

23rd January, 1925

THE

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES

(Official Report)

SECOND SESSION

OF THE

SECOND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 1925



SIMLA

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS

1925

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Friday, 23rd January, 1925.

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

MEMBERS SWORN:

Sir Geoffrey Clarke, Kt., C.S.I., O.B.E., M.L.A. (Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs) and Mr. Andrew Gourlay Clow, M.L.A. (Industries Department: Nominated Official).

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

COST OF DELHI AND SIMLA SESSIONS OF THE CENTRAL LEGISLATURE.

59. ***Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** With reference to starred question No. 620 of the 8th March 1924, regarding the autumn session of the Central Legislature, will the Government be pleased to give detailed information on the following points separately for both Houses:

- (a) The total cost of holding the last session at Delhi; and the cost of holding the last two sessions in Simla separately;
- (b) The total expenditure incurred in the Delhi session on account of (i) haulage of motor cars, etc., and (ii) conveyance allowance paid to Members.

Mr. L. Graham: A detailed statement is laid on the table to which is appended an estimate of the cost which would have been incurred if the two Simla sessions in question had been held in Delhi. The Honourable Member will observe that the holding of the May-June and September sessions in Delhi would have involved excess expenditure of approximately Rs. 34,600 and Rs. 49,000, respectively.

Statement.

	Council of State.	Legislative Assembly.	Total.
	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
<i>I. Delhi Session, 1924.</i>			
1. Travelling allowance of Members	22,983 14 0	47,956 8 0	70,940 6 0
2. Daily allowance of Members	41,860 0 0	1,35,695 0 0	1,77,555 0 0
3. Haulage of motor cars, etc.	16,196 14 0	33,672 9 0	49,869 7 0
4. Conveyance allowance	2,794 14 0	18,791 3 0	21,586 1 0
Total	83,835 10 0	2,36,115 4 0	3,19,950 14 0
<i>II. Simla Session, May-June, 1924.</i>			
1. Travelling allowance of Members	18,216 8 0	46,774 7 0	64,990 15 0
2. Daily allowance of Members	10,960 0 0	35,620 0 0	46,580 0 0
Total	29,176 8 0	82,394 7 0	1,11,570 15 0
<i>III. Simla Session, September, 1924.</i>			
1. Travelling allowance of Members	22,135 11 0	51,143 9 0	73,279 4 0
2. Daily allowance of Members	16,740 0 0	54,800 0 0	71,540 0 0
Total	38,875 11 0	1,05,943 9 0	1,44,819 4 0

APPENDIX.

Statement showing expenditure that would have been incurred on account of the sessions of May-June and September, 1924, respectively, had they been held in Delhi instead of in Simla.

I.—May-June Session, 1924.

	Council of State.			Legislative Assembly.			Total.		
	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.
1. Travelling Allowance of Members	15,790	14	0	35,281	14	0	51,022	12	0
2. Daily Allowance of Members	10,960	0	0	35,620	0	0	46,580	0	0
3. Haulage of motor cars	12,827	4	0	27,247	6	0	39,874	10	0
4. Conveyance Allowance	1,787	8	0	6,942	8	0	8,730	0	0
Total	41,165	10	0	1,05,041	12	0	1,46,207	6	0

II.—September Session, 1924.

	Council of State.			Legislative Assembly.			Total.		
	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.
1. Travelling Allowance of Members	20,009	2	0	41,281	6	0	61,290	8	0
2. Daily Allowance of Members	16,740	0	0	54,800	0	0	71,540	0	0
3. Haulage of motor cars	15,193	0	0	32,686	14	0	47,879	14	0
4. Conveyance	2,747	8	0	10,665	0	0	13,412	8	0
Total	54,689	10	0	1,39,423	4	0	1,94,122	14	0

Statement showing excess expenditure that would have been incurred on account of the above two sessions respectively, had they been held in Delhi instead of in Simla.

May-June Session, 1924.

	Rs.	A.	P.
Expenditure that would have been incurred if the session had been held in Delhi	1,46,207	6	0
Expenditure actually incurred for the session	1,11,570	15	0
Excess that would have been incurred if the session had been held in Delhi	34,636	7	0

September Session, 1924.

	Rs.	A.	P.
Expenditure that would have been incurred if the session had been held in Delhi	1,94,122	14	0
Expenditure actually incurred for the session	1,44,819	4	0
Excess that would have been incurred if the session had been held in Delhi	49,303	10	0

LOCATION OF TROOPS AT MUZAFFARPUR.

60. ***Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** (a) With reference to my starred question No. 1692 of the 8th September 1924, regarding the location of troops in Muzaffarpur, will the Government be pleased to state what were the events which led to the location of troops there?

(b) Are Government aware that in reply to a question on this subject in the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council on the 20th August, 1924, it was stated on behalf of the Local Government, as reasons for the location of troops in Muzaffarpur, that "a factory was burnt down in a place called Chautarwa. Another incident happened at Chauri Chaura"?

(c) Are Government aware that the incident at Chautarwa, which is in the District of Champaran, and not in Muzaffarpur, actually happened after the troops had been located in Muzaffarpur; and that Chauri Chaura is not in the Province of Bihar and Orissa at all?

Mr. E. Burdon: (a) Local disturbances and threats of local disturbances of a kind with which the police by themselves could not adequately cope.

(b) Yes.

(c) According to the information in the possession of the Government of India the answer to the first part of the question is in the negative. As regards the second part, the Government of India, and presumably the Government of Bihar and Orissa also, know where Chauri Chaura is.

CALLING OUT OF TROOPS IN MUZAFFARPUR OR IN THE TIRHUT DIVISION.

61. ***Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** (a) Is it not a fact that ever since the dawn of British rule in this country, there was never any occasion for troops to be called out in Muzaffarpur, or in the Tirhut Division from elsewhere?

(b) If not, will the Government kindly state when and where, and on what occasions were troops requisitioned from outside the Tirhut Division?

Mr. E. Burdon: (a) and (b). As far as the Government of India are aware troops have not been called out in the areas mentioned in recent years preceding 1921.

Colonel J. D. Crawford: Are the Government aware that the presence of British troops in Muzaffarpur has given considerable satisfaction to most of the people in North Bihar?

Mr. E. Burdon: I believe that is the case, Sir.

LOCATION OF TROOPS AT MUZAFFARPUR.

62. ***Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** Will the Government be pleased to give the date on which the troops were first despatched to Muzaffarpur; and also the date on which it was decided to retain the troops permanently in that town, as well as to give the name of the Governor who was at the head of the Province on the latter occasion?

Mr. E. Burdon: Troops were first despatched to Muzaffarpur on the 21st November, 1921. The formal decision of the Government of India to retain troops permanently at Muzaffarpur was dated the 4th April, 1922, on which date His Excellency Sir Henry Wheeler was Governor of Bihar and Orissa.

LOCATION OF TROOPS AT MUZAFFARPUR.

63. ***Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** Did the Government receive any representation from the planters of the Tirhut Division asking for the location of troops in Muzaffarpur? If so, will the Government be pleased to lay a copy of it on the table?

Mr. E. Burdon: The answer so far as the Government of India are concerned is in the negative.

LIABILITY OF THE BIHAR LIGHT HORSE TO QUELL DISTURBANCES
IN THE TIRHUT DIVISION.

64. ***Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** (a) Are the Government aware that in reply to a question "Had the Bihar Light Horse declared their inability to quell disturbances in the Tirhut Division, if any?" asked in the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council on the 20th August, 1924, the Local Government stated:—"We have not approached them on the subject yet"?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state if the Bihar Light Horse receive any sort of assistance, pecuniary or otherwise, from the Government; and if so, what is it?

(c) Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table a copy of the rules or regulations under which the Bihar Light Horse has been allowed to be formed; and the conditions under which they are liable to be called out?

Mr. E. Burdon: (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). The Bihar Light Horse is a unit of the Auxiliary Force, and the information which the Honourable Member desires to have regarding it will be found in the "Regulations for the Auxiliary Force, India, 1921", a copy of which is in the Library of the Assembly.

Mr. President: Question No. 65 has been answered.*

CAPITATION TAX IN BURMA.

66. ***Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** Will the Government be pleased to state if any correspondence has passed within the last 3 years, between the Burma Government, and the Government of India, on the subject of the agitation against the Capitation tax in Burma? If so, what objection the Government have to publishing the correspondence?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: The reply to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. As the correspondence is confidential, I regret that it cannot be published.

REVENUE REALISED FROM THE TEA INDUSTRY OF ASSAM.

67. ***Mr. T. A. Chalmers:** What is the amount obtained in respect of the year 1923 from the Tea Industry of the Province of Assam by the Government of India in respect of:

- (a) Export Duty on tea;
- (b) Income-tax from tea concerns and tea planters salaries and commissions; and
- (c) Import Duty on tea boxes.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: (a), (b) and (c). The information is not recorded.

* On the 22nd January, 1925.

REVENUE REALISED FROM THE TEA INDUSTRY IN INDIA.

68. ***Mr. T. A. Chalmers:** What is the amount obtained in respect of the year 1928 from the Tea Industry in India by the Government of India in respect of:

- (a) Export Duty on tea;
- (b) Income-tax from tea concerns and tea planters salaries and commissions; and
- (c) Import Duty on tea boxes.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: (a) The Honourable Member is referred to the Accounts relating to the Sea-borne Trade and Navigation of British India for the calendar year 1928.

(b) No figures are available.

(c) The Honourable Member will be able to calculate this by referring to the figures for value under the items "Tea chests entire or in sections" and "Metals—Lead sheets for tea chests" in the Monthly Accounts relating to the Sea-borne Trade and Navigation of British India and by taking the duty at 2½ per cent. of the total value for January and February, 1928, and at 15 per cent. of the total value for March to December, 1928.

SUBSTITUTION OF THE PROVIDENT FUND SYSTEM FOR THE EXISTING PENSION SYSTEM.

69. ***Mr. Harchandral Vishindas:** Will Government be pleased to state:

- (a) What action, if any, has been taken on the Resolution *re* substitution of Provident Fund system for existing Pension system passed by the Council of State on 18th February 1924?
- (b) If no action has yet been taken, when do Government propose to do the same?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: (a) and (b). The question is under consideration.

CONTEMPLATED CLOSING OF THE POST AND TELEGRAPH OFFICE AT BELAPUR IN THE THANA DISTRICT.

70. ***Mr. N. C. Kelkar:** (a) Is it a fact that Government contemplate the closing of the post and telegraph office at Belapur in the Thana district?

(b) Is it a fact that this office serves an area of about 90 square miles and a population of about 8,000?

(c) Is it a fact that the area served by this office is studded with salt pans?

(d) If so, how will the requirements of the local population be satisfied without a post and telegraph office?

Sir Geoffrey Clarke: (a) As the combined post and telegraph office is not self-supporting the question of closing the telegraph branch and reducing the status of the post office to a branch office has been under consideration.

(b) and (c). Yes.

(d) The office will be continued as a combined office on the local public furnishing the necessary guarantee against loss.

GRANT OF A MILITARY PENSION TO SEPOY GANPATRAO PARASHURAM
MORE OF THE 103RD MARATHA INFANTRY.

71. ***Mr. N. C. Kelkar:** Is it a fact that Sepoy No. 4947, Ganpatrao Parashuram More, of the 103rd Maratha Infantry, was wounded in actual fighting in the year 1919? Is it also a fact that his left leg was amputated in the Marine Lines Military Hospital at Bombay? Further, is it a fact that his application for a military pension was rejected by Government? If so, are Government prepared to give redress or state full particulars which in their opinion may justify such rejection?

Mr. E. Burdon: Sepoy Ganpatrao More was wounded in Waziristan in December, 1919, in the *right* leg. His *left* leg was amputated in the Marine Lines Military Hospital at Bombay, and the medical board was of opinion that the disability which necessitated the amputation of the left leg was neither contracted on, attributable to, nor aggravated by field service or military duty. The man's application for a pension never came before the Government of India, but the local military authorities are now reopening the case, and I will inform the Honourable Member of the result as soon as possible.

POSTAL ENDOWMENT INSURANCE POLICIES.

72. ***Mr. N. C. Kelkar:** (a) Will Government state whether it is a fact that the holders of postal insurance policies are deferred in point of the actual payment of the endowment insurance amount for a period varying from one to eleven months after the last due instalment of premium is paid?

(b) If so, does not the mean loss to the policy-holder represent the amount of interest at at least 5 per cent. for six months on the due amount, that is to say Rs. 90 per thousand?

(c) Is it a fact that Government regard this as a negligible loss?

(d) Will Government state reasons for this state of things? Is it a fact that this state of things is unparalleled in the dealings of any other insurance company?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (a) Yes, except when the endowment assurance becomes payable on the death of the insured.

(b), (c) and (d). The policy specifically provides for the payment of the endowment assurance on the insured attaining a specified age or at his death; and the premia are calculated actuarially on the basis of this contract. There can, therefore, be no mean loss to the insured. A similar arrangement is followed by many insurance companies.

REFUSAL OF A PASSPORT TO DR. SUDHINDRA BOSE, LECTURER IN
THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA.

73. ***Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar:** (a) Has the attention of the Government been drawn to an article in the *Swarajya* dated 1st October 1924, under the heading "Another Passport Scandal"?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state whether it is true that Dr. Sudhindra Bose was not given a passport to return to India to see his mother who was on her death bed?

(c) Will the Government be pleased to state on what grounds a passport was refused to him and whether the refusal was at the instance of the Government of India?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: I have already answered this question yesterday.

REFUSAL TO GRANT PERMISSION TO MAHATMA GANDHI TO VISIT KOHAT.

74. ***Mr. O. Duraiswami Aiyangar:** (a) Is it a fact that Mahatma Gandhi was prohibited from paying a visit to Kohat where he intended to bring about peace between the Hindus and the Muhammadans?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state on what grounds Mahatma Gandhi was so prohibited?

Mr. E. Burdon: I have been asked to reply to this on behalf of Mr. Bray. (a) and (b). Mr. Gandhi was asked to defer his visit to a mere opportune season for reasons set forth in the correspondence between His Excellency the Viceroy and Mr. Gandhi which has been published in the press.

Mr. B. Das: Sir, is it not a fact that Government had no objection to the visit of certain non-official leaders of this House to Kohat?

Mr. President: I am not aware that Mr. Gandhi is a non-official leader in this House.

BENGAL CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT ORDINANCE, 1924.

75. ***Mr. O. Duraiswami Aiyangar:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state if and when the Government of Bengal applied to His Excellency the Governor General to issue an Ordinance now known as Ordinance I of 1924?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state whether the question of promulgating the said Ordinance was in contemplation during the month of September 1924, when the Assembly was in session? If so, will the Government be pleased to state why the said fact was not mentioned by the Honourable the Home Member or Mr. Tonkinson who on behalf of the Government opposed the Criminal Law Amendment (Repealing) Bill of Doctor Gour?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: (a) The situation created by the existence of revolutionary conspiracies in Bengal and the measures necessary to deal with them have occupied the special attention of the Government of Bengal and the Government of India since the grave recrudescence of crimes of this character in 1923. I am not prepared to enter into any greater detail on the communications which passed and which were necessarily of the most confidential character.

(b) The situation was still under examination when this House was in session in September last. His Excellency the Viceroy has already dealt with the matter in a speech which was fully reported in the press and I have nothing to add to that.

Mr. Chaman Lall: Is it a fact, Sir, that in the original draft as prepared by the Government of Bengal mention is made not only of crimes anarchical but also of crimes political?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: I have already stated that I am not prepared to make any further statement.

REFUSAL OF A PASSPORT TO DR. SUDHINDRA BOSE, LECTURER IN THE
STATE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA.

76. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to the letter published in the issue of the *Forward* of the 3rd October 1924, page 3, under the heading "Another Passport Scandal"?

(b) If so, will the Government be pleased to state the facts of the case, namely, whether Doctor Sudhindra Bose was refused a passport, as referred to in the letter, and if so, under what circumstances?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: I have already answered this question yesterday.

CLAIMS AGAINST THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY DURING
THE YEARS 1921, 1922 AND 1923.

77. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to the reply of Government to unstarred question No. 306, in the last September session of the Assembly regarding claims against the G. I. P. Railway during the years 1921, 1922 and 1923, will the Government be pleased to state if the inquiry has been completed and if completed to furnish the information to the House?

Mr. G. G. Sim: The substance of the information asked for in Dr. Lohokare's question is given below:

The number of claims preferred was:

1921	...	...	...	...	34,144
1922	...	...	...	...	34,760
1923	...	...	...	...	24,035

The total amounts paid in settlement of claims was:

					Rs.
1921-22	...	...	...	...	28,11,000
1922-23	...	...	...	...	19,68,000
1923-24	...	...	...	...	16,17,000

PROVISION OF LATRINES IN THIRD CLASS CARRIAGES ON THE E. I.
AND B. & N. W. RAILWAYS.

78. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** Will the Government be pleased to state:

- the total number of third class carriages on the E. I. Railway and B. & N. W. Railway?
- whether they all are provided with latrines?
- if not, what is the number of carriages on each of the above lines which are not so provided?

Mr. G. G. Sim: A statement giving the information asked for by the Honourable Member is placed on the table.

Statement showing the percentage of third class carriages on the East Indian and Bengal and North Western Railways provided with latrine accommodation on the 31st March 1924.

Railway.	Total number of third class carriages.	Number provided with latrine accommodation.	Number not provided with latrine accommodation.	Percentage of those provided with latrine accommodation to total number.
East Indian	1,018	574	444	56.4
Bengal and North-Western	80	301	569	34.6

POLICY WITH REGARD TO THE RESTORATION OF THE GOLD STANDARD.

79. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** (a) Is it a fact that the Under Secretary of State for India made the following statement in May, 1924: "while effective restoration of the gold standard was the objective of Government policy, economic conditions throughout the world had not yet reached the degree of normality, which would justify at present an attempt to stabilise the gold value of the rupee"?

(b) If so, will the Government be pleased to give at least a rough idea of the time when we can expect that the policy of Government with regard to the effective restoration of the gold standard will be given effect to?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: I would refer the Honourable Member to the speech which I made yesterday, and if that does not satisfy him, to the speeches which I shall presumably have to make to-day. This answer may be taken as covering also the Honourable Member's question No. 140.

PROVISION OF WATER TAPS AT STATIONS ON THE E. I. AND B. AND N. W. RAILWAYS.

80. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** (a) What is the number of stations on the East Indian Railway and B. & N. W. Railway?

(b) What is the number at which water taps are provided?

(c) What is the number at which watermen are employed?

Mr. G. G. Sim: The numbers are:

(a) East Indian Railway, 481.

Bengal and North-Western Railway, 339.

(b) East Indian Railway, 68.

Bengal and North-Western Railway, 73.

(c) East Indian Railway, 340.

Bengal and North-Western Railway, 113.

HARDSHIPS OF INDIAN LABOURERS IN BURMA.

81. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan**: With reference to the Government reply to unstarred question No. 338, in the last September session of the Assembly with regard to hardships of Indian labourers in Burma, will the Government be pleased (a) to state if they have received the report from the Government of Burma? (b) if they have received the report, will they please lay it on the table?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: The Government of Burma have reported that they are placing an officer on special duty with a view to the examination of the question of establishing an agency for the collection of information relating to labour conditions. Until reliable statistical information is available, the Local Government are not prepared to publish statements of the kind suggested in the question asked in the September Session.

REGISTRATION OF COTTON GINNING AND PRESSING FACTORIES.

82. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan**: Will the Government be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of cotton ginning and pressing factories in India,
- (b) the number of them which have been registered?

Mr. G. G. Sim: (a) The number of cotton ginning, cleaning and pressing factories, subject to the Indian Factories Act, at work during the calendar year 1923, was 1,683. Information as to the number of such factories not subject to the Factories Act is not available.

(b) The nature of the registration which the Honourable Member has in mind is not understood.

COST OF INCREASED EMOLUMENTS TO THE INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE, ETC.

83. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan**: (a) Will the Government be pleased to state if the increase of emoluments to the Indian Civil Service, Indian Police Service, Indian Educational Service, British officers of Indian Army and British troops comes up to £2,540,000?

(b) If the figure quoted is not correct, what is the correct figure?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: I understand from inquiries made by me from the Honourable Member that his question relates to the cost of the recommendations of the Lee Commission in respect of certain services, though if that is so I do not understand his reference to British officers of the Indian Army and British troops. An estimate of the cost of the recommendations of the Lee Commission will be found in Appendix VII at the end of their Report.

EASTERN BENGAL RAILWAY TIMINGS.

84. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan**: (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to the letter under the heading "Eastern Bengal Timings" published in the issue of the *Statesman* of the 7th October 1924, page 8?

(b) If so, will they please state if the statements made, are correct?

(c) If correct, will they please issue instructions to the authorities concerned to remove the inconvenience complained of?

Mr. G. G. Sim: Government have seen the letter referred to. It contains a complaint about a change in the starting time of a certain train from Dacca. The Government cannot undertake to interfere in a matter of this kind. It is essentially a matter for the Railway Administration.

AMALGAMATION OF ORIYA-SPEAKING TRACTS.

85. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to Home Department Resolution, Public, dated Simla, the 1st October 1924, will the Government be pleased to state if they will consult the Legislative Assembly after the report of the officers appointed to inquire into the question of the amalgamation of Oriya-speaking tracts have been submitted to them, and before they pass orders thereon?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: The report in question has just been received and the question of its publication and the method in which it should be dealt with is under consideration.

AMALGAMATION OF THE DISTRICT LOCOMOTIVE CARRIAGE AND TRAFFIC OFFICES ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

86. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to Government reply to starred question 1659 *re*: 'Amalgamation of the District Locomotive Carriage and Traffic Offices on the East Indian Railway', will the Government be pleased to state by what time the proposals under their consideration are likely to mature to enable them to give definite information on the subject?

Mr. G. G. Sim: It has now been decided to constitute four Divisions on the East Indian Railway, each under a Divisional Superintendent, in place of the nine districts under District Superintendents of the various Departments.

The Divisional officers at Allahabad and Dinapore were opened on 12th January 1925 and those at Asansol and Howrah on 19th January 1925.

PROVISION OF MORE WATERWAYS ON THE B. & N. W. RAILWAY.

87. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** (a) Are Government aware of the fact that in the course of a statement in the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council on 29th August 1924, the Local Government stated as follows:

"Several telegrams have been received from the residents of Sabarsa, Maknabazar, Mansi, Pasraha, and Khagaria reporting that scores of villages were flooded, cattle were dying for want of fodder, and that people were in great distress. They prayed for more outlets in the B. & N. W. Railway line in various places."

- (b) If so, have Government taken any action in the matter?
- (c) If not, do they propose taking any?
- (d) If not, why not?

Mr. G. G. Sim: (a) Yes.

(b), (c) and (d). No reference has been made to the Government of India by the Local Government in the matter.

RAILWAY CONNECTION BETWEEN MUZAFFARPUR AND SITAMARHEE.

88. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to the replies of Government to starred question 1669 (a), (b), (c), (d) and its supplementary question asked in the last September Session of the Assembly, are the Government prepared to draw the attention of the Government of Bihar and Orissa to the fact that the question is urgent and that the travelling public are put to great inconvenience owing to the want of railway connection between Muzaffarpur and Sitamarhee and ask them to expedite the matter?

Mr. G. G. Sim: The project is not financially promising, nor is it considered to be of sufficient importance to be described as urgent. It has therefore been decided with the concurrence of the Local Government to postpone further consideration of the project.

Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan: May I ask till what time it has been postponed? Has any time been fixed?

Mr. G. G. Sim: It has been decided to postpone the project at present as it is not considered to be of any urgency.

DEPUTATION OF SIR BHUPENDRA NATH MITRA TO LONDON IN CONNECTION WITH THE OUTSTANDING CLAIMS IN DISPUTE BETWEEN HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT AND THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

89. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to question asked by Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar in the last session of the Assembly on 8th September 1924, *re:* Deputation of Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra to London in connection with the outstanding claims in dispute between His Majesty's Government and the Government of India, its supplementary questions and the replies of Government to them, will the Government be pleased to state:

- (a) the exact amount of outstanding claims in dispute between His Majesty's Government and the Government of India?
- (b) the time that is expected to be taken by Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra in settling the points at issue?
- (c) the amount that is likely to be spent on or that has been sanctioned for, his deputation?
- (d) whether the Assembly will be consulted before a final decision on the question is arrived at?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: (a) The Honourable Member is referred to the statement laid on the table on the 1st February 1924, as requested by Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas in his question No. 1.

(b) Owing to the intervention of a general election in England no settlement on the points at issue could be reached and Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra was appointed to officiate as High Commissioner for India on the 6th November 1924. Much useful work was however done both in regard to these points and on the question of the capititation grant.

(c) The cost of his deputation was just under Rs. 4,000.

(d) I am afraid I cannot add anything to my previous statements on this point.

THE COAL COMMITTEE.

90. *Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan: (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to the paragraph published in the issue of the *Statesman* of the 11th October 1924, page 8, under the heading "Contemporary Opinion" "The Coal Committee"?

(b) If so, will they please state if they have decided to appoint an Expert Committee, as stated in the paragraph?

(c) If so, when will the Committee be appointed, and what will be its function?

Mr. G. G. Sim: (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the Resolution appointing the Committee, which was published in the Gazette of India of the 20th September 1924.

SEPARATE COMPARTMENTS ON RAILWAYS FOR TUBERCULAR PATIENTS.

91. *Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan: With reference to Government reply to starred question 1711 and its supplementary questions, asked in the last September session of the Assembly, will the Government be pleased to state:

(a) if they are prepared to amend the Indian Railway Act in order that tuberculosis may be regarded as an infectious disorder, for the purposes of the Act?

(b) If not, will they make such arrangements that tuberculosis patients should as a rule travel in a separate compartment?

Mr. G. G. Sim: (a) Government do not propose to amend the Act, as tuberculosis is not considered to be in the same category, for the purposes of railway travel, as the infectious disorders already notified.

(b) Since tuberculosis does not come under the provisions applying to notified infectious disorders, Government are unable to make the arrangements suggested.

ARMING OF VILLAGERS AS A PROTECTION AGAINST RAIDS BY BORDER TRIBES.

92. *Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan: With reference to Government reply to the supplementary questions of Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar re: 'the arming of villagers to defend themselves', to starred question 1721 re 'Raids by Border Tribes', asked in the last September session of the Assembly, will the Government be pleased to provide the House with figures?

Mr. E. Burdon: Sir, I have been asked to reply to this question on behalf of the Honourable Member in charge. Up to the 1st January 1923, 11,482 Government fire-arms had been issued for village defence in the settled districts of the North-West Frontier; on the 1st January 1923 the number had increased to 11,692 and on 1st January 1924 to 14,758.

OUTPUT OF GOLD MINES.

93. *Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan: Will the Government be pleased to state:

(a) the number of gold mines in India?

(b) the output of these mines during the years 1921-22, 1922-23, and the quantity exported during the same years?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (a) There were four gold mines in British India and five in Indian States in 1921 and 1922.

(b) The output of gold in India was, in 1921,

British India	10,190 ounces.
Indian States	422,533 „

and in 1922,

British India	8,455 ounces.
Indian States	429,560 „

Gold bullion and coin are both exported from and imported into India and on the balance there is usually a net import of gold into India. The figures for the years specified in the question are:

1921-22	Bullion net export	918,669 ounces.
	Coined gold net import	868,313 „
1922-23	Bullion net import	4,257,764 „
	Coined gold net import	1,600,534 „

INCREASE IN INDIAN SEA AND LAND CUSTOMS REVENUE.

94. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** (a) Is it a fact that the total of gross Indian Sea and Land Customs Revenue (excluding Salt Revenue) during the month of September 1924 amounted to Rs. 468 lakhs as against Rs. 408 lakhs in the preceding month, and Rs. 340 lakhs a year ago?

(b) If so, will Government please state the cause of this steady increase?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: (a) Yes.

(b) The increase is mainly due to (1) general improvement in trade, (2) imposition of duty on Government Stores from April 1924, and (3) imposition of special protective duties from June 1924.

EXPENSES OF MAHARAJAHS AND RULING CHIEFS APPOINTED AS INDIA'S REPRESENTATIVES TO THE IMPERIAL CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

95. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to Government reply to starred question 1728 and its supplementary question, asked in the last September session of the Assembly, will the Government please:

(a) lay the information on the table, if it has not been laid?

(b) state if Maharajahs and Ruling Chiefs who join the Imperial Conferences and the meetings of the League of Nations, as representatives of India, also charge the expenses of their journey?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: (a) A statement giving the information desired is laid on the table. Expenditure in sterling has been converted into rupees at the rate of Re. 1 equals to 1s. 4d.

(b) The principle has been accepted that travelling expenses of Ruling Princes and Chiefs deputed as representatives of India on such occasions as the Imperial Conference, the meeting of the League of Nations, etc.,

should be debitable to Indian Revenues. Hitherto, however, there has been a general disposition on the part of the Princes concerned to defray such expenditure themselves and the cost to the Government of India has therefore been almost negligible.

Statement showing the expenditure incurred in connection with the deputation of the representatives of India to the Imperial Conference and the Assemblies of the League of Nations.

	Rs.	A.	P.
Imperial Conferences—			
1917	46,883	4	0
1918	28,4	9	14
1921	61,112	10	0
1923	16,638	6	11
League of Nations Assemblies—			
1920	55,122	5	0
1921	61,839	8	0
1922	24,024	5	0
1923	31,463	15	0

Mr. B. Das: May I know if the Indian Princes represented the Indian people or the Indian Princes only?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: That does not arise, Sir, from the answer to the question.

ENCOURAGEMENT OF RAILWAY INDUSTRIES.

96. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to Government reply "but up to the last year just under 10 crores had been spent in India out of the 150 crores grant", to starred question 1740, regarding the amount spent towards the encouragement of railway industries, asked in the last September session of the Assembly, will the Government be pleased to state the major heads of the expenditure of the amount?

Mr. G. G. Sim: The expenditure in question was charged to the Major head "53—Construction of State Railways" in the accounts.

RAILWAY COLLISION AT HARAPPA ROAD ON THE NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

97. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to the question *re* the Railway Collision at Harappa Road, North-Western Railway, asked by Diwan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao on the 10th September 1924, its supplementary questions and the Government reply, will the Government be pleased—

(a) to state if it is in a position to furnish full and complete information as asked for?

(b) If so, to furnish it for the information of the House?

Mr. G. G. Sim: The report is being printed and a copy will be placed in the Library in due course.

CLASSIFICATION OF RECORD SORTERS AS SUPERIOR SERVANTS.

98. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan**: With reference to my supplementary question to my starred question 2267 asked in the Assembly on the 19th September 1924 will the Government be pleased to state if they are prepared to regard the Record Sorters under the title of Superior Service?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: The question of classing record sorters as "superior" servants has been considered by the Government of India three times within the last four years and on each occasion the decision has been that they should not be so classed. I am not prepared to re-open the question.

TRADES UNIONS AND TRADE DISPUTES.

99. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan**: With reference to the Government reply to the last supplementary question to starred question 2279 asked in the Assembly on the 19th September 1924, will the Government be pleased to state:

- (1) whether they have received the replies to the letters circulated for public opinion regarding (a) Trades Unions and (b) Trade disputes?
- (2) If they have, whether they have considered the replies?
- (3) If so, will they please communicate their decision to the House?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (1) A number of replies have been received.

(2) and (3). The Honourable Member is referred to the provisions of the Trade Unions Bill which has already been introduced. The Trade Disputes Bill is under consideration and I suggest that the Honourable Member should await its introduction.

MONGHYR FERRY SERVICE.

100. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan**: (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to the letter published in the issue of *the Statesman* of the 6th November 1924, page 3, under the heading "Monghyr Ferry Service"?

(b) Are the complaints made therein correct?

(c) If so, do the Government propose to issue instructions to the railway authorities concerned to redress the grievances referred to?

Mr. G. G. Sim: (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). The Honourable Member is referred to the answer given in this Assembly on the 15th September, 1924, to question No. 1848 asked by Raja Raghunandan Prasad Singh on the same subject.

ALLEGATIONS IN THE *WEEKLY MAZDOOR* OF LUCKNOW AGAINST THE RAILWAY ADMINISTRATION.

101. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan**: With reference to Government reply to starred question 2280 asked in the meeting of the

Assembly on the 19th September 1924 *re* "Allegations in the *Weekly Mazdoor* of Lucknow against Railway administration", will the Government be pleased to state:

- (a) if the question has been considered?
- (b) If so, will they please communicate the result to the House?

Mr. G. G. Sim: It was stated in reply to Mr. Joshi's question No. 2280 referred to, that the Agent was being addressed in regard to proposed action to be taken against the Editor. Unfortunately all of the officers in question were on leave until recently and the decision in this matter has accordingly had to be deferred.

INDIAN PAPER MANUFACTURE.

102. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to the Government reply to unstarred question 417 in the Assembly on the 19th September, 1924, will the Government be pleased to state:

- (a) if the question of Indian Paper Manufacture has been considered by the Tariff Board?
- (b) if so, will they please communicate the result to the House?

Mr. G. G. Sim: The Tariff Board is considering this question. Its report has not yet been received.

VACANCIES IN THE OFFICE OF THE CONTROLLER OF MILITARY ACCOUNTS,
SOUTHERN COMMAND AND POONA DISTRICT.

103. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to Government reply to starred question 2817 *re* vacancies in the Office of Controller, Military Accounts, Southern Command, asked in the Assembly on the 22nd September, 1924, will the Government please state:

- (a) if the information called for has been furnished to them?
- (b) If so, will they please communicate it to the House for its information.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: (a) Yes.

(b) Acting promotions of Accountants in leave vacancies have been made in the office of the Controller of Military Accounts, Southern Command and Poona District during the period in question to the extent admissible within the strength of Accountants sanctioned for that office.

PURCHASE OF RAILWAY AND OTHER STORES.

104. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to Government reply to starred question 2322 (b) asked in the Assembly on the 22nd September 1924, *re* purchase of Railway and other stores through the Indian Stores Department, will the Government please state:

- (a) if the Railway Board has discussed the matter with the Agents of Railways?
- (b) If so, will they please communicate the result to the House?

Mr. G. G. Sim: The matter was one of the subjects of discussion between the Railway Board and Agents on the 6th October, but the discussion was mainly concerned with the details of carrying out the procedure

indicated in the letters to the Agents of Railways on the subject, which have already been laid on the table. It is not considered that any purpose would be served by giving the House a detailed report of the discussion.

BUS SERVICE FOR THE CONVEYANCE OF CLERKS FROM RAISINA TO THE SECRETARIAT IN DELHI.

105. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to Government reply to starred question 2824 asked in the Assembly on the 22nd September 1924, *re* Bus Service for the conveyance of clerks from Raisina to the Secretariat in Delhi, will the Government be pleased to state:

- (a) if they have been able to collect the information?
- (b) If so, will they please communicate it to the House for its information?

* **The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** The information asked for in Mr. Kumar Sankar Ray's question No. 2824 on the 22nd September 1924 is as follows:

(a) Government entered into a contract in 1921 with the Gwalior and Northern India Transport Co. Ltd., Delhi, for the running of a bus service for the conveyance of Government of India clerks from Raisina to Delhi for 3 years. This contract continues in force beyond this period until due notice of its termination is given to the company.

(b) (i) The amount spent on the New Delhi Motor Bus Service during each of the last three years is as follows:

	Rs.
During 1921-22	1,19,800
„ 1922-23 	80,428
„ 1923-24 	66,048

- (ii) Tenders were not invited when the agreement was first concluded but Government are convinced that no more economical arrangement could have been made that would have been as efficient and satisfactory.
- (c) (i) The service will continue for the winter season of 1924-25. Nothing has yet been settled about 1925-26.
- (ii) It is not now expected that the Government of India as a whole will be able to occupy the new Secretariat Buildings until November 1926.
- (d) and (e). The buses leave to scheduled timings in accordance with the time-tables published by the company at the commencement of the season. These time-tables are subsequently modified to suit the conveniences of the passengers. The original time-tables and modifications thereof are notified. Government have had no report that the company has failed to run to these time-tables.

INDIANIZATION OF VARIOUS CLASSES OF APPOINTMENTS ON THE EAST
INDIAN RAILWAY.

106. *Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan: With reference to unstarred question 426 in the Assembly on the 22nd September 1924, re the Indianization of various classes of appointments on the East Indian Railway, will the Government please state:

(a) if the inquiry has been completed?

(b) If so, will they communicate the result to the House?

Mr. G. G. Sim: (a) Yes.

(b) A copy of letter addressed to Kumar Ganganand Sinha, dated the 10th October, 1924, giving the requisite information is laid on the table.

COPY OF A LETTER NO. 1191-E., DATED THE 10TH OCTOBER 1924, FROM THE SECRETARY,
RAILWAY BOARD, TO KUMAR GANGANAND SINHA, M.L.A.

Number of Indians in certain services of the East Indian Railway.

With reference to the reply given to your question in the Legislative Assembly on the 22nd September 1924, I am directed to forward herewith a statement showing the number of posts specified by you (if any) which are held by Indians.

2. I am to add that there are other posts held by Indians which are similar in status and pay to those mentioned by you. For instance, in the Traffic Department there are 54 posts on Rs. 200 and over, and 527 posts on salaries over Rs. 100 but below Rs. 200 which are held by Indians.

Statement showing whether or not certain specified posts on the East Indian Railway are held by Indians.

Appointments.	Number held by Indians, if any.
District Inspector	Nil.
Travelling Ticket Inspector*	Nil.
Luggage Inspector	15
Detention Inspector	Nil.
Inter class Hall Supervisor	Nil.
Platform Assistant	23
Loco Inspector	Nil.
Loco Foreman	Nil.
Permanent Way Inspector	Nil.
District Carriage and Wagon Inspector	Nil.
Block Signal Inspector	1
Signal Inspector	Nil.
District Superintendent	Nil.
District Engineer	Nil.
District Loco Superintendent	Nil.
District Carr. and Wagon Superintendent	Nil.
Station Masters drawing over Rs. 200	Nil.
Assistant Station Masters drawing over Rs. 100 except Cabin Assistant	3
Guards drawing over Rs. 100	Nil.

* The services of Travelling Ticket Inspectors are under revision, and if this is sanctioned, the service will include Indians.

RECONSTITUTION OF THE CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY.

107. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** (a) Is it a fact that after the publication of the Sadler Commission Report about the Calcutta University, Lord Chelmsford's Government considered the question of reform and reconstitution of the Calcutta University an urgent matter and accordingly drafted a Bill for that purpose which was submitted to the Secretary of State for sanction but the questions of finance and detail stood in the way of its introduction in the late Imperial Council?

(b) Is it a fact that shortly thereafter the Government of India Act, 1919, having come into force education and control of Universities among other things became a transferred subject rules made under the Act providing, nevertheless, that the Calcutta University and the control and organisation of secondary education in the Presidency of Bengal should be subject to legislation by the Indian Legislature for a term of five years from the commencement of the Rules?

(c) Is it a fact that differences arose between the Bengal Government and Legislative Council on the one hand and the Calcutta University on the other hand and two private Bills about the reconstitution of the University were introduced in the Bengal Council and a Bengal Government Bill was also prepared on the same subject and submitted to the Government of India for sanction but the University disputed the competence of the Bengal Council to legislate about it and the Government of Assam which Province is also included within the jurisdiction of the Calcutta University supported the contention of the University?

(d) Is it a fact that shortly thereafter some sort of a compromise was agreed to, the two private Bills were withdrawn, no Government Bill was introduced and His Excellency Lord Lytton in consultation with the Government of India called a conference of the representatives of the University, the Bengal Government and the Assam Government, respectively, to consider the question of the preparation of a Bill and the conference met in the Government House in Calcutta in July 1923 at which the Honourable Member for Education and the Educational Commissioner of the Government of India also attended, the proceedings of the conference being treated as strictly confidential; that there was a second sitting of the conference at the same place on the 26th January last and a third sitting notified to be held about August last but it was adjourned *sine die*; that meanwhile the Bengal Legislative Council has practically ceased to function and the Governor of Bengal has assumed charge of education among other transferred subjects in that Presidency?

Mr. J. W. Bhow: (a) to (d). Generally, the facts are as stated.

RECONSTITUTION OF THE CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY.

108. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** (a) What is the position and prospect of legislation about the Calcutta University under the present circumstances?

(b) Do the Government of India propose to take up the question of the reconstitution of the Calcutta University themselves and introduce a Bill for this purpose in the Central Legislature?

(c) If not, what do they propose?

Mr. J. W. Bhore: (a) The Government of Bengal have decided to proceed first with the more urgent legislation for the creation of a Board of Secondary and Intermediate Education and to postpone legislation for the reconstitution of the Calcutta University till this has been done. They hope to hold a conference with the University authorities early in this year in order, if possible, to find a basis of agreement on the subject of secondary education. The question of the reconstitution of the University will be easier of solution if and when the question of secondary education has been satisfactorily disposed of.

(b) No.

(c) The Government of India propose to await proposals from the Local Government.

ANNUAL REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE OF HIGH COURTS.

109. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** What is the annual revenue and expenditure respectively of the several Chartered High Courts for the last 3 years for which the figures are available?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: A statement so far as the Calcutta High Court is concerned is laid on the table. Figures for the remaining High Courts with which the Governor General in Council is not primarily concerned are not available.

Statement showing the receipts of the High Court, Calcutta, during the calendar years, 1921, 1922 and 1923 as compiled from the Court's Register.

—	Receipts.		REMARKS.
	Rs.	Rs.	
1921.			
Appellate side . . .	2,44,281	} 17,87,787	These receipts include Rs. 9,27,570-12 received for Probate and Administration duty.
Original side . . .	15,43,506		
1922.			
Appellate side . . .	3,08,301	} 21,06,156	These receipts include Rs. 10,98,221 received for Probate and Administration duty.
Original side . . .	17,97,855		
1923.			
Appellate side . . .	2,98,879	} 27,52,355	These receipts include Rs. 13,66,659-4 received for Probate and Administration duty.
Original side . . .	24,53,476		

Note.—The figures are for the calendar years, 1921, 1922 and 1923.

U. N. MITRA,
for Assistant Registrar.

Statement showing the expenditure of the High Court during the financial years 1921-22, 1922-23 and 1923-24.

Heads.	1921-22.			1922-23.			1923-24.			REMARKS.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	
Judges . . .		7,93,625			8,34,797			8,07,286		
<i>Original Side.</i>										
1. Registrar . . .	4,14,820			4,87,291			4,56,457			
2. Official Receiver	21,989	4,36,719		20,104	4,87,395		22,311	4,78,768		
<i>Appellate Side.</i>										
1. Registrar . . .	4,78,488			5,36,073			5,05,513			
2. Refund of Court-fee stamp.	1,170			4,610			1,628			
3. Printing Charges	78,000	5,57,808		60,000	6,00,683		33,063	5,40,204		
		17,87,063			10,22,975			18,26,268		

Note.—The figures are for the financial year.

(Sd.) U. N. MITRA,
for Assistant Registrar.

REPEAL OF BENGAL REGULATION III OF 1818 AND OTHER REPRESSIVE LAWS.

110. *Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda: Has any step been taken or proposed to be taken to carry into effect the Resolution which was passed without any division by the Assembly on the 20th March last recommending the immediate repeal of Bengal Regulation III of 1818 and other repressive laws and regulations that still exist on the Statute-book?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: I invite the Honourable Member's attention to the reply given by me on the 11th June 1924 to a similar question (No. 1520) by Mr. Amar Nath Dutt.

ARRESTS UNDER BENGAL REGULATION III OF 1818.

111. *Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda: (a) Will the Government state the number of persons arrested, between the 20th March 1924 and the date on which this question is notified to the Home Department, under the Bengal Regulation III of 1818?

(b) Is there anything on record to show on what occasions before 1908, were any persons arrested in Bengal under this Regulation? Will the Government kindly place the information before the House?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: (a) Twenty-three.

(b) The periodical reports for the years 1868-75 indicate that the following numbers of persons were detained in Bengal under Regulation III of 1818. It is not suggested however that this information is complete as the records for the year subsequent to 1875 are not readily available.

Year.	No. of persons.
1868	4
1869	20
1870	7
1872	4
1875	2

ARRESTS UNDER BENGAL REGULATION III OF 1818.

112. *Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda: (a) Is it a fact that 18 persons were arrested under Bengal Regulation III of 1818 on or about the 25th October including two Members of the Bengal Legislative Council and the Chief Executive Officer of the Calcutta Corporation?

(b) Are the Government aware that they all or most of them belong to the Swarajya party?

(c) What is or are the charge or charges against them respectively?

(d) Was or were any charge or charges communicated to them and their answer taken thereto before they were arrested?

(e) If not, is it proposed to let them know the charges against them and get their answers?

(f) At any rate is it a fact that the charge or charges against them, all "documents and evidence relating to, each of them have been or will be placed before two Judges of the High Court for the purpose of thoroughly sifting the material on which action was taken, of submitting it to the technical tests of judicial knowledge and experience, and of framing recommendations regarding each case", care being taken to see that it is High Court Judges and not any other authority to whom reference is made (*vide* the address of His Excellency the Viceroy before the members of the Imperial Legislature on the 31st January 1924 and subsequent admission by the Honourable the Home Member of the incorrect information given to, and repeated by, His Excellency that two High Court Judges were consulted in regard to the detention mentioned in his address).

(g) Have Government made or do they propose to make any adequate provision for their own maintenance during their detention and maintenance of their respective families and other persons dependent on them?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: (a) Yes.

(b) Government are aware that some of the persons arrested claim to belong to the Swarajya party.

(c) I am not prepared to publish the charges.

(d) No.

(e) Charges have been framed against them and their answers have been taken.

(f) The papers are placed before two Sessions Judges.

(g) Yes.

ARRESTS UNDER THE BENGAL CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT ORDINANCE, 1924.

118. *Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda: How many arrests have been made under the new Ordinance for Bengal which His Excellency the Governor General has promulgated?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: Sixty-six.

HOUSE SEARCHES IN BENGAL.

114. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** (a) Have there been numerous house searches in Calcutta and other parts of Bengal in connection with rounding up of persons arrested or intended to be arrested under Regulation III or the new Ordinance?

(b) Have books and documents been seized during the above searches which are described as incriminating?

(c) Are the Government aware that even the Sri Bhagavad-Geeta is also looked upon as an "incriminating book" by the police and occasionally seized as such? Are the Government aware that the Geeta is one of the sacred books of the Hindus?

(d) Has the attention of Government been drawn to a Press interview said to have been given by Mr. Tegart of the Calcutta Police and published in the *Friend of India* that no fire-arms were found in the course of the above searches? Is it true?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: (a) and (b). Yes.

(c) "Sri Bhagavad Gita" is not regarded by the police as an "incriminating book". No copies of this book were seized during the searches under reference.

(d) Government have seen the statement, which is correctly reported.

PROTECTION OF THE INTERESTS OF INDIANS IN EAST AFRICA.

115. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to the Township Rules recently published in the Uganda official Gazette providing among other things, that the Governor may in the Gazette prescribe areas within which no piece or parcel of land may be occupied by any person not of European origin or extraction for the purposes of trade, residence or otherwise except with the consent or prior permission of the Governor in writing?

(b) With reference to the above rule do the Government of India propose to take any action to protect the interests of Indians in East Africa?

Mr. J. W. Bhore: (a) and (b). The Uganda official Gazette containing the new township rules has not yet been received by the Government of India but copies have been cabled for and the matter will be looked into as soon as they are received.

AUDITING OF THE ACCOUNTS OF THE GOVERNMENT AGRICULTURAL FARM AT TARNAB.

116. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to Government reply to my starred question 1905 (b), asked in the last September Session of the Assembly *re* "Auditing of the Accounts of the Government Agricultural Farm at Tarnab", will the Government be pleased:

(a) to state if they have obtained all the facts of the case?

(b) if so, to furnish the information to the House?

Mr. J. W. Bhore: No. The matter is still under inquiry.

Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan: May I ask by what time the inquiry will be finished?

Mr. J. W. Bhore: I cannot say. The matter is under inquiry by the local Administration and I can give the Honourable Member no intimation as to when the inquiry will be completed.

Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan: Will Government ask the local Administration?

Mr. J. W. Bhore: We have already asked that the inquiry should be expedited.

THE RANCHI RADIIUM INSTITUTE.

117. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to the last portion of the reply of Government, namely: "They have however drawn the attentions of these Governments to the passage in question, and asked for an expression of their views on the suggestion made therein" to my starred question 1794, asked in the last September session of the Assembly, *re* the Ranchi Radium Institute, will the Government be pleased to state:

(a) whether they have received the views of the Governments consulted?

(b) if so, will they please lay a copy of the same on the table?

Mr. J. W. Bhore: (a) and (b). The replies of all the Local Governments and Administrations, who were consulted, have not yet been received. When they are all in I shall be glad to place a copy of them in the Library.

INDIAN FOREST SERVICE EDUCATIONAL STAFF.

118. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to Government reply to my starred question 1795 *re* the Indian Forest Service Educational Staff, asked in the last September session of the Assembly, will the Government please state if they have arrived at any decision in the matter; and if so, will they please communicate it to the House?

Mr. J. W. Bhore: No decision has yet been arrived at as the question is a most difficult and complicated one. But I can assure the Honourable Member that the matter has not been lost sight of.

THE HESLA-CHANDIL CHORD RAILWAY.

119. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to Government reply to my starred question 1805 (b), asked in the last September session of Assembly, will the Government be pleased to state by what time the Hesla-Chandil Chord Railway is expected to be completed?

Mr. G. G. Sim: The Hesla-Chandil Chord is expected to be completed by May 1926.

INDIAN ARMY SCHOOLS OF EDUCATION.

120. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state if they have considered the question of establishing an Indian Army School of Education for the training of Indian officers and non-commissioned officers as Instructors in any other place or places besides the one at Belgaum, in such a big country as India?

(b) if not, will they please give reasons?

Mr. E. Burdon: (a) Government have considered the question, but have decided not to establish any other schools of the kind at present.

(b) The reason for this decision is that more Indian Army Schools of Education are not at present required.

POSTAL DELAYS.

121. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** Has the attention of Government been drawn to the letter published in the issue of the *Statesman* of the 17th October 1924, page 4, under the heading "Postal Delays"?

(b) If so, will Government please state if the statement made therein is correct?

(c) If correct, do they propose to take action in the matter with a view to prevent the recurrence of incidents such as have been complained of?

Sir Geoffrey Clarke: (a) and (b). My attention has been drawn to the letter in question, and I have had an inquiry made into the complaint, which was found to be well founded.

(c) Disciplinary action has been taken in the matter.

NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ASKED, RESOLUTIONS MOVED AND NON-OFFICIAL BILLS INTRODUCED IN THE FIRST SESSIONS OF THE FIRST AND SECOND ASSEMBLIES, RESPECTIVELY.

122. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** Will the Government be pleased to state the total number of questions asked, the total number of non-official Resolutions moved and the total number of non-official Bills introduced, in the first session of the last Assembly and the first session of the present Assembly, respectively?

Mr. L. Graham: I lay on the table a statement which gives the information asked for by the Honourable Member.

Number of questions asked, non-official Resolutions moved, and non-official Bills introduced during the first session of the First Legislative Assembly and the first session of the Second Legislative Assembly.

First session of the First Assembly. (February to March 1921).		First session of the Second Assembly. (January to March 1924, May 1924, and September 1924).	
Questions asked	696	Total	2,365 (starred). 470 (unstarred). <hr/> 2,885
Non-official Resolutions moved	38		20
Non-official Bills introduced	4		13

INCREASE OF STAFF ON THE EASTERN BENGAL RAILWAY.

123. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to Government reply to starred question 1887, *re* increase of staff on the E. B. Railway, asked in the last September session of the Assembly, will the Government be pleased to lay the result of the inquiry on the table for the information of the House?

Mr. G. G. Sim: The inquiry showed that additional traffic was being temporarily diverted over the Parbatipur-Kaunia-Santahar section owing to the extension of the broad gauge to Parbatipur and that arrangements would be made to post additional staff if this were found necessary.

GRIEVANCES OF THE EASTERN BENGAL RAILWAY INDIAN EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION.

124. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to Government reply to the second supplementary question to starred question 1892, *re* the grievances of the Eastern Bengal Railway Indian Employees' Association, asked in the Assembly on the 15th September 1924, will the Government be pleased to state as to what was the "Gross discourtesy by the people present at the meeting"?

Mr. G. G. Sim: The Agent attended the meeting by request and opened it. The next speech that followed consisted mainly of an attack upon the Agent in which among other things he was accused of treating the staff with injustice.

ADMISSION OF INDIANS INTO VARIOUS BRANCHES OF THE INDIAN ARMY.

125. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to Government reply to supplementary question to the starred question 1912, asked in the last September Session of the Assembly, *re* "Admission of Indians into various Branches of the Indian Army", will the Government be pleased to state whether they are carrying out the directions of the Statute referred to?

Mr. E. Burdon: The answer is in the affirmative. The Honourable Member is perhaps not aware that the King's commission held by an artillery officer is precisely the same as the king's commission held by an officer of cavalry or infantry and that the King's commissioned officer in Indian infantry and cavalry receives a higher scale of pay than the King's commissioned officer of Royal Artillery. Further, Indian candidates for the King's commission are required to qualify by what is on the whole a less rigorous test than British candidates.

126. (Will be answered at the next meeting.)

EXPENDITURE ON REPAIRS TO CHURCHES, TEMPLES AND MOSQUES.

127. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to Government reply to the supplementary question to starred question 1951 asked in the last September Session of the Assembly, *re* "the principle on which money is spent for repairs to churches, and not to temples and mosques in the country", will the Government please state the principle asked for?

Mr. G. G. Sim: The Government of India are bound by the King's Regulations to provide religious ministrations for British soldiers serving in India, and since 1698, it has been the practice first of the East India Company and then of the Government of India to provide, within reasonable limits, for the ministrations of religion to British born European servants of the Crown.

I may point out that many temples and mosques in India receive indirect subsidies from Government in the shape of remissions of land revenues on land owned by them.

CONSTRUCTION OF A PASSENGER SHED AT DARBHANGA STATION ON THE B. AND N. W. RAILWAY.

128. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** (a) Are Government aware that at Darbhanga railway station (B. & N. W. Ry.) there is no shed on the portion situated on the west of the railway line?

(b) If so, will they please state if they propose to consider the desirability of constructing a shed for the convenience of the third class passengers coming from Darbhanga City?

Mr. G. G. Sim: (a) The reply is in the negative.

(b) The policy of Government is to leave it to the discretion of Railway Administrations concerned to provide sheds for third class passengers at stations where the traffic offering justifies their provision, and the necessity for one at any particular station is a question that might suitably be brought to the notice of the Agent direct or through a member of his Advisory Committee.

PAY OF HOSPITAL STOREKEEPERS OF STATION HOSPITALS.

129. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to Government reply to starred question 1988, asked in the last September session of the Assembly, re the pay of Hospital Storekeepers of Station Hospitals, will the Government be pleased to communicate their decision, if arrived at, to the House?

Mr. E. Burdon: Orders on the subject have been issued in an Army Instruction (India), a copy of which will be furnished to the Honourable Member separately.

GRANT OF DUTY ALLOWANCE TO HEAD CLERKS OF POSTAL SUPERINTENDENTS.

130. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to Government reply "Government are not prepared to give effect to this recommendation", to my starred question 1990 (b), re grant of duty allowance to head clerks of Postal Superintendents, will they please give reasons?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: The reason is that a special scale of pay higher than the scales for ordinary clerks is already sanctioned for Head Clerks of Superintendents of Post Offices.

COMMUNAL REPRESENTATION IN KENYA.

131. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** (a) With reference to Government reply "The population of Indians is 22,822, and of Europeans 9,651 Indians are at present entitled to return 5 members and Europeans 11" to starred question 2019(b) and (c) asked in the last September session of the Assembly, will the Government please give reasons for such a discrimination unfavourable to Indians?

(b) If they cannot give reasons offhand, will they please make an inquiry from the Kenya Government or the Colonial Office, and communicate the result of the inquiry to the House?

Mr. J. W. Bhore: (a) and (b). The Honourable Member's attention is invited to paragraph 4 of part II of the memorandum published with the Government of India's Resolution No. 733, dated the 18th August 1923 and to paragraphs 4 and 5 of that Resolution. They do not consider that any inquiry on the lines suggested by the Honourable Member is necessary.

EXPENDITURE ON THE COLONIES COMMITTEE.

132. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to Government reply "I shall consider that point", to the second supplementary question *re* expenses of the Colonies Committee to starred question 2022, asked in the last September session of the Assembly, will Government please state as to whether they have considered the point, and if they have, to communicate their decision to the House?

Mr. J. W. Bhore: A statement giving the information required is laid on the table.

Statement of accounts of members of the Colonies Committee.

	Rs.	A.	P.
1. Honorarium	15,677	7	0
2. Subsistence allowance	11,910	0	0
3. Travelling allowance	9,629	10	0
4. Miscellaneous charges	553	3	0
TOTAL	37,770	4	0

PROVISION OF A WAITING ROOM FOR INTERMEDIATE CLASS PASSENGERS AT PURI STATION ON THE BENGAL NAGPUR RAILWAY.

133. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** Will Government please state if provision of a waiting room for intermediate class passengers at Puri Railway Station (B. N. Ry.) has been made?

Mr. G. G. Sim: Yes. Government understand that the room will be brought into use about 1st April, 1925.

GRANT OF PASSES OVER FOREIGN RAILWAYS TO EMPLOYEES OF THE EAST INDIAN, BENGAL NAGPUR AND MADRAS AND SOUTHERN MAHRATTA RAILWAYS.

134. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to Government reply to starred question 2043 *re* grant of passes over foreign railways, asked in the Assembly on the 16th September, 1924, will the Government please lay the information on the table for the information of the House, if the inquiry has been completed?

Mr. G. G. Sim: The result of the inquiry was communicated to Mr. M. K. Acharya and a copy is being sent to the Honourable Member.

THEFT OF INSURED LETTERS.

185. *Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan: With reference to Government reply to starred question 2062 asked in the Assembly on the 17th September 1924, re theft of insured letters, will the Government please state:

(a) whether the value of contents lost, was paid to the sender?

(b) if paid, when was it paid, and how long after the letters were insured?

Sir Geoffrey Clarke: (a). Yes, in two cases. The claim in the third case was inadmissible.

(b) On the 21st February, 1924, and 2nd October, 1924; about 9 months after.

CAPACITY OF RAILWAY WORKSHOPS FOR GENERAL REPAIR AND REHABILITATION WORK.

186. *Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan: With reference to Government reply to starred question 2080 (a) and (b) asked in the Assembly on the 17th September 1924, re the capacity of Railway Workshops, will the Government please also lay the information on the table, when received, for the information of the House?

Mr. G. G. Sim: A statement containing the information supplied to the Honourable Member, who asked question No. 2080 on the 17th September, 1924, in reply to parts (a) and (b) of that question, is laid on the table.

Capacity of Railway Workshops.

Serial No.	Railways.	The maximum number of Locomotives that can be repaired in the workshops per annum.	The maximum number of wagons that can be repaired in workshops per annum.	REMARKS.
1	North Western . . .	*650	12,000	*In terms of heavy repairs 4 light repairs or 2 medium repairs = one heavy repair.
2	Oudh and Rohilkhand . . .	144	3,640	
3	Bengal Nagpur . . .	†190	5,000	†General repairs.
4	Great Indian Peninsula . . .	‡440	10,000	‡First class repairs.
5	Nizam's Guaranteed State . . .	80	1,658	
6	Bombay, Baroda and Central India.§	270	5,500	§Both B. G. and M. G. Systems.
7	South Indian . . .	310	3,000	
8	Madras and Southern Mahratta.	250	2,700||	||Various repairs.
9	Eastern Bengal§ . . .	160	6,004	
10	East India . . .	506	28,000	

ADMISSION OF STUDENTS OF THE ROYAL INDIAN MILITARY COLLEGE,
DEHRA DUN, INTO SANDHURST.

187. *Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan: Will the Government please state:

- (a) the period for which a student has to study in the Royal Indian Military College, Dehra Dun, before he is permitted to appear at the Entrance Examination, Sandhurst?
- (b) whether all the students who pass the Entrance Examination are entitled to study at Sandhurst, or whether there is any prescribed number?

Mr. E. Burdon: (a) Six to eight years. The student enters the Dehra Dun College at 12 years of age and appears at the Entrance Examination between the ages of 18 and 20 years.

(b) The Entrance Examination is competitive, and there are five vacancies allotted at the commencement of the spring and autumn terms at Sandhurst, that is, ten vacancies a year.

ALLEGED FATAL RESULT OF OVERCROWDING ON THE BENGAL NAGPUR
RAILWAY.

188. *Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan: (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to the paragraph published in the issue of the *Forwârd* of the 24th October 1924, page 9 under the heading "Overcrowding on B. N. Ry. "?

(b) If so, will they please state whether the statements made therein specially regarding the death of a lower class passenger by suffocation near Balasore are correct?

(c) If correct, do they propose to issue instructions to the railway authorities concerned to make such arrangements that in future accidents such as that referred to may not take place again?

Mr. G. G. Sim: (a) Government have seen the paragraph referred to.

(b) and (c). Inquiry has been made and the Railway Administration state that they have no knowledge of any incident, such as described, having occurred.

PROVISION OF SERVANTS' COMPARTMENTS ON TRAINS ON THE B. AND N.
W. RAILWAY.

189. *Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan: (a) Is it not a fact that servants' compartments are not attached to all trains on the B. & N. W. Ry. ?

(b) If so, do Government propose to draw the attention of the authorities concerned to the urgency of the matter with a view to remove the complaints of the 1st and 2nd class passengers who travel with servants?

Mr. G. G. Sim: (a) Yes.

(b) Government understand that a servants' compartment has been provided in the latest design of upper class carriages and that new upper class carriages will be built to this design in future.

GOLD STANDARD.

140.† ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan** (a) Was the gold standard ever introduced in India since the establishment of the British Government?

(b) If not, will the Government please give reason why it was not introduced?

(c) If it was introduced why was it discontinued?

REMOVAL FROM THE ANDAMANS TO INDIAN JAILS OF POLITICAL PRISONERS.

141. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** (a) With reference to Government reply to starred question 2100 (c) asked in the last September session of the Assembly, will the Government please state if they have been able to remove to Indian jails the political prisoners that remained confined in the Andamans up to the time when the question was asked?

(b) If not, will they please give an idea of the time by which they will be removed?

(c) Will Government also please state their names and the terms of their imprisonment respectively?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: The names of the prisoners are Kapoor Singh, Hardit Singh, Kirpa Ram and Amar Singh who were convicted in the Mandalay conspiracy cases in 1916 and 1917 and are serving life sentences. Amar Singh was transferred to a jail in India in September last. Arrangements had been agreed upon between the Government of India and the Government of Burma for the transfer of the other three prisoners to jails in Burma, but it was found that these men had become self-supporting convicts in the Andamans and strongly protested against their removal from the settlement. Kirpa Ram has imported his family and Kapoor Singh has imported his wife, and he and Hardit Singh have a half share in a valuable plantation and state that they would claim Rs. 32,000 as compensation if disturbed. In these circumstances the Government of India are taking no further steps in the matter of their transfer.

REDUCTION OF FIRST AND SECOND CLASS FARES ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

142. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** Will the Government please state:

(a) If they propose to consider the desirability of reducing first and second class fares on the East Indian Railway, just as the Agent of the G. I. P. Railway has done on the G. I. P. Ry.?

(b) If so, from what date?

(c) If not, will they please give reasons?

Mr. G. G. Sim: (a), (b) and (c). I and II class fares were reduced from 1st April last over the East Indian Railway to the level that now obtains on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway.

†See reply to question No. 76.

DIMENSIONS OF FAMILY AND SINGLE QUARTERS ALLOTTED TO DAFTARIES AT RAISINA.

143. *Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan: Will Government please state standard dimensions of both family and single quarters allotted to the Daftaries of the Indian Secretariat at Raisina?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: The menials' quarters built at Raisina are of one type, and consist of a living room 10' x 10', a cooking room 10' x 5' with an open courtyard of about 10' x 11'.

SEPARATION OF EXECUTIVE AND JUDICIAL FUNCTIONS.

144. *Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan: With reference to Government reply to starred question 2126, asked in the last September session of the Assembly re the separation of Executive and Judicial Functions, will Government please state:

(a) if they have come to any decision on the subject?

(b) if not, by what time is the matter expected to be disposed of?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: (a) The question is still under the consideration of the Government of India, and they have not yet arrived at any decision.

(b) It is not possible to say when a decision is likely to be arrived at, as the matter is very complicated.

ALLEGED MALPRACTICES OF LABOUR RECRUITERS.

145. *Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan: (a) With reference to Government reply to starred question 2132 re alleged Malpractices of Labour Recruiters asked in the last September session of the Assembly, will the Government be pleased to state if the inquiries in the matter have been completed?

(b) And, if completed to communicate the result to the House?

Mr. J. W. Bhore: (a) The reply is in the affirmative.

(b) The report of the Local Government shows that Chottery Lal was not recruited under false pretences, nor was he kept in confinement against his will. After arrival at the Benares Depot he evidently visited some friends in the city and changed his mind about going to Mauritius. He was therefore allowed to return to his native place. It follows that the complaint of alleged illegal confinement was false.

RECRUITMENT OF LABOUR FOR THE ASSAM TEA GARDENS.

146. *Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan: Will the Government be pleased to make a statement showing the manner in which the garden sardars do the recruitment of labour for the tea gardens in Assam, and the protection given to emigrants by the officers stationed at Calcutta, Goalundo, Naihati, Asansole and Kharagpur in Bengal and Dhubri, Gauhati, Tezpur and Dibrugarh in Assam?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: Garden sardars are persons actually employed on estates who are deputed by employers to engage labourers. They are furnished with certificates specifying the limits within which they can recruit and the local Agents to whom they are subordinate.

the time within which they have to return and other details. These certificates are countersigned by an authority in the labour district. The garden sardar then proceeds to the recruiting area where he works under the control of the licensed local Agent to whom he is accredited. The main duty of the officers stationed at the places mentioned in the question is the protection of the health of the emigrants by supervision of the sanitary arrangements and in other ways.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A RATES TRIBUNAL.

147. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan**: With reference to Government reply to starred question 2139 *re* the establishment of a Rates Tribunal, asked in the last September session of the Assembly, will the Government be pleased to state:

- (a) whether they have received the reply from the Secretary of State?
- (b) if they have received it, whether they have considered the question?
- (c) if they have considered the question, will they please communicate their decision to the House?

Mr. G. G. Sim: (a) The reply from the Secretary of State has not yet been received.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

APPEALS OF THE EMPLOYEES OF THE EASTERN BENGAL RAILWAY AGAINST THE ORDERS OF DISTRICT OFFICERS.

148. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan**: With reference to Government reply to starred question 2145, *re* appeals of the employees of the Eastern Bengal Railway against the orders of the District Officers, asked in the last September session of the Assembly, will the Government please state:

- (a) whether they have received the reply of the Agent?
- (b) if they have received it, will they please communicate it to the House?

Mr. G. G. Sim: The Agent's reply was to the effect that the answer to the first part of Mr. Joshi's question was in the negative.

ALLEGED ASSAULT BY MR. GASPER, LOCO FOREMAN, KATI HAR, ON PHOOL MOHAMMAD, PUMPING DRIVER, KATI HAR.

149. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan**: With reference to Government reply to supplementary question to starred question 2148, *re* alleged assault by a Loco Foreman, asked in the last September session of the Assembly, will the Government be pleased to state if it is a fact that Phool Mohammad attended the local hospital, and produced a medical certificate from the local doctor which was not accepted by the Loco Foreman?

Mr. G. G. Sim: Yes. The Locomotive Foreman did not accept the medical certificate because it was not countersigned in accordance with rule by the Railway Medical Officer who had found Phool Mohammad fit.

WORKING HOURS OF THE TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT STAFF ON INDIAN RAILWAYS.

150. *Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan: With reference to Government reply to starred question 2152 asked in the last September session of the Assembly, *re* working hours of the Traffic and Transport Staff on Indian Railways", will the Government please state:

- (a) if the inquiry into the matter has been completed?
- (b) if completed, will they please communicate the result to the House?

Mr. G. G. Sim: (a) Yes.

(b) The following information was furnished to the Honourable Mr. N. M. Joshi in reference to question No. 2152:—

- (a) The transshipment staff at the stations named are not required to work 12 hours or more a day.
- (b) The 60 hours-a-week rule is observed. The question of the grant of extra allowances therefore does not arise.

PURCHASE OF LOCOMOTIVES FOR RAILWAYS.

151. *Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan: With reference to the unstarred question 351, in the last September session of the Assembly *re* "Purchase of Locomotives for the Railways" and the Government reply, to it, will the Government be pleased to state:

- (a) the cost of the 37 locomotives purchased?
- (b) the name or names of the firms from which they were purchased?

Mr. G. G. Sim: (a) The f.o.b. contract price of these 37 locomotives was £224,030.

(b) All the locomotives were purchased from Messrs Sir W. A. Armstrong Whitworth and Company, Limited.

ALLEGED FRAUDS ON THE OUDH AND ROHILKHAND RAILWAY.

152. *Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan: With reference to Government reply to unstarred question 355 in the last September session of the Assembly, *re* alleged frauds on the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway, will the Government please lay on the table a brief summary of the cases referred to, after judgment has been delivered in the second case?

Mr. G. G. Sim: A brief summary of the cases will be laid on the table after judgment has been delivered.

PURCHASE OF MACHINERY FOR THE SUKKUR BARRAGE.

153. *Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan: (a) Will the Government please state if the Sukkur Barrage Scheme and Lloyd Barrage and Canal Scheme are different or one and the same?

(b) Will they please state if the Government of Bombay have purchased or ordered to be purchased machinery for the Sukkur Barrage Scheme?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (a) The titles mentioned refer to one and the same project.

(b) Yes.

RETURN OF RAILWAY MATERIAL AND ROLLING STOCK SENT TO MESOPOTAMIA DURING THE WAR.

154. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to Government reply to starred question 2158, asked in the last September session of the Assembly *re* the Return of Railway material and rolling stock sent to Mesopotamia during the war, will Government please lay on the table:

(a) the list of the railway material sent to Mesopotamia which is available?

(b) the list of the rolling stock returned to India?

and state in what manner India has been compensated for such material as has not been restored to it?

Mr. G. G. Sim: (a) and (b). A list, showing rolling stock sent to Mesopotamia and retained there and also rolling stock sent to Mesopotamia but returned to India, is laid on the table. Detailed information regarding permanent way and other railway materials is not available and cannot be furnished.

For such stock and material as has been retained in Mesopotamia, Railways have been paid the actual or estimated cost of replacement of stock less a percentage for depreciation calculated on the cost of replacement, representing the proportion of service obtained before despatch to the total anticipated service.

In addition to this, Railways have been paid all incidental charges, to the extent of out-of-pocket expenses, in connection with the despatch of stock. They have also received 5 per cent. indirect charges on the net amount of the bills to cover supervision and other charges.

List showing rolling stock sent to Mesopotamia and retained there and rolling stock sent to Mesopotamia and returned to India.

Retained in Mesopotamia.		Returned to India.	
Locomotives	132	Locomotives	20
Coaching Stock	404	Coaching Stock	10
Goods Stock	3,646	Goods Stock	18
Special Stock	37	Special Stock	Nil.
Motor Trolleys	2	Motor Trolleys	Nil.

PROVISION OF LATRINE ACCOMMODATION IN SERVANTS' COMPARTMENTS ON RAILWAYS.

155. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to Government reply to the last supplementary question to the starred question 2171 asked in the last September session of the Assembly *re* the provision of latrine accommodation in the servants' compartments, will the Government please state:

(a) if the inquiries have been completed?

(b) if completed, will they please communicate the result to the House?

Mr. G. G. Sim: Except for replies from three or four smaller Railways the inquiries have been completed. Government understand that the Great Indian Peninsula, Bengal Nagpur and Oudh and Rohilkhand Railways provide latrines in some of the servants' compartments of their existing upper class stock. On other lines such accommodation is not provided. Railways will be asked to give the matter consideration when constructing new stock.

EXPORT OF BEEF.

156. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to the statement laid on the table, in reply to unstarred question 864, in the last September session of the Assembly, will the Government please state:

- (a) the reason why beef dried or otherwise was exported only from the port of Bombay and not from the ports of Madras and Calcutta during the five years mentioned in the statement?
- (b) the names of the Indian and Burmese ports to which dried beef was exported during the above period?

Mr. G. G. Sim: (a) Government do not know, and the amount exported from Bombay was so trivial in the years mentioned in the statement that it does not seem worth while to inquire into the matter.

(b) For all practical purposes it may be taken that the dried beef was sent from India only to Burma. The exact ports to which it was sent appears to be immaterial.

REPORT OF THE COLONIES COMMITTEE.

157. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** (a) Have the Government of India received the report of the Indian Colonies Committee?

- (b) If so, will they please lay it on the table?

Mr. J. W. Bhore: (a) and (b). No report has been received from the Colonies Committee as such. Two members submitted a memorandum and its publication is now under the consideration of the Government of India.

ADMISSION OF CANDIDATES FROM BIHAR AND ORISSA INTO THE ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE, SANDHURST.

158. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** (a) Will the Government please state if any candidates from the province of Bihar and Orissa were admitted to the Royal Military College Sandhurst out of the 61 Indian cadets admitted since the commencement of the spring term of 1919?

- (b) if so, what is the number?

(c) if not, was it that the Local Government did not nominate any, or was it that the candidates nominated by the Local Government, were not selected by the Central Government?

Mr. E. Burdon: (a) Yes.

- (b) Three.

(c) Does not arise.

EMPLOYMENT OF INDIANS IN THE ROYAL INDIAN MARINE.

159. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan**: (a) Is it a fact, that no Indians are employed in the Royal Indian Marine as executive and engineer officers?

(b) Is it also a fact that the entire cost of maintaining the Royal Indian Marine is borne by the Government of India, as well as by the Local Government so far as they are concerned?

(c) If the reply to (a) is in the affirmative, will the Government please state why no Indians are employed?

Mr. E. Burdon: (a) and (b). The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the reply given on the 17th September 1924, to unstarred question No. 395. It has since been decided that His Majesty's Government will bear a portion of the maintenance charges of the Royal Indian Marine ship "Lawrence" in respect of her duties connected with lighting and buoying in the Persian Gulf. Orders to this effect will be issued shortly.

(c) No Indians possessing the necessary qualifications have offered themselves for admission.

SUPPLY OF SUITABLE INDIAN CADETS FOR SANDHURST.

160. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan**: (a) With reference to the reply of Government to starred question 2233 (8) in the Assembly on the 19th September, 1924, re Indian cadets for Sandhurst, will the Government please state if they have arrived at any decision on the subject?

(b) If so, will they please communicate the result to the House?

Mr. E. Burdon: No conclusion has yet been arrived at on the subject.

161—163. **The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman**: I regret, Sir, the Foreign Secretary is ill to-day, and the questions will be answered at the next meeting.

164. (This question was answered on the 22nd January, 1925.)

LORD MORLEY'S DICTUM RE DEPORTATIONS UNDER BENGAL REGULATION III OF 1818.

165. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ghanda**: (a) Did Lord Morley as Secretary of State for India refuse to sanction the deportation of any one under Regulation III of 1818 "except for a man of whom there was solid reason to believe that violent disorder was the direct and deliberately planned result of his action"?

(b) Do Government accept the above principle as the basis of decision in sanctioning the arrest of any one under the said Regulation?

(c) Was the above test applied in the case of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, Babu Anil Baran Roy and Babu Satyendra Chandra Mitra who have lately been arrested and detained under the Regulation?

(d) If so, have the Government any objection to disclose what action of any of the above persons answers to the above description given by Lord Morley?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: The Government of India did not receive from Lord Morley as Secretary of State for India any communication in the terms recited in the question. Murder and other crimes

of violence have been the direct and deliberately planned results of the terrorist conspiracies in Bengal and it was in respect of complicity in such conspiracies that action was taken in the cases referred to under Regulation III of 1818. The evidence has been submitted to two Sessions Judges whose finding is that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the persons named are members of a terrorist conspiracy.

ARRESTS UNDER BENGAL REGULATION III OF 1818.

166. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** (a) Does Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose's conduct or action which in the opinion of Government made it expedient that he should be detained under Bengal Regulation III of 1818 relate to any period prior, or subsequent, to sanction by the Bengal Government of his appointment as the Chief Executive Officer of the Calcutta Corporation?

(b) Were any arms, ammunition or explosive substance or any ingredient thereof found during the search in the house or office of the said Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose and Babus Anil Baran Roy and Satyendra Chandra Mitra?

(c) What, if any, revolutionary literature was found therein?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: (a) The grounds upon which the Governor General in Council deemed it expedient to detain Mr. S. C. Bose under Regulation III of 1818, relate to his actions both before and after the Local Government sanctioned his appointment as Chief Executive Officer.

(b) and (c). I am not prepared to make any statement regarding the result of the searches.

EXODUS OF TEA GARDEN LABOURERS FROM ASSAM.

167. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** In connection with my question about the exodus of tea garden labourers from Assam, will the Government please find out from the Madras Government or the Assam Government which are the gardens where the labourers were as stated in the Government reply in the Madras Council getting Rs. 1/4 a day and had to work for 1½ or 2 hours a day?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: As far as the Government of India are aware no such statement was made by any Government Member in the Madras Council.

168. **The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett:** I have already replied to this question, yesterday.

AMALGAMATION OF THE DISTRICT LOCOMOTIVE, CARRIAGE AND TRAFFIC OFFICES ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

169. ***Mr. T. C. Goswami:** Will Government please refer to starred questions and answers, Nos. 1659 and 1660 (in the September session of the Legislative Assembly) and answer the following questions *sciatim*:

(i) Have the District Loco, Carriage and Traffic Offices in the E. I. Railway been amalgamated into Divisional Offices at Howrah, Asansol, Dinapur and Delhi? If not actually amalgamated yet, is such a scheme definitely sanctioned?

- (ii) Does that scheme mean the abolition of the Loop District which is one of the oldest Railway Districts in India, perhaps the oldest?
- (iii) Did the Railway Board receive petitions from merchants and the public of Sahebgunge and Bhagalpore, asking for official news of the scheme, which was then rumoured, and expressing apprehension at the possibility of great harm resulting to their interests? If so, did they receive it before Government answered the Honourable Kumar Ganganand Sinha's questions Nos. 1659 and 1660?
- (iv) Did the President of the Railway Board send a letter to the Agent, E. I. Railway, and did he write as follows:—"The Board fully appreciate the feelings of the staff concerned in the matter, but as the decision to place the headquarters of the Division in question at Howrah has not been arrived at until after careful consideration by the responsible officers of the Company, etc.?"
- (v) If the answer to (iv) is in the affirmative, was this letter dated, from London, the 2nd of October 1924? If so, how do Government reconcile this with Mr. A. A. L. Parsons' reply on the 8th September to Kumar Ganganand Sinha that "the proposals are not sufficiently mature to enable definite information to be given on this subject".
- (vi) Have Government decided as to whether this new arrangement will continue when they take over the Railway on the 1st of January 1925; or is that a State secret?

Mr. G. G. Sim: (i) and (vi). The Honourable Member is referred to the reply given to Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan's question No. 86 to-day.

(ii) Yes.

(iii) Yes. As stated in reply to question No. 1660 on 8th September 1924, the petition had been received by then.

(iv) and (v). No such letter was issued by the President, Railway Board, but the letter referred to is apparently one which was dated from London on 2nd October 1924, and was sent by the East Indian Railway Home Board to their Agent in India.

ABOLITION OF THE CAPITATION TAX IN BURMA.

170. ***Diwan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao:** Will the Government be pleased to state (i) whether any representations have been made by the people of Burma either to the Government of Burma or to the Government of India for the abolition of the Capitation Tax? (ii) Whether the Government have called for any report in regard to the agitation in Burma about the abolition of the Capitation Tax? (iii) Will the Government be pleased to place the report on the table?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: (i) The Government of India have not received any such representation and are not aware if the Government of Burma have received any.

(ii) and (iii). I would invite the attention of the Honourable Member to the reply given by me to-day to Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh's question on the same subject.

COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY INTO THE ECONOMIC ADMINISTRATION OF THE
POST AND TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT.

171. *Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar: (a) Will the Government be pleased to state why no non-official gentlemen were put on the Committee recently appointed for inquiring into the economic administration of the Post and Telegraph Departments?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state why the said Committee is debarred from inquiring into the rates of pay of the establishment?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (a) The Committee is a purely departmental one, intended to investigate possible methods of economy in the Post and Telegraph Department, more particularly to report whether economy can be effected without loss of efficiency by internal re-arrangement of the methods of working and re-distribution of duties. These points are of purely administrative detail, and in the opinion of Government the inquiry could best be conducted by a small committee consisting of an experienced postal officer, and an experienced telegraph officer, associated with a representative of the Finance Department.

(b) It will be clear, from what I have said, that the Committee has nothing to do with any general revision of rates of pay—a subject which in the opinion of Government does not require further investigation by a Committee at present.

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNTS OF THE POST AND TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENTS.

172. *Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar: With reference to the answer given to Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas under question No. 2223, will the Government be pleased to state now at least how the profit and loss accounts of the Post and Telegraph Departments separately stand?

COMMERCIALIZATION OF THE ACCOUNTS OF THE POST AND TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENTS.

173. *Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar: Will the Government be pleased to state whether the Post and Telegraph Departments will be kept separate in the system of commercialization of accounts, and, if so, from what date?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: With your permission, Sir, I propose to reply to questions Nos. 172 and 173 together.

As all the branches of the Post and Telegraph Department are administered by one authority a considerable portion of the expenditure is shared by two or more branches and an absolute separation of the accounts is not possible. In the commercial system of accounts which will be fully introduced from the 1st April 1925, there will, however, be separate Block accounts and separate Profit and Loss Accounts for each of the three branches—Post Office, Telegraphs including Radios and Telephones—designed to bring out the actual commercial profit or loss in each. A rough estimated profit and loss statement for the year 1925-26 will also be prepared and attached to the budget Demands for Grants for the Post and Telegraph Department for that year.

NUMBER OF FIRST CLASS POST OFFICES.

174. ***Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar:** Will the Government be pleased to state the number of first class post offices and the number of Indians who are postmasters of such offices?

Sir Geoffrey Clarke: The number of first class head post offices is 37 of which 13 are in charge of purely Indian Postmasters.

OPENING OF A TELEGRAPH OFFICE IN BANGALORE CITY.

175. ***Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar:** (a) Are the Government aware that a great deal of inconvenience is felt by the citizens of Bangalore for want of a telegraph office in Bangalore City?

(b) If so, do the Government propose to take steps to open a telegraph office in Bangalore City?

Sir Geoffrey Clarke: There is already a combined post and telegraph office in Bangalore City.

Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar: May I know whether it is in the Cantonment or in the City?

Sir Geoffrey Clarke: In the City.

REDUCTION OF THE SALE OF OPIUM.

176. ***Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state what steps have been taken to reduce the sale of opium?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state whether steps are taken or are proposed to be taken to see that wherever there are qualified medical practitioners or reputed Ayurvedic doctors the sale of opium is entrusted to them with instructions to sell the same for purely medicinal purposes?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: (a) The policy of the Government has always been to reduce consumption, and with that end in view the issue price of opium has been increased progressively about three-fold altogether in the course of the last 10 or 12 years. There is a limit, however, beyond which such enhancement of prices defeats its purpose, as it induces smuggling and other illicit practices. I may point out that the consumption of opium in India which in 1912-13 was Mds. 12,753 had fallen by 1923-24 to Mds. 7,406.

(b) This question could only arise if the Government had decided to restrict the use of opium to its use for strictly medicinal purposes on the prescriptions of qualified medical practitioners. The Government are not satisfied that such a restriction is necessary, advisable or practicable.

RAILWAY CONNECTION BETWEEN ARSIKERI AND MANGALORE

177. ***Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state whether any project of connecting Arsikeri with Mangalore by direct railway line is under consideration?

(b) Is there any proposal that a portion of that line at least will be taken up by the Mysore State Railways?

Mr. G. G. Sim: (a) No project for connecting Arsikeri with Mangalore by direct railway line is at present under consideration. The project for a

railway connection between Hassan and Mangalore was prepared in 1917 and its examination showed that its prospects were not good enough to justify construction.

(b) The reply is in the negative.

POLL-TAX IN FIJI.

178. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** (a) Is it a fact that Indians are refusing to pay the Poll-tax in Fiji and in consequence Indians including prominent merchants have been sent to jail?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to make a statement about the present situation there?

Mr. J. W. Bhore: (a) and (b). The Government of India understand that numerous protests were made by the Indian community in Fiji against the tax but they are not aware that payment was actually refused or that prominent merchants have been sent to prison. On the contrary it would appear that registrations for payment were proceeding smoothly last March. I may add for the information of the Honourable Member that the Governor has exempted from the tax persons having five dependent children under the age of 18. The whole question of the poll-tax formed the subject of representations by the Colonies Committee of the Government of India last July and the result of those representations is now awaited.

LEPROSY RESEARCH.

179. ***Dr. S. K. Datta:** Will Government state what has been done within recent years to promote research into the causes, dissemination and cure of Leprosy?

Mr. J. W. Bhore: The Mission to Lepers has kept the leper problem to the fore in India and for several years past researches into the causes, dissemination and cure of leprosy have been engaging the attention of medical and chemical experts working under the auspices of the Indian Research Fund Association, which is financed by Government and which has, since 1916, provided funds both for research and for modern treatment at selected centres. Extracts from the Annual Reports of the Association showing the work done in this connection have been placed in the Library.

In addition, an Indian Council of the British Empire Leprosy Relief Association has recently been formed by His Excellency the Viceroy for the purpose of stimulating interest in the problems connected with leprosy and for starting a campaign to stamp out the disease in India.

INSPECTORS OF LEPEERS.

180. ***Dr. S. K. Datta:** Will Government state whether any Inspectors of Lepers, as contemplated under the Act of 1898 and amended by the Act of 1920, have been appointed in the administrations under the direct control of the Government of India and, if so, whether the reports of these inspectors show that the provisions of the original Act are adequate for its purpose.

Mr. J. W. Bhore: The Lepers Act has not been extended to the areas in question as the number of lepers in those areas is comparatively insignificant. No inspectors of lepers have been appointed in them.

CENSUS OF LEPERS.

181. ***Dr. S. K. Datta**: Have Government ever undertaken a census of lepers in India and, if not, whether any special steps were taken to ensure the statistical accuracy of the figures which formed a part of the general census of 1921?

Mr. J. W. Bhore: No special census of lepers has been undertaken by Government, nor have any special steps been taken to ensure the statistical accuracy of the figures obtained during the last ordinary decennial census in the case of lepers. The reasons for this, as the Honourable Member doubtless realises, are the difficulty of diagnosing the disease in its early stages and the powerful motives which operate to prevent individuals from admitting infection except when concealment becomes impossible.

RESTRICTION OF THE SLAUGHTER OF USEFUL AND PRIME CATTLE

182. ***Raja Raghunandan Prasad Singh**: (1) Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing the number of the cattle under the different heads of (a) bulls, (b) bullocks, (c) cows, (d) he-buffaloes, (e) she-buffaloes, and (f) calves, slaughtered directly in Government butcheries as also the quantity of beef supplied by contractors for supply of food to the army?

(2) Have the Government of India consulted the Provincial Governments on the subject of restricting slaughter of useful and prime cattle? If so, will the Government be pleased to lay a copy of their replies on the subject?

Mr. J. W. Bhore: (1) I regret that it is impossible to obtain the information required by the Honourable Member. No such figures are on record. I may mention, however, that bulls, male and female buffaloes and calves are not slaughtered in Government butcheries at all; and that, under standing orders, slaughter is normally confined to bullocks unfit for work and cows no longer capable of yielding milk.

(2) The Government of India have not addressed Local Governments on the specific question of restricting the slaughter of cattle, but they have impressed on them the importance of improving the various breeds of Indian cattle and their number and they are themselves taking action in that direction.

ARRESTS IN BENGAL UNDER REGULATION III OF 1818 AND BENGAL ORDINANCE I OF 1924.

183. ***Mr. Kumar Sankar Ray**: (a) Will the Government be pleased to state under the authority of what law have Subhash Chandra Bose and 71 other persons been arrested by the Government of Bengal on the 25th October 1924 and whether the warrants under which they have been arrested were directed specifically for their arrest or not?

(b) Under what sections of the law have they been respectively arrested and for how long have they been kept in custody?

(c) Whether and if so when and under what provisions of the law are they going to be put on trial?

(d) Have the material facts and circumstances in the possession of the Local Government on which the orders have been passed against them been placed before any Judges, and if so, before whom?

(e) Whether any visiting committee has been constituted by the Government of Bengal under section 20 of the Ordinance No. 1 of 1924?

(f) What allowances, if any, are being given to them or their families and what arrangements have been made about their food and clothing?

(g) Will the Government be pleased to place before the Assembly a list of the incriminating articles found during the searches that led to their arrest?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: (a) and (b). Mr. S. C. Bose and 18 other persons were arrested on warrants issued under section 3 of Regulation III of 1818. 68 other persons were arrested without warrants under section 14 of the Ordinance. The majority of persons detained were arrested on 25th October 1924. A few were arrested at later dates. Those arrested under the Regulation are still in custody. Of those arrested under the Ordinance some have been restricted to definite areas, others remitted to custody in jails.

(c) The fact that any action has been taken against any person under the Ordinance or Regulation III will certainly not preclude such persons from being brought to trial for any substantive offences regarding which Government are advised that a prosecution is in the public interest. The policy of the Government of India is to bring persons to trial for substantive offences wherever possible.

(d) All the cases have been placed before two Sessions Judges whose names I am not prepared to give.

(e) Visiting Committees have been constituted.

(f) Those persons detained in jails at present receive no personal allowance but are given special diet and clothing and personal comforts. For those detained within prescribed limits outside jails suitable allowances have been sanctioned with due regard to their station in life and the locality of their detention. Family allowances are given according to the station in life of the detinue and the extent to which the family were dependent on him at the time of his arrest.

(g) The answer is in the negative.

Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar: May I know whether of the two Judges who have been appointed to examine the cases any of them is an Indian?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: I should like to have notice of that question. This is a Bengal matter and I really do not know.

Diwan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao: I should like to know whether any charges have been framed against persons referred to in (a) and whether the persons concerned were informed of the circumstances appearing against them and whether any explanations have been obtained from them?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: Does the Honourable Member mean persons detained under Regulation or Ordinance or both?

Diwan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao: Both.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: The answer is the same. Charges have been framed.

Diwan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao: Have any explanations been taken?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: They have been given an opportunity, as I have already stated in reply to questions, but in many cases they have not availed themselves of it.

Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar: With reference to the charges, may I know whether they have been told of the evidence that lies against them?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: I am not prepared to make any other statement beyond the fact that they have been asked to reply to charges.

Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar: Am I to take it that it is useless to say what the evidence is against these people to which they might reply?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: If the Honourable Member refers to the names of persons who have given evidence and desires this communicated to the world at large, it would result in immediate murder and I would not dream of it; but the purport of the charges have been communicated.

Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar: I am afraid my question has not been understood. I want to know whether the persons who are now under detention have been told of the evidence which is against them, so that they might be in a position to meet them.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: They have been told of the charges brought against them and of the general scope of the case. They certainly have not been told of the names of persons who gave information, nor do I intend to tell them.

Mr. Chaman Lall: With regard to part (d) of the question, may I know whether the decision of the Judges will be available to this House?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: The finding of the Judges would be available, not the terms of the decision.

Mr. Chaman Lall: Will the Honourable Member place it on the table?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: I have already stated that the Judges found there was reasonable ground for believing that these detenues were concerned in a terrorist conspiracy.

Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar: May I know whether the Government have so far had any communication that it would be possible for them to put any of them on trial?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: With reference to that question, it is obvious I cannot give a detailed answer, but I can give this assurance that, compatibly with the public interest, if we can bring these people to trial they will be brought to trial.

Mr. Chaman Lal: Arising out of the Honourable Member's reply, may I ask whether he will be prepared to make a statement before this House as to the evidence, leaving out the names of the witnesses who have given the evidence in each one of these cases?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: Most certainly not. Disclosing facts would be as bad as disclosing names. To disclose facts would undoubtedly lead to outrages at once.

Mr. Chaman Lal: Will the Honourable Member give this House information as to the number of witnesses murdered in such cases?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: The Honourable Member should put down that question.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MERCANTILE MARINE COMMITTEE.

184. ***Mr. Kumar Sankar Ray:** Will the Government be pleased to state what steps, if any, are the Government going to take to give effect to the recommendations made by the Mercantile Marine Committee in their report and when are they going to do it?

REPORT OF THE MERCANTILE MARINE COMMITTEE.

207. ***Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** With reference to Government reply to unstarred question 455 in the Assembly on the 22nd September, 1924, re "the Conversion of the Royal Indian Marine into an Indian Navy", will the Government be pleased to state:

- (a) whether they have considered the report of the Indian Mercantile Marine Committee?
- (b) If they have, will they please communicate their decision to the House?
- (c) If not, by what time is it expected that they will consider the Report?

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MERCANTILE MARINE COMMITTEE.

444. ***Mr. Ahmad Ali Khan:** Have Government considered the recommendations of the Indian Mercantile Marine Committee?

Are Government in a position to say which of the recommendations (if any) they are likely to adopt and put into effect in the immediate future?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: I shall take up questions Nos. 184, 207, and 444, together, for the sake of convenience as they relate to the same subject.

The Report of the Indian Mercantile Marine Committee is being considered by the Government of India, but no definite decision has yet been reached on the various recommendations made by the Committee.

TRIBUTES TO THE MEMORY OF THE LATE MR. EDWIN
SAMUEL MONTAGU.

Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer (Madras: Nominated Non-Official): Sir, with your permission, I desire to make a reference to the loss sustained by this country in the sad and untimely death of Mr. Edwin Samuel Montagu and to pay a tribute of appreciation to his work and worth. India has had many friends and benefactors among Englishmen, but of none of them could it be said that he was a truer friend or a greater benefactor than Mr. Montagu. Since the assumption of the Government of India by the Crown there have been several Secretaries of State; there have been among them able men, upright men, men who strove to do their duty by this country to the best of their lights. But their lights were generally coloured by the atmosphere of English interests. In the history of Indian constitutional progress, two names will stand out as shining landmarks, the name of Lord Morley and the name of Mr. Montagu. But in the case of Lord Morley, philosophic radical as he was and the gifted man of letters that he was, he never succeeded completely in carrying out his own advice of getting into the skins of other people and understanding them. He confessed he could never be anything but an Occidental and he could never fully enter into the aspirations of the Indian people. He confessed that he could not visualise any date when Parliamentary institutions could be introduced into India. But in the case of Mr. Montagu, he loved India, and he understood India. The uplift and advancement of India in the path of political progress were the tasks which he set before himself and to which he dedicated his life. India filled and fired his imagination and absorbed his sympathy, as it did in the case of Edmund Burke. He believed in a noble destiny for India and he identified himself with that destiny. The sacrifice of his brilliant career was brought about by his desire to heal the wounded feelings of the millions of our Mussalman fellow-countrymen by procuring a revision of the treaty of Sevres. It is doubtful whether but for his masterful personality and his untiring championship the spacious promises which were made by British statesmen in the early years of the war would have been translated into action to the extent to which they have been. Opinions may differ as to the merits of the scheme evolved by Mr. Montagu, but there can be no doubt that the feet of India have been firmly planted on the path of constitutional progress and I would ask which constitutional experiment has been free from imperfections and whether it was possible to have introduced and carried through a measure of larger scope than the one which was carried through by Mr. Montagu. Sir, the term Empire builders has been applied to many who have extended the geographical boundaries of Greater Britain, but I think the term would be more truly applied to the statesman who strives to extend the hand of fellowship and the moral influence of Britain and draw together the hearts of people of distant countries and of different races and creeds. Such an Empire builder was the late Mr. Montagu. I would ask you, Sir, to convey to the members of his family our feelings of profound sympathy and sorrow and to express to them the sentiments of affection, admiration and gratitude with which the name of Mr. Montagu will continue to be cherished by the people of this country.

Pandit Motilal Nehru (Cities of the United Provinces: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I associate myself and the members of my Party with the remarks which have just fallen from Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer. However much we may be dissatisfied with the constitution that the late Mr. Montagu gave us, there can be no doubt that he did his best and

that against enormous odds. We honour the memory of a friend; we respect his good intentions; we grieve at his loss, though, at the same time, we deplore the legacy he has left behind.

Sir Campbell Rhodes (Bengal: European): Sir, I desire to associate myself and my European colleagues with the tribute to the memory of Mr. Montagu. This is not the time to enter into the merits of his Reforms Scheme. Time will be the judge. But we have always felt that he was guided by a genuine desire to further the political progress of India and with that belief the community to which I have the honour to belong have done their best to make the Reforms a success. Surely, Sir, that is the finest tribute we can pay to his memory.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah (Bombay City: Muhammadan Urban): Sir, I beg to associate myself with this motion. We are not concerned so much on this occasion with regard to the achievements of Mr. Montagu. What we feel, Sir, is that Mr. Montagu was a statesman in the forefront of the statesmen of Great Britain. He was the Secretary of State for India and I am convinced from my own personal knowledge that he was a true and loyal friend of India. He endeavoured to the best of his ability to advance the cause of India. He was the Secretary of State for India who felt for India as much and as keenly as any Indian did. Sir, Great Britain has lost in him a great statesman and India has lost in him a true and a great friend.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman (Home Member): Sir, when the sad news of Mr. Montagu's premature death was received in India the Government of India despatched a telegram to the Secretary of State in which they expressed their deep regret at his death and their appreciation of his services. That telegram was published at the time and I will not detain the House by reading it. But I feel that, as the Leader of this House, I should say a few words on this matter. And if the House would give me a little indulgence I should like to deal with it from a somewhat personal point of view. At one period of my career I was somewhat intimately associated with Mr. Montagu. It was the period during which the Government of India Bill was being prepared at home and the period during which it was being passed through the Houses of Parliament. During the later period, at any rate, it was my duty to see Mr. Montagu at all times of the day and frequently late at night. I saw him under all the conditions of that very wearying time. I was very greatly impressed by his personality. I think anybody who was brought into that intimate relation would have been so impressed. He was a man of marvellous industry, of remarkable grasp, with a most versatile brain. It was said at the time that he could recite the amending Government of India Bill by heart. He certainly knew it better than any body else. He was often subjected to attacks of pain which greatly handicapped him. In spite of this he was always alert and always devoted to his task. I cannot help feeling indeed that his premature death was very probably hastened by the great strain which he underwent during those trying weeks. Honourable Members have said that the late Mr. Montagu was a friend of India. They have said less than the fact. No one who was associated with him could ever doubt that he had an enthusiastic devotion to India and to her interests which amounted almost to a religion. He lived to see the Act pass. He has not lived to see the final working of the Act. But I have no doubt that, when the time comes to write the history of India—and that history can be written judicially only when the dust of

[Sir Alexander Muddiman.]

debate has died down—the name of Mr. Montagu will be found written large in that history.

Mr. President: After what has been said it only remains for me to endorse the tributes that have been paid from all sides of the House. In view of the personal relation that I had with Mr. Montagu, perhaps the House will bear with me if I add a further word. The Honourable the Home Member's speech was more of a personal than of a political nature. I sat with Mr. Montagu in the House of Commons for 9 or 10 years. I had the interest and the pleasure of watching him serve his apprenticeship in Indian affairs when he was Under Secretary of State for India with Lord Morley as his chief in the office of the Secretary of State. At the end of the war, when many of us in England were casting about trying to find a clearer outlook into the future, Mr. Montagu was still then the Secretary of State for India and was devoting himself with a single mind and wholeheartedly to the interests of his great office. The particular personal interest that I have is that in the summer of 1920—and here I am revealing what I may call a public secret—it was on Mr. Montagu's personal recommendation to His Excellency the Viceroy that Lord Chelmsford invited me to take up the office which I now have the honour to hold. Therefore, in a special degree both as a friend and a colleague of Mr. Montagu in the House of Commons and as one who owes to him the nomination to a post which I regard as a pride and honour to hold, I think I am well justified in adding my personal tribute to the memory of the late Secretary of State. Many tributes have been paid to his memory, but the essential of his memory to India is that to which Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer and others have referred, namely that remarkable quality, which was more an instinct than an intellectual quality, which enabled him to appreciate the minds and thoughts and aspirations of men very different to himself, the proof of which we have seen to-day in the remarkable tributes which have been paid to his memory from all sides of the House. I shall make it my duty to send an early copy of these proceedings to his relatives, and accompany it with a letter in which I shall endeavour to describe the genuine sincerity and emotion which animated the speeches which have just been made. (Applause.)

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE MANŒUVRES.

Mr. President: The House will remember that at the close of the questions yesterday, Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer invited me to address to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief the appreciation and thanks of those Members of this House who witnessed the manœuvres and the review. I have received from His Excellency the following letter, which the House will be interested to hear:

“ ARMY HEADQUARTERS.

Delhi, 22nd January, 1925.

From—General Lord RAWLINSON, Commander-in-Chief in India,

To—The Honourable Sir FREDERICK WHYTE, Kt., President of the Legislative Assembly.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of to-day, and to express to you, and through you to the Assembly, my grateful thanks for their expression of appreciation in regard to the arrangements made for them to view the recent military operations.

I shall have great pleasure in conveying to those officers of the Army Department and Army Headquarters, who were responsible for the arrangements, the kind message of appreciation which your letter so courteously expresses.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
RAWLINSON."

I see His Excellency is present and I think we may repeat in his presence what we said behind his back, that we are very grateful to him.

Mr. Chaman Lall (West Punjab: Non-Muhammadan): May I take the opportunity of asking you, Sir, to convey the sympathy of this House . . .

Mr. President: Order, order

Mr. Chaman Lall: What I am about to say will appeal to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief.

Mr. President: Order, order; if the Honourable Member is prepared to reconsider what he said yesterday, I shall be very glad to give him an opportunity.

Mr. Chaman Lall: I am merely requesting you to convey the sympathy of this House to the soldier who, I understand, was wounded during the manœuvres, and who is reported to have lost a limb as well as the sight of both eyes.

His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief: I am very grateful for the expression which has fallen from the lips of the Honourable Member who has just sat down, and perhaps it will be of interest to the House to know that the soldier who was wounded, and who it was stated in the press was likely to lose his sight, is progressing very favourably. One eye is quite right, and the other there is great hope of saving.

PANEL OF CHAIRMEN.

Mr. President: Under the Standing Order, I appoint the following Panel of Chairmen;

Mr. K. C. Neogy,
Mr. Muhammad Ali Jinnah,
Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas, and
Mr. Darcy Lindsay.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE OBSCENE PUBLICATIONS BILL.

Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar (Madras ceded districts and Chittoor: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I owe an apology to this House for not having been present yesterday, so that a slight dislocation of business seems to have been caused by this Resolution not having been moved yesterday. However, with this apology, I beg to move that the Select

[Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar.]

Committee to which the Bill to give effect to certain articles of the International Convention for the Suppression of the Circulation of, and Traffic in, Obscene Publications, has been referred, do consist of the following members, namely:

The Honourable the Home Member,
 Mr. K. C. Neogy,
 Pandit Shamlal Nehru,
 Maulvi Abul Kasem,
 Mr. K. K. Chanda,
 Mr. M. C. Naidu,
 Kumar Ganganand Sinha,
 Mr. K. Venkataramana Reddi,
 Pandit Shambhu Dayal Misra,
 Pandit Nilakantha Das, and
 my humble self,

and that the number of Honourable Members whose presence shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of the Committee shall be six.

The motion was adopted.

Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar: I desire to add the name of Mr. K. Rama Aiyangar to the Committee.

Mr. President: The question is that the name of Mr. K. Rama Aiyangar be added to that Committee.

The motion was adopted.

(At this stage Mr. President vacated the Chair which was taken by Mr. K. C. Neogy, one of the Panel of Chairmen.)

RESOLUTION *RE* RE-TRANSFER OF SYLHET AND CACHAR TO BENGAL.

Mr. M. S. Aney (Berar Representative): Sir, I move the following Resolution:

"This Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council to be pleased to take early steps to give effect to the Resolution which was passed by the Legislative Council of Assam in July last asking that the Districts of Sylhet and Cachar be re-transferred to the Bengal Presidency."

I will not detain this House with a very long speech in support of this Resolution. Many of my friends in this House expressed a surprise that I should be the person to move a Resolution in regard to a subject in which I am not personally interested, and which is not one of an all-India character, but I will say this much in regard to that. Barring the Members from Assam and Bengal there is probably none in this House who is better qualified to appreciate the feelings of the people of Sylhet and Cachar than I who come from Berar. The Members of this House probably know and

the readers of the Montford report must be fully aware of the fact that the people of Berar have been clamouring for the last twenty years against the very grievance under which the people from Sylhet and Cachar have been suffering. Thought or idea is something like a wave that runs through the ether and seeks to find its own station of sympathy, so similar ideas running through all the Indian atmosphere have found sympathy in Berar, as it is charged with a similar sentiment. So it is not inappropriate that the Resolution should be in my hands. Secondly, Sir, though the Resolution in its concrete form is no doubt of a somewhat local nature, the principle underlying that Resolution is of very great importance to the people of this country. The principle underlying it is this. In the form of this Resolution I am asking this House to consider the big and important thing on which the success of the Reforms was made to depend by those who were the authors of the Report. The principle was that for the success of these Reforms, the present arrangement of the Indian Provinces required to be changed. The present Provinces are more or less formed not on any scientific principle recognising the claims of racial or linguistic affinity, but they are mere groups put together in the name of Provinces on a principle which only recognises the claims of administrative convenience or financial expediency. In fact the formation of Indian Provinces had generally followed the lines of the military conquests of the British arms and the territorial achievements of the British people, that is diplomacy rather than any other well recognised principle. That being the case and the success of the Reforms to a large extent being dependent upon the creation of properly manageable units upon the principle of linguistic and racial affinity as well as consequential transfers of districts to different administrations on the principle formulated there, I think it is necessary that the Members of this House, when they have given their acceptance to the principle, should insist upon seeing that that principle should at least be given effect to as regards a territory where a clear case has been made out. Now, so far as these two districts are concerned, it is known to every one that long before the era of Reforms when Assam was not carved out of the Bengal Presidency, they formed part of the Province of Bengal. The facts are known to every Member of this House who is at all well informed. I will only say this much. These two districts were tacked on to Assam not because there was anything in common between them and Assam. There are two groups of districts there, one known as the hill tracts and the other which is called the Assam Valley. From these two tracts Sylhet and Cachar are separated geographically. They form a unit by themselves, and that is known generally by the name of the Surma Valley. The position of these two districts is entirely apart from the remaining districts of Assam which form a province by themselves. If you know something of Assam, as I have endeavoured to do during the last three or four days—and I must admit that my knowledge of Assam and its geography has very much improved during that time—you will know that, when the new province was being set up there, these two districts in the Surma Valley were naturally tacked on to it just to support the administrative machine newly set up. That was in 1874. But when that was done the people of these two districts had a very serious grievance against the Government. A deep injury, a deep wound had been inflicted on them; and although in those days of the early seventies public opinion was only half formed—we find that even in those early days the people presented a petition to the Viceroy asking, praying on their knees, that they should not be tacked on to Assam. They felt it a great grievance, and a great wrong had been done to them and ever since that time, since 1874, they have kept

[Mr. M. S. Aney.]

up this agitation to this day. Those who have followed the course of this agitation, the history of which is given in the pamphlet circulated to Members, know that for the last 50 years the people of these two districts have been continuously agitating over this question in one way or another, through the press, the platform, the Provincial Council, and the Imperial Legislature. The services of all these institutions have been requisitioned by them; and through all these various agencies they have been trying to convince the Government of India that the people of Sylhet and Cachar do not desire to remain as part of Assam. They want to go back to Bengal. What has been the historical position? I do not want to tire you with the arguments which make up the case of the Sylhet and Cachar districts or the grounds on which they seek reunion with Bengal. I will only read out to you one or two paragraphs from the little pamphlet I have here which is really more illuminating than anything I may venture to say:

"Sylhet contains full one-sixteenth of the total Bengali population. Its affinities, religious, social and linguistic with the Bengali-speaking population of Bengal are of the closest kind. Its ancient history and culture have from time immemorial been organically bound up with those of Bengal."

They feel their present position very much. And not only that, but they are ethnologically and racially quite distinct from the rest of Assam, which has been practically conceded by the Government of Assam itself as also by the Government of India. The Government of India in their despatch of the 5th June 1919 gave expression to the following view:

"The problem is also complicated by the cleavage, geographical as well as religious, social and political, between two valleys which comprise the more advanced portion of the province. The Assam Valley is mainly Hindu and animistic. In Surma Valley, Muslims are in a majority. One experienced officer has indeed gone the length of advising that so different are the conditions and interests of the two valleys that separate administration appears necessary, if a real advance towards responsible government is to be made."

Now that is the opinion of an experienced officer; and I have placed these extracts before you to show that the case for the re-transfer of these two districts to Bengal is very strongly made out. That is the position then; and after that the only thing that was necessary for the Government to do was to retain these two districts with the rest of Bengal when the partition was revoked in 1911; but unfortunately the Government did not want to do anything of the kind, although the principle behind their action at that time was this—that Government wanted to organise entire Bengal into a solid unit. Now, if they had been true to that principle, one of the things necessary was to retain the two districts of Sylhet and Cachar with Bengal and not to send them back to Assam again; but unfortunately that was not done. A very great agitation on the part of the people of those two districts was got up at the time and the Viceroy was petitioned; but to their great disappointment Lord Hardinge expressed his inability to do anything. However the people did not remain silent there. They went on agitating till the present reform policy was clearly enunciated. Honourable Members will find that in the Reform Act itself it has been recognised that the present Provinces are certainly not the proper sort of units for the purposes of responsible government. But what they declared was this, that the proper time to consider the question of the redistribution of provinces on a linguistic and racial basis was after the Reforms were introduced and not

before. That was the reason why the grievance was not considered and remained unheeded till the Reforms were introduced. After the Reforms were introduced, they made another effort and questions were put several times ; and at one time, Mr. Latthe moved a Resolution on this point, namely, the redistribution of provinces on a linguistic basis. The then Member for Assam in this Council had specifically urged the claims of Cachar and Sylhet ; but the reply then given by the Honourable the Home Member, Sir William Vincent, was that he was unable to understand that the public opinion of Cachar and Sylhet was just as was explained by that particular Member, that the Resolutions adopted by public bodies and in public meetings were vague and intangible and there was no substantial or real evidence on which he could act. He wanted it to be proved by some other method and the method he suggested was that the people of Assam should ask their representatives in the Assam Council to move a Resolution on the subject and that would be a proper occasion when he could take their verdict seriously into consideration. But, Sir, you can easily know the difficulties of people in a little tract tagged on to another tract who have a majority in the Council in securing the consent of those who are separated from them. The Joint Parliamentary Committee realised the difficulty of the position and they therefore specifically recommended, while dealing with the subject, that people who wanted to have a separate existence in a separate province or sub-province ought not to be kept dependent upon securing the consent of the other members who are probably interested in retaining them as part of their own province. The Committee said that their case should be considered and decided by the Government ; if they found that the representatives of the particular tracts who suffered under the evil were unanimous, or practically so, their wishes ought to be considered. That was the position taken up by the Joint Parliamentary Committee. The Home Member imposed a little harder test upon them. It was really the test imposed upon them by His Excellency Lord Chelmsford in his Goalpara speech. Now, you find that even this harder test the people of Cachar and Sylhet have faced. The debate that took place in July last in the Assam Legislative Council is very important. It was a full dress debate in which the question was thrashed out from all points of view and every point that was raised in opposition was fully met by the Mover of the Resolution. The Government tried to get behind the clear policy laid down in the Parliamentary Committee's Report and the repeated statements made by the Home Member in the name of the Government of India. The Finance Member of Assam tried to persuade the remaining Members to vote against the proposition ; but you will find that after all the majority carried that Resolution ; and one thing that you will particularly take note of is this, that the Muhammadan and Hindu Members were practically unanimous. The Assamese Members also gave their consent and they voted for the Resolution. The people of Sylhet and Cachar do not want to be part of Assam and the Assamese Members have no objection whatsoever to their being sent back to Bengal. That is the position. So far as the voice of the people is concerned, therefore, there is no difficulty in ascertaining their opinion. Public opinion has been so clearly stated and indicated that every possible condition that was imposed upon them to give proof of their genuine desire to go back to Bengal has been satisfied. What remains is this. There is what the Government of India have promised to do. The Government of India wanted them to fulfil these conditions. Those conditions have been fulfilled. It is now for this House to ask the Government of India whether they are going to take into consideration the

[Mr. M. S. Aney.]

views expressed by the people in so clear and unequivocal a manner or whether they are going to keep the question hanging like that. It is due to this House that the wishes of the people so clearly expressed must be translated into action and this House must therefore move the Government to take the necessary steps to translate those wishes into action and not merely give an academic assurance. The only matter which this House has to consider in a question like this is this. You need not go into the merits of the case at all ; those who are competent to form a judgment on this point, those who are most vitally interested in the question, have given their clear opinion on this point ; and after this opinion has been ascertained and unequivocally expressed the Members of this House must see that the partial principle of self-determination in the reform policy is translated by the Government of India into action ; it must not remain as a mere academic assurance which is not meant to be acted upon. The only principle which has received recognition in the reform policy is as regards the right of the people to form themselves into a sub-province or remain part of this province or that. In other matters of course we know what our position is ; but in this matter it has been accepted and recognised. Now it is for us to see that the Government of India do not at any rate go back on this partial principle that has been recognised, and that they make every possible endeavour to translate that principle into action. Nothing more has to be done by us in this matter. I hope, therefore, that the House will see every reason to carry this Resolution in the form in which I have put it and ask the Government of India to redeem their pledge given to the people of Sylhet and Cachar. You will also find, gentlemen, that . . .

Mr. Chairman: Order, order. The Honourable Member should address the Chair and not the Members of this House.

Mr. M. S. Aney: Sir, Honourable Members will also that the claims of the people of Sylhet and Cachar have been practically recognised as perfectly justifiable by the Governor of Assam himself. After the Resolution was carried in the Assam Council, there was a speech delivered by His Excellency the Governor on the 17th September last and in that speech he stated that personally leaving sentiment aside there would be no difficulty from the financial or administrative point of view if Sylhet were transferred to Bengal ; so far as Sylhet was concerned, it was clearly recognised that there was a clear case and an undeniable claim. But it was the case of Cachar that gave rise to misgivings in the mind of His Excellency the Governor. But having read his speech I find there is really no substantial argument which he has given to exclude Cachar from the claim which he recognised and conceded in favour of Sylhet but only an apprehension that he had in mind that if Cachar goes away possibly another district would make a similar claim and Assam would gradually be depleted of its territory and reduced to a very narrow area, or at any rate to such a narrow area that it would not be able to sustain the status of a Governor's province, and the position of Assam would be one of inferior dignity. That is the sort of thing the Governor had in mind. As regards that I want to say with some degree of confidence that the existence of a Governor's province or no Governor's province ought not to be a criterion in judging the case on its merits. If there is justice in the demands of the people of Cachar, I am sure that it ought to be met ; and, secondly, his apprehensions are to my mind unfounded. The size of a province or the size of a tract or the numerical strength of a population is certainly not laid down anywhere. There is

no mechanical standard like that to fix the limit of an area of nation. A nation is a compact whole as it is. You cannot make any accretion to it and make it a mechanically bigger one. You cannot deny a people the right to autonomy. That being the case the right of Assam to existence as an autonomous province will be undeniable, whatever may be its numerical strength. It deserves to live as a nation. Are there not even smaller nations in Europe to-day? I am sure, whatever be the size of Assam, Assam will be several times bigger than those small nationalities whose existence has been safeguarded during the last few years in Europe. So the size of a nation should be no consideration in considering the rise of a nationality. Therefore, these apprehensions which were entertained by His Excellency the Governor and which alone were responsible for his not giving his consent to the motion passed by the House ought not to deter you from forming an independent opinion on this question. Let us give an assurance to the people of Assam that this House shall be the strongest bulwark to support their claim in any calamity that may befall them as a consequence of our act to do justice, namely, to have the two districts re-transferred to Bengal. I am confident that this House will carry the Resolution and compel the Government of India to redeem the pledge which has been given to the people of Sylhet and Cachar times out of number.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman (Home Member): Sir, I must congratulate my Honourable friend on the result of his two or three days' study of the position as regards Sylhet and Cachar, and the admirable speech at such short notice which he has made in support of his motion. He mentioned that he had distributed a pamphlet to most Members of the House. He might perhaps have included me in the distribution list. I did not receive the pamphlet. I also notice that he drew some analogy between the Berars and the case of Sylhet and Cachar. I did not quite follow him on that point. We are fortunate in having in this House an officer who has not devoted two or three days' study to the question of Sylhet and Cachar but has served in one of those districts for many years, and I hope later he will be able to give you local information which may be useful in enabling this House to come to a correct understanding as to local conditions there.

Before I turn to the subject generally I should like to take up one or two points. It has been said that the cry for the transfer of Sylhet and Cachar has been insistent for a number of years. It is undoubted that the Sylhet question has been mooted from time to time. But I am unable to find that the question of the transfer of Cachar has been raised. It certainly was not referred to by my predecessor, Sir William Vincent, when he dealt with the Resolution in which the question of Sylhet was brought up.

As regards Sylhet, the position is that, when the East India Company got the *dewani*, it passed into Bengal and there it remained till the province of Assam was constituted in September 1874. Sylhet was not first included in that province but it was included some six months afterwards. Cachar passed to the East India Company in 1826 and was included in Assam from the commencement of that Chief Commissionership. That is the position as regards the way in which these two districts have been treated in the past. When Eastern Bengal and Assam was constituted, the two districts went with that province. On the re-partition, Cachar and Sylhet again went back to Assam.

The main argument used by my Honourable friend was not based on local conditions but was of a general character. I do not propose to go

[Sir Alexander Muddiman.]

into that, because there is a Resolution on the paper which if discussed will give a more convenient opportunity for doing so. But I may point out in passing that the general argument he used would require the re-transfer to Bengal not only of Sylhet and Cachar but possibly also Goalpara. The question of Goalpara was raised at one period. I think it was raised in paragraph 13 of the despatch which the Honourable Member quoted. But in that despatch nothing was said about Cachar at all. So much on the points raised by my Honourable friend. Now as to the Resolution generally it is obvious that it raises a very serious question. We are asked to transfer from Assam, which has a total population of 7,600,000, these two districts. Sylhet has a population of roughly 2,500,000 and Cachar has a little over 500,000. The total population of these two districts is something like 3,000,000. That would mean the moving over of 3,000,000 and leaving the province of Assam with a population of about 4,000,000.

Then there is another point for consideration. You have to consider not only the people who want to go over but also the people who are to receive them. They may have something to say in the matter. One of course has to consider what they may have to say, particularly when, so far as I can gather from the figures, it will not be a profitable transaction for the Bengal Government to take over these districts as I fancy they are districts which may be regarded as minus from the financial point of view. That opinion I express with considerable diffidence because I am not quite sure that this has been exhaustively investigated.

I am well aware of the existence of a body of opinions in favour of the transfer and I think all officers who have served in Bengal have considerable sympathy with the desire that all Bengali-speaking people should be brought under one Government. There is undoubtedly a certain racial feeling in that direction and I am not one of those who undervalue sentiment in these matters. In connection with the argument based on language it is the case no doubt that the language of Sylhet is Bengali, though I am told—and I speak subject to correction—that the Sylhetee would find considerable difficulty in making himself understood in the Nadia district. The Sylhetee dialect, I am credibly informed, is a *patois* which is even more difficult than Chittagongee, which is, I am aware, not understood or only understood with considerable difficulty in the west of Bengal. Still there is that argument. It would of course carry us a long way if accepted as conclusive, for it would inevitably raise the question of Manbhum. There is a large Bengali-speaking population in Manbhum.

Mr. B. Das (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadian): There is an Oriya-speaking population also in Manbhum.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: No doubt. There were pro-
1 P.M. tests made when Sylhet was transferred back to Assam, but I find that they were not of such an insistent and important nature as my Honourable friend thinks, for I find a contemporary witness noted at the time that "not a single man came forward to raise the question". That is, I take it, when the then Viceroy visited Sylhet although it was put forward as a grievance. Undoubtedly, on the re-transfer in 1912 a considerable feeling existed in favour of retaining Sylhet in Bengal, and on that point, as I have said, I feel that there is a considerable amount of sentiment, but that it is anything like unanimous even in Sylhet itself is improbable. Indeed, I think if you consider the voting in the Assam Council you will see that that was not the case. The voting was 22 to 18.

in a Council of 58. There were quite a lot of abstentions. I had translated some speeches in Bengali of the Members of that Council, and they are rather interesting in the fact that they show that there is admittedly a considerable difference of opinion even in Sylhet and more in Cachar. However, the Government of India are not at present in a position to take any final view in this matter and they will be very glad to hear what the Assembly have to say on the question before coming to their conclusions. I have only had a preliminary report from the Government of Assam some time in December which clearly did not go into the matter in any detail and we have hardly had the time to have more than a brief statement from Bengal. But there are points to which I should like to draw attention which merit the consideration of the House.

One of the arguments I have always heard brought forward in favour of the transfer of Sylhet is that the revenue system of Sylhet is the same as that in Bengal, that is, there is a permanent settlement. It is quite true that a large portion of Sylhet is permanently settled. I have got the figures here. In Sylhet proper there are nearly $2\frac{1}{2}$ million acres permanently settled, and there are 400,000 or 500,000 acres temporarily settled. But the permanently settled tracts are not in any way comparable in their revenue arrangements to the Bengal districts except to the neighbouring district of Chittagong. As you are aware, most of the Bengal districts are settled with big zamindars, whereas in Sylhet—I have not got the accurate figures here—there are something like 50,000 permanently settled estates. So you will see that the argument in regard to the permanent settlement is subject to a certain amount of discount and must be considered in the light of what I have said above. There is another thing. If you consider the case of Cachar, so far as I can gather from the papers that I have read and the discussions which have taken place, the inhabitants of Cachar are not so anxious to be transferred as that when Sylhet is transferred they should not be left behind. That is their point. They say "We do not want to be the only Bengali-speaking district left." They are much smaller in their population than Sylhet and they would like, if Sylhet goes, to go with it. Now, if you take away Sylhet and Cachar from Assam, anybody who looks at the map will see that you have to consider the question of taking away the Lushai Hills, because if you take those two districts you cut off Assam from the Lushai Hills. Whatever may be the financial position as regards Sylhet and Cachar, there is no question whatever that the Lushai Hills are a very expensive commitment. Whether the Government of Bengal and the people of Bengal would like that commitment is a matter that would have to receive consideration. It is certainly a matter for this House to consider whether it would be possible to administer districts of the character of the Lushai Hills when you interpose an intervening portion of another province between you and that place. That is a matter for consideration. Then of course the effect of the transfer on the great communities inhabiting those parts is a matter for consideration and the House may like to have some figures. The distribution of the population among the two great religions inhabiting those districts are as follows. They are in thousands. Muhammadans in Sylhet are 14,88 and in Cachar 1,71. The percentage in Sylhet is 56 and the percentage in Cachar is 32. As regards Hindus, the number is 1,100,000 and Cachar 388,000. The percentage is 43 in the case of Sylhet and 64 in the case of Cachar. I do not think I need go into the question of the redistribution that would have to be considered in regard to the legislatures, if any action was to be decided

[Sir Alexander Muddiman.]

on. That is a matter which obviously must wait till we are nearer a decision than we are at present. As I have said, the position of the Government of India is this. We should be very glad to hear what the Assembly has to say on the question. We shall consider it carefully. We shall naturally consult the Government of Bengal and we shall have again to consult the Government of Assam before we come to any final decision. I really do not know that I need detain the House any further but I hope the House will recognise that this is not a matter which can be disposed of offhand or without very good grounds for action. You cannot take away millions of people and make them part of another province, without asking that province whether they would like to have them. I do not think my Honourable friend did argue that there is a unanimous demand even in the districts concerned. But if he did I may inform him that I have received two strongly worded telegrams of protest. I merely mention this to show that there are at any rate some persons opposed to this proposal.

The Assembly then adjourned for Lunch till a Quarter Past Two of the Clock.

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at a Quarter Past Two of the Clock, Mr. Chairman (Mr. K. C. Neogy) in the Chair.

Mr. W. A. Cosgrave (Assam: Nominated Official): Sir, as this is a matter vitally affecting the province of Assam of which I am the official representative in this Assembly, I desire to make some remarks on this Resolution. I hope the Honourable Mover of this Resolution, Mr. Aney, will not mind if I express my regret that the Resolution was not moved by my Honourable friend Mr. Chanda who, I think I am not exaggerating in saying, has been the brains and driving force behind this movement for the last ten years. I feel as an officer who has served in Sylhet some difficulty in following this Resolution which has been moved by a gentleman from Berar. I found it difficult to hear some of his speech, but as far as I could hear he was talking about the inclusion of Sylhet and "Kacha" in the province of Bengal. Well, Sir, we call it Kachar. I know the Honourable Mover has only had three days or five nights or something like that in which to prepare his speech, and though Assam may be a backward province we do not like to hear one of our districts which is to be transferred to Bengal described as "Kacha". Well, Sir, the Honourable the Home Member has pointed out already that the Resolution of the Assam Council to which it is now proposed to give effect was only carried by the narrow majority of 22 votes to 18. I would emphasise another point in this connection, namely, that the Resolution as originally proposed in the Assam Council referred to Sylhet only. An amendment was proposed after the luncheon interval against the protests of the Honourable the Leader of the House, the Honourable Mr. Webster, and the amendment was carried inserting the words "and Cachar" after the word "Sylhet". The consequence was that the Government representatives had no notice that Cachar was going to be debated on that day, and the representative of the Tea Association was not present, presumably because no mention of Cachar was made in the agenda for that meeting. Sir, the population of the Cachar

district is half a million. Half of that population is composed of Muhammadans and tea garden coolies in about equal shares, that is about 120,000 each. The Muhammadan Member for Cachar opposed and voted against the Resolution while, as I have said already, the Member who represented the tea industry was absent from that meeting. I understand, however, from various things I have heard that the tea industry are not in favour of this transfer. Sir, the tea industry in Cachar is of enormous importance, one-fourth of the population of that district being labourers and their dependants living on tea estates. The Muhammadans of that district also number one-fourth of the population, about 120,000 or 130,000, and I received a telegram from the Anjuman Islamia of Hailakandi, an important sub-division in the Cachar district, asking me to oppose this Resolution for union with Bengal. Sir, it is true that the two Hindu representatives from Cachar voted in the Assam Council in favour of this Resolution. I would however point out that most of the Hindus in Cachar are immigrants from Sylhet. The original inhabitants of Cachar were mostly Cacharis or Manipuris or the aboriginal and animistic tribes such as Kukis, Nagas and Mikirs who still live in the hills of the north Cachar sub-division. Cachar was only included for a short time in Bengal, and I submit, Sir, that there is no more reason to transfer it to Bengal on account of the Bengali immigrants settled in Cachar than to transfer to Bengal a district of Behar and Orissa, where Bengalis have settled in large numbers. Sir, the Honourable the Home Member has already mentioned in his speech the difficulty of the Lushai Hills. I would like to emphasize that Cachar is a frontier district, being the base for the Lushai Hills. The Lushai Hills is an enormous sparsely-populated hilly area reaching down from Cachar to the Chittagong Hill Tracts. It is a most expensive district to maintain, as there is a battalion of military police, now known as the Assam Rifles, maintained at Aijal, the headquarters of that district. All stores, rations and other things for that battalion and for the civil population at the headquarters station have to come up from Silchar which is more than a hundred miles away from Aijal by bridle path. If therefore Cachar is transferred to Bengal, it would follow that the Bengal Government will have to take over the Lushai Hills, which, from the financial point of view at any rate is a peculiarly unattractive district. I do not know how my Honourable friends, financial experts from Calcutta like Sir Campbell Rhodes and Mr. Darcy Lindsay, will appreciate the possibility of such a district being included in Bengal.

Now, Sir, it may be thought by some Honourable Members that because I have not yet mentioned Sylhet, the Assam Government see no objection to Sylhet being transferred to Bengal and that they only object as regards Cachar. Sir, such an impression would be quite erroneous. The Assam Government realise that a considerable number of the educated people of Sylhet do desire re-union with Bengal, but they are not convinced that the mass of the people desire such re-union or that the mass of the people would benefit by any change in the present system of administration. Now, Sir, I have some personal knowledge of the Sylhet district, having served in that district for one year as Sub-divisional Officer, in 1905-1906 in the Habigunge Sub-division, where is situated the home of my Honourable friend Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda. It is also the birthplace of another distinguished member of this Assembly, the Honourable Mr. B. C. Pal. I have also served from 1912 to 1916 as

[Mr. W. A. Cosgrave.]

Deputy Commissioner or additional District Magistrate of that district. So even if I have not been there for the last 8 years, I possibly may know a little more about the district than the Honourable gentleman from Berar. Now, Sir, I admit there is some force in some of the arguments in favour of the Resolution. Those are the arguments about the similarity of language and racial affinity. As the Honourable the Home Member has already pointed out the dialect spoken in the interior of Sylhet differs considerably from the classical language spoken in the villages of Nadia or Burdwan. In fact, I do not think that anybody can really understand the Sylhet language unless he lives there for a number of years.

I know, Sir, if I argue that the people of Sylhet will suffer materially by being transferred to Bengal that Honourable Members from the opposite side may retort that this re-union is a matter of sentiment and that it is their business if they suffer on account of exercising their right of self-determination. I would like, however, to ask my Honourable friends Mr. Chanda and Mr. Ahmad how the people of Sylhet and Cachar suffer by these two districts being in Assam. They enjoy the same privileges as the people of Bengal as regards the Calcutta High Court and as regards the Calcutta University. Further, last year the Assam Government spent more than 2 lakhs on the important project of converting the Murarichand college at Sylhet into a first grade arts college. Sylhet is a deficit district. The expenditure in 1923-24, excluding the expenditure of 2 lakhs on the Murarichand college, exceeded the revenue by more than one lakh. Sir, I would like to inquire whether the Bengal Government in its present condition of financial embarrassment would be able to finance this important educational project of the Murarichand college. Sylhet, unlike the neighbouring Bengal districts, has few rich zemindars who are able to endow schools, colleges and hospitals. The Sylhet district, therefore, stands to gain far more by being united with the temporarily settled districts of the Assam Valley with their steadily expanding revenue than by being allied with the deficit permanently settled districts of Bengal. Now, Sir, I understand that one of the arguments in favour of Sylhet and Cachar being transferred to Bengal is that by being included in Assam the people have been deprived of the increased scope of self-evolution. I am not quite sure what that exactly means, but that was one of the arguments put forward by the Mover of the Resolution in the Assam Council. I would ask the Honourable gentleman to my left, the Honourable Mr. Chanda, how the people of Sylhet have suffered as regards self-evolution by being included in Assam. It is an accepted axiom that any sound form of self-government must be built up from below and not constructed from above. The Sylhet district at present is fully decentralised in respect of local self-government. Each sub-division has a Local Board, an independent unit, with a considerable income and real spending powers. On the other hand, in Bengal the Local Boards have little or no power for everything is concentrated in the District Board at the headquarters of the district. Sir, in a question like this, in which sentiment is admitted to be the main consideration, it is needless for me to explain in detail how far the district administration in Sylhet has been decentralised to the great convenience of the people. May I, however, give one example? In Bengal all land revenue has to be paid in at the headquarters of the district. In Sylhet, where there are no less than 50,000 permanently settled

estates paying an average land revenue of Rs. 7, land revenue is paid in the case of permanently settled estates at the five sub-divisional headquarters, while in the case of the temporarily settled estates the land revenue is paid at the Tahsil offices conveniently situated to the areas in which the temporarily settled estates are situated. Does the Honourable Mr. Aney from his experience of Berar think that the decentralised system of administration in Sylhet should be abolished so as to bring it into line with Bengal districts? I question very much if in this matter he would have the support of the innumerable holders of 50,000 permanently settled estates of Sylhet. On the other hand, if Sylhet goes to Bengal, can the Bengal Government be expected to maintain in the Sylhet district the Assam Land Revenue Regulation of 1886 under which the land revenue system is decentralised? Now, Sir, I venture to describe this movement for re-union with Bengal as an unreal agitation. I do not want to labour the fact that the only gentleman who has spoken so far on the non-official side was a gentleman from Berar and that so far no gentleman has spoken from Assam on this subject; but I cannot describe this as anything but an unreal agitation. If the Honourable Mr. Chanda really expects or desires Sylhet and Cachar to go to Bengal, then I would inquire why, after the Assam Council passed their Resolution in last July, does he correspond with Assam Government asking them for their support in his proposal to move the Railway Board at Delhi for a railway to connect Sylhet with Shillong? Again, why in the present month has he moved the Assam Government to participate in the Bengal project for the Grand Trunk Canal? Sir, it is argued that most of the elected representatives of the Sylhet district voted for the Resolution passed by the Assam Council. I would like to point out, however, that in August 1924, after the Resolution was passed in the Assam Council, there was so much difference of opinion between Hindus and Muhammadans in Sylhet on this question that the Surma Valley Conference, sitting under the presidency of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, found it necessary to omit from its agenda a resolution for the re-union of Sylhet with Bengal.

To sum up, Sir, I urge that no case at all has been made out for disturbing the existing arrangements of administration as regards Cachar. If, however, the Bengal Government raise no objection to take over the unwieldy deficit district of Sylhet, then, Sir, I urge, that before any action is taken on this Resolution, an inquiry should be made in that district to ascertain the true wishes of the people.

Mr. Ahmad Ali Khan (Assam: Muhammadan): Sir, I rise to support the Resolution which has been so ably moved by my friend Mr. Aney. Before I proceed to deal with the subject matter of the Resolution, I desire to convey my thanks and the thanks of my friend, Mr. Chanda, to the Honourable the Home Member for the sympathetic way in which he has dealt with the subject matter of the Resolution. The Honourable the Home Member in the course of his speech practically admitted that the case for Sylhet stands unanswerable. He admitted that there has been agitation going on ever since 1874 against the separation of Sylhet from Bengal.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: I am sorry to interrupt the Honourable Member, but I would like to say that I did not say the agitation had been going on from 1874 to 1912. What I did say was that there was agitation in 1874 and there was no recrudescence of that till 1912. That was my point.

Mr. Ahmad Ali Khan: Anyhow I can point to facts to convince the Honourable the Home Member that an agitation has been going on ever since 1874. I will refer him to the memorial presented to Lord Northbrook, the then Viceroy of India. Furthermore the press had taken up the matter, and I will quote just a small passage from the *Hindu Patriot*, voicing the feelings of the people on the question. The passage runs thus:

"The people of Sylhet, it seems, cherish almost the same feeling on the subject of the annexation of their district to Assam that the people of Alsace Lorraine did on the absorption of their country by Germany."

So both on the platform and in the press an agitation had begun as early as 1874, coming down to 1912. This is also by way of an answer to what Mr. Cosgrave says that the agitation is unreal and I suppose got up just for the occasion. In 1912 various meetings took place in Bengal and elsewhere, and as a result of various meetings held in the sub-divisions of Sylhet a memorial signed by all the members of the then Provincial Council was submitted to Lord Hardinge. That was in 1912. I will add that a Resolution for the inclusion of Sylhet was passed by the Indian National Congress in its session of 1911; and furthermore that the people of Assam also held a very important meeting with the object of supporting the Resolution for excluding Sylhet from Assam. So the position is this—that we are not anxious, we do not want to remain as a part of Assam nor are the Assamese very keen to have us in Assam. In December 1917, on the eve of the Reforms, a deputation waited upon the Viceroy and the Secretary of State to present an address renewing the prayer for re-transferring Sylhet to Bengal. These facts prove conclusively that an agitation had been going on, had been very insistent and do not substantiate what my Honourable friend Mr. Cosgrave said, namely, that the agitation was unreal. It is an agitation of long standing, supported by both Hindus and Muhammadans. There was a feeling, however, that if this question of separation unduly passed, there might be some difficulty in connection with the grant of reforms to Assam. I may be permitted to say that in a matter of territorial redistribution there can be only three tests. The first is whether the people desire a change; secondly, whether the people who desire it are sufficiently numerous; and, thirdly, that they speak the same language. I submit that all three tests have been satisfied in the case of Sylhet. My Honourable friend Mr. Cosgrave has drawn the attention of the House to the voting. He stated that whereas only 21 Members voted for the Assam Resolution in the Assam Council as many as 18 voted against it. The House must bear in mind that the 18 consist of the official Members barring three, of whom two are elected and one nominated; so I may say that the sense of the House was unanimously in favour of the re-transfer both of Sylhet and of Cachar to Bengal.

Certain points were raised by the Honourable the Home Member and by Mr. Cosgrave, and I desire to address myself to them next. The Honourable the Home Member stated that a large portion of Sylhet was permanently settled but there was a certain portion which was not permanently settled. I take it he refers to the Jaintia Hills. Well, those are hill tracts and I suppose they do not form an integral portion of the district of Sylhet though for purposes of administrative convenience they have been brought in as such. Further a great deal has been made of the fact that the people of Sylhet do not speak the same language as that spoken by my Bengali friends in Nadia. The same might be said about the Mymensingh and Tipperah districts also. The language spoken in Mymensingh is not the language spoken in Nadia; but the fact remains that the court language of

Sylhet is Bengali, whereas the court language in other districts in Assam is Assamese. It has nothing in common with the Bengali language. Furthermore, there is another point of difference over and above the difference in language between the people of Sylhet and the people of Assam and that is the administrative difference. Whereas in Sylhet we have subordinate Judges and Munsiffs, doing the work of the civil courts, in the Assam districts we have executive officers doing the work of the civil courts. It seems to me no great objection, if objection it can be called, to Sylhet being taken back into Bengal—but there has been an attempt to frighten my Honourable friends from Bengal by saying that if you take Sylhet back you will be taking a beggar into your fold. Well, I question that. Of course there has been a deficit of a lakh of rupees. What that is due to we do not know; it may be due to floods or any one or more of a variety of causes. I am informed by my Honourable friend, Mr. Chanda, that there has been a deficit in one year only, and it seems to me that a trivial matter like this ought not to be allowed to determine the main issue whether Sylhet should remain in Assam or go back to Bengal, simply because there has been a deficit in one year of one lakh of rupees. We are all aware that in Sylhet—and I am also speaking for Cachar—we suffer from great disadvantages in the matter of a University, High Court, Medical College and Engineering College. We have none of those things there; for all those purposes we have got to go to Bengal; and I believe there is no chance of ever having any University, Chief Court or High Court in Assam itself. The province as constituted now is too small and not sufficiently rich to indulge in the luxury of a Chief Court or a High Court or a University for itself

Pundit Shamlal Nehru (Meerut Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): May I put a question, Sir? I want to know this: if it is a fact that there are no colleges in Assam, is it not a further reason that there should be no separation?

Mr. Ahmad Ali Khan: I only state to the House the difficulties under which we are labouring by being kept a part of Assam, difficulties from which we would not be suffering had we been a part of Bengal. The original purpose for which Sylhet was taken away from Bengal and joined to Assam and made a part of the newly created province of Assam was for financial needs. It was then felt that the newly constituted province consisting of unsettled tracts, vacant lands thinly peopled, could not support the burden of administration, the expenses of a costly administrative machinery, and therefore Sylhet being a contiguous district was joined to Assam. I submit that that reason no longer exists now. The Assam districts can very well stand on their own legs and they too like ourselves need to be constituted into a homogeneous administrative unit. It seems to me that the Honourable the Home Member and Mr. Cosgrave have not adduced any valid ground, not given to you any sufficiently strong ground, which would influence you against accepting the Resolution as it stands. I may say frankly that I have dealt exclusively with the case of Sylhet. I appreciate the difficulties that stand in the way of Cachar being also joined to Bengal, but the fact remains that Cachar is very closely allied to Sylhet. There is the hill portion there, peopled by hill tribes, in a very low state of educational development. That is a problem no doubt. But if Sylhet is to go to Bengal, as His Excellency the Governor of Assam has indicated, Cachar must also go along with Sylhet to Bengal, because Cachar's social and racial connections are with Sylhet and not with Assam. I admit that the case for Cachar is not so strong as the case for Sylhet,

[Mr. Ahmad Ali Khan.]

but nevertheless Cachar is in that peculiar position that it has to go where Sylhet goes.

May I, Sir, in concluding my speech say that, in addition to the advantages that I have enumerated from Sylhet being transferred to Bengal, we hope to have a bigger field for our activities. It may be pertinent to remark in this connection that not a single provincial officer to my knowledge has held charge of a district and I should be meeting the wishes of the Civil Services in saying that they too would welcome the change. In view, however, of what fell from the Honourable the Home Member's lips when he told us that he is not in possession of as complete a report as he would desire to have, I would ask the indulgence of the House to have the debate adjourned till the September session.

Mr. Chairman: May I take it that the Honourable Member moves that amendment formally:

"That the further discussion be adjourned till the September Session?"

Mr. Ahmad Ali Khan: I do so.

Mr. Chairman: The original question was:

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council to be pleased to take early steps to give effect to the Resolution which was passed by the Legislative Council of Assam in July last asking that the Districts of Sylhet and Cachar be re-transferred to the Bengal Presidency."

Since which an amendment has been moved:

"That the further discussion of the question be adjourned till the September session of this House."

The question is that that amendment be made.

The motion was adopted.

(At this stage Mr. K. C. Neogy vacated the Chair, which was taken by Mr. President.)

RESOLUTION RE INQUIRY INTO THE QUESTION OF CURRENCY AND EXCHANGE.

Mr. B. Venkatapatiraju (Gunjam cum Vizagapatam: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, the Resolution which I have the honour to place for the consideration of this Assembly runs as follows:

"This Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that a Committee with a majority of Indian non-officials on it, and with an Indian Chairman be immediately appointed to examine the whole question of exchange and currency in the light of the experience gained since the date of the publication of the Babington-Smith Report, and to make recommendations as to the best policy to be pursued to secure a system of currency and exchange best suited to the interests of India."

Sir, yesterday the Honourable the Finance Member gave us a warning that laymen ought not to read where economic angels fear to tread in dealing with this thorny subject. I do not represent either a financier or an economist but I represent only the poor tax-payer of India. The poor tax-payer needs a good exchange—a good monetary standard—as much as the merchant who exports goods or the merchant who imports goods, as

well as the Government. As the currency problem is a vital problem in the interests of the country I do not propose to rouse the ire of my friends on this side or on the other side or to import passion into its discussion in any manner whatsoever but to place facts before the House whether we have had a satisfactory currency system at all since the year 1898. Sir Basil Blackett started with 1912 yesterday. I would take the House to a much earlier period. Perhaps everybody is aware that till the year 1898 we have had some sort of standard which could be called the silver standard, when under the old Act of 1870 Government permitted the free coinage of silver and the people took the consequences of the rise in the

price of gold, and up to 1893 both the advantages and disadvantages were shared by the people as well as by the merchants. On account of the fall in the price of silver prior to 1893 Government thought that they could not get on unless some steps were taken to prevent the free coinage of silver so as to raise the gold value of silver and they have effectively done it after they stopped it. The people complained that the Government ought not to interfere with the monetary standard of the country by raising artificially its value. Merchants naturally complained that they must have a stable exchange in order to have monetary dealings with other countries, and the Government felt that in order to meet their own charges they could not afford to receive less value for their peoples' tribute which they had been accustomed to receive till then. But one thing is apparent from the speeches made by the Members in the old Imperial Legislative Council at Simla as well as by His Excellency the Viceroy then—and it is unfortunate that no additional Member was present on that occasion—that their objective was to have a real, effective, genuine gold standard followed by gold mint and gold currency. That was their objective and they have definitely stated it, but for the time being they were satisfied to raise the value artificially though they expected that one day or other they would reach that goal. Not only on that occasion but even later, even in the year 1910, Lord Meston used words to the same effect. Let me read what he said :

“ We have linked India with the gold currencies of the world. We have reached a gold exchange standard. The next and final step is a true gold currency. I trust that it will not be long delayed, for when it comes it will obliterate all the mistakes, all the inconveniences, all the artificialities of our present system.”

Now we have had a number of Committees beginning from the year 1866. We had the Mansfield Commission which recommended that gold coins should be made legal tender. Even then, though the Government of India were with the people and the people's representatives, somehow or other the people were not able to carry the sympathy or the support of the home authorities. Even in 1866 the Home authorities did not approve the proposal. Even later on, when the Government of India suggested in 1876 and also in the year 1882, the Home authorities did not agree. Even as late as 1902 when the Government of India strongly pressed for opening a mint, all sorts of imaginary objections were raised by the Home Government and it was shelved and ten years later again when it was moved by the India Government, then also the Home authorities objected to opening it. It was natural for the people to understand that there must be some underlying reason why the Home authorities are standing in the way in spite of the fact that European merchants and Indian merchants and representatives like Mr. Gokhale and Sir V. Thakersey pressed for opening the mint. The only reason suggested at that time in the papers was that financiers of those countries did not like that India should absorb all the gold as it would disturb the gold

[Mr. B. Venkatapatiraju.]

trade conditions in that country. How far that has got real foundation it is for Sir Basil Blackett to say. For my part it is enough to state that although European merchants who live in India and share our aspirations in some ways, Indian merchants and the people's representatives and Finance Ministers, one after the other have agreed to it that it is the home authorities that stand in the way of our realising our wish. When they appointed the Fowler Committee, even that committee stated the same thing. Then why should anybody object if we want to have a gold mint? The only thing suggested was that they wanted to adopt what was called Mr. Lindsay's scheme for the present gold exchange standard and they wanted to lull us into accepting it by stating that "not only you but several other countries have adopted it." I shall just mention what other countries have adopted it. The countries that have adopted it are only countries which have no independence and who are subject races. No country which can claim authority in its own domestic affairs ever had it. They referred us to the Phillipine Islands. Perhaps you are aware that the United States have control over the Phillipine Islands. The Dutch have control in Java and they have introduced it. The French have control in Indo-China and they have introduced it and in the Straits Settlements the colonial office have introduced it. Are we to be satisfied with this second-hand compliment of having a monetary standard which is adopted only in slave countries? Why should we not adopt what is in force in countries which are independent, who know how best to manage their own affairs? Sometimes it is stated that in Japan they have adopted this in practice though not in theory, which is different. But neither in theory nor in practice have we got any real standard at all. We have silver rupees circulating which have been coined to the extent I suppose of 600 crores in all these years which are full legal tender. I do not understand how any economist could approve of a token coin being of unlimited legal tender. It is a curious hybrid system which adopted a subsidiary coin for its unlimited legal tender. That has been the case in India. But can you find any real value in the rupee? Absolutely no, except what is dictated by Sir Basil Blackett or laid down by his predecessors in office. It has no other intrinsic value except the value of the silver, because they can put their own value and we have to look to its value in the sterling drafts which are sold in England. Perhaps that is suitable enough for trade purposes to a certain extent; it is suitable for home charge remittances to a certain extent. But is that our idea? Should we have currency only for those two purposes? Should we not have currency for internal purposes which do not depend upon the will of any executive officer? Formerly there was at least a silver standard. A man could purchase silver in the world's markets and take it to the mint and get it coined. Can we do it now? No. Can we do it even with regard to gold? No, for they have put an artificially high value on gold. They say they are prepared to give Rs 10 for a gold sovereign. I do not think anybody, at any rate at the present time, would be so charitable as to give a gold sovereign to the Government to secure Rs. 10. Perhaps we might have done so in the old days when the Government offered gold sterling drafts for Rs. 7. But that is another story, where by depleting 55 million pounds Sterling by the sale of Reverse Councils we have lost 35 crores. Sir Malcolm Hailey who once eloquently pleaded in support of Reverse Councils at last admitted that it would have saved the depletion of sterling drafts if they had adopted a different course than that actually adopted. That means they committed a mistake. I do not mean to say that nobody should commit mistakes.

"To err is human, but our difficulty is that when people think that they never err and that whatever they consider right should be carried out, there it is that the danger lies. That danger is not confined only to administrators but also to experts. It is certain that we are liable to error and when so many factors have to be taken into consideration there are some that might escape our notice. But we are thankful even for little mercies. His Excellency the Viceroy the other day and Sir Basil Blackett yesterday stated that they are willing to appoint a Committee not later than a year, perhaps some day earlier than that even. We are thankful that they have felt the necessity of finding out by proper examination the real and appropriate nature of the currency that suits India after the short experience they have gained of the Babington-Smith Committee's Report. And we have seen a variety of things since that date. Perhaps that Committee never conceived that we would be driven to such an extent as not to be able to fix any ratio which is 'close to the marketable ratio. They have fixed it at 2 shillings, which is practically not at all within the marketable ratio. Perhaps the Government now think that it is better that a Committee should be appointed. But what we are anxious about is that in the statement made by Sir Basil Blackett it is stated—I will quote his own words:

"We will appoint an authoritative Committee fully representative of Indian opinion to consider an improved method of the gold exchange standard."

What I did not quite understand is whether Sir Basil Blackett means, "what improvements are to be effected in the gold exchange standard." Those were the words used. We felt and some of my friends who have given notice of various amendments felt a doubt whether the Government wanted to confine the reference, as they had done when they referred the matter to the Babington-Smith Committee, and that they should only consider the existing gold exchange standard system and suggest improvements, without giving scope to consider whether any monetary standard should be adopted—whether it should be gold, and whether we should have a genuine gold standard, whether there should be a gold mint at all, whether they should consider the feasibility of a gold currency, whether they should consider that the reserves of the Gold Standard Reserve should be kept in London or in India, whether the sterling drafts should be confined only to remittances for the Home charges or should also be utilised for the benefits of merchants—whether all these things should be considered by that Committee, or they should only report how best either to fix the ratio at 1s. 4d., as suggested by Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas, or at 1s. 6d. as perhaps the Government might wish it, or whether we should ask this Committee to go into the question and come to a conclusion, if they desire it, that a genuine gold standard is absolutely necessary; whether there should be a gold currency in India, whether there should be a gold mint in India, and so forth. If the Government were to say, "We just wanted only an administrative recommendation in order to facilitate our work," I for my part would say, I have nothing to do with such a Committee. The Committee which I want should go into all these questions. We say we want a Committee, not because we have not made up our mind. If it is left to us, I am sure most of the Members, the majority, would certainly vote for a gold standard, a genuine and effective one, with a gold mint and a gold currency. But, as we have to carry the Government with us we suggested a Committee to consider all these points, and therefore I wish that there should be no restriction in the reference that is to be made to any Committee that the Government may choose to adopt. That is my main point. It is true in his yesterday's speech Sir Basil Blackett stated

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that there should be adequate and full representation of Indian opinion or in other words adequate representation is what he means. But there is this difficulty. On the last two occasions in previous Committees they had only a solitary Indian while the rest were Europeans. After all the persons who will be affected will be a few merchants and many millions of Indians. If a similar question were to be raised in Canada or in New Zealand or in Australia, how many Englishmen from England would be allowed in order to consider what sort of exchange should be introduced? In a Committee recently appointed in South Africa how many men from England were appointed? I think we must have the guidance of the best experts available. I do not dispute it; and that is what Government mean when they say that they want an authoritative Committee. But we want more than that. The world is not always controlled by experts. There is something like reality which will escape the attention of the experts. The persons who actually feel and suffer or take advantage of it are Indians. Should they not have a preponderating voice in the Committee? They cannot have a preponderating voice unless they have a majority. After all the persons will be selected by the Government and not elected by the people; they will be selected by Sir Basil Blackett or by His Excellency the Viceroy. Does Sir Basil Blackett find it impossible to select 5 Indians, say for a Committee of nine, out of 300 millions? If so, the 150 years' rule has not produced even 5 capable Indians to serve on such a Committee. What is the difficulty for the Government to secure 5 such men out of 9? They can have 4 experts. After all, the Committee may recommend some measures and nobody will be bound till they examine them on the merits. It is for the Government to consider them before they place them before the Assembly. What is the difficulty in giving us a preponderating voice in that Committee? We felt that in spite of the recommendations of the Fowler Committee and as well as successive Finance Ministers from day to day we are adopting a policy of drift. We have not stuck to any policy. We want some effective opinion to be expressed by Indians. For that purpose we want a majority and we also suggested a Chairman. For my part I do not attach much value, because out of 9 members selected whoever is the best man might be selected for the chairmanship, whether he was an Englishman or an Indian. I do not mean to attach much value to it. But I attach much value to the fact that in the selection of persons the Government should give Indians a preponderating voice because it is Indians who will be mainly affected. I therefore appeal to the other side and to Sir Basil Blackett. We are thankful to him for inducing the Home Government to agree to a Committee to which but for his persuasion they would not have agreed. There is this difficulty. In spite of all statements to the contrary what would be the effect in other countries if we have gold at our command, if we have a gold currency and a gold mint? If we refer to the report made by Mr. A. V. V. Aiyar as Controller of the Currency for the year 1923-24, we find that except in two years when to the extent of 90 crores we had an adverse trade balance, on all the years we had a balance of trade in our favour. The average of the 5 previous years ending 1913-14 was 78 crores and odd, in 1918-19 76 crores, in 1920 125 crores; only in the year 1920-21 there was 77 crores against us and 20 crores against us in 1921-22. But in 1922-23 we covered it up by 90 crores and in 1923-24 we covered it up by 144½ crores. Supposing we have got the trade balance of, say, 76 to 100 crores, should we not insist on being paid in gold? We sell our articles and we must be paid gold. Those persons who are dealing in gold will naturally pay in gold. Even for those five years during the

war period we have got a trade balance in our favour to the extent of 880 crores. At that time gold was not allowed to be imported on account of the war. But what I say is this. What difficulty is there for India which is exporting so largely and whose trade balance is so favourable to have a gold standard? It has after all been accepted that what you want is about one-fifteenth of the present silver currency if in gold and it ought to be enough for our purposes. But we can command 100 crores of gold in any year. We maintain that we want that and nothing else. The required amount can be raised in a few years. I do not think that is an important point at all. The only thing which I do not want and for the matter of that no Indian would want is that there must not be an extravagant and wasteful luxury by circulating gold unnecessarily. I agree there. But what I say is that, if I want it, I must have a gold currency, not paper or silver. I may not use it because in all gold using countries they generally use paper. We are now using 185 crores of paper currency. It is not because we have not got silver rupees but because nobody cares to have this depreciated rupee in his store. We prefer paper because it is so easy to carry. Why should you carry these rupees which have not got real value? But supposing you have got an appreciated rupee, would anybody care to have paper? Then you will experience difficulty in purchasing silver from America or some other place. But all the same if the people want to have coin it should not be in the interests of Government to prevent them from having it. Let them have that privilege. You can, of course, suggest various methods of utilising their money. After all, the money hoarded in India is comparatively far less than what is hoarded in England itself. This fact was clearly proved when after the war England produced her gold sovereigns which were kept back from circulation for several years. I can therefore safely say that comparatively India has not hoarded as much as England has either in coin or art treasures. After all we have taken about 20 to 30 crores during the last few years and before that we took only 10 crores. You cannot possibly dictate the class of people who should use gold and in what form they should use it. We have used it for one purpose whereas the other countries are using it for a different purpose. But all the same, what we want is some stable standard, a gold standard preferably, and if we cannot have a gold standard, it is far better to have a silver standard than this hybrid standard. Nobody understands it and it depends on the sweet will of the executive. I wish the Government would impress upon the Home authorities to agree, if not now, at some future day, to have a gold standard and not merely to be satisfied with the gold standard but, as Lord Meston suggested, also to have a gold mint and currency. Give up all artificialities and coin gold and let the people have the satisfaction of knowing what they have really got.

Sir, I do not propose to take up any more time. I hope that the whole Assembly will carry this Resolution.

Mr. President: Before I call upon Members to continue the debate, I understand the Home Member wishes to take this opportunity of making an announcement.

STATEMENT OF BUSINESS.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman (Home Member): Sir, I am sorry to interrupt the business of the House, and I will ask your indulgence, Sir, and the indulgence of the House for doing so. I had hoped to make a statement at the proper time this morning, but was unable to do so. It

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refers to the business of next week, and the reason I am making it now is that I understand later in the evening a large number of Members will not be here to hear it, so, with your permission, I will make it now. Honourable Members will remember that yesterday the Honourable Mr. Jinnah raised two points. He asked whether a date could be given for the discussion of the Bengal legislation and I promised then that I would do my best to secure an early date. The other request was a request that the business of the House fixed for Monday should be moved on owing to the Convocation of the Aligarh University. I also promised I would consider that. I regret to find that the two requests are mutually incompatible. If I did the one, I should not be able to do the other, and I think there is no doubt which the House really wants. Therefore, much as I dislike keeping to the business of Monday, I find I must do so notwithstanding the Convocation of the Aligarh University. I myself was invited to that and should have been very glad to have gone, but, in the circumstances of the business of the House, I regret I am not able to make any change as regards Monday. As regards the other matter, I propose to put down on Wednesday, which is an official day, a Resolution which stands in the name of my Honourable friend Mr. Duraiswami Aiyangar, which will enable the House to have the fullest discussion on the subject.

RESOLUTION RE INQUIRY INTO THE QUESTION OF CURRENCY
AND EXCHANGE—*contd.*

Sir Campbell Rhodes (Bengal: European): Sir, I will endeavour to be brief and avoid those dangers of inflation which seem to affect speeches on currency matters. I regret that I cannot wholeheartedly support my Honourable friend the Mover. In fact, I have to oppose this Resolution on two grounds, the inclusion first of the word "immediately", and secondly, of the words that a Committee "with a majority of Indian non-officials" shall be appointed. I will take the latter first, because it is obviously the one in which the Mover himself has the most interest. He has told us he is not an expert, and he has indicated that his interest in currency matters is as remote as, say, Berar from Sylhet. I personally, Sir, have not the slightest objection to a Committee composed entirely of Indians, but I would like it expressed in the Resolution as a majority of experts and not as a majority of Indians, for I can only assume from the words and from what the Mover has said that what he wants is really a packed Committee to prejudge the issue and to write its report in accordance with the dictates of people outside. He has not told us what this Committee will consist of except that it will consist of nine persons. The majority of five—is it to be drawn from the Cotton Green of Bombay or from those erudite professors who write political diatribes under cover of what they call an economic journal? My Honourable friend has not told us. Now amongst the four members you will undoubtedly have to have, as the Honourable Sir Basil Blackett told us yesterday, an international expert from some part of the world outside India. You will obviously have to have one of the leading officials of the Imperial Bank and a representative of the Exchange Banks. Then Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas will insist on a representative from the Bengal Chamber of Commerce (*Mr. M. A. Jinnah*: "Bengal Chamber of Commerce"?) I think so, because the whole of his speech

yesterday—at least the better parts of it—were culled, including a quotation, from a letter sent by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to the Government of India last July. Mr. Jamnadas Mehta will insist on a representative from the Associated Chambers of Commerce for he quoted them last night as being the last word in everything financial. We shall have therefore no room for the Honourable the Finance Member (*Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta*: "It may be better so.") His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, when he was very courteously discussing with one who was once a corporal in the Indian Defence Force, the position in front of us at the manoeuvres pointed out how dangerous would be a counter-attack on the flank by the Khaki Army if it were delivered at the wrong time and that the great danger usually was that the attack was launched too early. I am very sorry to say that even the Government, in spite of past unhappy experiences, want to legislate by the calendar, and have suggested that they can appoint their Committee within a year. I think probably that was only in order to conciliate the House, an attitude which I think is one of the most charming, but sometimes one of the most unfortunate attributes of the Government. But the Finance Member himself yesterday told us how dangerous it was to have your Committee at the wrong time and the Mover himself has hinted at the same fact in recalling the unhappy experiences of the past. The Mover has told us that he is not a commercial man. Well, Sir, I am. I know that these dangers are very real. I know what dislocation in the foreign exchanges mean. In the remote province of Madras they did not feel it very severely, but I remember those wholesale repudiations of contracts which caused loss to so many innocent people and which affected India's good name in the credit of the world; those numerous failures of many Indian firms, those heavy losses which Indian firms to their credit (as well as European) stood up to and were so crippled that even to-day they cannot stand such another shock. The Mover has suggested obviously that we ought to be back at 1s. 4d. He has not told us how we are going to get there. I listened very carefully to hear—and perhaps some of those who support the Resolution will give us some idea—how we shall get away from the present rate to 1s. 4d. without causing another serious crisis. The Mover suggested that he spoke as a poor tax-payer. Well, I must put one point before him. The reversion to 1s. 4d. will mean, I estimate, that we shall have to raise between 5 and 6 crores more in taxation to pay our foreign obligations, and I was listening hard to hear whether he proposed to meet that by a charge of about three annas per head on salt. He has mentioned that only subject countries have token coinage of unlimited tender. I think, if he will go to England, he will find token coinage of unlimited tender. He suggests that he ought to be paid in gold if he so desires. As the Honourable Finance Member pointed out yesterday, the unfortunate fact is that he does demand payment in gold and that he does get gold and the people would be very much better off if they brought in something more useful; but undoubtedly India does demand gold where it would be better demanding more useful things and undoubtedly it does get the gold. I am quite at one with my Honourable friend and Sir Purshotamdas in wanting to get away from 2s. If I saw a way of shifting my ground from 2s. to something else to-day, I would be glad to do it; but I do not know to what point I must shift and that is the difficulty. I quite agree with Sir Purshotamdas that our currency could be legitimately inflated if we could get away from that 2s. by the normal process of revaluing our securities in London. I do not like the present system any better than anybody else in this House. The Finance Member told us that but for

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his operations during the year exchange would probably in his estimation be at about 1s. 8d. I fully agree. From my experience of the exchange market I should say that that statement was absolutely correct. But it just shows the danger we are in at present of being so largely at the mercy of the Finance Member. We cannot always count on having a man of his abilities as head of our financial affairs, and I am with the Mover in wanting to get back as quickly as possible to a gold standard. Evidently there is to be a battle between the 1s. 4d. man and the 1s. 6d. man. To-day, Sir, I could not come down on either side. Price parities at the moment between the two countries—and it is a very important aspect of the question—seem to indicate 1s. 6d., and I would like here to repeat some words I used at Bombay last year:

“A high exchange or a low exchange is merely a relative term; it is the process of rising and falling which causes dislocation. I suppose the price levels of any country theoretically at least could adjust themselves to any ratio you care to fix, but this question of readjustment has to be considered. Readjustment is a very easy term but you have got to consider what lies behind it. For example, the alteration of the family budget of every one of the 320 million people in India is a painful process and a process which would add to the distress in the country, which would cause unrest and might even cause worse troubles, because, as I recently said in quite another connection, people may not know who hit them but they will be fully conscious of the blow.”

I am not at all certain that exchange can be permanently kept at 1s. 6d. even if it is desirable to do so. Not only during the last three years have we had a very brilliant financial man as our Finance Member but Heaven has showered its blessings on him and given him three good monsoons. We are not at all certain that exchange can stand up against one or possibly two bad ones, and two successive bad monsoons are not an uncommon occurrence in the history of India. Sir Purshotamdas told us yesterday that the time was ready because sterling had reached gold parity and was now in definite relationship with the dollar. And he proved this by quoting from a circular issued by the Postmaster General in the United States. Certainly sterling has touched gold, largely helped however by sentiment, which is such a strong factor, as every commercial man knows, in temporary movements of the market. It may stay there. We hope it will. But if it does, it will not be because the Postmaster General has issued a circular. I doubt even if our own brilliant and be-knighted Director General of Post Offices could effect that result. It cannot be done by the *ipse dixit* of any man. Sir Purshotamdas told us yesterday and the Mover told us to-day that now is the acceptable time. I have heard that cry so often and we have thought we have had stability and we have found that our stability was only that of a performer on a tight rope. I do believe with the Finance Member that the time is coming, but I decline to work by the almanac. I believe the time will come within possibly twelve months to appoint a Committee. But in the interests of the country that Committee must contain the very best brains we have and it must not be assumed that because a man is not an Indian that therefore he is not a follower after the light and will not do his duty. I therefore ask the House seriously to consider this question. We are all wanting the same thing. We are all wanting to get back to stability, to that stability which is produced by the natural flow of economic forces, the inflow and outflow of gold, and which is not left to the manipulation of a Treasury Department. But if the attack is made just too soon, we may fail again as we failed in the past. And therefore I ask the House to exercise a little patience.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett (Finance Member): Sir, this is one of those Resolutions on which the general sentiment throughout the House, both on the Government Benches and among the non-official Members, is I believe, pretty nearly at one. But I am afraid that it is not within my power to accept on behalf of the Government this Resolution in the form in which it stands. The points in it which I should find difficulty in accepting are very nearly the same as those to which your attention has been drawn, Sir, by the last speaker:

"This Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that a Committee with a majority of Indian non-officials on it, and with an Indian chairman be immediately appointed . . ."

I share to the full the desire that has been expressed by the Mover of this Resolution to-day and by other speakers at other times that any Committee that is appointed to deal with this subject should be fully representative of Indian opinion, and if it is an expert Committee, it ought not to be a Committee of experts who have never been to India but should be a Committee composed mainly of people who know the Indian atmosphere and can visualize their expert problems in the light of Indian conditions. But I could not agree on behalf of Government that it should necessarily be a Committee consisting of a majority of Indians and still less that the majority of Indians should be entirely non-official. The Mover quoted from the Controller of Currency's report for the existing year. Those who know Mr. A. V. V. Aiyar know that there are few people in India who know more about Indian currency than he does, and yet this Resolution would exclude him, supposing he were available to serve. Similarly, when it comes to the question of chairman, the Mover himself recognised that the problem of the chairman depends on the sort of Committee you can get together. It would be unfortunate, I think, if you were necessarily tied in advance to exclude from the chair any but an Indian. Government, therefore, are not in a position to commit themselves to acceptance of a Resolution which contains those words. Then the other word to which Government must necessarily take exception is the word "immediately." You will remember that His Excellency the Viceroy three days ago made a clear statement in regard to the view held by the Government of India on the matter of the date at which such a Committee, if appointed, should be appointed. He said:

"It is the intention of the Government to appoint an authoritative Committee to consider the question as soon as world economic factors appear sufficiently stable to justify the formulation of a new policy. They anticipate that if the movement towards more stable conditions which has lately manifested itself continues, the appointment of such a Committee should be possible not later than twelve months hence."

I am afraid that the word "immediately" would not be possible of interpretation in the sense in which Government would necessarily require to interpret any Resolution they might accept. Therefore, as the Resolution stands, I am afraid that I have no option on behalf of Government but to express my regret that I must oppose it. But as I say that is largely a question of form. On the question of substance we are agreed, I think, very nearly throughout. I must confess that when Mr. Venkatapatiraju was speaking I was a little saddened, because I do honestly feel saddened when the sort of charge that is implied in some of the things that he said is made against the Government of India of the past or the Government of India of to-day. He spoke about the Indian Currency system as being a monetary standard adopted only in

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slave countries. Why import that sort of thought into this sort of question? I deny absolutely that the gold exchange standard system as worked in India was a system which was worked only in dependent countries. The nearest parallel, as a matter of fact, to the Indian currency system before the war was, I always believed, Austria-Hungary, one of those autocratic empires which has been swept away by the war. It is largely, as usual, a question of words and in India we are sometimes, I think, inclined to get words on the brain. The real difference between a gold standard and a gold exchange standard is one which I should not feel myself competent to express: it depends entirely on how it is worked. As I said yesterday, I personally am not in favour of the use of gold as currency in circulation. If Lord Meston is quoted against me on that matter I must respectfully ask to be allowed to differ from Lord Meston. But a gold currency does not seem to me to be in any way an essential feature of the gold standard. As worked in the United States for many years, the gold standard was worked without gold appearing in circulation anywhere except, I believe, on the western sea-board. Throughout the east of the United States the country was content to accept bits of paper as legal tender. I would also like to quarrel for a moment with my Honourable friend, Mr. Raju, on his statement that there is something abhorrent in the thought of the rupee being an unlimited legal tender. The rupee, after all, is in essence a note printed on silver. It differs only in essence from a currency note in that whereas it is intrinsically worth a considerable number of annas, a currency note is intrinsically worth practically nothing at all. But in essence the two are very much the same. Therefore, I would ask what it is in the gold exchange standard as worked in India before the war that differs from the gold standard as desired by the Mover when he asks for an effective gold standard now. It is not, I claim, in the introduction of gold into the currency for the purposes of circulation. What I think is the essence of it is that the holder of a rupee or a currency note should be able on demand to obtain foreign exchange—that is much the same thing as gold for his purpose—should be able to obtain exchange at a fixed minimum rate or should be able to obtain rupees in exchange for a foreign exchange at a fixed maximum rate. If you have that, you have exactly the same position as that which arises if you can bring gold into the country and obtain rupees for it, or if you take rupees to the mint and get gold for them and export it. That is, I believe, the essence of the gold standard as desired in this country, that you should have an absolutely fixed relation to a gold currency or the currencies of gold standard countries. Practically that is the way in which the gold standard works throughout the world.

4 P.M.

In England the number of times people actually took gold to send abroad was negligible as compared with the number of times that they used the currency system to obtain foreign exchange at a point just above what is called the gold export point. There is really no essential difference between the gold exchange standard and the gold standard if there is a fixed minimum and maximum point at which you can get foreign exchange. The Mover of this Resolution has been regarded evidently by others as being insufficiently definite in the demand that he makes and there are amendments down (I do not know whether they are going to be moved) asking for a change in the wording. There is one by Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer which attempts to set out at length what is presumably the intended content of the phrase used by the Mover in regard to examination of the whole question of currency and exchange. For myself I can say at once that I see

very little difference between Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer's Resolution and Mr. Raju's. On the whole I should prefer the terms of reference as given by Mr. Raju because I think they are more comprehensive, and that brings me to the question asked by Mr. Raju as to what was the Government's intention in regard to this Committee. On that I have to say first of all that the exact terms of reference have not hitherto formed the subject of any discussion because it was our view that the time had not yet come at which a Committee should be appointed, but I can say for myself, as I said yesterday, that my view is this. I will read the words:

"When the Committee is appointed, the Government of India will certainly not lose sight of the obvious desirability that it should be fully representative of Indian opinion, but it must also take into account international factors. There will be many cognate questions to be dealt with by the Committee besides the question of the ratio. We shall have an opportunity of considering what improvements can be made on the gold exchange standard system as worked up to 1914."

When I used those words I had no intention to use them in a limiting manner. For myself I should regard the question whether a gold currency should be introduced at once as quite germane to the terms of reference of the Committee, though I hope that they would not come to that conclusion, and all the questions raised by Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer's amendment would be entirely germane so far as I can see. There is no desire on the part of the Government of India to limit the terms of reference of this Committee so as to prevent a full examination of what currency system would best suit Indian needs, whether it should be a gold currency in circulation or a genuine gold standard, which I believe to be identical with the gold exchange standard system if you carry it to its logical conclusion, or whether it should be the gold exchange standard system as worked before 1914. All these would be questions which would be naturally discussed by that Committee.

I will not attempt to follow Sir Campbell Rhodes in his discussion of the question of the ratio. We shall have another opportunity during this Session of discussing the ratio, as to whether the moment has arrived for introducing the ratio of 1s. 4d. at once. I will only say two things in regard to that. First of all I entirely sympathise with the desire of Sir Campbell Rhodes that the time during which the Finance Member is responsible for the rate of exchange from day to day shall be curtailed as soon as possible. It is not a desirable position, nor is it a position which I in any way covet. But as I said yesterday, I do not think that the time has come yet when any ratio can be finally fixed; nor has the time come when we can determine what that ratio should be. The other thing that I would like to say is that it has come to my notice that the fact that leave has been given to Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas to introduce his two Bills fixing the ratio at 1s. 4d. has been taken in some quarters as implying that the Government of India are in agreement with those Bills. Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas knows very well that the question of leave to introduce a Bill of this sort is a matter which is entirely in the hands of the Governor General, not in the hands of the Governor General in Council, and the reasons for which leave is given to introduce such a Bill can not be discussed here on the floor of the House. But I should like to say at once that they do not imply for a moment either that the Governor General or the Governor General in Council agrees with the contents of a Bill for which leave is given for introduction. The contents of that Bill may be violently opposed by the Government, but leave may still be given. I know Sir Purshotamdas realises this, but I have been told from one or two quarters that the

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action of the Governor General in allowing these Bills to be introduced has been taken as indicating the intention of Government to accept them. I say that merely to avoid possible difficulties.

I do not know what action the Honourable Mover of this motion will desire to take in view of the statement that I have made. I should be loath to have to go to a division for a difference of words, but, at the same time, speaking on behalf of the Government, I must say again that as this Resolution stands it is not one to which the attitude of Government can be anything but that of opposition.

Mr. President: It may clear the position if I say something about all the amendments on the paper first. It appears to me that the amendment standing in the name of Sardar V. N. Mutalik is one which offers a more explicit alternative than any other to the Resolution. The Resolution itself is in wide general terms asking for an inquiry by a Committee of a certain character. I understand from the phrasing of the Sardar's Resolution that he proposes to commit the Assembly by this Resolution now to the principle of a gold standard. That is so? (Sardar V. N. Mutalik signified assent.) In that case it represents a most substantial amendment, whereas the amendment standing in the name of Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer, offers merely in one sense an alteration of phrases used in Mr. Venkatapatiraju's Resolution, and in another sense a certain limitation. Therefore I propose, if the Honourable Member wishes to move it, to call upon Sardar V. N. Mutalik to move his Resolution which is to commit the Assembly here and now to the principle of the gold standard and thereby to limit the inquiry into the examination of measures necessary in order to establish it. Does the Honourable Member wish to move?

Sardar V. N. Mutalik: (Gujrat and Deccan Sardars and Inamdars: Landholders): Sir, in view of the statement made by the Honourable the Finance Member, I do not propose to move my amendment and I think the question may be left over, for the present, to the examination of the Committee.

Mr. President: If that amendment is not moved, the amendment standing in the name of Dr. Lohokare offers another alternative in so far as it is an attempt to commit the Assembly simply to the basis of gold as the only unlimited standard of value in currency. I am not sufficiently expert to know the precise meaning.

Dr. K. G. Lohokare: (Bombay Central Division² Non-Muhammadian Rural): Sir, I beg to move the following amendment:

"That for all the words after the words 'to make recommendations', the following be substituted:

'so as to organize the currency system in India on the basis of gold as the only unlimited standard of value and currency.'"

Sir, the wording seems to be a little difficult and I would take the opportunity of explaining it, to begin with. Before I proceed, I should like to submit my apology for entering into such a field as that of economics and currency and for expressing views on a subject on which perhaps I might be thought not to be entitled to speak. As the Mover of the Resolution has just said, I would express the views more of a tax-payer and just an observer of the economic events in this country. It was after my university education in economics that I had a tendency to look into

It, though I do not profess to be a regular student or in any way concerned with commerce and other things. But I looked into these things more from the point of view of a general citizen. The words that I have incorporated in my amendment do appear to be rather a little more technical, but the necessity for putting them in this technical language has arisen out of the situation, out of the action taken by the Committees appointed to inquire into the currency question by the Government of India, now and then. The words "standard of value and currency", I may at once tell the House, may be replaced here by the words "legal tender". In common parlance, it would be just legal tender. That the medium of exchange need not necessarily be the standard of value is the view expressed by certain economists. What I wish here therefore is that the standard of value and the standard of currency should be the same, that is, in gold; in other words, it means gold currency. A gold currency should be the legal tender, the only unlimited legal tender. By these words I limit the reference to one fact, that the rupee should be a subsidiary coin. These are the two purposes that I wanted to serve, with the words that I have adopted. This fact of making the rupee a subsidiary coin arises out of the recommendations of the Fowler Committee in 1898, which failed in that respect, and consequently by simply introducing gold in the currency the purposes which Indians had really at heart could not be achieved. Therefore, I have translated the words, "an effective gold standard" into "the only unlimited standard of value and currency". In other words, it means simply this, that it should be an effective gold standard with a gold currency. That is first the meaning of the amendment that I have tabled. Secondly, my purpose in limiting the reference to the Committee is obvious. I do not hide that it expresses disbelief in the various Committees now and then appointed to inquire into the currency questions in India. The rupee began to fall in value from 1873, and from 1893, up to 1919, when there was the last Committee, so many despatches and other things have been written and said and so many Committees have been appointed but with an entirely different view to that held by Indians in politics and Indians in commerce. Indians in commerce and Indians in politics expressed one view and the Committee always came to another conclusion. It was as the records show tinged with not only the international feeling but with the feeling of the keepers of the British Treasury—I hope I shall be excused, but it is plain there—with an anxiety that they wanted to keep gold out of India. It has been plainly said even by Indian witnesses before the Currency Committees and it can be found even in the records of the various Committees as well as from the records or the correspondence regarding the subject from the Government of India, and the Secretary of State so far as they are available for perusal by other workers.

The short history of the whole thing is this. From 1873 silver began to fall in price as compared to gold. The fall necessitated so much taxation that not only the Government but people as well every now and then represented to the Secretary of State to take certain action which would definitely avoid this. I must at this stage give my tribute to those financiers of India who placed sincerely the cause of India before the Secretary of State and the British Treasury. But one way or the other from 1872 onwards, from the proposals of Sir Richard Temple in 1872 onwards, every now and then all these proposals have been tried to be shelved so as to make India refuse the share of gold that she would have in the world production in spite of her balance of trade in her favour. In 1872 there were Sir Richard Temple's

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proposals and at that time the demonetisation movement of silver had commenced. That was just the point when India could have taken to the mono-metallic gold standard without any appreciable loss to the Indian tax-payer, but the opportunity was anyhow lost. Then comes in the field the proposal of Colonel Smith, Mint Master of Calcutta, in 1876. He proposed to open a mint to free gold coinage and stopping the coinage of silver, that is, giving silver a subsidiary place since it had failed to keep up its value as currency. In 1876 the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and the then Finance Member practically supported Colonel Smith's proposal. But there, again, the Secretary of State set them aside. Government again proposed in 1878 another method of facilities for the introduction of gold coin. They however proposed unlimited silver coinage on terms not favourable to silver so as to put in gold coinage in more numbers and slowly come down to a gold standard. The Secretary of State rejected it and said, as my Honourable friend Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas pointed out yesterday, that he would wait and see with a 'Masterly Inactivity' which the then Secretary of State and a series of Secretaries of State have every now and then advised the Government of India. Then came in the idea of bi-metallism. The Government of India clung to the idea that bi-metallism would come in to save the country. They expected this in vain and offered to do nothing to displease other nations if the bi-metallic system was established. Anyhow, all the four Conferences could not achieve anything in the matter. On the other hand, the British Treasury had on one occasion offered to prevent India from having any share of the gold in order that other countries in the world might not suffer. Thus, in short, the British statesmen have proved themselves, I may be excused if I use a stronger word, faithless to the cause of India. Then came in the proposals of the Herschell Committee in 1892. The mints were to be closed and gold was to be given in exchange of rupees at the rate of 1s. 4d. and the Government were to receive gold as well in satisfaction of their dues. But this, too, after a short time proved to be converted to a single-sided convertibility, Government only receiving gold and not giving back gold when rupees were tendered. In 1898, the Fowler Committee came in and they put in the proposals of a gold standard, but failed or rather had the intention of not limiting silver coinage at all, so that the token currency became an unlimited legal tender. Although the mints were closed, free coinage of token coins was raised to such an excess as to raise the price level and bring down the exchange, or rather keep the exchange and the price level to be manipulated in their own hands for the benefit much more of the British trade than of the Indian tax-payer. Then came the famous Chamberlain Commission. Till then, the Government of India's avowed goal was the gold standard. Somehow or other, in giving evidence before the Fowler Committee, the Lindsay and Probyn schemes came in. The Probyn scheme was to give gold in exchange for rupees, at least above a certain denomination. But the Lindsay scheme was meant to prevent an outflow of gold to India. He wanted to keep two funds, one in England and one in India in silver out of which he would balance, as it were, the foreign remittances. But he wanted to create these funds on loan bearing interest so that the rate of interest might control what amount might be set aside for the purpose of exchange. The Government of India, unawares, or even awares, I cannot say which, took the idea out of it that the profits of coinage should be set aside in the Gold Standard Reserve and the Paper Currency Reserve, and the currency reserves should form the basis of manipulating exchange. So the operations of exchange were behind

the curtain and even economists failed to realise what was being done behind the curtain. It is a fact that economics and the question of currency are not understood by many men, and yet behind the curtain the operations were to be conducted uncertain, hidden and unknown to the general public or even to the politicians of India. Anyhow the imitation gold standard, if you call it so, the gold exchange standard, came in by the year 1900-01. All along to 1908, though the gold exchange standard and the keeping of reserves in two countries was the practice in force since 1900, the Government said the gold standard was their goal. The Chamberlain Commission at last disavowed it, and now we find another Finance Member advocating the stability of prices standard. The present theory of stabilizing the prices is the purpose of the currency policy advocated now. Neither the stabilising of exchange nor the bringing of the currency to the gold standard is the object now ; both these have disappeared now from the official records and official statements, and the price level parity is the attempt now. One way or the other, it has come down to this and history shows it, that something comes in the way which prevents India from taking her due share of gold and utilising it for the sake of the currency. It is therefore that in my amendment I try to limit the powers of the Committee. It is not myself alone who has been proposing this. Many Indian politicians have in and out of season expressed themselves in its favour. Almost all professors of economics in India have done so. Economists in India who have issued books on the subject, have been unanimous in saying that the gold standard is the only cure of this evil. Even Professor Edward Cannan of Cambridge has supported the idea very strongly. I may at the same time mention the names of Sir Vithaldas Thackersey and Mr. Gokhale, and even men like Begbie and Reed. It is from the standpoint of the experience of the last 30 years, as we have been refused a gold standard, one way or another, even when our economists were sure that the gold standard was the only cure for the evils that I propose this limitation to-day when a reference is being made to a Committee. We are sure that a fresh Committee will decide again that gold should be set aside somewhere in a central reserve so that it might be more useful, reserves being placed somewhere else and utilised for others. These are the motives, possibly I say, which might have been coming in our way. It is therefore that I wish to limit the terms of reference to this Committee. Secondly, the argument

Mr. President: I draw my Honourable friend's attention to the fact that he has already exceeded his time, and I must ask him to draw his remarks to a close.

Dr. K. G. Lohokare: With your permission, Sir, may I continue a little longer as I have left out the establishment of one argument, that a gold standard is the only remedy?

Mr. President: I must point out to the Honourable Member that the time for the establishment of his argument is now very limited.

Dr. K. G. Lohokare: I will take only two or three minutes, Sir. I will cut short the rest of my arguments. We were told yesterday that utilising gold currency for our purposes would mean a dreadful thing. I put another question here. The profits of coinage are set apart to be utilised for the purpose of exchange. Now the total amount of profits of coinage from 1898 down to 1919 or 1920 would be something like 85 millions of pounds. If you add to this sum interest at a modest rate of 3 per cent. you will have

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got nothing less than 60 millions; while actually the Gold Standard Reserve to-day is 40 millions. Where are those 20 millions? The amount of gold that was set aside for the purpose of currency has not only swallowed the interest but a part of the saving as well. Consequently if it is said that that currency is cheaper, I should like to challenge it.

The second argument is that we have attained stability of prices. If you refer to Mr. Findlay Shirras's book you will see it clearly stated that the level of prices in gold-using countries is far lower than the level of prices in India. I will quote certain price indexes here. Taking the index figure for 1890 to 1894 as the standard, in 1897 India had 110 while England had 90. Coming to 1902 India had 108, while the level of prices in England and gold-using countries was 91. Then we come to a period when the exchange had absolutely failed and you find that the index figure for India going higher and higher till it reaches the figure of 140, while the English figure for the same period has been 112, 106 and 117. Apparently then, if the level of prices argument is to be used, I put it to the House whether India could maintain the level of prices by this mechanism of a gold exchange standard better than by actual gold currency. Silver is bad but that the gold exchange standard is not as good as the gold standard itself can be seen from this argument of the level of prices.

The third argument is the stability of exchange argument which for the sake of brevity I will leave out because my Honourable friend opposite does not assume it.

Lastly, there are certain objections to hoarding gold and such others. How much gold have we absorbed till now from 1835? The total production of gold is worth in this period 3,562 millions of pounds. The total amount of gold absorbed in the form of bullion and coin is 251 millions only—7 per cent. of the total production, not even 11 per cent. as some have tried to make out. The population of India is something between 17 to 20 per cent. of the whole world. The gold that India has absorbed, the hoarding of gold that is being so much made of, is only 7 per cent. In spite of a favourable balance of trade, the gold exchange standard has prevented the coining of gold to India and has prevented the country from taking her natural share in the markets of the world.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: Will the Honourable Member tell me from what date he gives that figure 1835?

Dr. K. G. Lohokare: I take it from 1835 up to 1919. I therefore think and recommend it to the earnest attention of the House that the mechanism of the gold exchange standard has absolutely failed; it is not cheap; it is not automatic; it is not automatic in the sense that the sale of Councils and Reverse Councils does not have a greater effect in contracting the currency, it can contract currency only as far as the gold standard reserve is concerned; since the other reserves are appropriated reserves nobody can take out of it or add to it without having a corresponding replacement. Consequently the only thing that you have there is the Gold Standard Reserve that you can manipulate. The contraction of currency that can at most be effected is therefore only limited to the amount of the Gold Standard Reserve that you have with you. The automatic expansion or contraction of this inconvertible money is therefore not present here. For the trade

requirements you can put in money; you cannot take it out; as the Honourable Mr. Gokhale once said in his speech on a Finance Statement it is as it were a water-logged field—you can put in coinage in any way; you cannot take it out.

I am sorry that the limited time prevents me from developing the argument further, and I therefore say that the currency as it is to-day is neither cheap nor automatic nor stable in exchange; it cannot even stabilise the level of prices and cannot therefore be continued *ad infinitum* to the detriment of the Indian nation. I therefore appeal to the House to take up this point of limiting the powers of the Committee to recommend measures and ways and means for having a gold standard as early as possible, so that we may not find ourselves in trouble again and again. That is the experience of our past Committees, and I request my Colleagues not to be afraid of limiting the powers of this Committee in the manner I have indicated in my amendment.

Mr. President: Amendment moved:

“ That for all the words after the words ‘ to make recommendations ’ the following be substituted ;

‘ so as to organise the currency system in India on the basis of gold as the only unlimited standard of value and currency. ’ ”

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas (Indian Merchants' Chamber: Indian Commerce): Sir, the good example set by the Honourable the Finance Member yesterday in widening the field on which he was to address this House in connection with his Bill appears to have been fairly infectious even to-day. The Resolution before the House concerns two things, firstly, the personnel of the Committee which His Excellency the Viceroy has announced and, secondly, the time when that Committee may be set to work. Instead of restricting the discussion to these two points, I see that the Honourable Members who preceded me have taken the Assembly back to the year 1835 and even a little earlier. As I taxed the patience of the House fairly fully yesterday, I do not propose to follow the example of the Honourable Member who has just preceded me. I would like not to refer to any of the remarks from the Honourable Sir Basil to-day except to one with which he wound up his speech. The Honourable Sir Basil referred to the impression which he said appeared to him to have been caused by the announcement that His Excellency the Viceroy has been pleased to assent to my Bills being discussed in the Assembly. Some persons, I do not know whether they are Members of this House or not, apparently have informed Sir Basil that that announcement, which has come in the ordinary course by the way, has been construed as meaning that the Government of India are prepared to accept a *1s. 4d.* gold basis. I do not know who those dignified persons are, to whose opinions or impressions the Honourable the Finance Member has given all that importance that he chose the floor of this House to make a statement in order to remove those impressions, but I cannot help feeling that those gentlemen whose impressions the Honourable Finance Member is anxious to remove must either be absolutely ignorant of the tendencies of the Government of India or must be great simpletons. For it is very rarely, Sir, that the Government of India take any cue from a non-official Member of this House, and it is still more rare for the Government of India in the Finance

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Department to take a cue from a representative of the Indian commercial community. If the Bills were to be moved by my Colleagues from Bengal I could have understood that impression but most important of all, Sir, is that it was only yesterday that the Honourable the Finance Member criticised my Bills and I had the temerity to throw out to him a very mild but a very firm challenge that, if the Government of India thought the House would reject the 1s. 4d. basis, the Honourable the Finance Member may as well give me an official day for my two Bills. I therefore cannot have been a party to that impression which the Honourable the Finance Member was anxious to see removed, and I make this statement to begin with in my remarks because I feel it is in fairness due to me that nobody in this House should carry away the impression that I had anything to do with the wrong impression of the Honourable the Finance Member.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: If I may be allowed a word of personal explanation, I desire to apologise at once to the Honourable Member if I have given the impression to him or to anyone else that he was in any way responsible for this rumour getting about. I had no desire to suggest for a moment that he was responsible for it, for the very good reason that I knew that he was not. And, if I have given that impression, I desire to apologise. The remarks I made were made as the result of hearing that the effect of this belief might be undesirable in the market.

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas: I very much appreciate what the Honourable the Finance Member has said and all that I will say, Sir, is that the same permission was granted to me by His Excellency the Viceroy last September and that impression somehow or other did not get about then. There is something behind this misimpression which I will try to unearth and tell the Honourable the Finance Member if I can.

Referring now, Sir, to my Honourable friend, Sir Campbell Rhodes, he generally speaks in this House, Sir, with a humour which is all his own. And his speech to-day was characterised by that special monopoly of his. I am afraid I cannot, and I have not the power to, follow him in that humour. But I do wish, Sir, to reply to one or two of his points. Sir Campbell Rhodes asked whether, when my Honourable friend Mr. Raju recommended this House to ask the Government to appoint a committee with a majority of Indians, he intended that the Government should appoint a packed committee. Now, Sir, the day is still to come when an Indian can expect to have a packed committee. The day, Sir, in the past has been when we have had packed committees from the other side. In fact, my acquaintance with my Honourable friend from Calcutta began in the Calcutta Club when I was on a committee, and the first question that my Honourable friend asked me as soon as we were introduced, was whether the report of my committee which had just begun its sittings in Calcutta was in draft, if not in print. If, therefore, of packed committees anybody knows anything at all, I submit that my Honourable friend from Bengal knows first hand about it and I am not sure that he perhaps has not been a party to some of these packed committees. But I will give him the benefit of the doubt, Sir, and I will only say that if my Honourable friend from Madras at all intended to recommend that there should be a committee packed with Indians, the example has only been set to us by similar appointments by Government in the past.

Sir Campbell also asks, Sir, in that characteristic humour of his which I cannot imitate, whether my Honourable friend wanted on that Committee which His Excellency the Viceroy may appoint within the course of a year from now a representative from the Cotton Green of Bombay. A reference, Sir, to the Cotton Green of Bombay, of all places in India, has its own significance. I do not propose to imitate my friend in that significance, but I do wish to ask my Honourable friend whether it is not a fact that in Committees in the past India has had the misfortune more often than the good fortune to have representatives from the city of London far too much. Has it not also been at times that India has had on these Committees a little too much of representation, if not from the Cotton Green of Bombay, from the Clive Street of Calcutta? I am sure, Sir, my Honourable friend from Madras had no intention of representation either from the Cotton Green of Bombay or from the Clive Street of Calcutta. All that the Resolution asks for is that Indians who have a stake, Indians whose interests are to be guarded, should have a substantial and a full say on that Committee.

My Honourable friend then referred, Sir, to my reference in the course of my speech yesterday to a letter that was addressed by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to the Government of India last September in connection with the increasing monetary stringency. If those references from me to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce have in the slightest degree pleased my Honourable friend, all that I will say is that I am very pleased myself. However much I may differ from any person or any Association, I would be the last person not to pay them their just due of recognition whenever they say anything which is right, correct and in the interests of India. Just as I have been accused of being bitter against some interests more frankly than perhaps people like it to be, I also like, Sir, to be all the more cordial in paying my tribute of appreciation of and indeed even of admiration for those same interests whenever they speak correctly and in the best interests of India. But I think I owe an explanation why I did not refer to letters to Government from my constituency. To begin with, that may have been construed as a little of conceit, for it is that same constituency which I have the honour to represent here and it is possible that I may at times be connected with letters from that constituency to the Government of India. But there is a still more important reason which tempted me to refer to the communication from the Bengal Chamber in preference to any communication from my own Chamber. It has not been rare in recent years to run down anything said by my Chamber, which may not be congenial or may not be to the taste of the Government of India, as being dictated by political bias. What truth there is for such an allegation is not a question that I propose to go into to-day. But if I can find anything in the letters of anybody from whom the Government of India would take things as gospel truth, is there any reason why I should not use it? I will only say that I will repeat such references as often as I can, and I only wish that I could repeatedly refer to letters from the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to the Government of India more often than I have been able to do in the past.

My Honourable friend from Calcutta asked this Assembly to realise the crisis that might come on if exchange were to get back from 1s. 6d. to 1s. 4d. I really wonder if my Honourable friend could tell me, or any of his friends by his side could, in the course of the debate, let us know, if this same apprehension of his would not have been avoided in last September when I gave notice of my Bills and His Excellency had assented to their being

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discussed in this House; if it is not a fact that 1s. 4d. gold then really meant round about the rate that exchange was then ruling in India—round about 1s. 5d. or 1s. 5½d. or 1s. 5¾d.; and if the Government of India had accepted it, i.e., 1s. 4d. gold as the rates for the Statute then, whether exchange would not in normal course have come back to where it should be to-day in sympathy with the gold price. I therefore say that the question of time is of the greatest essence and the sooner the Committee is appointed the better, for, the more time elapses the apprehension which my Honourable friend from Calcutta has tried to put before the House will be more and more marked and the responsibility for it, Sir, can only lie with the Government and with the advisers of Government—my Honourable friend from Calcutta who advises Government still to follow a policy of wait and watch.

My Honourable friend further said that but for the very skilful handling of the whole situation by the Honourable the Finance Member exchange to-day might have been 1s. 8d. I will not differ from him. I paid my tribute of admiration yesterday to the skilful manner in which the Honourable Sir Basil Blackett has handled the whole department in that unenviable legacy which he got from his predecessor. But I will say this that it is not for my Honourable friend from Bengal to make much of this, for he at least should remember that, if the resources of India are to be frittered away in Reverse Council Bills to the extent of rupees 40 or 50 crores in making an experiment, the justification for any wrong step that you may now wish to take should not be laid at the door of India or non-official Indians. In fact, this is the main reason why my Honourable friend from Madras says or recommends to Government that the Commission or Committee should be appointed immediately, which means with as little delay as possible. The more time that elapses the greater will be the danger of disturbing the exchange situation whenever the Committee decide upon a lower figure in the Statute than the one which now prevails. And to-day what is it but the skilful manipulation of the Honourable the Finance Member which can prevent exchange from going high? Indeed, about two months back many parts of India apprehended that exchange might go to 1s. 7d. and even higher. Whilst I again repeat that the reason why the exchange situation has kept at the figure where it now is lies to the credit of the Honourable the Finance Member, the delay and loss that may ensue will always be quoted against the Government of India and against their advisers, or those who support them in this policy of do nothing at present.

My Honourable friend from Calcutta criticised my reference to the return of sterling to gold point. He referred to my Honourable friend who represents the Post Office in this Assembly and asked him about the post offices in America accepting money orders now to various parts of Great Britain on the pre-war basis. I would like the Honourable Member representing the Post Office in this Assembly to tell me if it is usual for post offices even in India, leave aside America which is a better organised country, to make a change to something which prevailed 10 years back for the purpose of changing again, or whether the post offices make a change in order to keep to that change at least for some years. The very fact that the post offices in the United States of America have determined or have notified that they will accept money orders at the old pre-war parity between dollar and sterling should, to my mind, I speak subject to correction by the Honourable international financial expert over there, give the

greatest confidence that the pound sterling will be tried to be maintained at that figure. If Sir Basil Blackett says "No" I will say that I may be mistaken, but I will not take that from anybody else but Sir Basil over there and Sir, that indicates the resolve of Great Britain and the United States of America to try and keep the pound sterling round about the pre-war ratio.

I expected Sir Campbell Rhodes to tell us something a little more substantial than humorous, a little more clearing the air than a few flings at the Cotton Green of Bombay. Whatever fling he may like to indulge in, I do not wish to refer to the happy jutewalla whose dictation is or at least used to be more or less accepted like *jo-hukum* by the Government of India in the past, although I cannot say that it is still to-day being accepted in the same spirit by the Honourable the Finance Member over there. What will help the Assembly to come to a correct decision is not personalities but more knowledge, clearer facts and logical facts. I hope that this will be the last time that I and my Honourable friend over there speak in this House either about the Cotton Green of Bombay or Clive Street of Calcutta.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya (Allahabad and Jhansi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, the Honourable the Finance Member has told us that on the general question raised by this Resolution the Government benches and the non-official Members are at one. He has told us that the differences on this Resolution between the Government and the Mover of the Resolution are limited to three facts, namely, firstly, that the Resolution asks for a non-official Indian majority, secondly, that it asks for an Indian Chairman, and, thirdly, that it asks for steps to be taken immediately to appoint a committee. Now, Sir, in view of the immense importance of the questions which have to be considered, is it not possible that the Government should reconsider their position? The proposal to constitute a committee is one which deals with the most vital interests of the country. The Resolution makes it clear that it wants that the Committee should examine the whole question of exchange and currency in the light of the experience gained since the date of the publication of the Babington Smith Report and to make recommendations as to the best policy to be pursued to secure a system of currency and exchange best suited to the interests of India. Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer in his amendment has amplified what the last sentence of the Resolution means and he has suggested that we should substitute for the words beginning from "to examine the whole question" the following words:

"To investigate, and report upon, the whole question of Indian Exchange and Currency, the question of the location and investment of the cash balances, the Currency Reserve and the Gold Standard Reserve of the Government of India and the Secretary of State, and the principles, conditions and limitations governing the issue of Council Bills and Reverse Council Bills, and to make such recommendations as may be best calculated to advance the interests of India, especially in the direction of industrial and economic development".

The Honourable the Finance Member has made it quite clear that the terms of reference of the Committee that will be appointed will not be narrow. In fact, if I understood him correctly, he accepted the view suggested by Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer in the amplification which is put in in his amendment. It is thus agreed that whenever the Committee is appointed it will deal with the questions which have been indicated in the amendment of Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer. If that is so, I ask the Honourable the Finance Member to consider again whether the proposal that the Committee should be appointed immediately is not one which the Government should accept.

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I can understand a difference of opinion as to the time when the recommendations of a committee like the one proposed should be put into effect. I can understand the Government desiring to wait for a favourable turn of circumstances, for more stability to which the Honourable the Finance Member referred, in the world factors and to other conditions in determining the time at which the recommendations of a committee like this should be put into operation. But I do ask the Honourable the Finance Mem-

5 P.V. ber to consider whether, in view of the immensity of the problem, in view of the immensity of the interests involved, an investigation like what is proposed should not be commenced immediately or as early as may be practicable. I hope, Sir, that no one will argue that the conditions which are being looked for twelve months hence or within a year will be stable for any length of time. No one can feel certain that any conditions which may come into existence within a year will continue for even a month or for a year. Conditions which affect currency and exchange will continue to fluctuate more or less, and if we have to wait for a certain set of conditions being established in order that an inquiry might be inaugurated into the important problems which have to be dealt with, we might have to wait for a very long time. I submit that the inquiry is one which does not depend only upon the factors to which the Honourable the Finance Member referred. It will have to take into consideration so many ramifications of the problems connected with currency and exchange, that the inquiry will necessarily have to be a long one, and it is therefore desirable that it should be begun as early as may be practicable. And after all what does the acceptance of the word "immediately" commit the Government to? It certainly does not mean that the Committee will be appointed to-morrow. We understand that it may take some time to determine the personnel of the Committee. In determining the personnel of the Committee the Government may have to consult the gentlemen whom it wishes to ask to serve on the Committee. Some time must elapse, but is it necessary to refuse agreement, are the Government right in opposing the Resolution merely by reason of the presence of the word "immediately" in it? I hope the Government will reconsider this matter.

Then, as regards the question of a majority of Indians serving on the Committee, I ask the Government, and particularly the Finance Member, to remember the history of this question, to remember the feeling that has prevailed amongst Indians for a long time past, that the question of Indian currency and exchange has not been dealt with as well as it should have been dealt with. We do not wish to impute motives to any Honourable Members who at any time served as the Finance Member of the Government of India. They must have had very good reasons for the conclusions they came to and the course they adopted. But it is an unfortunate fact that the system of our currency has not been put on a sound basis. When we cast back our eyes to the huge losses that the country has sustained by reason of the want of a correct policy in currency and exchange, we feel staggered at them. We therefore desire that there should be an end put to the present system. We desire that we should have an examination of the subject by experts with the assistance of Indians who, though they may not claim to be experts, know where the shoe pinches, and will at any rate understand the general aspects of the problem which will be considered by the Committee. Indians as a whole should be able to feel that the matter has received that consideration at the hands of the Committee, which will certainly contain experts, which they think they are entitled

to ask for it. Suppose there is a majority of Indian members on this Committee, will the majority not represent the huge majority of the interests which will be dealt with by the Committee? Can any experts from London or can any experts in India represent the views and the feelings, the hopes and the fears, the various vital interests of the vast mass of the people as Indians can? We do not ask that there should be a majority of Indians on the Committee from any narrow racial point of view. We know that there are many Europeans in this country, there are many **outside** it, who are as honourable men as any in the world. We know that in the past we have had many friends among Europeans, even among the officials of Government, who served the people of India honestly, with care and anxious solicitude, and successfully. We honour them. There is no feeling in our minds that no European or no Englishman should sit on such a Committee. We have learnt a great deal from them. We have to learn a great deal more from them, and we are willing, perfectly willing, that they should guide us in our deliberations, correct our mistakes where we **are wrong**, show us our fallacies and try to convince us and carry us with them in dealing with a problem which is of the greatest interest to us people of India. But I do beg the Government, Sir, to consider whether the proposal that a majority of the members of the Committee should be Indians, and non-official Indians, is such a proposition that it must be rejected by the Government. The Honourable Finance Member mentioned one official Indian, namely, Mr. A. V. V. Aiyar, whom he would evidently like to see on the Committee. I join with him in paying the tribute he paid to him; but the acceptance of the view that there should be a majority of non-official Indians on the Committee need not prevent Mr. Aiyar being appointed to the Committee. Government will have the power to determine how many Members shall constitute the Committee. Government will decide it after considering what the need of the problem is, and they can certainly put in Mr. Aiyar if the Honourable Finance Member thinks his presence will help, and he can certainly put in other people whose presence he thinks will be useful. But a majority of Indians on the Committee is asked for to guard against a feeling which exists in the minds of many of us. I will be frank, I hope I will not be misunderstood. In the past when some Committees were constituted, there was an idea that the Committees were so constituted that it was assumed that their report would be what the Member in charge for the time being expected or wished it to be. Now here my Honourable friend, the Finance Member, has made no secret of the fact that he is opposed to a gold currency being introduced in this country. I do not quarrel with him. In fact he deserves to be honoured because he has frankly repeatedly stated his view that he does not believe in a gold currency. On the other hand, there is a vast body of Indian opinion which does believe in the advantages of a gold currency, which thinks that it has been a great wrong to India that a gold currency has not been adopted and that gold has been kept out of the country to the extent to which it has been. I know a great deal of gold has come into the country, but I wish, I certainly wish,—I may be wrong—but I do think that it is for the benefit of my country that a great deal more gold should come into this country; I think that a great deal more of gold should have come into this country. Everybody knows that if England did not possess gold to the extent it did during the last war, England would not have been anywhere. If the United States of America did not possess the amount of gold that they possessed, the United States of America would not have been able to help England and France and civilization. Knowing that, I feel, and many thousands of my countrymen feel, that it is an indisputable

[Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya.]

advantage to have a large amount of gold in the country. Gold will always have a better value than silver. We know too to what condition silver has been reduced and we do not know to what further condition it will be reduced. If, therefore, there is a strong feeling in favour of a gold currency, the fact has to be taken note of. It may be that the feeling is based not upon reason but upon a wrong sentiment. The experts on the Committee to be nominated by the Honourable Finance Member and other officers of Government may be able to convince us, to persuade us, that we are wrong, that we are not asking for that which is for our good; but until the matter has been considered, until our arguments have been examined and answered, you will find that Indian public opinion will not be prepared to endorse the view of the Honourable Finance Member. Now, Sir, the Honourable Finance Member will have a great voice, naturally and rightly, in the appointment of the Committee. Will he guarantee to us that the Committee will be such that Indians need not have an apprehension that the conclusions arrived at will go against the views which they hold? They have that apprehension, and what will the Government lose by selecting a majority of Indians to serve on this Committee? With whom will lie the decision to take action upon the report of this Committee? It is not yet in the power of this Assembly to force the hands of Government by any Resolution that it may pass. Unfortunately it is not. Fortunately for those who differ from us the Government have the power either to accept or reject a recommendation made by any Committee. Assuming that a Committee such as my Honourable friend Mr. Raju has suggested makes a recommendation which the Honourable the Finance Member honestly considers not in the interests of India, I am sure that while he is the Finance Member his voice will prevail, His Excellency the Viceroy will rightly attach great weight to his opinion, and the Viceroy certainly, the Government of India certainly, will not attempt to force Sir Basil Blackett to accept the view of the majority of members of the Committee. On the other hand, the apprehension felt by us is that if the majority of members is of a different complexion, of a different view, the fact that the majority has reported against what is generally the Indian view will be used against our views when the matter comes to be discussed. I therefore request the Finance Member to reconsider this question also.

I now come to the third point, namely, the appointment of the chairman. I submit, again, that this is a matter upon which it should be possible for us to arrive at an agreement. I do not think my Honourable friend Mr. Raju will insist upon keeping the clause relating to it, namely, that the chairman must be an Indian. We should be prepared—I am sure, in saying what I say, I carry him with me—to agree that if the Honourable the Finance Member sees his way to accept the other two recommendations, the Honourable Mr. Raju will withdraw his suggestion that the chairman of the Committee must be an Indian. I recognise that the chairman of the Committee should be a gentleman who should possess expert knowledge, that he should be a man who should carry great weight with the Government and the Assembly, and we are prepared to have any gentleman, either European or Indian, whom the Government in their wisdom and with their larger knowledge, may select for the purpose. We should be able to arrive at an understanding on this point. We should on our side drop the question of the Indian chairman and the Government should accept the Indian majority in the Committee. It will be such a pity if when there is so much

of agreement in regard to all the essential points which are to be discussed by this Committee the Government should not be able to accept the proposal of my Honourable friend Mr. Raju. I hope the Government will reconsider this matter.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: May I ask you, Sir, to adjourn the debate for this reason that we have an important meeting of the Executive Council fixed at half past five and there seems to be no prospect of the debate finishing this evening.

Mr. President: The proposal of the Home Member in this case must be regarded. He informed us yesterday, with the general assent of the House, that nothing should take precedence of the business of this House. I imagine that a debate on currency and finance conducted in the absence of the Finance Member would be a remarkable case of the play of Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark, and, therefore, in the circumstances, I propose now to adjourn and this debate will be carried over to the next day set apart for non-official Resolutions.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Monday, the 26th January, 1925.
