

25th February, 1924

THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES
(Official Report)

FIRST SESSION
OF THE
SECOND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 1924



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Monday, 25th February, 1924.

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber at Eleven of the Clock.
Mr. President in the Chair.

MEMBER SWORN.

Shaikh Mushir Hossain Kidwai, M.L.A. (Lucknow and Fyzabad Divisions: Muhammadan Rural).

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

WAGON ALLOTMENT TO COLLIERIES.

411. ***Mr. C. Duralawami Aiyangar:** (a) Has the attention of the Government been drawn to the correspondence published in the issue of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, dated 5th February 1924, complaining against the prevailing system of wagon allotment to collieries according to which no colliery proprietor, agent, or consumer is able to have wagons unless his requisition is for half rakes at least?

(b) Is there truth in the said complaint?

(c) Is it a fact whether a colliery proprietor is bound to pay the half-yearly wharfage charge to the Railway Company even if he did not get a single wagon during the half year?

(d) If all or any of the grievances stated above be true, will the Government be pleased to remedy the same by proper directions to the Railway Companies concerned?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) Government have seen the letter referred to.

(b) and (d). The present system of distribution of wagons is an attempt to get back to the methods in force before the war. It is designed with the object of moving as much coal as possible from the fields and of making the best use of the wagons available. The system is worked by the C. T. O. who is assisted by an Advisory Committee, on which the Indian Mining Association, the Indian Mining Federation and consumers are represented. In recent months there have been few complaints and in December last the Indian Mining Federation told me that they had no representations to make in regard to wagon supply. But the usual seasonal difficulties have now begun, and since the beginning of January the Railway Board have received complaints that the smaller collieries are not getting sufficient wagons. The matter has been specially considered by the Advisory Committee and it has now been arranged that certain

days in the month should be set aside for small collieries. On these days wagon supplies, after meeting Locomotive requirements, will be confined to collieries having less than 1/2 rake capacity.

(c) No.

WAITING ACCOMMODATION AT TIRUPATI EAST STATION.

412. ***Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar:** (a) Are the Government aware that the Tirupati East (Railway station) on the M. and S. M. Railway, Gudur-Villupuram section is an important station for the reason that Tirupati is an all-India place of pilgrimage?

(b) Are the Government aware that waiting accommodation for third class passengers is very meagre and that in spite of repeated representations to the Railway Company no redress was obtained?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) and (b). Certain alterations are proposed in regard to Tirupati East Station. These include the construction of a large waiting shed for the special accommodation of pilgrims.

ARMING OF THE POPULATION IN THE TERRITORY ON THE FRONTIER SUBJECT TO RAIDS.

413. ***Mr. Kumar Sankar Ray:** Will the Government be pleased to state whether the population so often raided in British territory is disarmed or not? In the former event have the Government ever tested the effect of arming them fully?

Mr. E. B. Howell: The Arms Act is in force in the British districts of the North-West Frontier Province but licenses for arms are granted with great freedom and, where arms are for border defence, without payment of license fee. Government arms are also issued freely for defence purposes.

The following figures show the number of Government fire-arms issued for border defence and the number of licenses for private fire-arms in force during 1922 and 1923, respectively:

Number of Government fire-arms issued for border defence	12,395
Number of licenses for private fire-arms	13,982

RAILWAY RATING.

414. ***Mr. Kumar Sankar Ray:** Will the Government be pleased to state how far effect has been given to the recommendation of the Industrial Commission that the principle to be followed in Railway rating so far as it affects industries is that internal traffic should be rated as nearly as possible on an equality with traffic to and from ports? Has the principle been followed in the case of sugar and other industries?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: The Honourable Member is referred to paragraph 157 of the Acworth Committee's report.

CONSUMPTION OF COAL ON THE RAILWAYS.

415. ***Mr. K. Rama Aiyangar:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state if in every Railway, a record of the consumption of coal by each engine has been maintained during 1923-24? If not, what railways have not so maintained a record?

(b) What is the average quantity of coal per mile consumed on the 5 6" gauge railways during 1923-24 up to the end of December compared with 1922-23 and 1918-14?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) Since October last all Class I Railways record and report monthly the total tons of coal consumed by passenger and mixed, goods, shunting and departmental engines separately. The practice on Class II and Class III Railways is not known.

(b) The Honourable Member will find the figures he requires for the years 1918-14 and 1922-23 on page 463 of Volume II of the Railways in India Administration Report for 1918-14; and on pages 20 and 102 of Volume II of the Administration Report for 1922-23. Such information, as is available for the current year, will be found in Statement No. 1 of the Abstracts of Monthly Statistics, copies of which are in the Library.

THE IMPERIAL BANK OF INDIA.

416. ***Mr. K. Rama Aiyangar:** Will the Government be pleased to state, if the Honourable the Finance Member has examined the terms on which the Government have agreed to start and control as far as is necessary the Imperial Bank of India and invest the other available Government monies therein and expressed his opinion on the advantages or otherwise of such terms to the general tax-payers? If not, will the Government be pleased to call for such opinion?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: I do not understand this question. The agreement has still seven years to run.

Mr. K. Rama Aiyangar: I want to know if any expression of opinion has been given already?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: I have already answered that I do not understand what the point of the question is.

PURCHASE OF STORES IN ENGLAND.

417. ***Mr. K. Rama Aiyangar:** With reference to the table showing purchases made in England without accepting the lowest tender referred to on page 16 of Volume IV of the Assembly Debates dated 1st February 1924, will the Government be pleased to state what stock on hand of the articles referred to hereunder was available on the dates of purchase referred to in the table at pages 16, 17 and 20?

Bottles (water)—2 items.

Wheels and axles—3 items.

Tracing cloth—1.

Punching machine—1.

Portland cement—1.

Netting (mosquito)—2.

Tickets (Railway)—1.

The Honourable Mr. A. C. Chatterjee: In order to supply the information required by the Honourable Member it would be necessary first to ascertain from the High Commissioner which was the indenting department or officer in each of these cases and then to inquire from those officers and Departments what stocks they held. The value of the information required would not be commensurate with the labour and expense

of obtaining it. I may add that all departments have strict instructions regarding the scale of stock to be maintained and indents for supplies are made only in accordance with such instructions.

CARRIAGE OF MAILS BETWEEN ENGLAND AND INDIA.

418. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** (a) Is it a fact that arrangements have lately been made by the Secretary of State for India with the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company without the knowledge of the Government of India?

(b) Have the Government of India taken any exception to this and will the Government place the correspondence on the subject on the table?

The Honourable Mr. A. C. Chatterjee: The general arrangements for the carriage of mails between England and India are at present made by the British Post Office but the Government of India are always consulted with regard to the terms of the agreement between the British Post Office and the Steamship Company.

The second part of the question does not therefore arise.

HOWRAH-BOMBAY POSTAL EXPRESS.

419. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** (a) Is it a fact that the Howrah-Bombay Postal Express Train is to be re-introduced? Will there be any other similar postal expresses re-introduced?

(b) What will be the annual cost of this train? Could not this be avoided by starting a little earlier from Howrah and accelerating the ordinary Bombay mail train?

(c) What is the cost of the Bombay-Howrah Express train annually?

(d) Comparing the time of departure of this train from Bombay with the time of departure of the ordinary mail train, what would be the maximum delay to the mails if they were carried by the ordinary mail train instead of this special train?

(e) Considering that the delay would be a few hours over a period of some twenty days taken by the mails from England to destination in India, will the Government consider the expediency of cancelling this train, regard being had to the present financial condition of the country?

The Honourable Mr. A. C. Chatterjee: As the answer is rather long, if the Honourable Member will permit me, I shall place it on the table.

(a) The Howrah-Bombay Postal Special has already been re-introduced from the 14th February. There is no intention at present of introducing any other Postal special.

(b) The cost of running the Howrah-Bombay Postal special is Rs. 1,05,068 a year as against expenditure in the cost of conveying Postal vans by the ordinary trains amounting to Rs. 68,798 per annum. It is not possible to arrange for an earlier start from Howrah of the ordinary Bombay mail train as the foreign mails from Burma which usually arrive late in the afternoon would in that case be liable to miss connection with the ordinary 8 Up Bombay mail, thereby necessitating the running of another special over the B. N. Railway. It would further curtail the hours of posting both in Calcutta and at all places from which the foreign mails are conveyed by the Postal special. It is not possible to accelerate the train.

(c) The cost of running the Bombay-Howrah Postal special train is Rs. 1,09,824.

(d) and (e). The time of departure of the Bombay-Howrah special is 5 hours after the arrival of the steamer, whereas the time of departure of the ordinary mail train is fixed at 21 hours. In any case this special cannot be abolished as the additional load, namely, 4 bogies is too heavy for the ordinary mail train to carry. The re-arrangement of postal special trains has resulted in an actual saving in railway haulage charges for postal vans.

BOOKSTALLS AND ADVERTISEMENT CONTRACTS ON RAILWAYS.

420. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** (a) Is it a fact that Messrs. Wheeler and Company have been given the practical monopoly of bookstalls and exhibiting advertisements on some of the railways?

(b) What are the terms on which they have got this contract and for what period?

(c) Were any tenders called for before this contract was given to them?

(d) Is it a fact that they refused to keep some of the Indian newspapers in their stalls?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) Government are aware that Messrs. Wheeler and Company have bookstall and advertisement contracts on some railways.

(b) These are matters settled by the contractors and the Railway Administrations concerned.

(c) Government have no information.

(d) Government have no information. It is in the interests of the contractors themselves to stock papers that find a ready sale.

Mr. K. Ahmed: Is it not a fact, Sir, that on the floor of this House Colonel Waghorn had stated in reply to my question that some vernacular papers were being kept at the stalls and that he would try his level best to see that Messrs. Wheeler and Company sell Indian papers to the passenger public according to their choice and demand.

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: I do not know whether it is a fact or not, because I do not remember it. If the Honourable Member will put another question, I will endeavour to answer it.

Mr. K. Ahmed: What good has been done to the public by putting questions here a few years ago which Government do not even remember? Is there any public utility in putting questions of this description?

Mr. President: The Honourable Member can judge that for himself.

CONSTITUTION OF THE PROVINCES ON A LINGUISTIC BASIS.

421. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** (a) Is it a fact that the report on constitutional reforms of Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford suggested the constitution of provinces on a linguistic basis?

(b) Have the Government of India considered or inquired into the question of re-formation of provinces on that basis?

(c) Will the Government be pleased to publish the result of such inquiry if any?

(d) Have there been from time to time expressions of a desire on the part of important communities in some of the provinces for such reformation?

(e) If there has been no such inquiry, will the Government consider the propriety of making one on the subject?

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: I invite the Honourable Member's attention to the statement on the subject made by Sir William Vincent in the Assembly on the Resolution moved by Mr. Latthe on the 21st September 1921. I have nothing to add to that statement, the general purport of which was to deprecate the institution of any inquiry by Government until definite proof had been submitted that the areas affected desired reconstitution on a new basis and some scheme had been submitted showing possible lines of reconstruction.

INCREASE OF THE POSTAL AND TELEGRAPH STAFF.

422. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state the percentage of increase of business from 1913-14 to 1921-22 (1) in the Post Office and (2) in the Telegraph Department?

(b) What was the percentage of increase of (1) clerical staff, (2) postmen, (3) village postmen and menials in the Post Office, (4) sorters and menials in the R. M. S., (5) clerks, and (6) menials in the circle offices, (7) telegraph masters, (8) telegraphists and signal room clerks, and (9) menials in the Telegraph Department?

Mr. G. R. Clarke: (a) and (b). A statement is laid on the table.

Statement referred to in the reply by Mr. G. R. Clarke to question No. 422.

(a) (1) Postal articles	Increase 34.7 per cent.
(2) Telegraph Traffic	22.2 "
Telephone connections	94.6 "
(b) (1) Clerical staff in post offices	33.0 "
(2) Postmen	17.1 "
(3) Village postmen	3.7 "
Menials in post offices (excluding runners)	23.5 "
(4) Sorters in R.M.S.	26.5 "
Menials	23.7 "
(5) Clerks in Postal (including R.M.S.) Circle offices	32.4 "
Clerks in Engineering Circle and Divisional offices	30.7 "
(6) Menials in Postal (including R.M.S.) Circle offices	32.4 "
Menials in Engineering Circle and Divisional offices (including Exchanges)	31.2 "
(7) Telegraph masters	35.7 "
(8) Telegraphists	30.7 "
Signal room clerks	157.7 "
Telephone operators	100.0 "
(9) Menials in the Telegraph Department	74.6 "

ADEQUACY OF STAFF IN THE POST OFFICE AND THE R. M. S.

423. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** Will the Government be pleased to state (a) whether the staff in the Post Offices and the R. M. S. is sanctioned on a calculation based on fixed standards known as "time-test", (b) whether according to the old time-test the Post Offices require 1,200 additional clerks and according to the new time-test 700 clerks?

(c) If the reply be in the affirmative, will the Government arrange to sanction the full staff necessary for efficient work?

(d) Whether the number of sorters in the R. M. S. is adequate for the R. M. S. work according to the standard time-test for the R. M. S.?

Mr. G. R. Clarke: (a) Yes.

(b) During the year 1922-23 there was a decrease of 16½ per cent. in the volume of traffic handled by the Post Office and as the result of an examination of the work of post offices generally during that year and the current year with reference to the new time-test it was found that a large number of post offices were overmanned. There is no reason to believe that there is any serious shortage of staff at the present time.

(c) Government do not propose to take any special action in the matter. Any increases in staff that are found to be necessary to meet the growth in traffic will be provided automatically under Departmental arrangements.

(d) There is no reason to believe that this is not the case.

ABSENTEES IN THE R. M. S. AND IN CERTAIN POST OFFICES.

424. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** Will the Government be pleased to furnish a statement showing the average number of absentees in the R. M. S. and in the Post Office in Calcutta, Jalpaiguri, Burma, Lahore, Bombay, Madras and R. M. S. Eastern, Northern and Western Circles and Calcutta Sorting Division?

Mr. G. R. Clarke: The information asked for is being collected and will be supplied to the Honourable Member as soon as possible.

LEAVE RESERVE IN THE R. M. S.

425. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** (a) Is it a fact that it was the unanimous recommendation of the Joint R. M. S. Conference under the chairmanship of Rai H. K. Raha Bahadur, Deputy Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs, that there should be a 50 per cent. leave reserve in the R. M. S. and that the Calcutta Postal Advisory Committee under the chairmanship of the Presidency Postmaster unanimously recommended for the Calcutta Post Office a leave reserve of 25 per cent?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to consider the necessity of increasing the leave reserve as recommended by the Joint R. M. S. Conference and the Calcutta Postal Advisory Committee?

The Honourable Mr. A. C. Chatterjee: (a) Yes.

(b) Government will be prepared to consider any recommendations that the Director-General may decide to make on the subject.

EXPENDITURE ON POSTAL AND TELEGRAPH BUILDINGS.

426. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** Will the Government be pleased to state the amount expended in the year 1923-24, on (1) Post Office buildings, (2) Telegraph buildings?

EXPENDITURE ON QUARTERS FOR POSTAL AND TELEGRAPH EMPLOYEES.

427. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** Will the Government be pleased to state the amount expended in the year 1923-24, for construction, maintenance and furnishing of quarters, for (a) Postal employees, (b) Telegraph employees?

Mr. G. R. Clarke: With the Honourable Member's permission, I will answer questions 426 and 427 together.

The information asked for in these two questions is being collected and will be furnished to the Honourable Member in due course.

BRANCH POST OFFICES.

428. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** Will the Government be pleased to state, (a) how many Post Offices were abolished and the status of how many offices reduced during the year 1923-24, (b) whether it is now in contemplation to abolish the so-called unremunerative Branch Post Offices?

Mr. G. R. Clarke: (a) The number of post offices closed during 1923-24 is 255 and the number of which the status was reduced 205.

(b) It is not under contemplation to abolish any post offices which are doing useful postal work or which are showing any signs of development.

Mr. K. Ahmed: Is it a fact that there are post offices or sub-post offices where the authorities do not take any responsibility for delivering letters to their destination in the villages? Is it not a fact that in the district of Malda in Bengal, there is a branch post office called Gobratala where the I. G. S. N. Company's steamer clerk gets only Rs. 50 per year and he has to manage all the affairs of the sub-post office?

Mr. G. R. Clarke: Sir, there are 20,000 post offices in India and I cannot remember the details of all of them. But if the Honourable Member will give me notice, I will inquire.

Mr. K. Ahmed: Is it not a fact that there are some post offices or sub-post offices where the authorities do not undertake the responsibility of delivering letters in time to the addressees?

Mr. G. R. Clarke: There are plenty of post offices where we do not keep postmen to deliver letters. These are very small offices.

Mr. K. Ahmed: Do Government propose for the benefit of the public to remove the hardship on the public and take the responsibility of seeing that the letters reach their destination?

Mr. G. R. Clarke: We do our best in every case to see that the letters reach their destination.

Mr. K. Ahmed: Do Government propose to alter the rule and take the direct responsibility of reaching letters to their proper destinations by keeping a staff similar to other post offices where they do undertake the responsibility of delivering letters to the addressees?

Mr. G. R. Clarke: I must have notice of that question.

UNREMUNERATIVE DEPARTMENTAL TELEGRAPH OFFICES.

429. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** Will the Government be pleased to state how many departmental telegraph offices maintained now are unremunerative and whether it is proposed to abolish such unremunerative offices and to establish combined offices in their place?

Mr. G. R. Clarke: I regret that the information required is not available for all Departmental Telegraph Offices and would be very difficult to obtain as many of these Offices are concerned more with the transiting of messages and the control of Traffic than with booking and delivery.

The working of small Departmental Offices is regularly examined and wherever possible they are converted into Combined Post and Telegraph Offices. During the past two years fifteen Offices have been so converted.

INCREASE OF WORK IN THE POST OFFICE, ETC.

430. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** Will the Government be pleased to furnish a statement showing the increase since 1910-11, (1) of work in the Post Office, (2) of village post offices, (3) of clerks doing the manipulative work, (4) of postmen, (5) of village postmen, (6) of packers, (7) of runners, (8) of R. M. S. sorters, and (9) of R. M. S. menials?

Mr. G. R. Clarke: A statement giving the information asked for is placed on the table.

	Increase.
Total number of articles dealt with	248,436,196
Village post offices	422
Clerks doing manipulative work	3,864
Postmen	2,973
Village postmen	156
Packers	643
Runners	—2,371
R. M. S. sorters	955
R. M. S. menials	735

INCREASE OF TELEGRAPH TRAFFIC, ETC.

431. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** Will the Government furnish a statement showing the (1) increase of Telegraph traffic since 1910-11, (a) in departmental telegraph offices, (b) in combined offices, (2) the increase of telegraphists and signal room clerks in departmental telegraph offices, (3) telegraph peons in departmental telegraph offices, and (4) other menials in departmental telegraph offices?

Mr. G. R. Clarke: The required statement is laid on the table.

Statement showing the increase of Telegraph Traffic and the Telegraph establishment since 1910-11.

Item.	1910-11.	Present (1922-23).	Percentage of increase.
(1) Telegraph Traffic—			
(a) in departmental telegraph offices	53,670,900	78,820,652*	46.0
(b) in combined offices	18,354,418	20,556,544	53.9
(2) Telegraphists (including Military) and Signal Room clerks	3,332†	4,585‡	37.6
(3) (4) Telegraph peons and other menials§	2,000	2,886	36.1

* Includes Press messages converted into 25-word messages, as Press messages have during the last few years been very lengthy, and excludes Service messages as the figures shown under 1910-11 do not include Service messages, the number of the latter not being available from records.

† Includes equivalents of Military Telegraphists, the working capacity of whom is taken as 2/3rd of that of a civil telegraphist.

‡ This figure represents actuals on 31st March 1923.

§ Separate figures are not available.

COST OF TELEGRAPH LINES AND OF THE TRAFFIC BRANCH.

432. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** Will the Government be pleased to state the cost for the year 1922-23 for the maintenance of telegraph lines required for telegraph traffic and the cost of the traffic branch of the telegraph department?

Mr. G. B. Clarke: The approximate cost of maintaining telegraph lines for telegraph traffic including over-head charges but excluding pensionary charges was rupees thirty-three lakhs in the year 1922-23 and that of the traffic branch of the Telegraph Department rupees one crore thirty lakhs.

INADEQUATE SUPPLY OF MAIL VANS.

433. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** Will the Government be pleased to state whether the supply of mail vans is not inadequate and whether some R. M. S. sections are not required to do the sorting work in third class compartments. If the reply be in the affirmative, will the Government arrange to provide for a sufficient number of vans?

Mr. G. B. Clarke: On the whole the supply of mail vans is not inadequate but a few unimportant R. M. S. sections here and there work in unfitted third class compartments owing to the paucity of mail vans having corresponding accommodation. Sorting work done in these compartments is so insignificant that it is not considered necessary to provide them with permanent fittings.

ABOLITION OF R. M. S. SECTIONS.

434. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** Will the Government be pleased to state how many R. M. S. sections were abolished during the year 1923-24?

Mr. G. B. Clarke: Altogether eight R. M. S. sections were abolished during the year 1923-24 of which 7 were either unnecessary or unimportant. The question of re-introducing the Narayanganj-Chandpur section is under consideration.

MEDICAL EXAMINATION OF POSTAL AND TELEGRAPH EMPLOYEES.

435. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state (i) the annual cost involved in the appointment of a special medical officer in Calcutta for the examination of postal, R. M. S. and telegraph employees of Calcutta, Howrah and Alipore going on leave on medical grounds, (ii) the utility of the appointment of a special medical officer?

(b) Will the Government state whether the appointment of a special medical officer in Calcutta has effected any reduction in the average number of absentees?

Mr. G. B. Clarke: (a) The appointment which came into existence on the 1st November 1922, continued only up to the 31st January 1924, when the gentleman who held it resigned and it was decided not to appoint a successor.

(b) For the short period during which the special medical officer existed, there was a decrease in the average number of absentees in the General Post Office.

THE SUB-POSTMASTER, FORT WILLIAM.

436. **Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state why Mr. J. Kelly has been appointed to act as Sub-Postmaster of the Fort William P. O. in supersession of the claims of a large number of Indian officials senior to him?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state whether the undermentioned Indian officials did not hold charge of the Fort William P. O. successfully, (1) Kalipada Mukerjee, (2) Srish Chandra Chakraborty, (3) Srish Chandra Bose, (4) Jogendra Nath Nundy, (5) Bama Charan Ganguly, (6) Pulin Behari Dutta, (7) Norendra Nath Banerjee?

(c) Will the Government please state how many Indian Sub-Postmasters of Fort William and how many Anglo-Indian Sub-Postmasters of Fort William were found unsatisfactory and dismissed or removed from the charge?

Mr. G. R. Clarke: (a) The Sub-Postmaster, Fort William, has to deal mostly with British officers and British soldiers and it is therefore advisable that a European or Anglo-Indian should, if available, hold this particular appointment.

(b) Yes. The first four officials held the appointment of Sub-Postmaster, Fort William, over twenty years ago. The work of the remaining three officials was not considered satisfactory.

(c) During the past fifteen years, five Indians and ten Anglo-Indians and Europeans have held charge of the office. Three Indians, one European and one Anglo-Indian had to be removed for unsatisfactory work. One Anglo-Indian was dismissed.

GRANT OF LOCAL ALLOWANCES TO POSTAL AND R. M. S. OFFICIALS.

437. **Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state whether the postal and R. M. S. officials should not receive local allowances at the same rates as are paid by Local Governments?

(b) Will the Government please furnish a statement showing the local allowances paid by Local Governments in India and Burma to the different classes of their officials and the local allowances paid to the different classes of postal and R. M. S. employees in those places and to the different classes of employees in the Telegraph Department?

(c) Are the Government aware that the cost of living in places with second class head offices is not generally lower than in places with first class head offices? What is the reason for the difference of pay in first class and second class offices?

The Honourable Mr. A. C. Chatterjee: (a) The pay of Postal and Railway Mail Service officials was fixed by the Postal Committee on different scales in different localities, after taking into consideration the cost of living in each case. The question of local allowances does not therefore ordinarily arise. There are, however, certain special localities in India and Burma where local allowances are given in addition to pay, but it has not always been possible to adopt the Local Government rates in such places.

(b) The work involved in preparing a statement of the kind required would be enormous. It would entail a reference to all Local Governments and mean the preparation of tabular statements which would fill a volume of over 200 printed foolscap pages, without fulfilling any useful purpose.

(c) No. The second part of the question does not arise.

PAY OF CERTAIN CLASSES OF POSTAL EMPLOYEES IN CALCUTTA, ALIPUR AND HOWRAH.

438. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** (a) Will the Government please state if the same standard of qualification is not fixed for recruitment of clerks and sorters for Calcutta G. P. O., Calcutta sorting offices, Calcutta D. L. O., R. M. S., C. and E. divisions as well as for postmen for Calcutta, Alipur and Howrah and whether cost of living in Calcutta, Howrah and Alipur is not the same?

(b) Why is there a lower scale of pay for the clerks of the Calcutta D. L. O. and sorters of Calcutta sorting office and R. M. S., C. and E. divisions as well as for postmen and menials in Alipur and Howrah?

Mr. G. R. Clarke: (a) The scales of pay were sanctioned in accordance with the recommendations of the Postal Committee who were of opinion that a somewhat higher class of work is performed by clerks in post offices than by sorters of the R. M. S. and that the conditions of service are more favourable in a Dead Letter Office than in a Post Office. They accordingly proposed for the clerks of the Calcutta General Post Office a scale of pay with a higher maximum than that recommended by them for the sorters in Calcutta and Howrah and the clerks in the Dead Letter Office, the minimum, however, being the same in all cases.

(b) With respect to postmen and menials, the Postal Committee were of opinion that on the whole living was cheaper and the work of a less difficult and responsible character in Alipore and Howrah than in Calcutta, and they accordingly recommended higher scales of pay for the men in Calcutta.

TRANSFER OF RAILWAY PASSENGERS FROM A LOWER TO A HIGHER CLASS OF COMPARTMENT IN CASES OF OVERCROWDING.

439. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** Will the Government be pleased to state whether under Railway Bye-laws or under any rules the Guards on trains have the right to allow passengers to travel in the next higher class compartments in cases of overcrowding?

If not, will the Government be pleased to state the real authority who can allow such changes of compartments?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: No general orders have been issued on the subject and the practice on the different railways is not uniform. On some railways the staff are allowed to exercise their discretion in the matter provided that the comfort of the passengers rightfully occupying the higher class of compartment is given primary consideration.

PASSENGER GUARDS.

440. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** (a) Is it a fact that in all the fast trains there are passenger guards who travel in the train for looking to the comforts of passengers during the night? If so, will the Government be pleased to state the number of (i) Indians, (ii) Europeans or Anglo-Indians as such guards?

(5) Will the Government be pleased to state the pay of Indians and Anglo-Indians, respectively, amongst the passenger guards?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: Government have no information, but will make inquiries.

PASSENGER GUARDS ON III CLASS EXPRESS AND PASSENGER TRAINS.

441. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** Will the Government be pleased to state whether passenger guards are appointed on express and slow trains carrying III class passengers?

If not, will the Government be pleased to state the reasons for not doing so?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: Guards run in charge of all trains. It was formerly customary on most railways to have a second or assisting Guard on passenger trains where the work was heavy. Last year, as a result of the economies railways had to effect in order to reduce their working expenses, a number of railway administrations took off the second guard where this was found possible or replaced him by a brakeman.

PASSENGER AGENTS AT RAILWAY STATIONS.

442. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** Is it a fact that passenger agents at railway stations are appointed from the pensioned staff of Indian soldiers? If so, will the Government be pleased to state the reason?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: Many of the passenger Superintendents at railway stations are retired Indian military officers who were appointed because it was considered that their training made them suitable for the posts.

CONCESSIONS TO I AND II CLASS PASSENGERS.

443. ***Mr. N. M. Joshi:** With reference to the reply to question No. 100 at page 4404 of the Legislative Assembly Debates, Volume III, will Government be pleased to state whether it is a fact that railway administrations do not, of their own accord, compile and maintain any statistics to show whether concessions in fares to 1st and 2nd class passengers given in order to increase traffic do actually bring in increased traffic?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: It is understood that all railway administrations compile certain figures to watch the effect of any concessions introduced, though not on a uniform basis.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I want to know whether Government have ascertained, by putting together figures, if the concessions given to first and second class passengers have increased the traffic or not.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: As I have explained, railway administrations compile certain figures to watch the effect of the concessions but they do not do so on a uniform basis.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I want to know the fact whether these concessions have brought in greater traffic or not. I shall explain my object. Last year I asked a question why similar concessions were not given to third class passengers and I was told that the concessions are given to first and second class passengers because they bring in increased traffic. I

want to know whether Government have ascertained as a matter of fact whether increased traffic was brought in or not.

Mr. K. Ahmed: And in view of the fact that a Resolution in this House was withdrawn on the distinct understanding given by the Honourable Mr. Hindley, the Chief Commissioner for Railways, that he would try his level best to find out whether it is desirable that such concessions for first and second and inter class passengers and also a reduction of the fares for third class passengers should be given.

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: With regard to Mr. Joshi's question, I may say that it is rather difficult to reduce the matter in terms of figures, but I will make inquiries from the Agents and find out whether they are satisfied that the concessions granted have resulted in any increased traffic. With regard to Mr. Ahmed's question, I am afraid I must ask for notice.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask, Sir, whether Government will include the third class passenger traffic also in their inquiry on this point?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: I think that point was considered at the last meeting of the Indian Railway Conference Association, but that is another point and I will look into it.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: Does the B. and N. W. Railway grant concessions to first and second class passengers or not?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: That question does not arise.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member had better give notice.

RENEWALS OF, AND ADDITIONS TO, ROLLING STOCK.

444. ***Mr. N. M. Joshi:** With reference to paragraph 17 at page 69 of the report of the Indian Retrenchment Committee, 1922-23, will Government kindly state what steps have been taken to ensure a closer correspondence between the number of carriages and wagons in regard to provision of rolling stock of each kind in excess of actual traffic?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: The Railway Board now require that all proposals for renewals of, and additions to, rolling stock should be justified by detailed figures of actual traffic requirements.

I should like to take this opportunity of pointing out that the passage in paragraph 17 of Part II of the Retrenchment Committee's Report, to which the Honourable Member refers, does not completely disclose the true position. It points out that the stock of wagons had increased by 21 per cent. in 1922-23 over the 1913-14 figure whereas the maximum tonnage conveyed in any year subsequent to 1913-14 showed a growth of only 8.8 per cent. But the work actually done, and consequently the justification for increased rolling stock, depends not on tonnage, but on ton mileage, and the increase in ton miles is shown by Appendix D to the Report to be not 8.8 per cent., but 41.7 per cent. This fully justifies an increase of 21 per cent. in wagons and in fact shows that wagons on the average were doing more work.

THIRD CLASS RAILWAY TRAVELLING FACILITIES.

445. ***Mr. N. M. Joshi:** With reference to the reply to question No. 48 at page 4159 of the Legislative Assembly Debates, Volume III, have Government yet received the final reports on the principal points of complaints

relating to third class passengers together with the remarks of the Local Advisory Councils?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: Reports from five railways are still awaited.

SUB-DIVISION OF THE RAILWAY DEMANDS.

446. ***Mr. N. M. Joshi:** With reference to paragraph 22 at pages 4086 and 4687 of the Legislative Assembly Debates, Volume III, in which the Public Accounts Committee recommend that the possibility of sub-division of the railway demands should be carefully considered, will Government kindly state what steps, if any, have been taken in pursuance of the recommendation?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: No action has yet been taken. The question has been considered, and will again be considered this summer in connection with the separation of Railway from General Finance.

SUPPLY TO MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE OF THE ESTABLISHMENT ROLLS AND WORKING ESTIMATES OF THE RAILWAYS.

447. ***Mr. N. M. Joshi:** Will Government kindly state what additional expense will be entailed by supplying copies of the establishment rolls and working estimates of the railways to the Members of the Legislature and whether they propose to furnish Members with copies this year?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: The additional expense involved would be about Rs. 3,600.

The reply to the second part of the question is in the negative. The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the answer given on the 29th January, 1923, to his starred question No. 282.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I want to know, whether, besides the expense of having to spend Rs. 3,600, there is any other reason for keeping back this information from the Members of the Assembly.

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: We are prepared to place copies of these establishment rolls in the Library. At the same time I must point out what I have said before in this House that, if every Member of this House studied these establishment rolls and asked us detailed information about minor points in railway administration, both the Railway Board and the Agents will be overwhelmed with work.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Could not Members of the Assembly be trusted not to do it?

INTEREST ON THE UNPRODUCTIVE PORTION OF THE CAPITAL COST OF RAILWAYS.

448. ***Mr. N. M. Joshi:** Will Government kindly state what is the total amount of interest borne by the Indian revenue on that portion of the capital cost of the railways which was left unproductive by their dismantlement during the war?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: The total amount of interest borne by Indian revenues on that portion of the capital cost of the railways which was left unproductive by their dismantlement during the war is approximately Rs. 6,58,000 to the end of December last.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Was that recovered from the Government in Great Britain?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: No, Sir. Practically all the materials were used on a line within the Indian frontier.

Mr. K. Ahmed: Am I to suppose, Sir, that a portion of the expenditure incurred from the capital cost of the country was not spent on a commercial basis?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I am afraid I could not catch the Honourable Member's last words.

Mr. K. Ahmed: Am I to suppose that a portion of the cost incurred

Mr. President: That is a supposition, not a question.

Mr. K. Ahmed: Is it a fact, Sir, that a portion of the cost was not spent on a commercial basis or an enterprise of that description?

ESTABLISHMENT ROLLS AND WORKING ESTIMATE OF THE E. I. RAILWAY.

449. ***Mr. N. M. Joshi:** Will Government kindly place in the Library a copy of the latest establishment rolls and working estimates of the East Indian Railway Company?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: A copy is being placed in the Library.

POSTAL INSPECTORS AND SUPERINTENDENTS' HEAD CLERKS.

450. ***Mr. N. M. Joshi:** Will Government be pleased to give the following information:

- (A) Is it a fact that (a) the Postal Inspectors and the Superintendents' Head Clerks are required to undergo a departmental test; and (b) if so, are they immediately confirmed in their posts after successfully going through the test or are they kept on the waiting list and are only tried in officiating appointments till vacancies occur? If the latter, what is generally the period in which they are so kept on the waiting list? Have Government fixed a limit to this period after which the Inspectors and the Superintendents' Head Clerks are no longer kept on the waiting list irrespective of the occurrences of vacancies?
- (B) What was the maximum pay of the Postal Inspectors and the Superintendents' Head Clerks before the revision recommended by the Postal Committee of 1920 and what maximum pay has been fixed for them after the revision?
- (C) Is it a fact that at the time of the revision of pay granted to the postal subordinates in February 1920, the pay of the Postal Inspectors and the Superintendents' Head Clerks was not revised? If so, why?
- (D) Is it a fact that by the recommendations of the Postal Committee of 1920, (a) the Postal Inspectors and the Superintendents' Head Clerks in India got one increment for every two years of their past services while the Postal Inspectors

and the Superintendents' Head Clerks in Burma, and even the postal clerks all over India, got one increment for each year of their past services? If so, why?

(E) Is it a fact that the scale of pay fixed for the postal subordinates in Burma is higher than that fixed for the same class of subordinates in India? If so, why?

(F) Is it a fact that by the recent revision in the scales of pay of the Postal Inspectors and the Superintendents' Head Clerks and the other postal subordinates, the first two classes of postal servants have become junior in pay to the men who were junior to them before the said revision?

Mr. G. R. Clarke: As the reply to this question is very long and tedious I propose, with the Honourable Member's permission, to lay it on the table.

(A) (a) Postal subordinates who are considered suitable for the special cadre of Inspectors of Post Offices and Head Clerks to Superintendents of Post Offices are required to pass a departmental examination.

(b) After passing the prescribed examination, they have to wait for permanent vacancies in the special cadre of and in the meantime are tried in officiating appointments. The period of waiting depends entirely on the intervals at which vacancies occur. No limit to this period has been or can be, fixed.

(B) Inspectors of Post Offices and Head Clerks to Superintendents of Post Offices were in 4 grades, viz., Rs. 60, Rs. 80, Rs. 100 and Rs. 100—10—150, the highest grade containing the smallest number of officials. They are now placed on a single time-scale of Rs. 100—5—175.

(C) The scope of the revision of February 1920, was limited to ameliorating the condition of the lower paid officials of the clerical class who had necessarily been the hardest hit by the increase in the cost of living. The pay, therefore, of Inspectors of Post Offices and Superintendents' Head Clerks was not revised at that date. As a result, however, of the Postal Inquiry Committee's recommendations, it was revised later in the year with retrospective effect from 1st December 1919.

(D) Yes. In the case of Inspectors and Superintendents' Head Clerks in India, the increase in the minimum pay was from Rs. 60 to Rs. 100. Moreover, the increment is Rs. 5 a year, compared with Rs. 4 a year, of the mofussil time-scales. The minimum pay of these officials in Burma was already Rs. 100 and they would obviously have received no benefit if they had not been allowed to count an increment for every year of service as Inspector or Head Clerk.

(E) The time-scales of pay for Postal subordinates of the various classes serving in offices in Burma are higher than those for such officials serving in offices of the same status in India and the reason for the difference is the higher cost of living in that Province.

(F) Government have no information on the point beyond a statement made by the Honorary General Secretary of the All-India (including Burma) Postal and R. M. S. Union which he has been asked by the Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs, to substantiate. It may be mentioned that it has been ruled that an Inspector or a Superintendent's Head Clerk may at any time voluntarily revert to the general line and take the position in that cadre that he would have held if he had remained in it.

GRIEVANCES OF POSTAL INSPECTORS AND SUPERINTENDENTS' HEAD CLERKS.

451. ***Mr. N. M. Joshi:** Will Government be pleased to state whether they propose to inquire into the grievances of the Postal Inspectors and the Superintendents' Head Clerks and remedy them? If so, when and how? If not, why not?

The Honourable Mr. A. C. Chatterjee: I have carefully examined the question and do not consider that these officials have any legitimate grievances. I do not therefore propose to institute any further inquiry.

THE BOMBAY CURRENCY OFFICE STAFF.

452. ***Mr. N. M. Joshi:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether they are aware that there is great discontent among the staff of the Bombay Currency Office owing to their inadequate scales of pay as compared with any other Government Offices and the leading banks and firms in Bombay?

(b) (i). Is it a fact that the Bombay Currency Staff have been representing their grievances by representations, and memorials submitted from time to time through the Deputy Controller of Currency, Bombay, since 1920? (ii) If so, what action, if any, have they taken on them or do they propose to take any in the near future? If so, when? If not, why not?

(c) Will Government be pleased to state whether, in the event of their not being able to sanction any final revision in the immediate future, they will sanction, as an immediate relief, a temporary local allowance pending such final revision?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: As the reply to this question is very long and tedious, I propose to lay it on the table.

(a) Government are aware that some of the staff of the Bombay Currency Office have expressed their dissatisfaction with their existing scales of pay.

(b) (i). Since the general revision of pay on a time-scale basis in January, 1920, representations have been received not only from the Bombay Currency Office but also from other Currency Offices for revision of pay.

(ii). The following concessions were granted in the Bombay Currency Office with effect from 1st March, 1922.

- (1) The minimum pay of clerks was raised from Rs. 40 to Rs. 60.
- (2) One additional increment was granted to men drawing less than Rs. 80.
- (3) The pay of the shroffs was raised from Rs. 40—2—60 to 50—2—70—1—80 with a Head Shroff at 90.

In addition, the pay of Superintendents was revised on an incremental basis in place of fixed rates with effect from 1st March, 1922.

Prior to the general revision in January, 1920, the clerks of the Bombay Currency Office had fixed rates of pay ranging from a minimum grade

of Rs. 80 to a maximum of Rs. 75 with superior posts at Rs. 100 as compared with the existing time-scale of pay rising from a minimum of Rs. 60 to a maximum of Rs. 100 with superior posts at Rs. 125. The Government consider that the increases already given are adequate and are not prepared to consider further revision of the scales of pay at present.

(c) For the reasons stated above, the Government are not prepared to sanction a temporary local allowance.

COST OF THE ESTABLISHMENTS OF THE DEPUTY CONTROLLERS OF CURRENCY, BOMBAY, CALCUTTA AND DELHI.

458. ***Mr. N. M. Joshi:** Will Government be pleased to state the costs of the establishments of the Deputy Controllers of Currency, Bombay, Calcutta and Delhi, including the pay and the allowances of the Deputy Controllers since their creation?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: The information asked for by the Honourable Member is contained in the statement which I lay on the table.

Statement showing cost of the establishments of the Deputy Controllers of the Currency, Bombay, Northern India and Calcutta.

The cost of the establishment of the Deputy Controllers of the Currency, Bombay, Northern India, and Calcutta, including contingencies, but excluding debt and remittance charges, are given below :

1919-20.	1920-21, Actuals.		1921-22, Actuals.	1922-23, Actuals.	1923-24, Revised Estimate.	1924-25, Budget.
6,000	25,000	Deputy Controller of the Currency, Bombay.	30,000	30,000	26,000	27,000
1,400	7,000	Assistant Currency Officer, Bombay.	7,500	7,800	8,100	8,400
1,273	21,177	Establishment, travelling allow- ance, etc.	42,554	39,384	39,900	38,100
8,836	37,867	Contingencies.	31,526	15,000	15,000	13,500
		Deputy Controller of the Currency, Northern India.	18,000	25,900	22,000	22,500
		Assistant Currency Officer, Northern India.	4,600	5,900	6,300	6,600
		Establishment, travelling allow- ance, etc.	15,876	33,971	36,400	43,929
		Contingencies	8,942	11,781	8,000	8,180
		<i>Deputy Controller of the Currency, Calcutta.</i>				
	2,100	* Deputy Controller of the Currency's pay less Assistant Controller of the Currency's pay.	18,000	8,400	8,700	8,400
	2,050	* Establishment, travelling allowance, etc.	31,170	31,950	30,650	29,100
	400	* Contingencies	5,000	5,000	4,700	5,000

* Estimates only.

2. The functions now performed by the Deputy Controllers of the Currency were previously performed in the Accountants General's offices, and when the new posts were created the establishments for the new offices were drawn almost entirely from the respective Accountants General's offices, corresponding reduction in the establishments of the Accountants General being made. The additional cost to Government, therefore, consisted mainly of the extra charge on account of the pay of the Deputy Controllers

and the Assistant Currency Officers. It is estimated that the total cost of the separation of the work of the Currency Department from that of the Audit Department is as follows :

—	1921-22.	1922-23.	1923-24.	1924-25.
Deputy Controller of the Currency's Office, Bombay	41,300	41,600	37,500	39,000
Deputy Controller of the Currency's Office, Northern India	25,200	35,000	31,100	32,000
Deputy Controller of the Currency's Office, Calcutta	18,000	8,400	8,700	8,400
Total	79,500	85,000	77,300	79,400

EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN POLICE TO CONTROL THE TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

454. ***Mr. Jamnadas Mehta:** (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to the report of the Delegates of India to the fourth Session of the Assembly of the League of Nations held at Geneva in 1923 and to the resolution which the Assembly adopted on the recommendation of its 5th Committee regarding the traffic in women and children?

(b) Have Government received from the Council of the League of Nations the recommendation of the Advisory Committee regarding the employment of women police in dealing with the traffic in women and children and have Government considered the said recommendation?

(c) Will Government be pleased to consult the Provincial Governments regarding the advisability of employing women police as suggested by the aforesaid resolution of the Advisory Committee and endorsed by the fourth session of the Assembly of the League?

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: (a) Yes.

(b) Yes. The Advisory Committee's recommendations have been brought to the notice of the central authorities in India appointed under Article 1 of the 1904 Agreement for the suppression of the White Slave Traffic.

(c) The question of the agency to be employed is mainly one for the central authorities and, so far as we are aware, they have not yet considered it expedient to request from the Local Governments (who are in charge of police) the assistance of women police.

THE IMPERIAL LIBRARY, CALCUTTA.

455. ***Rai Hari Prasad Lal:** Has the attention of the Government been drawn to an article in the editorial columns of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, dated February 10, 1924, regarding the affairs of the Imperial Library at Calcutta?

If so, (a) will the Government be pleased to state the reasons which led the Government to sanction the removal of the Library from its former place?

(b) Is it a fact that the utility of the Library has lessened on account of its removal?

(c) Is it a fact that the collection of important and useful works is steadily decreasing?

(d) Will the Government be pleased to lay a statement on the table showing:

- (i) the number of books on useful and general subjects,
- (ii) novels and other such matters, added during the years 1921, 1922 and 1923?

Mr. M. S. D. Butler: The attention of Government has been drawn to the article in question.

(a) The removal was sanctioned on the advice of the Library Council and the Bengal Government and because the accommodation available in Metcalfe Hall was insufficient.

(b) and (c). The reply is in the negative.

(d) A statement furnishing the information is laid on the table. Novels are seldom if ever purchased by the Library, but some Bengal novels were transferred to it from the Bengal library.

Statement showing the number of books added to the Imperial Library, Calcutta.

Heading.	1921.	1922.	1923.
(i) Books on useful and general subjects---			
(a) Purchased by Library	1,429	1,136	1,713
(b) Bengal publications received from Bengal Library	795	1,183	925
(ii) Novels---			
(a) Purchased by Library . . . .	...	...	...
(b) Bengal novels received from Bengal Library	228	282	156

EXPENDITURE ON THE IMPERIAL LIBRARY, CALCUTTA.

456. ***Rai Hari Prasad Lal:** Will the Government of India be pleased to state the amount of money spent on the Imperial Library during (1) 1921, (2) 1922, and (3) 1923, under the heads (a) management and (b) purchase of books?

Mr. M. S. D. Butler: A statement giving the information is laid on the table.

Statement showing the expenditure of the Imperial Library, Calcutta.

Heading.	Actuals for 1921-1922.	Actuals for 1922-1923.	Revised Estimates for 1923-1924.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Management	48,804	53,304	51,900
Purchase of books	20,188	14,936	16,700
TOTAL	68,992*	68,240	68,600

*Exclude Rs. 9,664 for the erection of new racks for books.

CONTROL OF THE IMPERIAL LIBRARY, CALCUTTA.

457. ***Rai Hari Prasad Lal:** Will the Government of India be pleased to consider the advisability of the transfer of the control of the Imperial Library to the Bengal Government? If not, will they be pleased to state the reasons for their not doing so?

Mr. M. S. D. Butler: The question is under consideration in consultation with the Bengal Government, whose views have not yet been communicated to the Government of India.

ASSISTANT ENGINEERS.

458. ***Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar:** In the matter of the Indian Service of Engineers and the Regulations passed thereunder by the Secretary of State for India in Council for the appointment of Assistant Executive Engineers in 1924:

- (a) Will the Government be pleased to state whether the Government of India was consulted by the Secretary of State prior to issuing the said Regulations?
- (b) Will the Government be pleased to state how the fifteen appointments of Assistant Executive Engineers will be apportioned between the Public Works and State Railway departments of the Government of India respectively?
- (c) Will the Government be pleased to state whether the proposed appointments will oust the Assistant Engineers in service already or whether they are additional appointments? If the latter, will the Government be pleased to state whether such additional appointments have been found necessary and if the former why they are ousted?
- (d) Will the Government be pleased to state whether the Government of India recommended to the Secretary of State that a greater percentage than 10 per cent. of Indians may be included in the appointments of Assistant Executive Engineers to be made in 1924?
- (e) Will the Government be pleased to state whether the Government of India recommended to the Secretary of State for India that in Appendix I to the Regulations degrees obtained in any of the Indian Universities should also be included?
- (f) If there was any correspondence on this subject between the Government of India and the Secretary of State for India in Council, will the Government be pleased to place the same on the table?

The Honourable Mr. A. C. Chatterjee: (a) Not specially in respect of the 1924 Regulations. With slight variations in detail, the same Regulations have been in force for the past seventeen years. They relate only to that portion of the recruitment to the Indian Service of Engineers which is effected in England and there are different Regulations for recruitment to the Service in India.

(b) 14 for the P. W. D. and 1 for the State Railway Department. About 15 candidates will also be recruited to the Service in India.

(c) The recruitment to be effected represents somewhat less than the average number of officers required annually to fill vacancies caused by retirements and other casualties in the Europe-recruited branch. The new recruits will not oust Assistant Engineers already in service.

(d) No. The whole question of recruitment to the Service is now under examination by the Royal Commission on the Public Services.

(e) No. Holders of Indian Engineering Degrees are appointed to the Service in India and not in England.

(f) There was no correspondence other than the usual intimation by the Government of India of the number of recruits required.

ACCESS TO HOWRAH RAILWAY STATION PLATFORM.

459. ***Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** (a) Are the Government aware that the gates for third class passengers for entrance into the platform at the Howrah Railway station are too narrow and cause great inconvenience to the passengers?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state whether they propose to take steps for widening the gates for entrance of third class passengers at the Howrah Railway station?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) and (b). Government are not aware that the gates are too narrow, but in this connection the Honourable Member's attention is invited to the reply given to Question No. 212 in regard to this matter, on the 23rd January, 1923.

Mr. K. Ahmed: But is it not a fact that thousands and thousands of passengers gather together in front of the entrance door for the third class?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: I have seen large crowds myself waiting for trains which very often do not come for several hours later.

Mr. K. Ahmed: But is it not a fact that in regard to the Eastern Bengal State Railway last October Mr. K. Ahmed, a Member of the Legislative Assembly, brought to the notice of the authorities that the opening of at least three gates was advisable on account of the pressure of the passenger traffic?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: I am not aware that the question relating to the Eastern Bengal State Railway arises out of the question relating to the Howrah Station.

Mr. K. Ahmed: Will Government for the benefit of the public try their level best to remove the barrier and make the Member in charge of the Government entirely responsible, and will Government take proper steps to ask the Agent to report to the Member so that the representatives of the country may be in a position to criticise the action of the Agent?

EXEMPTION OF CHEQUES OF CO-OPERATIVE BANKS FROM STAMP DUTY.

460. ***Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** Will the Government be pleased to state whether cheques of Central Co-operative Banks, having current account business, are chargeable with receipt stamps of one anna each? If so, are the Government prepared to exempt the same?

Mr. M. S. D. Butler: Yes. The Committee on Co-operation in India examined this question in 1915 and recommended that the continuance of this concession was no longer necessary. It was accordingly withdrawn in 1919. The Government of India do not propose to revive the exemption.

IMPRISONMENT OF MR. AMIR CHAND BOMBWAL OF PESHAWAR.

461. ***Mr. Ohaman Lal:** (a) Is it a fact that a public meeting was held in Keseryia Hall, Peshawar, on the 18th of February, 1921, to protest against the presentation of a farewell address to Sir Hamilton Grant?

(b) Is it a fact that Mr. Amir Chand Bombwal was the chief organiser of this meeting?

(c) Is it a fact that on the 22nd of February, 1921, Mr. Bombwal was sent to prison for three years under section 40 of the Frontier Crimes Regulations?

(d) Is it a fact that Mr. Bombwal was not allowed the privilege of a defence?

Mr. E. B. Howell: The information asked for in (a), (b) and (d) is being obtained and will be communicated to the Honourable Member on receipt.

(c) Mr. Bombwal was sentenced to three years imprisonment on 22nd February, 1921, for failure to furnish security demanded under section 40, Frontier Crimes Regulations.

COST OF GARDEN PARTY TO SIR HAMILTON GRANT.

462. ***Mr. Ohaman Lal:** (a) Is it a fact that in 1919 Sir Hamilton Grant was given a garden party on his taking charge of the Chief Commissionership?

(b) Is it a fact that some of the expenses of this garden party were not met and that civil suits for the recovery of the same were instituted?

(c) Is it a fact that after the institution of these suits payments were made in satisfaction thereof in 1921 out of the Political Fund?

(d) Will Government be pleased to state their reasons for incurring this expenditure?

Mr. E. B. Howell: (a) Yes.

(b) The garden party was given by local gentlemen some of whom afterwards repudiated their obligations and civil suits against these were instituted by the caterers.

(c) No.

(d) Does not arise.

APPEAL OF THE RESIDENTS OF SIALKOT AGAINST CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS OF THE CANTONMENT COMMITTEE.

463 ***Mr. Ohaman Lal:** (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to the *Cantonment Advocate*, Ambala, dated 10th December 1923,

in which was published a summary of the appeal submitted to the military authorities, by the residents of Sialkot Cantonment against certain Resolutions of the Cantonment Committee?

(b) If so, will Government be pleased to state what action has been taken upon it?

(c) If not, will the Government be pleased to inquire into the matter?

ERECTION OF PLATFORMS BY THE RESIDENTS OF THE SIALKOT CANTONMENT BAZARS.

464. ***Mr. Ohaman Lal:** (a) Is it not a fact that platforms in front of houses and shops throughout the Sialkot Cantonment Bazars and lanes, were erected by the residents at their own cost on requisition by the Cantonment authorities themselves about some 50 years ago?

(b) Is it not a fact that the platforms were erected on the ground allotted to the house-owners for residential purposes, under the rules in force at the time of the founding of the Cantonment, namely, 1848 A. D.?

RESIDENTIAL AREA IN THE SIALKOT CANTONMENT BAZARS.

465. ***Mr. Ohaman Lal:** (a) Is it not a fact that the residential area in the Sialkot Cantonment bazars (specially Sadar Bazar) was further subdivided into sections (Santars) which, in their turn, were enclosed by kutchha drains running around each section and thus separated from Government land?

(b) Is it not a fact that green trees were planted on both sides of the kutchha drains to limit their sites from being shifted in future towards the Government land?

REMOVAL OF PLATFORMS ERECTED BY THE RESIDENTS OF THE SIALKOT CANTONMENT BAZARS.

466. ***Mr. Ohaman Lal:** (a) Is it not a fact that the necessity of proving by the Sialkot Cantonment Committee its right to the ground under platforms before taking any action against the present occupants and owners, was specially emphasised by the Encroachment Sub-Committee appointed by it to investigate the question of alleged encroachments?

(b) Is it a fact that the Cantonment Committee has resolved upon the removal of the said structures without proving its right by the testimony of authorised records in its possession as recommended by its Sub-Committee?

RENT FOR PLATFORMS AND SITES BY RESIDENTS OF SIALKOT CANTONMENT.

467. ***Mr. Ohaman Lal:** Is it not a fact that the Sialkot Cantonment Committee had decided in its meeting on 28th September, 1928, that no ground rent would for the present be charged on benches, etc., occupying Government land but that rent is being demanded even for the use of platforms and sites—which have been in the possession and occupation of the house-owners for over 50 years and to which the Cantonment Committee never previously asserted its right?

Mr. E. Burdon: Sir, with your permission, I propose to answer questions Nos. 468 to 467 together.

Government have seen the article referred to by the Honourable Member. They have, however, no information on the subject but are inquiring, and I shall let the Honourable Member know the result as soon as possible.

INDIAN TRAFFIC INSPECTORS AND TRAFFIC SUPERINTENDENTS.

468. ***Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas:** (a) What percentage of Indian Station staff has been promoted to the rank of Traffic Inspectors or appointed Traffic Superintendents?

(b) Is it a fact that higher grade posts in the Traffic Department such as Claims Inspectors and the like are filled up by recruiting outsiders to the exclusion of men already serving in the Department with long service and experience to their credit?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: The Government have no information, but are making inquiries.

WORKING HOURS OF THE CLERICAL STATION STAFF.

469. ***Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas:** (a) Is it a fact that there is a standing Government order limiting the work of the clerical station staff to eight hours a day?

(b) If so, is more than eight hours' work exacted from some of this staff?

(c) If the reply is in the affirmative, is any overtime wage paid to them?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) and (b). Under the draft convention and recommendations adopted by the International Labour Conference at Washington the 60-hour a week rule applies to station staff not employed in connection with the working of trains.

(c) It is not usual for clerical staff to earn overtime.

POWER OF VETO OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA.

470. ***Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state in how many and which cases the Secretary of State for India has exercised his power of veto in the last three years where the Government and the Legislature were in agreement?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to make a statement *re*:

(i) the total number of times the Secretary of State has vetoed the decisions of the Government of India since the inauguration of the reformed constitution?

(ii) the nature of the matters in connection with which the veto was exercised?

(iii) the effect of the veto on each occasion and the extent to which the original decision of the Government was thus modified or nullified?

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: Government are unable to give any information in the matter.

Mr. V. J. Patel: The Government are unable to give the information?

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: They do not consider it desirable to do so.

Mr. V. J. Patel: In the public interest?

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: Undoubtedly.

PURCHASE OF STORES IN ENGLAND.

471. ***Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas:** Will Government be pleased

- (a) to state what action they have taken on the Resolution passed by the Council of State re purchase of Stores in England in their meeting of September, 1922?
- (b) to lay on the table the correspondence which may have passed between them and the High Commissioner for India and the Secretary of State in connection therewith?

The Honourable Mr. A. C. Chatterjee: The Honourable Member is presumably referring to the Resolution adopted by the Council of State on the 29th September, 1921. I would refer him to the reply† which I gave to a similar question put in the Assembly by the late Sir V. Thackersey on the 18th March, 1922, when a copy of the correspondence which passed between the Government of India and the High Commissioner on the subject of the purchase of stores in England was laid on the table.

APPOINTMENT OF INDIANS ON I.C.S. CADRE AS SECRETARIES AND DEPUTY SECRETARIES.

472. ***Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas:** With reference to the starred question‡ No. 139 of Rai Bahadur Lachmi Prasad Sinha put on the 16th January, 1923, and the reply† given by Sir Malcolm Hailey, will the Government be pleased to state:

- (a) how many Indians from the cadre of the Indian Civil Service have been appointed as Secretaries and Deputy Secretaries, respectively, in the last three years? and
- (b) what are their names and dates of appointments?

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: One Indian from the cadre of the Indian Civil Service, the Honourable Mr. A. C. Chatterjee, was appointed Secretary in the Department of Industries with effect from the 15th February, 1921. He held the post until 2nd January, 1923, when he became a Member of the Executive Council of the Governor General of India.

One Indian who held a post reserved for the Indian Civil Service, Kunwar Maharaj Singh, was appointed to the post of Deputy Secretary in the late Department of Education and Health from the 15th November, 1920 to the 31st March, 1923.

Mr. K. Ahmed: In view of the fact that a Resolution was passed in the Council of State at the instance of the Right Honourable V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, what effect has been given to it with regard to this matter?

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: I think I have already answered that question before, but I will repeat my answer. We decided to issue orders to all Departments that, when posts became available, every effort was to be made to obtain the services of qualified Indians to fill them.

†Vide pages 3313—3317 of L. A. Debates, Vol. II.

‡Vide p. 1111 of L. A. Debates, Vol. III.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE LAST IMPERIAL CONFERENCE.

473. ***Mr. Ahmad Ali Khan:** (a) Is it a fact as reported in the press that the Resolutions passed at the last Imperial Conference are going to be moved at an early date in the House of Commons?

(b) Will Government be pleased to lay on the table a copy of such of the Resolutions as to which the representatives of India were an assenting party?

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: (a) Government have no information on the subject and believe the Honourable Member is misinformed.

(b) I would refer the Honourable Member to the Compilation "Imperial Conference, 1923. Summary of Proceedings" which contains information as to the Resolutions passed at the Conference. A copy of this Compilation is in the Library of this House.

FINANCIAL LIABILITY INCURRED BY INDIA'S PARTICIPATION IN THE LAST IMPERIAL CONFERENCE.

474. ***Mr. Ahmad Ali Khan:** Will Government be pleased to state whether the Government of India have incurred any financial liability by reason of India's participation in the last Imperial Conference? If so, to what extent? Is any portion of it recurring?

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: So far as I am aware, the only financial liability incurred in connection with the Imperial Conference will be in relation to the appointment of Committees to confer as to the best and quickest means of giving effect to the Resolution of the 1921 Conference regarding the position of Indians in other parts of the Empire. I cannot say what that liability will amount to.

MILEAGE OF NEW RAILWAY LINES.

475. ***Mr. Ahmad Ali Khan:** Will Government be pleased to state the mileage of new lines opened in British India in 1922-23 by the State and Company managed Railways (including strategic Railways) and the cost of construction in each case?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: By State-managed railways—Nil. By Company-managed railways 206 miles, at a capital cost of Rs. 4.86 crores.

This mileage includes 91 miles of new lines constructed in Indian States and worked by Company-managed railways. The cost of these lines was Rs. 69 lakhs.

EUROPEANS AND INDIANS ON THE STATE-MANAGED RAILWAYS.

476. ***Mr. Ahmad Ali Khan:** What was the number of vacancies permanent and officiating in posts carrying a monthly salary of Rs. 500 and more on the State-managed lines in 1922-23 and how many of them were filled by Europeans and how many by Indians?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: Information in the form asked for by the Honourable Member is not available but, on the 1st November, 1923, as compared with 1st November, 1922, there was an increase of superior officers on State-managed railways of 10 of which 6 or 60 per cent. were Indians. There was a decrease in the total number of subordinates drawing Rs. 250 per mensem and over on scales of pay rising to Rs. 250 per mensem and over, during the same period, of 82 of which 17, or 21 per cent. were Indians.

GROSS EARNINGS AND WORKING EXPENSES OF THE STATE-MANAGED RAILWAYS.

477. ***Mr. Ahmad Ali Khan:** Will Government be pleased to state the gross earnings and the working expenses for 1922-23 of the State-managed Railways in British India and the return per cent. for that year on the total Capital?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: The gross earnings on railways owned and managed by the State were Rs. 23,52,94,000, the working expenses were Rs. 19,20,72,000 and the return on the total capital was 2·38 per cent. Strategic lines are included in the above figures.

DUTIES ON ARTICLES OF EAST INDIAN PRODUCE.

478. ***Mr. Ohaman Lal:** (a) Are Government aware of the existence of a publication entitled "Memorials of Indian Government?"

(b) Is it correct, as stated in that publication, that duties levied on articles of East Indian Produce were as follows:

Aloes—duty from 70 to 280 p. c.
Asafoetida—duty from 233 to 622 p. c.
Cardamums—duty from 150 to 266 p. c.
Coffee—duty from 105 to 378 p. c.
Pepper—duty from 266 to 400 p. c.

(c) Is it a fact that at that period duties on every £100 value of flowered or stitched muslins of white calicoes of Indian produce were £82-9-2?

(d) Is it a fact that the duty at that time on Indian manufactured cotton was £81-2-11 on every £100 of value?

(e) Is it a fact that the duty on raw cotton of Indian growth going out of India at that time was £0-16-11 for every 100 lbs.?

(f) Is it a fact that these duties were subsequently removed but only after the export trade in them had temporarily or permanently been destroyed?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) Yes.

(b) to (e). The Honourable Member presumably refers to the import duties levied in the United Kingdom in 1813, towards the close of the Napoleonic wars, when the import tariff in the United Kingdom reached its highest point. The rates of duty on the articles, enumerated by the Honourable Member, in that year were:

	£	s.	d.	
Aloes	0	1	2½	per lb.
Asafoetida	0	0	9½	" "
Plus	3	3	4	per centum ad valorem.
Cardamums	0	1	11½	per lb.
Plus	3	3	4	per centum ad valorem.
Coffee—Customs	0	0	4½	per lb.
Excise	0	0	6	" "
Plus	3	19	2	per centum ad valorem.
Pepper	0	1	11½	per lb.
Cotton { Flowered or } Muslins {	82	9	2	per centum ad valorem.
{ Stitched, } white Calicoes }				
Cotton and Calicoes, Plain White	81	2	11	" " " "
Wool (Cotton wool)	0	16	11	per 100 lbs.

(f) These duties were progressively reduced in the following years, and by 1886, in pursuance of the policy of Free Trade, had been altogether removed except in the case of Coffee. The present rate of duty on Coffee is £1-8-0 per 100 lbs., on which a preferential drawback of one-sixth is allowed for coffee of Empire origin.

No figures are available to show the effect of the above duties on the Indian export trade. Representations were, however, made at various times by commercial interests that a reduction in the rates of duty would benefit Indian trade.

AVERAGE ANNUAL AGRICULTURAL AND NON-AGRICULTURAL INCOMES.

479. ***Mr. Chaman Lal:** (a) Will Government state approximately the average annual agricultural income of British India?

(b) Will Government state approximately the average annual non-agricultural income of British India?

(c) Is it a fact that the average annual income of an Indian works out at less than one anna a day?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: I would refer the Honourable Member to the answers given by me to Question No. 12 by Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas on the 1st instant and to Question No. 151 by Mr. K. G. Lohokare on the 5th instant.

INDIAN DEBT.

480. ***Mr. Chaman Lal:** (a) Will Government state in detail the exact condition of the Indian debt and of the charges relating thereto?

(b) What is the total amount of money which is annually drained out of India in respect of charges relating to the national debt?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: The Honourable Member will find whatever information he requires on the subject in the Finance and Revenue Accounts.

EXPENDITURE IN ENGLAND ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

481. ***Mr. Chaman Lal:** What is the total amount of money drained out of India in respect of:

- (a) Pensions,
- (b) India Office charges,
- (c) Other charges relating to Indian finances or Indian administration?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: The Honourable Member presumably refers to the amount of expenditure in England on behalf of the Government of India under the heads mentioned by him. If so, I would refer him to the Finance and Revenue Accounts.

WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR IN THE COTTON AND JUTE INDUSTRIES.

482. ***Mr. Chaman Lal:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state in the shape of a comparative table the average monthly wages obtained for different classes of workers in principal categories in the

- (i) Cotton industry in India,
- (ii) Jute industry in India,

and for both these industries in Great Britain?

(b) Will Government state the number of maximum hours worked by operatives in :

- (i) Cotton mills,
- (ii) Jute mills,

in India and the corresponding classes of workers in Great Britain?

The Honourable Mr. A. C. Chatterjee: (a) The Honourable Member is referred to the Report published last year by the Bombay Labour Office entitled "Wages and Hours of Labour—Cotton Mill Industry". The statement of average earnings for the different classes of workers comprises 69 pages of figures in this report. The report relates only to one Presidency and only to one of the two industries for which he desires information. I must leave the estimate of the labour involved in collecting similar figures in each province of India and in Great Britain to the imagination of the Honourable Member.

(b) No distinction is made between cotton mills and jute mills in either country. In India the maximum weekly hours permitted are sixty for adults of both sexes and thirty-six for children under 15. In Great Britain there is no legal maximum for men; women and young persons under 18 may not be employed for more than 55 hours weekly, and children under 14 may not be employed at all.

MINIMUM WAGE FOR JUTE AND COTTON WORKERS.

483. ***Mr. Chaman Lal:** Are Government prepared to legislate for the establishment of a minimum living wage for jute and cotton workers in India?

The Honourable Mr. A. C. Chatterjee: The answer is in the negative.

IMPORT AND EXPORT OF CATTLE.

484. ***Mr. Syamacharan:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state if cows, buffaloes and oxen are imported into India from outside? If so, the annual numbers of each of them so imported for the last ten years or for as many years as possible, should be stated.

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state if any export of the cattle in reference is made from India to foreign countries?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) There has been no import of cattle during the past 10 years.

(b) The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the reply given on the 18th. instant to Mr. Jamnadas Mehta's question on the same subject.

No separate figures for the export of cows, buffaloes and oxen are available.

EXCESS OF EXPENDITURE OVER REVENUE, ADDITIONAL TAXATION, ETC.

485. ***Mr. Jamnadas Mehta:** Will Government be pleased to state :

- (a) the amount of the excess of expenditure over revenue, actual or estimated, for each year beginning with the year 1918-19 up to 1923-24?

- (b) the total amount of additional taxation (including the receipts from increased Railway charges for passengers and goods traffic and from increased postal rates) actually collected every year during the said period taking the level of taxation of the year 1917-18 as the basis?
- (c) the aggregate amount of the deficit remaining to be covered in spite of additional taxation and the manner in which it was made good?
- (d) the aggregate amount of interest paid or payable up to the end of the year 1923-24 on any debts floating, funded or unfunded incurred for covering the said deficits?
- (e) the amount of the annual charges payable by way of interest every year on the said debts?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: (a) For the actual figures to the end of 1922-23, I would refer the Honourable Member to the Finance and Revenue Accounts for the years concerned, and as regards the latest estimates for 1923-24, I would ask him to await the Budget Statement.

(d) It is not possible to calculate the actual yield of the additional taxation referred to. Additional taxation expected* to yield 52 crores was imposed in the period 1918-19 to 1923-24.

(c) to (e). I would invite the Honourable Member's attention to paragraphs 15 to 19 of my speech introducing the Budget for 1923-24.

Mr. Jamnadas Mehta: In view of the fact that it is impossible for Members of this Assembly to get all the provincial figures unless they appeal to all the Provincial Governments individually will Government supply similar information?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: Full figures are published in the Finance and Revenue Accounts.

Mr. Jamnadas Mehta: I mean for all the Provincial Governments together. It is very difficult for Members to run to all the Provincial Governments for similar figures. Will Government consider the advisability of supplying these figures for provinces?

COUNTERVAILING IMPORT DUTY ON SOUTH AFRICAN COAL.

486. ***Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** With reference to the Resolution adopted by the Indian Legislative Assembly on the 7th February, 1924, will the Government be pleased to say if and when they will impose the countervailing import duty on South African Coal?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: I am not yet in a position to make any statement on the subject.

SUPPLY OF WAGONS TO COLLIERIES.

487. ***Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** Will the Government be pleased to say what is the total number of wagons supplied to the collieries in the Bengal and Bihar coal fields during the last three months of November and December, 1923 and January 1924 month by month?

Of these wagons how many were supplied for (a) Railways, (b) Industries in rakes and half rakes, (c) In small lots as "Emergent Supply", (d) In Public Supply?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: The total number of wagons supplied to the collieries in the Bengal and Bihar coal fields during the last three months was as follows:

November 1928	...	...	...	...	85,908
December 1928	...	...	...	...	77,588
January 1924	...	...	...	...	77,784

Of these wagons 99,401 were supplied for Railways, 29,051 for Industries in rakes and half rakes, 52,114 in small lots as "Emergent Supply", and 60,744 in Public Supply.

WAGONS FOR COAL.

488. *Mr. Amar Nath Dutt: (a) Are the Government aware that the present system of wagon distribution in rakes and half rakes is not only destructive of those collieries which have not got a rake or half rake siding but also of small industries which cannot take coal in a minimum lot of 25 wagons (half rake)?

(b) What relief if any do Government propose to afford these collieries and consumers in the matter of wagon supply and coal supply respectively?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) and (b) The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the reply given to a similar question No. 411 asked by Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar in this Assembly to-day.

REMOVAL OF THE OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY ACCOUNTANT GENERAL, MILITARY ACCOUNTS, FROM POONA TO BOMBAY.

489. *Mr. K. G. Lohokare: Will the Government be pleased to state:

(i) Whether they intend to remove the office of the Deputy Accountant General, Bombay District, Military Accounts, from Poona to Bombay?

(ii) Whether the removal involves any more expenditure than at present, and whether it is desirable to remove the office in the interest of economy to Government?

(iii) Is it a fact that the Kohat District has its office at Rawalpindi, and the Aden District at Poona?

(iv) Is it a fact that representatives of the office establishment were asked to see the *chawls* which could be given them as quarters and they were reported as inconvenient and unhealthy?

(v) Looking to the present difficulty of finding suitable housing accommodation and the high rents existing in Bombay, have Government been thinking of giving adequate housing allowance to the staff if the office is removed to Bombay?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: (i) and (ii). The question of moving the office of the Controller of Military Accounts, Bombay District, from Poona to Bombay on administrative grounds is under consideration and no final decision has yet been arrived at in the matter. As the details of the arrangement have not yet been worked out, it is not possible to state at present what the financial effect of the arrangement would be.

(iii) The headquarters of the Controller of Military Accounts, Kohat District, is temporarily located at Rawalpindi.

Aden is in the audit area of the Controller of Military Accounts, Southern Command and Poona District, who has his headquarters at Poona.

(iv) and (v) A senior commissioned officer and a senior Indian civilian officer of the Military Accounts Department have been deputed to Bombay to look into the question of the accommodation of the establishment and to inspect the *chawls* which were reported as inconvenient by the representatives of the office establishment who were sent to see them. The question of granting any house allowance to the staff in question will, if necessary, be considered on receipt of their report.

HEALTH OF THE ARMY.

490. ***Mr. K. G. Lohokare:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state if there are any annual reports regarding the health of the Army, and whether they contain statistics of the number of patients treated in the Station Hospitals as admitted and detained cases?

(b) Will Government be pleased to lay on the table copies of such annual reports for the years 1921-22 and 1922-23?

Mr. E. Burdon: (a) and (b). I would refer the Honourable Member to the "Annual Report of the Public Health Commissioner with the Government of India", which contains particulars regarding the health of the Army. A copy of the Report for 1921 will be placed in the Library. The Report for 1922 is in the Press, but will, it is expected, be published very shortly. The report for 1923 is not yet ready.

TRAINING IN GOVERNMENT MEDICAL SCHOOLS.

491. ***Mr. K. G. Lohokare:** Will Government be pleased to state if they know of any schemes in some provinces to improve and extend the course of Government Medical Schools to five years, and whether in order to secure uniformity in Medical education in India they are prepared to address other provincial Governments on the subject?

Mr. M. S. D. Butler: The course at the various Medical Colleges is five years and at the Medical Schools four years. Government are not aware of any scheme to extend the course at any Government Medical School to five years.

CONTRACTS FOR THE SUPPLY OF REFRESHMENTS AT RAILWAY STATIONS.

492. ***Mr. K. G. Lohokare:** 1. Will the Government be pleased to state:

- (a) If they know that the G. I. P. and other railway companies in India give licenses to the highest bidders for the right of (i) selling articles of consumption for the Indian passengers at railway stations; (ii) providing refreshments in the 1st and 2nd class refreshment rooms; (iii) providing refreshments in the dining cars attached to trains?
- (b) What is the amount of revenue from these sources (i), (ii) and (iii), each year during the period of the last five years to the G. I. P., M. and S. M. and the other Indian Railways?
- (c) What is the amount spent by the G. I. P., M. and S. M. and other Indian Railways on capital and recurring accounts on the above three heads, during the same period?

2. In case the above figures are not immediately available, will the Government be pleased to furnish them within a month at least?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: 1. (a) The reply is in the negative. Railways do not put these contracts up to auction.

(b) and (c). Government are not in possession of the information.

2. In view of the reply to 1 (a), Government do not propose to collect the figures.

REDUCTION OF TELEGRAPHISTS.

498. ***Mr. K. Rama Aiyangar:** Will the Government be pleased to state if a substantial portion of the 626 telegraphists found to be in excess of the leave reserve also, in page 94 of the Incheape Report, will be reduced this year to give adequate relief and encouragement to the clerical and other non-operating staff doing telegraph work?

The Honourable Mr. A. C. Chatterjee: I would refer the Honourable Member to item 29 in Statement No. III laid on the table by the Honourable the Finance Member in reply to Question No. 15 by Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikari on the 2nd July, 1928.

DAIRY FARMS AND BREEDING CENTRES.

494. ***Raja Raghunandan Prasad Singh:** Will the Government be pleased to state the number of dairy farms and breeding centres established by the Government in each of the provinces?

Mr. M. S. D. Butler: A statement giving such information as is available is laid on the table.

Province.	Number of civil dairy farms and breeding centres.	NUMBER OF	
		(a). Military dairies.	(b). Young Stock farms.
1. Bombay	5	5†	...
2. Madras	2	...	...
3. Bengal	1	...	...
4. United Provinces	2	4	...
5. Punjab	8	12	3
6. Bihar and Orissa	4	...	...
7. Burma	1	...	...
8. Central Provinces	10	2	...
9. Assam	1	...	...
10. Under the Central Government.	4 { 1 at Bangalore, 1 at Wellington, 1 in the Punjab, and 1 at Pusa in Bihar.	...	...
11. N.-W. F. Province . . . . .	...	8§	...
12. Baluchistan . . . . .	...	1	1
Total	38	32	4

† Vide p. 4088 of L. A. Debates, Vol. III.

‡ Includes a temporary dairy at Deolali.

§ Includes 5 temporary dairies in Waziristan Force.

N.B.—In the case of military dairy farms, animals are bred on the dairy farms and reared both at certain dairy farms and at the young stock farms.

INCREASE IN RAILWAY FARES.

495. ***Raja Raghunandan Prasad Singh:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state what led to the high increase in the railway fares?

(b) Do the causes which led to the same still exist?

(c) Are the Government aware that the high increase in the third and intermediate class fares has told very heavily on the middle and poorer class passengers?

(d) Do the Government propose to take measures at an early date to see that the fares are brought down to their former level or at least reduced appreciably?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) The increase in working expenses.

(b) Yes.

(c) and (d). The Honourable Member is referred to the discussion in this Assembly on the 24th March, 1923, in connection with the Resolution moved by Mr. K. Ahmed regarding the reduction of third class fares and the undertaking given by Government in connection therewith.

EXPRESS TRAIN BETWEEN HOWRAH AND DELHI *via* JAMALPUR.

496. ***Raja Raghunandan Prasad Singh:** (a) Are the Government aware that considerable inconvenience and discomfort are felt by passengers owing to lack (i) of an express train running between Howrah and Delhi along the loop line *via* Jamalpur (ii) of through trains running between the said two stations along the loop line *via* Jamalpur?

(b) Are the Government aware that the present time table is so arranged that passengers from the loop line have to wait long hours at Kiul junction to catch trains and so are considerably inconvenienced?

(c) Do the Government propose to issue the necessary directions to remove the aforesaid grievances of the passengers by the loop line?

(d) Are the Government prepared to direct the E. I. Railway authorities to run "15 L. Passenger to Sahebgunj *via* Barharwa-Bandel Loop" as far as Jamalpur or Patna instead of up to Sahebgunj at present, for convenience of passengers concerned?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: The matter has been referred to the railway administration concerned and the Honourable Member will be replied to on receipt of a reply from the administration.

REPEAL OF THE COTTON EXCISE DUTY.

497. ***Mr. Kasturbhai Lalbhai:** Have Government received any representation from cotton mills, the Mill Owners' Association, or the Chamber of Commerce for the repeal of the Cotton Excise Duty?

PROTECTION OF THE COTTON MILL INDUSTRY.

498. ***Mr. Kasturbhai Lalbhai:** Do Government propose to direct the Tariff Board to examine the claims of the Indian cotton mill industry to protection at an early date as recommended unanimously by the Indian Fiscal Commission? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: I propose to answer these two questions, Nos. 497 and 498, together. The Government examined the recommendation of the Fiscal Commission in regard to the cotton excise duty and came to the conclusion that the immediate abolition of the duty was not a practical proposition. They decided therefore that there was no necessity to direct the Tariff Board to examine the claims of the Indian cotton mill industry to protection. A representation on the subject has just been received from the Bombay Millowners' Association. That representation will be considered, but that is all that Government can say at present.

Mr. Kasturbhai Lalbhai: Are not Government aware that the inordinate delay in the consideration of the question of protection has resulted in a grave situation in regard to the steel industry, and do they propose to wait till a similar situation arises with regard to the cotton industry?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: The Government are not aware that their orders on the Fiscal Commission's Report have had anything to do with the present state of the cotton mill industry. If the mill industry is in a state of depression, it is due to entirely different causes.

Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Oshetty: The Honourable Member said, Government consider that it is not practicable to give effect to the recommendation of the Fiscal Commission. May I know whether he means that that is due to opposition to this recommendation from England?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: Certainly not; it is entirely connected with the revenue position of the Government of India.

FREIGHT ON COAL.

499. ***Mr. Kasturbhai Lalbhai:** (a) Are the Government aware that the railway freight for coal from the Central Provinces collieries to Ahmedabad has been recently reduced while that from the Bengal collieries (Jharia and Raneeaganj) remains unaltered?

(b) If the answer be in the affirmative, will the Government be pleased to state the reasons for giving preferential treatment to the Central Provinces collieries over those of Bengal?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) The reply is in the affirmative.

(b) There is no question of preferential treatment. The through rate from the Bengal coal fields is too low to permit of reduction whereas it was found possible to make a reduction in the higher mileage rate applying over the shorter distance from the Central Provinces collieries.

COAL WAGONS FOR INDUSTRIAL CONCERNS.

500. ***Mr. Kasturbhai Lalbhai:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state the number of emergency supply of coal wagons requisitioned by industrial concerns and the number made available by the Coal Transportation Officer for them during 1923?

(b) How many coal wagons were made available by the Coal Transportation Officer for merchants in the same period under emergency supply and how many did they requisition?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: Inquiry is being made and the result will be communicated to the Honourable Member in due course.

WAGONS FOR THE COAL TRAFFIC.

501. ***Mr. Devaki Prasad Sinha:** (a) Are the Government aware that the provisions of the scheme for wagon distribution for coal traffic in the Jharia and the Ranee-gunj coalfields, introduced in December 1922, are being violated by the Coal Transportation Officer in very fundamental respects?

(b) Are they aware that the supplies of wagons in rakes which were provided for under the scheme only as "advance cumulative supplies" are being authorised by the Coal Transportation Officer without any stipulation or prospect of their being equalised on forfeiture of collieries' day-to-day allotment under *pro-rata* basis?

(c) If the reply to (b) be in the affirmative, will the Government state if the Advisory Committee were consulted in the matter and if so, will the Government lay on the table the proceedings of the Advisory Committee or other papers recording their approval to the Coal Transportation Officer's course or suggested course of action? If the Advisory Committee were not consulted, will the Government state what action they propose taking against the Coal Transportation Officer for such fundamental violation of the scheme on his part?

(d) Are the Government aware that since October last owing to the Coal Transportation Officer authorising supplies of wagons chiefly on the basis of rakes, collieries with less than 25 wagon sidings are being placed under a serious disadvantage in comparison with those having larger loading space?

(e) If the reply to part (d) be in the affirmative, will the Government state why such undue preference has been shown to collieries with larger loading space?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: Inquiry is being made and the result will be communicated to the Honourable Member.

COAL MINES IN THE RANEEGUNJ AND JHARIA COAL FIELDS UNDER INDIAN AND EUROPEAN MANAGEMENT.

502. ***Mr. Devaki Prasad Sinha:** Will the Government lay on the table a statement showing the number of coal mines in the Ranee-gunj and Jharia coalfields under Indian and European management, the aggregate tonnage raised by these two sections of the coal industry and the aggregate number of wagons supplied to them, the last figure being shown month by month for the last one year.

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: The Government have not got the information and consider that the collection of it would involve an inordinate amount of time and trouble.

GERMAN TENDER FOR LOCOMOTIVES.

503. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** (a) Is it a fact that the High Commissioner has accepted the tender of a German firm to supply five locomotives to Indian State Railways at prices considerably lower than tenders of British firms?

(b) Is it a fact that there have been adverse comments on this in influential circles in England on the allegation that there was an implied promise that the British loan would be largely spent in Britain?

(c) Is it true that there was any such promise?

(d) Is it the duty of the High Commissioner to look to the interest of the Indian taxpayers and buy in the cheapest market and not to be influenced by considerations of unemployment in any country?

The Honourable Mr. A. C. Chatterjee: (a) Yes.

(b) The Government of India have no official information on the subject.

(c) No.

(d) The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the letter from the Government of India to the High Commissioner No. S.-360, dated the 22nd December, 1921, in which the principles to be followed by the High Commissioner in making purchases of stores are fully set out. A copy of this letter was laid on the table on the 18th March, 1922.

BENGAL REGULATION III OF 1818.

504. ***Mr. K. O. Neogy:** (a) With reference to the reply to clause (c) of starred question No. 15 of the 1st February last, will Government explain why they have no information on the subject?

(b) Is it not a fact that the Governor General in Council is primarily responsible for the administration of Bengal Regulation III of 1818?

(c) Have Government any authority to delegate their functions and responsibilities under the said Regulation to any Local Government? If so, under what provision of law?

(d) What steps have Government taken to ensure that the requirements of the said Regulation are strictly fulfilled?

VISITS TO STATE PRISONERS IN BENGAL.

505. ***Mr. K. O. Neogy:** (a) With reference to the reply to clause (d) of starred question No. 15, dated the 1st February last, will Government be pleased to state whether they have instructed, or ever considered the desirability of instructing, any Judge or any officer other than a Magistrate in any district, to visit State prisoners under Bengal Regulation III of 1818?

(b) If not, why not?

TREATMENT OF STATE PRISONERS IN BENGAL.

506. ***Mr. K. O. Neogy:** (a) Do Government accept the proposition laid down by the Repressive Laws Committee that restrictions to be put on persons imprisoned under Bengal Regulation III of 1818, are not of a penal or even irksome character; that the only desideration is to remove such persons from places where they are potential sources of trouble; and that within such limits as may be necessary to achieve this object, they would ordinarily enjoy full personal liberty?

(b) Has the attention of Government been drawn to complaints that have, from time to time, been published in the Bengal newspapers, to the effect that the treatment—particularly in the matter of food, clothing and comforts—accorded to these prisoners was not satisfactory, and that they were not permitted to read books and newspapers of their choice?

(c) Is it a fact that the standard of maintenance allowances granted to the prisoners and their families, and of the treatment generally accorded to them in jail, is much lower on the present occasion than what was adopted by Government towards prisoners under Bengal Regulation III of 1818 in the past?

(d) With reference to the seven prisoners mentioned in reply to starred question No. 17 of the 1st February last, will Government be pleased to state with whose assistance the Governor General in Council made the inquiry into their complaints?

ALLOWANCES OF STATE PRISONERS IN BENGAL.

507. ***Mr. K. O. Neogy:** With reference to the reply to starred question No. 16 of the 1st February last, will Government be pleased to state:

- (a) whether some of the present political prisoners in Bengal were imprisoned under Bengal Regulation III of 1818 once before; and
- (b) whether in their case, the allowances fixed this time are less than what they and their families used to get during their previous detention?

508. ***Mr. K. O. Neogy:** With reference to the reply to clause (c) of starred question No. 16 of the 1st February last, will Government be pleased to state whether actual payment of allowances was first made after a considerable lapse of time, and the prisoners and their families were put to great inconvenience on this account? If so, who was responsible for this?

REPRESENTATIONS FROM STATE PRISONERS IN BENGAL.

509. ***Mr. K. O. Neogy:** Will Government be pleased to lay on the table of the Library a summary of the reports under Sections 3, 4 and 6 of Bengal Regulation III of 1818, and representations from prisoners under Section 5 thereof?

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Halley: If the Honourable Member has no objection, I will answer his Questions 504 to 509 together. I can of course answer them separately.

No. 504. Information has now been obtained that:

- (a) no State prisoners were in the custody of Zilla Magistrates.
- (b) Yes.
- (c) No.

(d) The Government of India issued the warrants and have received the reports required by Law.

No. 505. In addition to the official visitors, two non-officials have been appointed in every district where State prisoners are in confinement.

No. 506. (a) The Government of India accept generally this proposition.

(b) I invite the Honourable Member's attention to the answer I gave on the 1st February to Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh's Question No. 29.

(c) No.

(d) The inquiry was made through the agency of the Local Government.

No. 507. (a) Yes.

(b) Except in two instances the allowances now sanctioned are on a more generous scale than those previously sanctioned.

No. 508. A certain amount of delay in the payment of allowances was unavoidable as the sanction of the Government of India had first to be obtained. In all cases, however, allowances were granted with retrospective effect.

No. 509. Such information on the subject as Government are prepared to give has already been imparted in reply to previous interpellations in the House.

Mr. O. Duraiswami Aiyangar: May I know whether these non-official visitors are allowed to interview the State prisoners?

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: I think so, but I will inquire, and will give definite information when I have seen the rules laid down by the Bengal Government.

Mr. K. O. Neogy: May I know, Sir, when these non-official visitors were appointed with this object for the first time?

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: I have not the date with me, but I can ascertain that also for the Honourable Member.

Pandit Shamlal Nehru: May I know, what is the amount of the allowances now, and what was the amount before?

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: The sums vary. I have seen the list, but I do not remember the details.

Pandit Shamlal Nehru: What was the maximum?

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: That also I cannot remember.

Mr. K. O. Neogy: Is it a fact that these State prisoners were put on jail diet for some time?

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: I do not recollect seeing that complaint, Sir.

Mr. K. O. Neogy: Is there any restriction as to the newspapers or books that these State prisoners can read?

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: That again I will ascertain.

Mr. O. Duraiswami Aiyangar: With reference to the answer that has been given to me that the Honourable Member will inquire whether non-official visitors are allowed to interview State prisoners, may I know whether further information will be given to this House without further interpellation, and if so, at what time?

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: As soon as I have ascertained, I will make a statement to the House on the subject.

Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal: Will the Honourable Member kindly tell us whether there is any special restriction placed on the kind of books and periodicals to be issued to State prisoners?

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: I will ascertain that. The House will understand that I am under a certain difficulty in answering these questions, because details have to be obtained from the Bengal Government who actually administer the jails. However, I will ascertain the details the Honourable Member has asked for.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: Is the Honourable Member in a position to state the names of the non-official visitors?

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: I will supply those to the Honourable Member or to the House, if they so desire.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

165. (The question was withdrawn.)

COLLIERIES WITHOUT SIDING ACCOMMODATION FOR A RAKE OR HALF RAKE.

166. **Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** Will the Government be pleased to say what is the total number of collieries in Bengal and Bihar which have not got siding accommodation for a rake or half rake?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: 494 of the collieries served by the East Indian Railway and 78 of those served by the Bengal-Nagpur Railway have less siding accommodation than rake or half rake.

The Bengal-Nagpur Railway figures do not include loading depôts which are not on assisted sidings.

REGISTRATION OF MILITARY ASSISTANT AND SUB-ASSISTANT SURGEONS.

167. **Mr. K. G. Lohokare:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state if they have issued orders to get Military Assistant Surgeons registered under the Provincial Medical Acts?

(b) If so, do the Government propose to issue similar orders for Military Sub-Assistant Surgeons possessing the same professional qualifications?

Mr. E. Burdon: (a) Yes.

(b) Military Sub-Assistant Surgeons do not possess the same professional qualifications as Military Assistant Surgeons.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya (Allahabad and Jhansi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I beg leave to move an adjournment of the business of the Assembly for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the occurrences which took place on the 21st instant at Jaito, occurrences which resulted in the death of a large number of His Majesty's subjects, variously estimated between 14 and 150. That the deaths took place is undeniable; that firing was

resorted to by the officers who were at Jaito is also not denied. The question then is, how was it that this firing took place, how was it that these numerous deaths took place? To consider, Sir, how the situation arose, it is necessary to go back to a prior period of time and to mention a few circumstances connected therewith

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey (Home Member): Sir, may I be pardoned for interrupting the Honourable Member? It is not because I do not, as much as he, deplore the occurrences which took place at Jaito. Wherever lies the responsibility, or whatever the causes, I join with him in deploring it. But, we must observe the rules of this House, and I have to ask you, Sir, whether, on a point of order, this motion for adjournment can be moved. The whole of these occurrences took place in Indian State territory.

Mr. President: There seemed to me to be a possibility of doubt in the matter and therefore I was going to give the benefit of the doubt to the Honourable Pandit. But the combined operation of rules 12 and 23 forbids the discussion, either by way of Resolution or on a motion for adjournment, of "any matters affecting the relations of His Majesty's Government, or of the Governor General or the Governor General in Council, with any Prince or Chief under the suzerainty of His Majesty, or relating to the affairs of any such Prince or Chief, or to the administration of the territory of any such Prince or Chief;" and I am afraid the Honourable Member comes within the mischief of the latter phrase. I am however prepared to hear him if he can offer any arguments to convince me.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya: Did you refer, Sir, to the Standing Orders?

Mr. President: I refer particularly to the combined operation of sub-section (5) of rule 12 with sub-section (2) of rule 23, by which no matter may be discussed on a motion for adjournment which could not be discussed under the rules covering the procedure for Resolutions.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya: I may at once say, Sir, that I am not discussing a question relating to the ordinary administration of the affairs of Nabha. My object in drawing attention to the incidents at Jaito is that the deaths of so many of His Majesty's Indian subjects should be a matter to be considered by this Assembly and by the Government. I admit that, if I were raising any question about the ordinary administration of the affairs of Nabha, the rule referred to would stand in my way, but here I am strictly confining myself to the incidents which took place at Jaito by which His Majesty's Indian subjects met with death or received wounds. That is the specific point to which I am confining my attention. If I refer to any prior incidents it will only be by way of explaining the connecting links. I have no intention, I wish clearly to state, to go into the question of the deposition of the Maharaja of Nabha on its merits, or to say anything regarding the administration which has been substituted in his absence in the Nabha State; and I hope, Sir, that you will hold that a Member of this Assembly is entitled to bring a matter in which the lives of so many of our fellow-subjects have been sacrificed, before this Assembly and through it before the Government of this country and His Majesty's Government. The incidents which have led up to it or with which it is in some way connected go back to the deposition of the Maharaja and it is only necessary for me to mention the date of it . . .

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Halley: I hope you will allow me to interrupt on a point of order, but I am afraid our rule—and again I hope the House will understand I am taking a point of order only—makes no differences between the ordinary administration and any incident of an extraordinary nature arising in the course of administration of an Indian State; and though I admit that the incident in itself was unusual—unusual in that the State is for the time being being administered by an officer of Government—though I admit that, yet the matter remains one of principle with us. I cannot see that if this incident, which took place entirely within the territory either of Nabha or Faridkot, is discussed on the floor of this House, there is anything to prevent us from discussing incidents, either ordinary or extraordinary, arising out of the course of the administration of any Indian State. Again I repeat that there is no intention on our part of avoiding discussion, but it is a matter of principle, and I have to ask you again for a ruling in the interests of the order of this House.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya: Before, Sir, you give your ruling, I hope you will permit me to put some few points. May I ask the Honourable the Home Member if Mr. Johnstone, who is administering the affairs of Nabha, is an officer of the Government of India; and secondly whether he came to Delhi two days before the occurrences at Jaito and consulted the Government of India for their instructions. If he will give me an answer to that question, I will proceed to lay the gist of my contention before the House.

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Halley: Mr. Wilson Johnstone is an officer of the Government now acting as Administrator of the Nabha territory. He has from time to time taken his instructions from the Government of India.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya: Did he come two days before the occurrences at Jaito to take instructions regarding what might happen there?

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Halley: He was in Delhi some days before—certainly not two days—but some days before.

Mr. V. J. Patel (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadian Urban): Was it in this connection? That was the question put by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. Did he come to take instructions from the Government of India?

Mr. President: I am afraid from the point of view of the rules it does not matter whether he was here in that connection or in another. The Honourable Member who put this question is I think confusing two things—namely, the responsibility of the Government of India under the Act for all matters within that Act and the narrower responsibility resting with this House, which is specifically restricted in a matter of this kind. The fact that these words are included in rule 28 leaves me no option but to rule the Honourable Pandit out of order. The words are:

“Any matter affecting the relations of any of the foregoing authorities with any Prince or Chief . . . or to the administration of the territory of any such Prince or Chief.”

The fact that these words occur in rule 28 I am afraid brings this matter certainly within the mischief of the rule itself.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya: But I hope, Sir, you will kindly allow me to put a few more explanations for your consideration before you finally decide this point against me.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member has not yet begun to satisfy me that he is within the rule. The matter he proposes to raise is out of order because I am unable to conceive any circumstances in which this would not be "a matter affecting the administration of the territory of any such Prince or Chief, and the fact that it is temporarily under the administration of an officer appointed by the Government—I do not know whether it is by the Governor General or by the Governor General in Council—is irrelevant. From the Honourable Member's point of view, it may be important to bring it home to the Government of India but not on the floor of this House.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya: It is on that point, Sir, that I want your permission to make a submission. It is exactly on that point. Now, Sir, the rule to which you have been pleased to invite attention refers to the ordinary administration of the territory of an Indian Prince or Chief. I ask you, Sir, to consider whether this rule was meant for or contemplated a case arising like the present. I submit with great respect that this rule was not meant to bear the construction which has been put on it in the circumstances in which it has arisen. The rule applies to the ordinary administration by an Indian Prince of his territory or his State. This is a different matter. There is no provision made in the rules to deal with a situation like that which has arisen, where an Indian Prince has gone out of his State by an arrangement with the Government of India, where the Government of India have themselves appointed an Administrator of their own, where that Administrator has to act under the direct instructions of the Government of India through the Home Member or the Viceroy, and where incidents have occurred through the hands of British Officers who have been so placed there by the Government of India in relation to His Majesty's Indian subjects who reside not in the territory of Nabha but in British territory in the Punjab. I request you to hold that in the circumstances of this particular case, a rule like that to which attention has been drawn cannot shut out the discussion of a matter which has deeply stirred the sentiments of His Majesty's subjects throughout the land. If this is not the place where a matter like this can be raised, where can it be raised?

Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar (Madras City: Non-Muhammadian Urban): May I draw your attention, Sir, and the attention of Government to the serious nature of the issue involved in this point of order? If the lives of Indian or European subjects of His Majesty under the Indian Government are taken inside an Indian State, can it be said that it related to the ordinary administration of the State? That is a point which I ask you to consider and which I ask the Government to consider; whether it can be the intention of the rules that such a question as taking the lives of His Majesty's subjects can at all come under the ordinary administration of a State. The question of taking the lives of His Majesty's subjects, whether it be in an Indian State or in Tibet or in China, is a matter, Sir, on which this Assembly should have a voice. I leave it to you, Sir, to decide whether the rules provide for it or not; but if the rules do not provide for it, I would ask the serious attention of Government to see whether the rules should not be modified at once.

Mr. President: I think I may reasonably ask my Honourable friend, the Deputy President, to think what he would have done if I were not present to-day.

I am afraid I must rule the Honourable Pandit out of order. The words of the rule are both wide and explicit. The words "any matter" includes ordinary administration and extraordinary administration and I am afraid I must rule the Honourable Member out of order. That is not a subject which can be discussed here.

THE SEA CUSTOMS (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes (Commerce Member): Sir, I move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Sea Customs Act, 1818, for certain purposes.

The proviso to section 20 of the Sea Customs Act exempts from the payment of customs duty goods belonging to Government. The object of this Bill is to eliminate that proviso from the Act. It is a very little Bill, but I should be sorry if it were thought that it was not an important Bill. It has its origin, as I have stated in the Statement of Objects and Reasons, in paragraph 285 of the Fiscal Commission's Report. The Fiscal Commission stated that they had had a good deal of evidence about this proviso, whereby goods belonging to Government are exempted from the payment of customs duty. They admitted that this point had been realised by the Government and that in the Stores Purchase Rules provision had been made that, in comparing Indian tenders with tenders received from home, allowance should be made for customs duty and for other charges. But they said that commercial and industrial opinion in India did not regard that rule as a sufficient safeguard and they recommended that the proviso should be abolished. Sir, I should like to assure the House that, at any rate as far as the Railway Board and the Indian Stores Department are concerned, that rule of the Stores Purchase Rules is very carefully observed. But I am prepared to admit that individual officers may not be so strict in their application of the rule. Commercial opinion, both Indian and European, throughout India is in favour of the recommendation made by the Fiscal Commission's Report and the Government, therefore, have decided to accept it and to submit it in the form of a Bill for the approval of the Assembly. We propose to make the repeal absolute and merely to exercise our power under section 28 of the Act to continue to exempt from customs duty a limited class of articles mainly consisting of arms and ammunition and definitely military stores.

Then there is one point that I should like to make clear and that is how this Bill will affect Local Governments. We are introducing this Bill in the interests of Indian industries. Local Governments are just as much concerned in the development of Indian industries as the Government of India. In fact industries are a provincial and transferred subject. At the same time Local Governments have enjoyed the privilege of this proviso for many years past and it would affect their finances if we merely abolished the proviso and made no arrangements in any way to compensate them. We have decided therefore for the present at any rate to make arrangements whereby the amount of duty levied on goods imported by Local Governments, belonging to Local Governments, will be recorded in the customs offices and at the end of each year a refund will be made to the Local Government of that amount.

The other point that remains is the effect of this change upon the departments of the Government of India. When I mentioned it the other day in the House, Sir Purshotandas Thakurdas stated that the effect would be merely a book-keeping entry. That is true as far as the administrative departments are concerned; our demands for grants will be increased, and, on the other hand, there will be a corresponding increase in Customs revenue. But the remark is not true in so far as the commercial departments are concerned, particularly if the House accepts my proposal to separate Railway finance. It will mean a real payment by Railways to the general tax-payer. But on careful consideration we have decided that it is right to treat the Railways as a commercial department, and we have decided that it will be in the general interests to accept the proposal of the Fiscal Commission. I therefore hope that the House will agree to my introducing the Bill.

The motion was adopted.

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: Sir, I now introduce the Bill.

THE INDIAN COINAGE (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett (Finance Member): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Report of the Select Committee on the Bill further to amend the Indian Coinage Act, 1906, for certain purposes, be taken into consideration."

Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar (Madras ceded districts and Chittoor: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I have given notice of certain amendments. The first amendment is the main amendment, because it is a request for recommitting the Bill to Select Committee. The other amendments of which I have given notice are subsidiary amendments, which will arise only if the first amendment is not accepted. Sir, all the arguments which I would like to advance upon the subsidiary amendments I propose to consolidate and mention in connection with the main amendment itself.

Sir, in the form in which the Bill has survived its amputation in the Committee room, the issues to be discussed on the floor of this House have become fewer than when the Bill was first ushered into this Chamber. The present discussion will only centre round the subsidiary token coins which are useful within the country only as "small change" and "narrow legal tender." The coins that are now affected are the smaller silver coins, the nickel, the bronze and the copper coins of all grades.

There can be no question but that the power to call in coins in an emergency, or even as a matter of expediency sometimes, ought to be vested in some authority. In the United Kingdom this power is vested practically in the Privy Council, and here it is sought to be vested in the executive Government of this country by the Bill under consideration. I have been agreeable to this course without the help of the bracing atmosphere of the Committee room. The immediate occasion for this Bill has been stated to be the unrest created by the secession of the eight-anna nickel coin. But I am afraid the four anna-nickel piece must also be classed under this head and probably an immediate order of recall is awaiting that coin also. At

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any rate both these coins require a close surveillance according to Mr. Shirras. Mr. Shirras diagnosed the cause of this debility of the nickel coin in the following terms:

"The issue of coins, such as the 4-anna and 8-anna pieces, of relatively high value, in a cupro-nickel alloy will undoubtedly offer great temptations to the counterfeiter and it is probable that many attempts will be made to foist spurious coins on the public. Although the cupro-nickel alloy at present employed by the Government of India has a high melting point and offers many mechanical difficulties in its treatment during its conversion into coin, yet the profits to be reaped are so enormous that skilled labour may be tempted into this forbidden and unlawful field. The employment of pure nickel instead of the present cupro-nickel alloy may be suggested as a means of rendering attempts at counterfeiting nugatory. It has a far higher melting point than the present alloy and the mechanical difficulties that arise in its subsequent treatment are also much greater. It is, for example, highly magnetic so that any ordinary horse-shoe magnet will pick up a pure nickel coin, whilst one of cupro-nickel remains apparently unaffected. This is a valuable feature, as it would provide the public with a ready means of picking out all counterfeits made in a more easily manipulated material. If, in addition, all the resources of the engraver's wit are lavished in the production of a design difficult of reproduction the risk of the issue of the successful imitations would probably become negligible."

Mr. President: If the Honourable Member is prepared to discuss the merits of the subject itself, then he must allow this Bill to be taken into consideration. The only occasion for a motion to recommit the Bill to a Select Committee is one on which the Select Committee may reasonably be held not to have adequately considered the Bill or that unforeseen circumstances have arisen since they considered it. I have held here before that a motion for recommitment of a Bill to a Select Committee, being in its essence a dilatory motion, must be justified on such grounds.

Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar: I hold, Sir, that the Bill is necessary, but I am only trying to show to this House how the present nickel coins should be substituted. It is on that point that I am concentrating my arguments. I repeat again that the principle of the Bill is excellent and it ought to be allowed . . .

Mr. President: I would draw the Honourable Member's attention to the fact that the speech he is making would be in order on the clauses, but is not strictly in order on the motion for recommitment. If the Honourable Member appreciates my point, the motion for recommitment must be supported by arguments designed to show either that the Select Committee themselves did not adequately consider the Bill or that unforeseen matters have since arisen to require reconsideration by the Committee of the measure.

Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar: Sir, I am proceeding directly, I submit, to mention the points upon which the Committee must reconsider this Bill. May I proceed, Sir? But, when a measure like this is laid on the legislative anvil, it is incumbent on the Legislature to make their best attempt to make the provision as complete as possible. The reasons why I desire that the Bill be recommitment to the Select Committee are to consider the following questions:

- (1) whether the words "subject only to the provisions of section 15A" should be inserted in section 15, clause (2), also by a suitable provision in clause 2 of the present Bill, and
- (2) whether in section 15A any allusion should be made to the proviso to section 24 of the Indian Coinage Act, 1906;

- (3) whether in section 15A the words "shall cease to be a legal tender save at a Government currency office" express accurately the idea sought to be conveyed.

In the Statement of Objects and Reasons appended to the Bill when it was introduced, it is stated:

"The right of the holder to obtain value for any genuine coin in his possession, even though it has ceased to be legal tender, is secured by the specific provision in the Bill that coin once issued shall always be *legal tender* at a currency office."

The expression "*legal tender*," as I understand it, applies to a "tender in payment or on account," and is distinct from "exchange" or "convertibility to money value (*vide* sections 11 to 14 of the Coinage Act, 33 and 34 Vict., c. 10). At page 10 of his treatise on "Money, Banking and Exchange in India" Professor Jevons says:

"Money is said to be *legal tender* according to law when a person is bound to accept it in satisfaction of a debt if offered to him."

I am not able to see how the tender of a coin at a currency office can be called a payment of debt though the tender of coins at any treasury in payment of public revenue can be classed under "tender in payment."

The Honourable the Finance Member in introducing the Bill stated as follows:

"Provision is made in the Bill under which coins so notified can be received at Government treasuries . . ."

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: On a point of order, Sir, I would like your ruling whether the Honourable Member has in fact raised any point to justify his motion for recommittal.

Mr. President: I understood that the Honourable Member was moving that motion, and I pointed out the circumstances in which he could move it. The Honourable the Finance Member having already moved the motion that the Report of the Select Committee be taken into consideration, a general discussion is in order on that. I was offering a hint to my Honourable friend on my left that it is improper to press the House to a division on his motion unless he can show that the conditions I have laid down are satisfied. I am not satisfied that such conditions exist at all. The Honourable Member is in order in addressing his remarks to the motion moved by the Honourable the Finance Member, but those remarks are not in order in support of his own motion.

Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar: Sir, I am trying to mention the points which ought to have been considered in the Select Committee and which could be better considered in the Select Committee if the Bill were re-committed to it. What I submit to this House is that I see the absolute necessity of the Bill being sent back to a Select Committee, and it is within my bounds to point out all the objections which exist to the form of the Bill in which it has emerged from the Select Committee in order to convince the House how it would be better to send back the Bill to a Select Committee, in order that the sections may be framed more in accordance with the ideas which are sought to be conveyed by the wording of the Act itself.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member must see from the Report of the Select Committee on the Bill that they consider that they have adequately considered it. The points he is raising are arguments which he

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may legitimately use for persuading the House to reverse the decision, if necessary, of the Select Committee and therefore it would appear to me to be more appropriate on each of the individual clauses which will be put at a subsequent stage. I do not think he quite appreciates the ruling I laid down a little while ago regarding a motion for recommittal. It is the business of the Chair to protect the House against dilatory motions except where such motions are rendered necessary either by the manner in which a Select Committee have handled the Bill or by unforeseen circumstances arising since the Bill emerged from the Select Committee, and in my opinion neither of these conditions are satisfied.

Mr. Jamnadas Mehta (Bombay Northern Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, if I understand your ruling rightly, it follows that an amendment of this character cannot be moved; speaking on the motion of the Honourable the Finance Member, however, I may at once say that the Report of the Select Committee is not satisfactory; particularly the second paragraph, if I may say so, is very obscure and even contradictory. The main question before the House, when the Bill was referred to the Select Committee, was whether it would be advisable to give power to Government to issue a notification with respect to the calling in of rupees. In this connection my Honourable friends Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas, Dr. Gour and Mr. Jinnah and many others pointed out that it was a power of very wide character and should not be given to a Government which was not responsible to the people. Now, Sir, we have got in the second paragraph the considered view of the Select Committee that the fears which were then expressed were groundless, and my Honourable friends Mr. Jinnah and Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas who roared like lions against the Bill when it was introduced are now cooing like doves in the Report of the Select Committee. I cannot understand the change which has come over them, and therefore I am speaking first to enable Mr. Jinnah to answer me. That is why I took the opportunity to speak before him. Sir, I cannot understand this paragraph. It is not at all clear. When we raised the question that investing Government with the power of calling in rupees was an extremely wide power, all these gentlemen agreed. Now they say that there is no substance in our contention which was also theirs. From what they say it follows that they are withdrawing the speeches they made, they are practically eating their own words. But, so far as I understand, Sir, they were right, and I want to point out that the second paragraph does not do justice to the fears that were expressed on that occasion. The Honourable the Finance Member and the Honourable the Home Member declared that the powers which were being taken were very moderate, that those powers obtained also in England under the English Coinage Act, and they further scouted the very idea that they would be invested with the power of calling in rupees, even if the Bill as it then stood were passed, by pointing out the liability of Government under the Indian Currency Act of replacing the rupees called in. That was the answer which they gave. The Honourable the Home Member almost went to the length of saying and wondering whether they were candidates for the lunatic asylum that they were to be charged with the intention of calling in rupees. Sir, I do not know whether they were candidates or not.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: May I just explain to the Honourable Member that we distinctly asked for the power of calling in rupees? What we said was that we had no intention of calling in the whole of the rupees,—which is a very different thing.

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey (Home Member): That is also the point to which I was referring.

Mr. Jamnadas Mehta: I do say, Sir, that, when the Honourable the Home Member submitted in answer to Dr. Gour that they could not under the law call in the rupees without putting in fresh ones, he should have pointed out the law under which he was making that statement. He did not point out the law; all that I could gather was this. When rupees are withdrawn, they would be bound under the Indian Currency Act to replace them with legal tender; therefore only they could not be withdrawn. That was not a satisfactory answer at all. (*The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett:* "True.") I want to point out, Sir, that the power which Government intended at that time to take would by implication have abrogated the right of the subject to claim rupees. I ask the Honourable the Home Member whether he agrees that, in case Government had been invested with the powers which they originally wanted to have, it would have been possible for any subject to claim as a matter of right any rupees to which he is entitled at a currency office. (*The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett:* "Yes, Sir.") (*The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey:* "Certainly.") I say, Sir, if this Bill had been passed as it stood originally and Government had called in all rupees under the new authority, then the right of the subject to demand fresh rupees in place of those called in would have stood abrogated by the original section 15A, as the rupee would have ceased to be tender altogether.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: No. The Honourable Member is quite wrong. He is discussing a section which is not in the Bill at the present moment because it has been removed by the Select Committee.

Mr. Jamnadas Mehta: I am quite aware, Sir, that by excluding the rupee and half-rupee from the operation of the Bill, this Bill has become innocuous to a large extent, but the reasoning adopted in this second paragraph of the Select Committee's Report still seems to suggest that the grounds on which the inclusion of the rupees was opposed were grounds in which there was no substance. I am combating that attitude of the Honourable the Home Member and the Honourable the Finance Member and the gentlemen who have signed this Select Committee Report. Let us take an example. Supposing Government recalled rupees coined in 1862, what would happen? The moment those rupees of 1862 were called in, all those who possessed the rupee lost the rupee value of the coins which they had then in possession. (*The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett:* "No.") The only right which they would have is to go to a currency office,—(*The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey:* "Yes") to go to a currency office and claim a fresh rupee. That is the only thing. Does not the Honourable the Finance Member know that there are only seven currency offices in India, or even less? And there are, if I mistake not, lakhs of villages in this country with poor people who have got in the aggregate crores of rupees in small hoards. And, if the rupees were called in, they could only get fresh rupees if the rupees which were called in were tendered at a currency office and not anywhere else. Was not that a dangerous power to give? What is the protection for the crores of rupees which are in the hands of the villagers, if the crores of rupees of 1862 are called in? No remedy. The only protection is that Government are bound to replace them in case those rupees are tendered in a currency office. In the interval what would happen? Those crores of rupees would be purchased by Marwaris, by shroffs, by moneylenders, at the value of the silver contents of the rupee and the

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subject would be deprived of one-half of the value of his possessions. The Marwari may tender it at the currency office and get the full value, but the subject, who has earned his rupee by the sweat of his brow, would be deprived of one-half of the total value of his possession.

Mr. O. Duraiswami Aiyangar: I rise to a point of order, Sir. When I was explaining my position, I thought the Honourable Mr. Jamnadas Mehta rose only to a point of order himself. But he has been making a long speech and before he finishes my turn will be over unless . . .

Mr. President: The Honourable Member never rose again. I understood that he sat down to let Mr. Jamnadas Mehta go on. I thought he was adopting the hint which I gave. He could have made that speech perfectly well on his own amendment. In the meantime, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta is dangerously near the border line himself. He is discussing the principle of the Bill, which has already been accepted by the House. The application of the principle has been limited by the action of the Select Committee, and it is only in respect of that limitation that any discussion is in order now.

Mr. Jamnadas Mehta: Sir, I am very sorry if anything I say limits my friend's right of speaking. All I can say is that Mr. Aiyangar is the last person who ought to be jealous of any one. (*Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar:* "I am not jealous.") All I said was with reference to the second portion of the Select Committee's Report and I confined myself only to this paragraph. Will the Honourable the Home Member or the Honourable the Finance Member satisfy me on the only question which I put? It is a simple straight question. Whatever may be the state of the law, is it or is it not true that, if Government were invested with the power which they claimed originally, it would be quite possible, it would be the legitimate consequence of that power that, whenever they felt the necessity on any occasion to recall rupees of a particular year, these rupees would not be paid back in fresh rupees unless they were tendered at a currency office? (*The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett:* "Yes, Sir, that is the purpose of the Bill.") Then, Sir, I was saying that it would not be possible in the case of large numbers who hold those rupees to go to a currency office; those rupees would therefore go to a discount and the poor villagers would lose practically one-half of the value of their petty hoards. Would not that consequence follow? That is the only question I wanted to put to the Honourable Member and to Mr. Jinnah, because they had persuaded themselves that it would not. I see they have thoroughly misunderstood the point which was raised, namely, that the moment Government actually withdrew the rupee from circulation, that rupee can only be replaced at the currency office and nowhere else; with the result that the several crores of rupees that are in circulation in the whole country would go to a discount and the poor people would be deprived of one half of the value of their rupees, regardless of the fact that the currency office would take the rupee at its full value. That is the only point I wished to make.

Mr. President: The question is:

"That the Report of the Select Committee on the Bill further to amend the Indian Coinage Act, 1906, for certain purposes, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 2 was added to the Bill.

Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar: Sir, in clause 3 of the Bill, I propose:

"(i) That the proviso to the proposed new section 15A be omitted," and

"(ii) That the words 'or any Government treasury' be added at the end of the section."

Section 15A says:

"Notwithstanding anything contained in section 12, section 13, section 14 or section 15 . . . and on and from the date so specified such coin shall cease to be a legal tender save at a Government currency office."

I want that the expression "or any Government treasury" be also added and that the proviso which authorises the Governor General in Council to issue a notification specifying any later date up to which such coin shall be received at a Government treasury be omitted. The advantage of making local treasuries in every district the media of exchanging the called-in coins for their equivalents is enormous considering the fact that this Bill deals only with subsidiary coins and persons who deal in these subsidiary coins are persons living in remote villages far away from the currency office and even to some extent from a treasury office. It is unreasonable to expect people to look for the purpose to currency offices which are so few and far between. Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas has made a special pleading for the Government when he observed:

"It must be borne in mind that currency offices in India are much too few, but it is also necessary at the same time that, when the Government notify the withdrawal of a coin, they can make it legal tender at such places where the genuineness or otherwise of a coin can be correctly tested and gauged. I think the Council may well be satisfied that in this matter the Bill is on correct lines."

Sir, the Honourable Member from Bombay is evidently not aware of the fact that the treasury offices all over and the shroffs under them even in the small *taluk* treasuries are supposed to be experts in testing the genuineness of a coin. They are all persons authorised to take steps under sections 16 to 20 of the Indian Coinage Act to cut or break a coin under the circumstances detailed therein, namely, "diminished, defaced and counterfeit silver coins". Thus, the officers in the local treasuries, who are day after day testing coins and cutting and breaking such of them as come within the purview of the provisions just referred to, cannot be considered to be incompetent to deal with the called-in coins in an appropriate manner, if only they are provided with the reserve fund necessary to pay the face value of called-in coins tendered to them by the holders thereof for an exchange. A transaction between the local treasuries and the currency offices may easily be opened and kept up for this purpose under a system of periodical recoupment. Whatever inconvenience there may be in making the local treasuries available for this purpose cannot certainly weigh as against the duty of the Government to make the inconvenience of the public an irreducible minimum. It is therefore my desire that the called-in coins must be convertible (not merely legal tender) in the local treasuries.

I will go further and state that even the village officers who are agents of the Government to collect public revenue must be bound to receive the called-in coins also when tendered in payment of public revenue, and the object of a proclamation calling in a particular coin should be nothing more than to prevent its circulation thereafter *inter se* among the people.

I further beg to venture a theory that every man pays for the maintenance of the detective force his own mite into the hotchpot of the public exchequer and that, if counterfeit coins are not duly detected and

[Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar.]

prevented, the burden must not fall on an innocent possessor of a counterfeit coin but must be borne by the common purse. This is certainly not Bolshevism though it may savour of socialism. All that you can expect of a man, be he literate or illiterate, is to exercise the utmost diligence which he can command in dealing with the King's coins. In the United Kingdom every man is empowered to cut, break or deface certain coins, which are liable to be so dealt with, whereas in this country such a power is vested only in certain persons specially authorised by the Government. Thus the standard of diligence also varies. Out of the five senses that man is endowed with, three alone are useful in dealing with coins, two in light and two in darkness—touch and hearing in darkness and sight and hearing in light. But for the close affinity that exists between a rupee and half-anna, a silver quarter-rupee and a nickel one-anna, distinguished from each other by colour, as we are in other respects, the sense of touch may also be dispensed with. That which must test the genuineness of a coin is mostly the ear. But the counterfeit nickel coins surpass the ingenuity of even the Maker of man. Under these circumstances the State which issues coins of such a type that counterfeiting becomes impossible of detection by the ordinary man must bear the brunt and repay the value which an honest man paid even for a counterfeit coin in the nearest treasury. In the case of non-silver coins what guarantee is there that their counterfeits have not had their ingress and egress even through the portals of the Government treasuries and currency offices? The Coinage Act makes no provision for cutting or breaking a counterfeit non-silver coin. Suppose a man tenders a counterfeit non-silver coin in a treasury. It is not noticed at all as the shroff has no surgical operation to make on it under the law. It is received and re-issued to another man. Or, it is noticed to be a counterfeit. But the man who tendered it is above suspicion and the treasury officer dares not hand him over to the police. It is returned to him. It goes back to absorption again by the public. In these circumstances, Sir, would you expect a man, who has taken the utmost diligence that a man can take in the matter of dealing with King's coins, to drive over to a currency office at some distance for the purpose of getting the face value of a coin which has been called in by the Government? Therefore, Sir, under these circumstances, I think it is absolutely necessary that every man, who has been dealing with the King's coins in the ordinary course of events, must be in a position to get its face value the moment the coin is called in, and that at the nearest convenient place possible. The nearest convenient place that you can provide for the ordinary villagers or rustics is the *taluk* treasury which is close to him and not make him drive to a currency office in Madras or Bombay. Therefore, Sir, I move that this proviso be omitted and the addition be made to the original clause itself "or at any Government treasury", and if it is not inconvenient to the House, I would also request that the words "legal tender" be changed into "legal convertibility".

Mr. President: Strictly speaking, the Honourable Member's second amendment ought to come before his first. We will take the omission of the proviso to section 15A.

The question is:

"That in clause 3 of the Bill the proviso to the proposed new section 15A be omitted."

The motion was negatived:

Mr. President: The question is:

"That after the words 'currency office' the words 'or any Government treasury' be added."

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: Sir, I do not wish the House to think that we desire to evade giving an answer. The points made by Mr. Duraiswami Aiyangar were to a large extent concerned with the law and practice of counterfeiting which is not exactly what we are dealing with here. I am not sure if the suggestion that the Finance Member should pay anybody to counterfeit any coin he likes would lead to a reduction of counterfeiting. But I will confine myself to the substance of his arguments on this particular point in regard to the suggestion that we should add the words "or at any Government treasury" at the end of the section before the proviso. Now, Sir, what we have in mind is that for some reason, which is bound to be a reason concerned with the convenience of the public, it will be for the convenience of both the Government and the public that a particular coin should be gradually withdrawn from circulation and should cease to be a legal tender. The Government come to the conclusion, shall we say, that the eight-anna nickel coin is causing a real loss to the innocent subjects of His Majesty because, owing to the suspicion that has been cast upon it, although a good coin as a legal tender, it is unpopular in the bazars and will therefore not always be fetching its full price. It is therefore clearly in the interests of the Government and of the people that that coin should be withdrawn from circulation. At present all that we can do is to take that coin in when it is tendered at the currency offices or Government treasuries and not re-issue it. But we cannot order that it shall cease to be legal tender. The effect of withdrawing good coins when there are a certain number of bad ones in circulation—withdrawing good coins at Government treasuries—is to increase the proportion of bad ones that remain in circulation, because we are not re-issuing the good ones nor coining any new ones. Therefore, we ask for power to do what is done by proclamation in the United Kingdom, to remove the legal tender character from a particular coin. Our procedure would, of course, be, first of all, to give notice, which would, I think, in all circumstances—all that we can foresee—be at least six months, that we propose to withdraw the legal tender character from a coin. During that period it would be legal tender at any currency office and at any Government treasury. During that period one may reasonably expect that all but a few of the coins of that denomination would be tendered and the holders would receive in exchange other legal tender. I need not return to the original point which was made during the second reading debate. It is not legal for Government to pay a note out. That is not legal tender at a currency office. So, it would be quite impossible for us to withdraw rupees without providing for rupees in their places. That is by the way. Now, the amendment proposes that not only for a period of six months or whatever period may be fixed at the time the notification is issued, but for all time, this coin should be legal tender at any Government treasury, which means practically every branch of the Imperial Bank of India in India and currency offices and treasuries at other places where there are treasuries but no branch of the Imperial Bank. The effect of that would be that, although these coins cease to be legal tender in the terms of the Statute, they would be customary tender for all practical purposes, because people would be willing to receive them. After all, you cannot absolutely prohibit, it does

[Sir Basil Blackett.]

not become a penal offence to try and get somebody to buy a little bit of nickel for eight annas from you. It is impossible to force him to do so if it is no longer a legal tender, but if you can, in fact, get value for a coin at any Government treasury, the distinction between legal tender and customary tender being so small, you will be giving back with one hand what you have taken away with the other. Therefore, Government cannot accept this amendment.

When it comes to the next amendment in regard to the date during which notice

Mr. M. A. Jinnah (Bombay City: Muhammadan Urban): I suggest that we deal with one portion of the amendment at a time instead of taking the whole amendment *en bloc*.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: I have completed what I have to say. What I was going to say was merely that I was prepared to consider on the next amendment the question of six months.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: With regard to this amendment of my Honourable friend, Mr. Duraiswami Aiyangar, I must say I am opposed to it. I may say I happened to be on the Select Committee, and so I am already charged by my Honourable friend, Mr. Mehta, that we roared in this House like lions and that we have taken up a different position after we have emerged from the Select Committee. If Mr. Mehta had carefully studied the Act and the amending Bill before the House he would not have, I am sure, said that. The point has already been explained by the Honourable the Finance Member. We felt that there was really nothing in the suggestion which was at one time likely to gain ground.

Now, with regard to this amendment of Mr. Duraiswami Aiyangar, I am sorry to say that I must oppose it and I will give him my reasons for it, and I hope that I shall be able to satisfy him. The object of this Bill is that, when you find that a particular coin is being largely counterfeited, you want to prevent that. Now, if you take this Bill as it emerges from the Select Committee, the position is that the Government by notification will call in a particular coin, circulation of which ought to be stopped. Of course, it will be a legal tender and can be tendered at places wherever there are treasuries within six months or three months, as the case may be. If the public take the opportunity within that period to tender that coin, which will be a legal tender during that period, they can do so at any treasury. If they do not within that time hand over those coins, in that case the only punishment which is sought to be inflicted by this Bill is that thereafter it can only be tendered at a currency office and nowhere else. Therefore, you at once centralise one place, or two places, or as small a number of places as possible, with a view to call in the rest of the coins. But, if the amendment of my Honourable friend is allowed, then it will be a legal tender at every treasury and the very object that we have at heart, so far as this Bill is concerned, will be frustrated. If the coin is a legal tender at every treasury for all time, how are you going to arrest the circulation of the counterfeit coins? I would therefore ask my Honourable friend to consider whether, if his amendment were accepted, it would not practically destroy the very object of this Bill. The coins have to be called in within a certain time and it is open to any member of the public to go and hand over the coin

to the treasury. If he does not do so within a certain time, even then he does not lose the value of his coin. It is still open to him, though he has been so lazy, or so careless as not to help the object which we have at heart, to go to the currency office. Or, quite right, he may not go to the currency office. In that case it is quite possible he may have to sell it at a cheaper rate than the coin is worth. Possibly. But, then, whose fault will that be? If a man is not very careful and if he does not show vigilance, and is consequently put to this inconvenience, I do not think it will be the fault of anybody else except his own. I therefore submit that, if the amendment of my Honourable friend, Mr. Duraiswami Aiyangar, is accepted by the House, it will practically destroy the very object of the Bill; and so I must oppose it.

Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar: One word, Sir, by way of reply to my Honourable friend, Mr. Jinnah. I am unable to understand the force of his argument when he says that the object of this Bill will be frustrated if the coin is made always available as legal tender in any local treasury. The object of the Bill is to prevent the free circulation of

1 P.M. this coin when once the coin is recalled. I am sure, when once there is a notification saying that a particular coin is recalled, no man among the public is going to take it in payment. So the man who possesses that coin will perhaps only have the opportunity of taking it to the treasury for getting his value and not from any fellow subject or friend of his. According to the Bill which the Select Committee have sent here, if he goes to the treasury, he cannot get an exchange because tender only means payment for debt, but, being a man who will probably have to pay his land revenue once in six months or once in a year, he can only take certain coins when he has to pay and he cannot exhaust all his coins. But, on the other hand, if the treasury is open to him not only for payment of his public revenue but also for giving the face value of it, I have no objection to limit it for even six months, but, if it is to be taken only for the purpose of a tender in payment of his public debt, then it must be eternal.

Mr. President: The question is:

"That in clause 3 after the words 'Government currency office' the words 'or at any Government treasury' be added."

The motion was negatived.

Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar: I move:

"That in the proviso to the proposed new section 15A, the word 'shall' be substituted for the word 'may.'"

Mr. President: The question is:

"That in clause 3, in the proviso to the proposed new section 15A, the word 'shall' be substituted for the word 'may.'"

The motion was negatived.

Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar: The next amendment that I propose to move is:

"That in clause 3 in the proviso to section 15A after the word 'treasury' the following be added:

'such date not being less than six months from the date on which the calling in of such coin takes effect.'"

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: I think that there is nothing in the intention of this amendment which is not entirely within the intention of the Government and if it would help to satisfy my friend, Mr. Aiyangar,

[Sir Basil Blackett.]

I am perfectly willing to accept what he intends by this amendment, though in another form. If he would be willing to withdraw his proposal, I would move that for the proviso to section 15A the following be substituted, namely:

"Provided that such coin shall continue to be a legal tender also at Government treasuries until the expiry of such further period, not being less than six months, as the Governor General in Council may fix by the notification."

Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar: I withdraw my amendment.

The amendment was, by leave of the Assembly, withdrawn.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: I beg to move my motion as an amendment to Clause 3.

Mr. President: As the House has already decided to retain Clause 3 as it stands, the Honourable the Finance Member will have to move his motion as an amendment.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: I beg to move:

"That in the proviso at the end of clause 3 all the words after the word 'Provided' be omitted and that the following be substituted:

'that such coin shall continue to be a legal tender also at Government treasuries until the expiry of such further period, not being less than six months, as the Governor General in Council may fix by the notification.'"

Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar: May I know from the Finance Member whether he has got any particular attachment to the word "legal tender" and whether he will not be in a position to convert it into "legally exchangeable for this value".

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: "Legal tender" is a term known to the law; I do not know if "legally exchangeable value" is. I have a distinct affection for the legal term.

Mr. President: The question is:

"That in the proviso at the end of clause 3 all the words after the word 'Provided' be omitted and that the following be substituted:

'that such coin shall continue to be a legal tender also at Government treasuries until the expiry of such further period, not being less than six months, as the Governor General in Council may fix by the notification.'"

The motion was adopted.

Raja Raghunandan Prasad Singh (Bihar and Orissa: Landholders): I beg to move that to clause 3 of the Bill the following be added as an additional proviso:

"Provided that the notification aforesaid shall be published in all the leading vernacular newspapers in each province and shall be as widely published as possible in villages, hamlets and small towns through village *panchayats* and unions."

Dr. H. S. Gour (Central Provinces Hindi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan): We have not got a copy of this amendment and we have not heard a word of what the Honourable Member said just now.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member is moving an amendment somewhat similar in substance to, but slightly different in form from, that which is on the paper.

Raja Raghunandan Prasad Singh: Sir, inhabitants of villages, hamlets and small towns may possess small hoards of the coins called in

and, unless there be the widest possible circulation of the notification amongst them in the vernaculars, they are likely to be hard hit. This can be done through publication in the leading vernacular newspapers in each province and through village unions and *panchayats*.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: I think this amendment provides only for the machinery for notifying a change officially to the public. Undoubtedly the Government will desire in their own interest and that of the people to give the widest publicity to any notification and it is very probable that publication in leading vernacular newspapers as well as other means will be adopted, but I would suggest to the Honourable Mover that it is hardly necessary to insert this clause in the Bill itself. I am prepared to undertake on behalf of the Government that, whenever such a notification is issued, Government will in fact take every possible step to give publicity to the notification.

Raja Raghunandan Prasad Singh: Then I withdraw my amendment. The amendment was, by leave of the Assembly, withdrawn.

Mr. President: The question is that clause 3, as amended, stand part of the Bill.

The motion was adopted.

Mr. President: The question is that clause 1 stand part of the Bill.

The motion was adopted.

Mr. President: The question is that the Title and Preamble stand part of the Bill.

Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar: There is another amendment in my name, that a proviso be omitted and certain provisos be added.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member is too late.

Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar: How can it be too late?

Mr. President: I put the question. The question is that the Title and Preamble stand part of the Bill.

The motion was adopted.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: Sir, before I move that the Bill be passed, I should like to say, with reference to the amendment which was not moved, which Mr. Duraiswami Aiyangar has mentioned, that it would obviously be an impossible one.

Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar: It is no use attacking the amendment without hearing me.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: I did not hear that, but, as the Honourable Member does not want an explanation, I agree that it is hardly worth while giving it. I therefore move that the Bill be passed.

Mr. President: The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Coinage Act, 1906, for certain purposes, as amended, be passed."

The motion was adopted.

THE CENTRAL BOARD OF REVENUE BILL.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: I beg to move:

"That the Report of the Select Committee on the Bill to provide for the constitution of a Central Board of Revenue and to amend certain enactments for the purpose of conferring powers and imposing duties on the said Board, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2, 3 and 4 were added to the Bill.

The Schedule was added to the Bill.

Clause 1 was added to the Bill.

The Title and Preamble were added to the Bill.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: I ask leave to move that the Bill, as amended in Select Committee, be passed.

The President: The question is that the Bill, as amended, be passed.

The motion was adopted.

AMENDMENT OF STANDING ORDERS.

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Halley (Home Member): Sir, I move for leave to amend the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly in the following manner:

"After Standing Order 40 the following Standing Order shall be inserted, namely:

'40A. (1) At the time of the appointment by the Assembly of the members of a Select Committee the number of members whose presence shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of the Committee shall be fixed by the Assembly.

(2) If at the time fixed for any meeting of the Select Committee, or if at any time during any such meeting, the quorum of members fixed by the Assembly is not present, the chairman of the Committee shall either suspend the meeting until a quorum is present or adjourn the Committee to some future day.

(3) If any action is taken by the chairman in pursuance of sub-order (2) on two successive dates fixed for meetings of the Select Committee, the chairman shall report the fact to the Assembly.' "

Very little explanation is needed for this motion. We have found in the past that, owing perhaps to the number of Select Committees sitting at the same time, or to other claims on the time of Members, matters of very great importance are often considered by a Select Committee of very reduced numbers. I feel that that is not really in the interests of the House or of legislation, and we have therefore decided to put forward a rule which will enable the House itself on each occasion to lay down the quorum for the Select Committee. That is following the procedure of the House of Commons. As I say, it is entirely permissive for the House to lay down on each occasion the number which should constitute a quorum, and the procedure which it is proposed to adopt should a quorum not be present is also not unduly restrictive. That is to say, the Chairman would adjourn the meeting to a subsequent occasion, and if after two attempts, he found it impossible to form a quorum, he would then report the matter to the House.

Mr. President: The Assembly has heard the proposed amendments to the Standing Orders read. I have to ask if any objection is taken. There is no objection; the Honourable Member may move for a reference to a Select Committee.

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Halley: I move that the proposed amendment be referred to a Select Committee.

Mr. President: The question is that the proposed amendment of Standing Orders be referred to a Select Committee.

The motion was adopted.

Mr. President: As Honourable Members are probably aware, the Select Committee consists of nine, of whom the President is Chairman, and of whom the Deputy President must be one, and the other seven are elected by the Assembly by means of a single transferable vote, a process with which they are now familiar. I shall take an early opportunity of announcing the day on which that election will be held.

ELECTION OF A PANEL OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE TO ADVISE ON QUESTIONS RELATING TO EMIGRATION.

Mr. President: The Members will now proceed to elect a panel of the Standing Committee to advise on questions relating to Emigration. The panel itself is 16 in number, and I have received 17 nominations

Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar: I propose to withdraw my name.

Mr. President: As Mr. Deputy President has withdrawn his name, there are now sixteen vacancies, and I have to declare:

- (1) Mr. K. C. Neogy,
- (2) Mr. S. C. Ghose,
- (3) Dr. H. S. Gour,
- (4) Dr. S. K. Datta,
- (5) Lt.-Col. H. A. J. Gidney,
- (6) Sir Purshotandas Thakurdas,
- (7) Maulvi Abul Kasem.
- (8) Mr. N. M. Joshi,
- (9) Haji S. A. K. Jeelani,
- (10) Captain Ajab Khan,
- (11) Sardar Gulab Singh,
- (12) Mr. K. Rama Aiyangar,
- (13) Mr. K. Sadasiva Bhat,
- (14) Mr. B. Venkatapattiraju,
- (15) Mr. Mahmood Schammad Sahib Bahadur, and
- (16) Sardar V. N. Mutalik,

duly elected to the said panel of the Standing Committee to advise on questions relating to Emigration.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday, the 26th of February, 1924.