

Monday, 13th February, 1922

THE
COUNCIL OF STATE DEBATES
(Official Report)

SECOND SESSION
OF THE
COUNCIL OF STATE, 1922



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COUNCIL OF STATE.

Monday, the 13th February, 1922.

The Council assembled at Metcalfe House at Eleven of the Clock. The Honourable the President was in the Chair.

DEATH OF MAJOR-GENERAL ROBINSON.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: I regret to have to inform Honourable Members that intimation has been received of the death of Major-General Robinson, who was at one time a Member of this Council. Our deceased Colleague died in Calcutta very suddenly at the comparatively early age of 58. I think the news will come to the Council as a shock. It certainly did to me, as I saw him last January in Calcutta on an important public occasion, and he appeared to be in the full possession of his usual health and spirits. Major-General Robinson was a distinguished member of the Indian Medical Service. He spent most of his early years in Burma, and his later service was in the Rajputana States where, I believe, he was very well known. He had considerable war service, in the Burmese war, and several Frontier Campaigns and in the Great War. For his services in the Great War he was awarded the honour of a Companionship of the Bath. I think I shall be giving expression to the wishes of the Council if I cause to be communicated to his widow the sympathy of the Council in the great loss she has sustained.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

ACETONE FACTORY, NASIK.

60. The HONOURABLE MR. KALE: Will Government be pleased to state what has been the total cost up to date of the Acetone Factory at Nasik?

(a) Is it run as a business concern or is it a pioneering and demonstration enterprise?

(b) What have been the financial results of the undertaking?

(c) If it is a part of essential national military equipment, why is the expenditure connected with it shown under the head of Industries and not under that of the Military Department?

The HONOURABLE MR. H. A. F. LINDSAY: The expenditure incurred on the Government Acetone Factory up to the end of December 1921 has amounted approximately to 50½ lakhs. Of this sum, approximately 41½ lakhs represents the cost of buildings, land, machinery and equipment, and construction, which is chargeable to the capital account of the factory. The balance represents the working charges incurred from the inception of the factory in 1917 up to the 31st of December 1921.

The factory has not been worked either as a business concern or as a pioneer or demonstration enterprise. Its establishment was necessitated by the extremely serious position created during the war in order to cope with the demand for acetone for military purposes.

It is impossible at present to furnish data showing precisely the financial results of the undertaking. The acetone manufactured has been purely for the use of the army, and it has not yet been decided what price, if any, should be charged to the army for the stocks made over. Negotiations for the sale of the butyl alcohol, which is a by-product of the process employed at the factory, are not yet complete, although so far sales amounting to £15,000 for a portion of the stocks of this product have been made in England.

The administration of the factory was originally entrusted to the Indian Munitions Board, which was constituted for the purpose of arranging supplies of munitions. The Indian Munitions Board was subsequently transformed into the Board of Industries and Munitions, and finally merged in the Industries Department. It was considered undesirable to make a change in the administrative control of the factory, and consequently its expenditure was budgetted for in the Civil Estimates.

I should like to add, for the information of my Honourable friend, that the manufacture of acetone has now been discontinued, the staff is being disbanded and negotiations for the sale or lease of the property are now in progress.

INCREASE IN MILITARY EXPENDITURE SINCE 1913-14.

61. The HONOURABLE MR. KALE: (a) Will Government be pleased to supply information as to what increase has taken place, since 1913-14, in military expenditure, owing to the increased cost of British officers and soldiers and Indian officers and soldiers?

(b) What increase is due to the enhanced prices of equipment and materials?

The HONOURABLE MR. S. P. O'DONNELL: I will supply the Honourable Member with a copy of a Memorandum on this subject which was distributed to Members of the Legislative Assembly in March last.

INCREASE IN CIVIL EXPENDITURE SINCE 1913-14.

62. The HONOURABLE MR. KALE: Will Government be pleased to state what increase has taken place, since 1913-14, in civil expenditure in the Central and Provincial Governments owing to increase in salaries and allowances of the Imperial Services?

The HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK: According to such information as is available the total increase in civil expenditure in the Central and Provincial Governments combined since 1913-14 owing to the increase in salaries of the Imperial Services is about a crore of rupees a year. No information is available as to the total increase in expenditure on the allowances of these services.

ALTERATION OF RULE 6 OF THE INDIAN LEGISLATIVE RULES.

63. The HONOURABLE MR. BHURGRI: (a) Will Government be pleased to state if there was any correspondence with the Secretary of State regarding the alteration of rule No. 6 of the Indian Legislative Rules? If so, will they be pleased to lay it on the table?

(b) With reference to section 129-A of the Government of India Act, will Government be pleased to state whether the altered rule was approved by a Resolution of the two Houses of Parliament, or whether it was merely laid before the two Houses of Parliament?

The HONOURABLE MR. S. P. O'DONNELL: (a) There has been correspondence with the Secretary of State, but it would be contrary to orders to place it on the table of the House without his permission which has not been received.

(b) The correspondence took place at a time when the Houses of Parliament were not sitting, and the amendment could not have been approved by a resolution of both Houses. That, however, is an exceptional procedure which the Act definitely allows the Secretary of State to follow or not, as he may think fit. Government are supplying the Secretary of State with copies of the correspondence so that they can be laid before both Houses of Parliament in accordance with the normal procedure provided for in section 129-A, sub-section (3) of the Act.

The HONOURABLE SIR ARTHUR FROM: Is it not a fact that new rule 6, differing in this respect from the scheme of the Act and Rules as originally passed by Parliament confers upon the Governor General in Council for the first time power to restrict the business of this Council, whereas constitutional checks of this nature are by the Act and original Rules invariably conferred on the Governor General?

The HONOURABLE MR. S. P. O'DONNELL: The rule runs:

'The Governor General shall allot so many days and so on.'

Is that what is referred to?

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: The question, I think, was whether this rule confers powers of restricting the business of this Chamber upon the Governor General in Council, and the suggestion was that such powers were under the Act and original rules invariably conferred on the Governor General.

The HONOURABLE MR. S. P. O'DONNELL: I think the last part of the rule certainly does confer power on the Governor General in Council, that is to say, that part of the rule which runs:

'No Government business shall be transacted except with the consent of the Governor General in Council.'

SECRETARY OF STATE IN COUNCIL'S AUTHORITY TO INITIATE, CONTROL, ETC.
ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURE.

64. The HONOURABLE MR. BHURGRI: Will the Government be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Secretary of State in Council enjoys absolute power and unchecked authority to initiate, control or sanction additional expenditure of almost every kind, over and above the budgetted one?

(b) How many times during the last thirty years has this authority been exercised by them without the previous approval of or against the wishes of the Government of India?

The HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK: (a) The Honourable Member will find the financial powers of the Secretary of State in Council defined in section 21 of the Government of India Act.

(b) It is not possible to furnish the information desired by the Honourable Member without an elaborate investigation.

FINANCIAL YEAR FROM 1ST OCTOBER INSTEAD OF 1ST APRIL.

65. The HONOURABLE MR. BHURGRI: In view of the uncertain character of the seasons in India, the inconveniences and imperfections of the

present arrangement, have the Government considered the desirability of commencing the financial year from the 1st of October or any other suitable time?

The HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK: Yes. The Government have had this matter under their consideration, and all Local Governments and the principal Chambers of Commerce and Associations were addressed on the matter in a letter dated the 3rd December last. Copies of that letter were sent to each Member of the Legislature, and I presume that the Honourable Member's copy went astray in the post. I will have another copy sent to him.

SEDITIONOUS AND NON-SEDITIONOUS MEETINGS IN PROCLAIMED AREA.

66. The HONOURABLE MR. RANGASWAMY AYYANGAR: (a) Is any discrimination made between seditious and non-seditious meetings in a proclaimed area?

(b) If so, has the Government classed Congress Committee meetings under class 'seditious'?

(c) If not, has the Government taken permission in the proclaimed area for the holding of the Legislative Council meetings?

The HONOURABLE MR. S. P. O'DONNELL: (a) The Honourable Member is referred to sections 4 and 5 of Act X of 1911.

(b) and (c) do not arise.

ARREST AND TRIAL OF PICKETEERS.

67. The HONOURABLE MR. RANGASWAMY AYYANGAR: (a) Is it a fact that Members of the Government of India have given statements in the Council that only actual picketeers have been arrested and tried?

(b) If so, would the Government be pleased to state whether Mr. Motilal Nehru, Babu Bagwandas and Mr. C. R. Dass in any way disturbed the peaceful avocations of any class of people?

The HONOURABLE MR. S. P. O'DONNELL: (a) Not so far as I am aware. No such statement appears in the Report of the proceedings of either Chamber of the Legislature. I may add that in December last the Government of India informed Local Governments that it might be necessary to limit the number of prosecutions of volunteers very materially, if the existing jails were not to be filled with a number of foolish individuals who desired to pose as martyrs, and that consequently the power of arrest should, as far as possible, be exercised only in the case of volunteers who were believed to be actively guilty of obstruction, violence and intimidation and those who organised such movements. Subsequently, in reply to a reference from the Government of the United Provinces, the Government of India stated that persons who deliberately organised associations avowedly intended to break the law, or associations members of which were pledged, to disobey blindly any law, might be prosecuted; that it did not appear to be necessary to prosecute those whose joining of or membership of such associations was merely nominal; and that Local Governments should exercise their discretion, the real test in deciding whether or not to prosecute being the necessity or otherwise of such action in order to maintain law and order.

(b) This does not therefore arise. I may, however, refer the Honourable Member to the reports in the press which indicate the charges on which proceedings were taken against the persons referred to.

SEARCHING THE MOSQUE OF TIRURANGADY WITH SHOES ON.

68. The HONOURABLE MR. RANGASWAMY AYYANGAR: Has the Government ascertained whether it was a fact that the District Magistrate of Malabar allowed the military and the police to search the mosque of Tirurangady with shoes on and whether this was the reason cited by the dying declaration of one of the leaders of the rebels as the cause of provocation for the Malabar troubles?

The HONOURABLE MR. S. P. O'DONNELL: There are three Mosques in Tirurangady. One, the Kishakkapalli mosque, was searched for arms on the 20th August. The search was conducted by Moplah Police Officers who respected the sacred character of the place and removed their shoes before entering. Government are not aware of the alleged dying declaration of one of the rebel leaders, but if such a declaration was made, it was without foundation.

EXEMPTION OF MAGISTRATES, ETC., FROM OPERATION OF THE ARMS ACT.

69. The HONOURABLE LALA SUKHBIR SINHA: Is the Honourable the Home Member now in a position to state what has been the ultimate fate of my Resolution for the exemption of Magistrates and members of the Indian Legislature from the operation of the Arms Act, and whether he can mention the date from which effect shall be given to that Resolution?

The HONOURABLE MR. S. P. O'DONNELL: In accordance with the undertaking given by the Honourable Sir William Vincent in the course of the debate on the Resolution, Local Governments have been consulted on the subject. They are practically unanimous in their condemnation of the proposal to extend the list of exemptions in the manner proposed.

I may add, for the Honourable Member's information, that on the 8th February Government accepted a Resolution moved in the Legislative Assembly for the appointment of a Committee to examine and report on the Indian Arms Rules, 1920. The recommendation embodied in the Resolution passed by this Council will be referred to that Committee.

FORT OR MILITARY STATION IN ASSAM.

70. The HONOURABLE MR. BOROOAH: Is it a fact that either a fort or a military station will be made in the North Lakhimpur Sub-division of Assam, or somewhere near the said sub-division?

HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF: The answer is in the negative.

DISTRIBUTION FOR ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES OF TERRITORIES UNDER THE GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM.

71. The HONOURABLE MR. BOROOAH: Will Government be pleased to state if it is intended to make a further distribution for administrative purposes of the territories now under the Government of Assam?

The HONOURABLE MR. S. P. O'DONNELL: Government have no such proposal under consideration.

RAILWAY LINE FROM SILGHAT TO AMGURI.

72. The HONOURABLE MR. BOROOAH: Was it proposed sometime ago, to make a Railway line from Silghat to Amguri, in the province of Assam? If so, when will the work be taken up?

The HONOURABLE MR. H. A. F. LINDSAY: The reply is in the affirmative. A detailed survey for a railway from Sikani, a station on the Chaparmukh-Silghat Railway, to Amguri, was carried out in 1915-16, but it is not possible to say when the construction will be taken in hand.

POLITICAL SITUATION IN ASSAM.

73. The HONOURABLE MR. BOROOAH: (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to an editorial article, on the present political situation in Assam, published on page 10 of the "Statesman" of the 24th January 1922, and also to the letters, on the same subject, under the heading "The Situation in Assam," published by the same paper, in its issue of the 28th January 1922?

(b) Have any steps been taken to allay the unrest, complained of in the said article and letters, for protection of the law-abiding population of Assam generally, and the tea industry in particular?

(c) In case the answer to (b) is in the negative, will Government be pleased to state if they do not mean to do anything whatever in the matter?

The HONOURABLE MR. S. P. O'DONNELL: (a) Yes.

(b) and (c) The Local Government are fully alive to their responsibilities and have taken such steps as they considered to be necessary. Amongst these I may mention the augmenting of the strength of the Assam Rifles, in certain areas, arrangements for a route march of the Assam Rifles, the employment of additional police at the cost of the inhabitants of disturbed areas and the application of the Seditious Meetings Act to a number of districts.

CERTAIN POSTS HELD BY EUROPEANS, ANGLO-INDIANS, AND INDIANS ON CERTAIN RAILWAYS.

74. The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: Will Government kindly state what number of the following posts are held by Europeans, Anglo-Indians and Indians, respectively, on each of the North-Western, Oudh and Rohilkhand and Eastern Bengal Railways:—

- (a) Traffic Inspectors (Transportation section),
- (b) Traffic Inspectors (Commercial section),
- (c) Platform Inspectors,
- (d) Yard Inspectors,
- (e) Luggage Inspectors,
- (f) Loco Inspectors,
- (g) Carriage and Wagon Inspectors,
- (h) Train Inspectors,
- (i) Loading and Unloading Inspectors,

- (j) Goods Supervisors,
- (k) Chief Clerks,
- (l) Loco Foremen?

The HONOURABLE MR. H. A. F. LINDSAY: The only information which the Government of India have regarding the incumbents of the posts mentioned by the Honourable Member will be found in the Railway Board's Classified List of Railway Establishment, pages 43 to 74, a copy of which is kept in the Council Library.

CAPITAL INVESTED ON MILITARY OR STRATEGIC RAILWAY LINES.

75. The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: Will the Government kindly state—

- (a) what is the total capital invested up to date on the Military or Strategic railway lines in India?
- (b) what amount of interest does the Government of India annually pay on the capital so invested?
- (c) what is the total loss to Government in working such lines during the last ten years after meeting working expenses and interest?

The HONOURABLE MR. H. A. F. LINDSAY: The Honourable Member is referred to the answer* given to him on the 31st January 1922 in reply to his question regarding the military sections of the North-Western Railway. There are no other lines in India which are treated as military or strategic railways.

INCOME-TAX STAFF IN EACH OF THE INDIAN PROVINCES.

76. The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: (a) Will Government kindly state what percentage the cost of collection is likely to bear to the gross receipts under Income-tax in each of the Indian provinces in the current year?

(b) Will they kindly state why is the collecting agency devised for the Punjab more costly than it is in other provinces?

(c) Do the collecting agencies in different provinces differ from one another? If so, cannot a uniform system of collecting agency be devised for all provinces with a view to bring about economy in expenditure?

(d) Is it not possible to empower High Courts or Chief Judicial authorities in each province to hear appeals against assessments of Income-tax by collecting agencies? Will they kindly point out practical difficulties, administrative or theoretical, which lie in the way of the adoption of this reform?

(e) Is it a fact that the present Income-tax departmental organizations in different provinces do not provide for the separation of collecting from assessing functions? Do not the Government contemplate the desirability of such separation as is already the case in the Land Revenue Department?

The HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK: I am afraid the reply to this Question, Sir, is necessarily rather long, and, if no Honourable Member has any objection, I propose to lay it on the table.

* Vide page 716 of Volume II, No. 14, of Council of State Debates.

The HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK: (a) The percentages are as follows:—

| Province. | Percentage of cost of special income-tax staff to gross receipts of income-tax and super-tax. |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Madras | 2.2 |
| Bombay | .8 |
| Bengal | .6 |
| United Provinces | 4.0 |
| Punjab | 5.2 |
| Burma | .9 |
| Bihar and Orissa | 4.2 |
| Central Provinces | 4.2 |
| Assam | .6 |

I must point out that these figures represent the cost of special income-tax staff only, where a special income-tax staff is entertained, and do not include any figures on account of the cost of the work where done through the agency of the revenue authorities.

(b) The cost in the Punjab is higher than in other provinces because a special income-tax staff has been appointed for the whole of that province, and also because the cost of assessment and collection is higher in rural areas, where assesseees are few and scattered and where the average income of the tax-payer is low, as compared with the cost in provinces which contain important commercial centres having many assesseees and companies with high taxable incomes.

(c) The agencies in different provinces differ. A uniform system for all provinces has been devised and is being gradually introduced.

(d) The All-India Income-tax Committee considered that a reference to the High Court should be made only on a question of law and not on a question of fact, and clause 66 of the Income-tax Bill which will, I understand, be considered by this House on the 23rd February, contains a provision giving effect to this recommendation.

(e) Where a special income-tax staff is employed, such staff, as a general rule, both assesses and collects the tax, and it is only where the work is sufficient to justify it, that a separate staff for collection purposes is entertained. It would not be economical to provide a separate collecting agency in all cases. No analogy can be drawn from the system in the Land Revenue Department where assessments are usually made only once in thirty years.

SINKING FUNDS.

77. The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: Is it a fact that only 150 lacs of rupees per year have been provided as a Sinking Fund for the Rupee Loan and 50 lacs for the Sterling Loan? Will Government kindly state whether it is not desirable to provide for larger Sinking Funds?

The HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK: As regards the 50 lakhs referred to in the question, I presume the Honourable Member has in mind the provision of £500,000 made annually towards meeting the outstanding liability in connection with India's War contribution of £100 million. As regards the rupee loans, the Honourable Member is no doubt aware that according to the terms of the 1929-47 and 1945-55 loans, 1½ per cent has to be set aside as a Sinking Fund. This amounts to 74 lakhs; and it was on account of the fact that Government did consider it desirable to provide

more for this purpose, that a further amount of 80 lakhs was provided in the current year's budget. If my Honourable friend will refer to the speech of the Finance Member introducing the budget for the current year, he will find that it was only a consideration of the difficulty of finding additional resources that dissuaded Government from providing more funds for this purpose.

NAMES OF PLACES IN PERSIA AND ARABIA WHERE BRITISH TRADE AGENTS AND CONSULS ARE STATIONED.

78. The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: (a) Will Government kindly state the names of places in Persia and Arabia where British Trade Agents and Consuls are stationed? (b) In which of these places are Indians employed on these posts? (c) Has Government considered the desirability of appointing in each of these places Indian officers recruited from Indian commercial classes?

The HONOURABLE MR. S. P. O'DONNELL: (a) Consuls or Vice-Consuls are stationed at Teheran, Bushire, Bunder Abbas, Meshed, Sistan, Kerman, Mohammerah, Ahwaz, Dizful, Shiraz, Kermanshah, Ispahan, Birjand, Resht, Tabriz and Qasr-i-Shirin in Persia, and at Jeddah and Muscat in Arabia. There are no British Trade Agents in Persia or Arabia.

(b) Indians are employed in Birjand and Jeddah.

(c) The formation of an Indian Commercial Service is under consideration, but the question where posts are to be established has not yet been finally decided, and the decision will be governed by trade considerations alone.

EMPLOYMENT OF OTHER MEASURES FOR PACIFICATION OF TRIBAL TERRITORIES IN NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE.

79. The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: Will Government kindly state whether, besides military occupation, they employ other measures for the pacification of tribal territories in the North-West Frontier Province? If so, will they give a description of the measures so far adopted?

The HONOURABLE SIR JOHN WOOD: Yes. The subject was dealt with at some length in the answer given to Rai Bahadur Jadu Nath Majumdar in the Legislative Assembly on the 15th February 1921, to which I would refer the Honourable Member.

INVESTMENT OF CAPITAL ON RAILWAY SIDINGS, ETC., FROM 1914-15 ONWARDS.

80. The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: Will Government kindly state what has been the amount of capital invested on railway sidings and other railway works constructed exclusively for military cantonments during each of the years up to date from 1914-15 onwards?

The HONOURABLE MR. H. A. F. LINDSAY: The information is not available. The collection of these statistics for the past seven years will involve an expenditure of time and labour incommensurate with the results to be obtained, and Government are not, therefore, prepared to call for them.

It may be noted that expenditure in connection with military sidings is debitable partly to military and partly to railway funds.

* Vide pages 34 and 35 of Volume I of Legislative Assembly Debates.

INDIAN TITLES HELD BY CERTAIN COMMUNITIES.

81. The HONOURABLE KHAN BAHADUR AHMEDTHAMBY MARICAIR: Will Government be pleased to state the number of Indian titles held by Muhammadans, Brahmins, Non-Brahmins (Hindus), Christians and other communities, respectively?

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: I should like to ask the Honourable Mr. O'Donnell whether he has received private notice from the Honourable Member that he will be absent.

The HONOURABLE MR. S. P. O'DONNELL: No.

The HONOURABLE MR. S. P. O'DONNELL: The Government are of opinion that the public interest in such a statement would be insufficient to warrant the labour and expense involved in its compilation.

MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: I have received notice of two motions for adjournment of the business of the Council. One stood in the name of the Honourable Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas. That has been withdrawn. The other stands in the name of the Honourable Saiyid Raza Ali. The notice appears to be in order. The definite matter of urgent public importance which the Honourable Member desires to raise is the strike on the East Indian Railway and the threatened strike on other railways. In accordance with the practice in this Council it is here necessary for me to ascertain whether the Honourable Member has the necessary support. Will those Members who are in favour of leave being granted kindly rise in their places.

The Honourable Member has leave.

The notice will be taken at 4 o'clock, or, if the business of the Council is finished earlier, immediately after the business of the Council is disposed of.

MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

The SECRETARY OF THE COUNCIL: Sir, a message has been received from the Legislative Assembly through the Secretary of that Chamber.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: Let the message be read.

BENARES HINDU UNIVERSITY (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The SECRETARY OF THE COUNCIL: Sir, the message runs as follows:

'I am directed to inform you that the Legislative Assembly have at their meeting of the 6th February agreed, without any amendments, to the Bill to amend the Benares Hindu University Act, 1915, which was passed by the Council of State on the 23rd January 1922.'

ASSENT OF THE GOVERNOR GENERAL TO THE ABOVE.

The SECRETARY OF THE COUNCIL: Sir, information has been received that His Excellency has been pleased to grant his assent to the Benares Hindu University (Amendment) Bill, 1922.

BILLS PASSED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

The SECRETARY OF THE COUNCIL: Sir, in accordance with rule 25 of the Indian Legislative Rules, I lay on the table Bills passed by the

Legislative Assembly at their meetings held on the 6th and 8th February 1922. They are:—

- (1) A Bill to amend the law relating to Emigration;
- (2) A Bill further to amend the Indian Lunacy Act, 1912.

RESOLUTION *RE*: CARRIAGE OF HUMAN BEINGS IN CATTLE TRUCKS.

The HONOURABLE MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS: Sir, I beg to move the following Resolution:—

‘This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that steps be taken immediately to put a stop to the practice of Railways conveying human beings in cattle trucks or goods wagons.’

Sir, I do not think that in this Year of Grace, 1922, there will be any opposition to the principle underlying my Resolution from any side of the House. That the poorest of our countrymen should be treated as human beings, and should not be carried as cattle or chattel is a proposition that has merely to be put before the House to get its approval. That they suffer such indignities most of us must have noticed, and I hope the Honourable Members who have seen it will, when they support this Resolution, give the advantage of their experience to this Honourable Council. This Resolution, Sir, may, for practical purposes, be divided into two portions:—(1) the carrying of passengers in trucks in ordinary trains, on ordinary occasions; and (2) doing so on special goods wagons trains, or trains composed partly of passenger coaches and partly of wagons on pilgrim days, or on what are known as *mela* days. I myself have seen a large wedding party being carried in a goods wagon attached to an ordinary train. That experience is not a solitary one, and it is borne out by the fact that some of the witnesses before the Railway Committee said practically the same thing. Lala Mukhraj Bala says:

‘Goods wagons are used for passengers on many branches, quite apart from special conditions of pressure due to pilgrim traffic.’

Sir, this first part of my Resolution will, I am sure, meet with immediate acceptance from all Members of the House. I do hope the Honourable Member for Commerce and Industry, when he gets up to reply to this debate, will have no objection to raise to this part of my proposal and will accept it whole-heartedly.

I now pass on, Sir, to the second part of the Resolution dealing with what is commonly known as ‘pilgrim traffic.’ The attention of the Government of India has been drawn to the inconveniences experienced by passengers when they are carried in goods wagons as pilgrims. So far back as 1916, the Sanitary Commissioner to the Government of India, in his letter, dated 27th September 1916, forwarding the reports of the four Pilgrim Committees appointed under the orders of the Government of India by the Governments of Madras, Bihar and Orissa, United Provinces and Bombay, said—

‘that by far the most important objections and criticisms that the public make regarding railway administration are (1) overcrowding of ordinary trains and pilgrim specials, and (2) the use of goods wagons to carry pilgrims. It may be safely said that, if these objections are removed, the remainder would be so insignificant as to give rise to no serious agitation. The Government of India can hardly be aware’—this was said, Sir, in 1916—‘of the amount of ill-feeling and ill-will towards themselves that these two conditions engender.’

[Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas.]

Stress has again been laid on this point by the recent Railway Committee, who say :

‘ The Government ought to put a stop to this practice.’

Now, Sir, all the Pilgrim Committees have unanimously condemned this practice, but the Committee in the United Provinces and the Committee in Bihar and Orissa have gone into details and have given full particulars of the objections that are raised to this pilgrim traffic in goods wagons. The first objection raised, Sir, is—that the use of goods wagons, from a sanitary point of view, is most objectionable as it leads to much more overcrowding than could be possible in ordinary coaching passenger vehicles, and that it increases the danger of infection of such diseases as cholera. The Committee found—

‘ Not only that the carriages were packed ’—I am quoting the words of the Committee—‘ but after they were fully and tightly packed, a few more passengers were always squeezed in at the last moment.’

The Honourable Members of this House can realize what it means to have a ‘ few more passengers squeezed in ’ after the goods wagons had already been tightly packed with pilgrims. But that is not the worst part of it. The worst part of it is, that when a passenger is suffering from an infectious disease, like cholera—I am sorry to refer to these matters, but the Committee have referred to them—what happens is that the dijecta comes in contact with the clothing of the passengers who happen to be sitting near the patient and they cannot keep themselves or their clothing from contamination. The Members of this House have only to visualise for themselves these horrible conditions under which the passengers have to travel, and I am quite sure that they will agree that an immediate stoppage of the practice is necessary. Such conditions are not possible in the case of ordinary third class carriages, because there the passengers can keep themselves away from pollution from the dijecta of the patient.

A second disadvantage in the use of goods wagons for passenger traffic is that they are constructed wholly—I hope I am right—of steel and iron, and are, therefore, liable to become excessively hot during the day in the hot season and excessively cold at nights during the cold season. Consequently, the pilgrims who travel in goods wagons have to suffer extreme heat during the day and extreme cold during the night. This also would not happen if passengers were accommodated only in passenger coaches.

A third difficulty which has been pointed out, is the want of ventilation. Defective ventilation, as we know, led to the terrible tragedy in Malabar. That tragedy would not have occurred if action had been taken by the Government of India on the recommendations of the Sanitary Commissioner in 1916. Possibly the war and scarcity of materials did not allow the Government of India to take any action. But I want to lay stress on the fact that the Sanitary Commissioner was shrewd enough to see far ahead what contingencies were likely to arise if goods wagons with very little ventilation were used for the carriage of passengers. I hope, Sir, that arrangements will be made to remove this defect, so that there may be no repetition of the deplorable accident which, I fear, will remain always a dark spot on the British administration in this country.

The fourth objection is, Sir, the absence of latrine accommodation. That defect is serious in itself, but, in the case of goods wagons, it is

aggravated because pilgrims, owing to the insufficient, insanitary and unwholesome food that they have to take during their journey and owing to chills, are usually affected with such diseases as dysentery and diarrhoea.

After referring to these four main objections, the Committee touch on some minor objections, such as dirtiness, the difficulty of ingress and egress, no lights, jolting, and last—but I believe not the least important—what the Committee call the sentimental objection which they say—I quote the words of the Committee—

‘may not sound a very serious complaint, but it is a real sentiment, especially amongst the well-educated classes. There can be no doubt that it is a grievance which grows daily and one that wants sympathetic consideration.’

It has often been said—I hope it will not be repeated from the opposite Benches—that pilgrims prefer to travel in goods wagons. The United Provinces Committee has smashed that argument. They have given instances within their knowledge where pilgrims have rushed into crowded and overcrowded passenger carriages and avoided goods wagons, although these wagons, specially cleaned and lighted, were brought near the places where they were standing on the platform. However, the Committee was not satisfied by this experience. They went further, they made inquiries, not only of the educated classes, or the half-educated classes, not only of townsmen, not only of the middle classes, but of other persons than pilgrims and they say: ‘every villager of whatever caste or class was of the same opinion’, that is of the opinion that they did not prefer to travel in goods wagons. That once for all sets aside the argument that is sometimes used that pilgrims or ordinary passengers prefer to travel in goods wagons if they can do so. I hope, Sir, I have been able to convince the House of the necessity of doing away with this system which is now in vogue. The next point to consider is, whether it is possible to put a stop to the practice immediately as my Resolution recommends Government to do. Fortunately, the United Provinces Committee have carefully considered the possibility of doing away with goods wagons, and after noticing and acknowledging the force of the objection that the proposal of purchasing extra rolling stock specially for *melas* and pilgrimages and then allowing them to lie idle for a great portion of the year is economically unsound, go on to say:

‘but we are not convinced that the difficulties are wholly insurmountable or indeed so great in practice as has been made out.’

In support of this opinion, the Committee quotes the instance of the East Indian Railway, which practically never uses goods wagons. On occasions of great rush of pilgrim traffic, they are able to meet the requirements of the pilgrims by supplying sufficient passenger carriages for their use. The Sanitary Commissioner with the Government of India practically endorses this opinion and quotes instances of two other railways, which are not also using goods wagons, *viz.*, the South Indian Railway, and I am proud to say the Railway in my province, *viz.*, the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway; and he goes on to say:

‘It seems fair to argue that what these Railway Companies have accomplished others can do’,

and he gives specific instances. I am sorry to say that in my own province also the passenger traffic on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway for

[Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas.]

Pandharpur (only 10,000 extra) is conveyed in goods wagons and the Sanitary Commissioner said that he could not understand why a Railway of the size and importance of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway could not put up the additional stock necessary to carry this comparatively small number of passengers to Pandharpur. I may make it quite clear that these remarks of the Sanitary Commissioner are in reference to the ordinary fairs and not to the fairs that come once in twelve years or sometimes six years, the *Kumbha Mela*, the *Magha Mela* and *Sinhasta*. The Sanitary Commissioner has not been bold enough to recommend the immediate stoppage of this practice as regards these large fairs which come at an interval of so many years. The reason probably was that the country was in the midst of a great war and there were financial difficulties, the difficulty of getting financial assistance from the Government of India and the greater difficulty of getting carriages, or materials for carriages either from England or from other countries. Fortunately the war has been won and two years have passed. The prices of materials have practically reached the pre-war level, and I now ask whether the Railways cannot get the financial assistance that they require to put this proposition into immediate execution. The Railway Finance Committee, Sir, have very generously sanctioned 150 crores for five years' programme. Although in their report they do not make any mention specially of goods wagons being used for third class passengers, they lay stress on the difficulties that third class passengers experience, and they say:

'Finally, the need for a radical increase in the provision of facilities of all kinds for third class passengers is so patent and the demand of the public on this point is so insistent, that the matter requires no further emphasis on our part.'

They have examined the quinquennial programme that was set before them. The programme was for 149 crores. They have generously sanctioned one crore more and given 150 crores for five years. I now want the Honourable the Finance Member and the Honourable the Member for Commerce and Industry to reserve that one crore for the special purpose which I have put forward in my Resolution before this Honourable House. There will be no difficulty in earmarking this amount. The question then is as to what system should be followed for meeting the rush of passengers on pilgrim days and *melas*. It was suggested to the United Provinces Committee that the Railway Board should purchase a reserve stock of carriages which should be hired out by the Railway Board to the various Railways at the time of pilgrim traffic. There may be some difficulty in adopting this suggestion, but as a layman, in all humility, I support that proposition. It would not be difficult for the Railway Board to incur this expenditure and then keep carriages or trains constructed specially for pilgrims to be hired out for use of whichever Railway that requires it. I believe the amount that they would receive by way of hire of the carriages will most probably meet the interest on the capital cost. Even if it does not, the Railway Board can represent to both the Houses to agree to this loss being thrown on the general revenue, because it has merely to be recognised that this system of carrying human beings brutalises not only the passengers who are carried, but brutalises and de-humanises railway officers. If that fact is recognised, Sir, I am quite sure the Honourable the Finance Member and the Commerce and Industry Member will not talk of practical difficulties and carry out the proposal that I have laid before this House. Sir, the Railway Committee have told us that it is the man who grumbles most that gets most money from the

Finance Department. They say, referring to the reductions made in the Budgets of various companies by the Railway Board under instructions from the Finance Member:

‘ We were told by well-informed witnesses that if a community is more than usually clamorous, if a district is easily accessible to Delhi or even if an Agent is more than usually persuasive, that community, district or Agent tends to get an unfair share at the expense of the others.’

The poor third class passengers do not know how to be clamorous, no person who has access to Delhi or who is persuasive has taken up the cause of these passengers, and as a result their wants are not attended to. I am quite sure that, if this matter had been properly represented at the headquarters, we would have seen something better than what we have noticed in the last year's Administration Report of the Railway Board. Referring to this difficulty they merely say that, owing to the unfavourable financial position and material difficulties due to the dislocation of the industries and commerce caused by the war, progress in this direction has not been all that could be desired. Sir, if matters had been really inquired into more sympathetically, we would have had a better and a fuller appreciation of the difficulties of third class passengers than we have got in this small paragraph about the third class passengers in the last Administration Report. I hope that the Railway Board will not await the clamour for reform becoming very strong before they take action, for it is always statesmanlike to see things far ahead and to take action before you are forced to do so. If it however awaits clamour it may perhaps find the words ‘ too late ’ written on the improvements when they come, and that is a contingency which I strongly request the Honourable the Commerce Member and the Railway Board to avoid. With these words, I commend my Resolution for acceptance by the Council.

The HONOURABLE SIR MANECKJI DADABHOY: I fully sympathise with the Resolution which has been moved with reason and moderation by the Honourable Member, but at the outset I must point out, after listening to the interesting speech of the Honourable Member, that he has travelled a little bit beyond the real scope of his Resolution. As I understand, the Resolution is limited to the practice of conveying human beings in cattle trucks or goods wagons, but the speech which the Honourable Member made refers to many defects existing in the present railway system of the Government of India in the matter of defective ventilation, latrine accommodation and other subjects to which my Honourable friend has referred

The HONOURABLE MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS: I was referring to the absence of latrine accommodation, ventilation, etc., only in goods wagons. I was not referring to ordinary third class carriages.

The HONOURABLE SIR MANECKJI DADABHOY: I am thankful to the Honourable Member for the information given to me at this stage. I hope that this Resolution is one which will meet with the sympathy of the Honourable Members. I fully endorse what the Honourable Member has stated regarding the great inconvenience caused by conveying human beings in cattle trucks or goods wagons. We cannot, at the same time, overlook the Government difficulty in the matter. Passengers are carried in goods wagons on occasions of pilgrimage or when large fairs are held at particular places. In a small space of time, probably a week or a fortnight, large

[Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy.]

masses of people, sometimes a population of one hundred thousand or even more, are moved to and fro. We cannot reasonably expect Government at brief notice to provide accommodation for removing from one centre to another a large population, nor can we expect the Railway authorities to reserve or earmark wagons exclusively for this purpose, or divert all traffic wagons for the removal of these pilgrims and stop all other traffic in the country. At the same time, I fully recognise the importance of this Resolution, and I think this Resolution should be readily accepted by this Council with the slight modification which I propose to make. We all fully endorse the reasons that the Honourable Member has given in support of his Resolution. I myself have often seen in one wagon 50 or 60 or even 100 people crowded together, men, women and children all packed together as sardines with scarcely breathing room in the wagon. I have seen their trouble and difficulties. I have noticed the personal inconvenience and the great discomfort felt by these poor people. Every possible endeavour should, therefore, be made to relieve, as far as practicable, this grievance, but the difficulty of the Railway Administration at present is enormous. We are all aware that the country is suffering very much owing to the paucity of rolling stock. The entire trade is suffering a great deal and is put to much inconvenience. We cannot obtain wagons for our industrial purposes. We cannot find wagons to remove coal. The railways are fully hampered in this matter. The railway budget does not permit huge expenditure to be incurred for this purpose, and the difficulties of Government in more than one way are excessive and enormous. At the same time, we want to see this Resolution accepted by Government and ask the Railway Department to see that these things are promptly attended to, and I therefore hope that the Honourable Member will see his way to accept the slight modification which I now propose. The House will find it difficult to accept the Resolution as it stands. I move as an amendment that the words 'as far as practicable' be inserted after the word 'immediately'.

The HONOURABLE LALA RAM SARAN DAS: This Resolution does not need any further comment from me. Every one of us realises the plight of the third class passengers who are put to this hardship. My Friend, the Honourable Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy, has referred to the fact that on temporary occasions, such as fairs and festivals, it is rather too much to expect the Railway to provide coaches. I want to inform my Honourable Friend of the conditions that prevail in my own province on the North-Western Railway. On certain branch lines goods wagons have been temporarily converted by putting in a few benches to meet ordinary passenger traffic. I think that condition is unknown to our Honourable Friend. Railways, whenever there is a very heavy traffic in goods, borrow goods vehicles from other Railways, and I would strongly suggest that, whenever there is a necessity, coaching stock also should be got on loan from other Railways. I think the neighbouring Railways will always be able to give a loan of their coaches to meet the temporary increased traffic as fairs generally do not clash with each other. I quite realise that, owing to the paucity of funds, Railways have not been able to keep up the number of coaching vehicles and rolling stock to cope with the increased traffic. But I fully endorse the view which has been put forward by my Honourable Friend, Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas, that a crore of rupees out of the grant of 150 crores which has been recommended by the Railway Finance Committee be utilised for this purpose.

With these few words, Sir, I support the Resolution.

The HONOURABLE LALA SUKHBIR SINHA: Sir, I think the Honourable Mover, Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas, has done a great service to the country by moving this Resolution before this Council. The people in general, and the people of the United Provinces in particular, are very thankful to him, because it is in the United Provinces that many religious fairs are held every year; for instance, at Hardwar, Allahabad, Benares, Ajodhya and many other places. It is in the United Provinces also that third class passengers are carried in these goods wagons and cattle trucks and suffer much. Sir, this complaint is not a new one; it is a very old one, but I am sorry to say that nothing has been done up to this time to remove this complaint. It is the third class passengers who bring most of the money to the Railway Department, but it is the third class passengers who are much more neglected than any other class of passengers,—and this complaint of carrying them in goods wagons is the worst of all. Sir, I know by experience that in the Hardwar fairs where lakhs of people come every year third class passengers are generally carried in goods wagons that have no proper sanitary arrangements, no lights, and no benches, the floors are dirty, full of coal dust and other stuff. If any Honourable Member will go and look at them, I do not think he will not be struck with the fact that no human being can sit in that wagon even for a moment. My Honourable Friend, Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy, has said that these lines cannot provide sufficient third class carriages for want of sufficient notice of fairs. I think he is mistaken. These fairs are generally known years and months before; and if the Railway Department takes a little care to provide wagons for the pilgrims, they can easily do so. They can borrow from other lines where there are no fairs; and they can improve the wagons, if they choose to do so. They charge the same fares from the third class passengers, while they carry them in goods wagons and cattle trucks. Sir, it is always said by the Sanitary Department that Hardwar is the place from which cholera spreads to the whole country, and not to this country alone, but to the whole world. I may be allowed to mention here that one of the chief causes of the spread of cholera from Hardwar is this system of carrying third class passengers to Hardwar and back from Hardwar. I have seen with my own eyes that passengers are packed up in these wagons like sheep and cattle. When they go to Hardwar they are very sickly-looking. When they return from Hardwar after three or four days and are carried in these wagons, they carry with them all the germs, if there are any, at Hardwar, to all those places. First they bring the disease themselves to Hardwar, and when they go back they take it to their places. Hardwar is not the place where germs are bred. The germs are brought there from other places through these third class passengers, packed up in wagons, and when they go back, they carry them with them to other places. Therefore, Sir, I strongly support this Resolution and recommend to the Government and to the Railway Department generally to put a stop to this practice as soon as may be possible, and that third class passengers should be given as much comfort as the passengers of other classes do get. I think this can be easily met either by borrowing third class carriages from other lines or by having additional stock. It may be said that there is no money for having new wagons. But as my friends have pointed out, some money can be set apart for this purpose, and stock should be kept in reserve for utilising at these big fairs and festivals. If there is no money at present, the system of borrowing can be introduced, which I am told can be introduced very easily and without any difficulty to the lines.

[Lala Sukhbir Sinha.]

With these few words, Sir, I strongly support this Resolution for the acceptance of the Council.

The HONOURABLE MR. SETHNA: Sir, I quite understand that the Honourable Mover has been actuated by humanitarian motives in bringing forward this Resolution. I sympathise with him, I sympathise equally, and more so, with these third class passengers, and particularly with the pilgrim passengers who have got to suffer the hardships to which reference has been made by the different speakers. But, as the Honourable Sir Maneckji Dadabhoi pointed out, there is also the other side of the question which requires to be considered, and consequently his amendment ought to meet with the acceptance of this Council. My Honourable Friend claims to be an orthodox Hindu,—I mean the Honourable Mover. I do not think that the orthodox Hindus, who believe in going long distances for pilgrimages, will thank him if the Resolution, as he has moved it, namely, that passengers be immediately stopped from being carried in goods wagons, be given effect to, because it would deprive hundreds of thousands from going on pilgrimages, as they now do, until such time as carriages are ready for their use.

Sir, I think, it is necessary to know which are the railways most concerned in regard to these pilgrim places; and, as far as I can make out, there are five places of great importance, on the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway, namely, Hardwar, Benares, Allahabad, Fyzabad, (Ajodhya) and Lucknow. There are six places on the South Indian Railway, namely, Rameswaram, Madura, Srirangam (Trichinopoly), Chidambaram, Conjevaram, and Kumbakonam. There is one important place on the Bengal-Nagpur Railway, namely, Puri, where there is held the Juggernath pilgrimage. There is one on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, namely, Nasik. The Honourable Mover has said that conditions on the Great Indian Peninsula and Bombay, Baroda and Central India are more favourable than elsewhere . . .

The HONOURABLE MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS: I said Bombay, Baroda and Central India.

The HONOURABLE MR. SETHNA: I stand corrected—on the Bombay, Baroda and Central India, but, Sir, the conditions which should be considered particularly are those which prevail on the Oudh and Rohilkhand and the South Indian Railways. Now the Honourable Mr. Lalubhai has made two concrete proposals to remove the existing state of affairs. The first is, that one crore out of the 150 crores be spent for the purpose of making wagons . . .

The HONOURABLE MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS: Carriages.

The HONOURABLE MR. SETHNA: I mean carriages. My Honourable Friend forgets that this crore of rupees has to be divided into five years, as the 150 crores are to be spent in five years. Consequently, if one crore is divided into five years, it means 20 lakhs a year, and the 20 lakhs a year amongst the different railways, so that this will not amount to very much.

The second point he made out was that the Railway Board should have a very large supply of carriages ready on hand to loan out to the different railways whenever wanted for large pilgrim traffic purposes. Now, Sir, as he himself and other speakers have pointed out, pilgrim traffic is annual at some places, and at other places it does not come on except at intervals of twelve years. How can you expect the Railway Board to keep a large supply of coaching vehicles ready at hand to make

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them available at these long intervals of time? Moreover, if inquiry is made, it will be found that most of these *melas*, annual or long distant, festivals are held during January and March, when the railways, as a rule, have very heavy traffic to handle, not only passengers, but goods, and most of them have only a single track. But more than that, the suggestion that the Railway Board should have a large reserve of carriages takes no account of the fact that in India we have different gauges. Suppose there is a very large *mela* in the south of India. The Railway Board, if it had a supply of carriages constructed for the broad gauge, could not use it for carrying the traffic to the south, because the six most important places of pilgrimage are all on the South Indian Railway which is a metre gauge railway. Consequently, what the Honourable Member proposes cannot afford much relief.

I hold no brief for the railways. Conditions might have been improved and doubtless will be improved as time goes on. I should like to draw the attention of the Government Benches to one incident in particular. I mentioned a little while ago that five of the most important places of pilgrimage in India are on the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway. The Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway therefore carries a very large pilgrim traffic. The East Indian Railway also, which runs parallel to the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway takes a portion of the pilgrim traffic to those places. The Government have also allowed the Bengal and North-Western Railway to come in and take away a portion of this pilgrim traffic. I admit that the Bengal and North-Western Railway is a Company-owned and Company-managed railway. But although it is a Company-owned and Company-managed railway, it has received financial assistance from the Government of India. For example, one of its bridges, I believe the bridge near Benares, has cost a crore of rupees. Another bridge at the Allahabad end has cost a crore and a half of rupees. Now, my point is that, if the Government of India, instead of helping the Bengal and North-Western Railway, had doubled the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway track, it would have done so at a much smaller cost, and would at the same time have considerably helped the pilgrim traffic.

These, Sir, are some of the points which I would like to bring to the attention of the Government of India.

Now, Sir, I know it is a very great hardship to carry people in trucks, but I may remind this House that India is not the first country in which people have been so carried. In the land which gave birth to the steam-engine and the railway, it was the same when the railway was first started. I was reading the other day the diary of a Journalist by Sir Henry Lucy, M. P., and under date April 20th 1899 is the following extract:

‘At the inauguration of the Great Central Railway at Marylebone Station to-day I came across John Jollingshead. After a life of varied labour and experience equalled by few, he might pass in a crowd for a man just turned fifty. He recollects quite well how, sixty years ago, he made his first railway journey. He travelled as a third class passenger, and having taken his ticket, was shown the way into an open truck, which, when not in use for passenger traffic, carried coals, cattle, or anything going its way. For the convenience of the passengers one side of the wagon was let down, making a gangway by which they entered the van. When the train was about to start the side was lifted up, more or less securely hooked, and, to the amazement of mankind, the train rumbled off at fully twenty miles an hour, third class passengers jolting on springless wheels.’

I do not use this as an argument that those conditions should continue in India. As I say, matters require improving and will improve, but the real solution of the problem does not lie in a Resolution of this kind, but in

[Mr. Sethna.]

the solution of a more important problem with which the country is faced at the present moment, and that is the question of railway management. That is one of the important problems before India to-day. And if at the proper time when the question comes up, it is the decision of the Legislature that State-owned but Company-managed railways should become—as recommended by the majority report of the Railway Committee—State-owned and State-managed, I am sure that the lot of the third class passengers whether ordinary or pilgrims will very considerably improve and particularly the lot of pilgrims. It has been suggested that the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway, which is State-owned and State-managed, and the East Indian Railway, which is State-owned and Company-managed, might borrow carriages from one another at times of pressure. Surely, Sir, it is well known that there is much rivalry between neighbouring railways, just as there very often is between neighbours. I believe that attempts have been made to borrow rolling stock, but these attempts have not been very favourably responded to by the East Indian Railway. And this is bound to be the position until the question which is now before the country, in regard to the management of the railways by the State, is decided and given effect to. I think, Sir, the proper time for my friend to press his views will be when that question is considered.

THE HONOURABLE MR. E. S. LLOYD: Sir, I happened to be a member of one of the Pilgrim Committees to which the Honourable Mover has referred, and naturally one of the chief points to which our attention was drawn was this of using goods wagons for pilgrim traffic. I do not remember whether we discussed the question of the use of cattle trucks very much, but we did the question of using goods wagons. Our Committee—the Madras Committee—was glad to find that the South Indian Railway, on which pilgrim traffic, as the House may be aware, is peculiarly heavy at certain times of the year, in the hot weather as well as in the cold weather, had entirely abandoned the system of using goods wagons for pilgrim traffic. I think we found—I speak subject to correction—that the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway still used them occasionally. The members of the Committee, especially the non-official members, were astonished to hear that the practice in the north of India was very different, and that at the time of pilgrimage when *melas* were held these goods wagons were largely used. While it was not our province to criticise the north of India, we did, as far as I remember, make the recommendation that, if it was possible for a small line like the South Indian to give up the practice altogether, it was certainly worthwhile considering whether it could not be a great deal limited, if not entirely abandoned, on the other railways. Ofcourse we were bound to consider whether, if these goods wagons were not used, the ordinary third class carriages might not be even more crowded than they are at present. It is quite true that the South Indian Railway have very great difficulty about their third class accommodation. It is by no means sufficient, and during the war, no doubt, it did not improve and probably to some degree deteriorated. But I do not think that, if it is possible for the South Indian Railway to manage without using goods wagons, it is at any rate possible that the other Railways might study the convenience of the third class passengers more than they do at present at pilgrim traffic times, and give up the practice except ofcourse for short distances and under very special circumstances. No doubt the pilgrims prefer to be carried in anything rather than be left on the platform, which is very often the case: but I do think, in the interests of sanitation and in the interests of public health,

that you ought not to allow this insanitary and improper means of conveyance except in the case of very short trips. Certainly for long journeys, the Committee found, as the Honourable the Mover has pointed out, that there is very great danger of contamination and spread of disease. I think, therefore, the amendment moved by my Honourable Friend, Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy, would probably meet the case, and that we should steadily set our face towards the removal of the existing practice, which, I think we must admit, is a certain amount of blot on the Railway administration.

THE HONOURABLE MR. C. A. INNES : Sir, the debate has covered wide ground and has gone into for many ramifications. I do not propose to pursue all those ramifications, but I must just mention one point. The Honourable Mr. Sethna said that the solution of this problem lay in State as opposed to Company management. That is his opinion and I do not propose to discuss that point to-day ; but I must point out to the House that he selected a very unfortunate illustration. In the course of his remarks, he referred to the East Indian Railway and Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway. Now, the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway which is a State Railway has been held up to-day as the Railway in which the practice of using goods wagons for passenger traffic is worst, and the East Indian Railway which is a Company railway has been held up as the Railway in which the practice is least in vogue. There is one other point, Sir. Mr. Sethna suggested that the reason why the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway could not secure sufficient coaches for pilgrim traffic was that the East Indian Railway would not lend them. That is a wrong view of the case, Sir. Railways, after all, are commercial bodies. If one Railway provides another Railway with wagons, it charges hire for them. It is purely a business transaction.

When I first read this Resolution, Sir, I must confess that I looked at it somewhat askance. As it is worded, it tends to convey the implication that Railways make a habit of conveying human beings in cattle trucks or goods wagons. If that is the implication, Sir, then I join issue at once. It is not a common practice on Railways, and it is not a practice which Railways like any more than the Honourable Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas himself. Mr. Lalubhai has divided his subject into two parts. The first part was the use of Railway wagons and trucks on ordinary occasions. As I have suggested, that practice is not at all common in India. I have here telegrams from every important Railway in India and, with one or two unimportant exceptions due to special causes, I may say that I am in a position to inform the House that on ordinary occasions, passengers are not carried in goods wagons, and I am prepared, in the special cases, where the practice does go on, to issue instructions to the Railways concerned that they should do their best to stop it at once. It is only adopted on exceptional occasions as when large bodies of troops have suddenly to be moved. The House will realise that that kind of exceptional occasion is always likely to arise. But if I may, I will follow Mr. Lalubhai's example and confine myself mainly to the question of great fairs and festivals. I am happy to be able to inform the House that on the principle there is no difference of opinion at all between the Honourable Mover and the Government. I grant at once all the objections that have been raised to this practice. As the Honourable Mr. Lalubhai has told us, they have been pointed out on more than one occasion by Pilgrim Committees, and notably by the Bihar and Orissa Committee of 1913. I do not quarrel with the Honourable Mr. Lalubhai's statement of those objections. There are reasons, connected with sanitation, reasons connected with the

[Mr. C. A. Innes.]

convenience of passengers why that practice, even on the occasion of the great fairs and festivals is very undesirable. Moreover, there is, what the Honourable Mr. Lalubhai called, the sentimental objection. It may be sentimental, but it has none the less force for that. The fact is that passengers who have paid for a higher class of accommodation resent being conveyed in cattle trucks and rightly resent it. But as I have said once before to-day, the House must remember that Railways are commercial bodies. The Railways themselves do not like this practice still less do they like in any way to quarrel with their best customers. On the other hand, the House must recognise that the occasional use of wagons is, to some extent, unavoidable. As the Honourable Mr. Sethna pointed out, it is a choice of evils. Either the Railway Companies must use goods wagons or they must turn away people who wish to go on pilgrimage, and what is worse they must delay the return journey of people who have been on pilgrimage. Now, if pilgrims were given the choice of travelling in a goods wagon or of not travelling at all, is there any one here who doubts what their answer will be? And once a festival has come to an end, it is a matter of supreme importance that the pilgrims should be returned home with the least possible delay. As has been pointed out by more than one speaker this morning, these great fairs and festivals are the great source in India of cholera, and the longer you keep, in the pilgrimage centre, large collections of people, the greater the danger. Consequently, whenever a *mela* comes to an end, the civil authorities always impress upon the Railway administrations the urgent need of clearing pilgrims away with the least possible delay. Now, let me give the House one illustration, taken from fact, of what this means. I have here the report of the Railway arrangements in connection with the *Kumbha Mela* at Hardwar in 1915. At the end of that *mela* there were 195,000 pilgrims waiting to be returned home, and, as usual, the civil authorities were insistent that they must be got away without any avoidable delay. In five days, between the 13th and 17th April 1915, the vast bulk of those pilgrims were got away, and how was that done? Ordinarily, there are four trains running daily in Hardwar, and in those five days the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway ran not less than 80 additional special trains all in one direction. That is to say, in five days they started from Hardwar one hundred trains or a passenger train at intervals of every 72 minutes. Now I think the House will realise that the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway could not possibly have run this enormous number of trains without supplementing its coaching stock by the use of goods wagons. At the same time, as I have said, I recognise the objections to the practice and I recognise that our object must be to reduce the practice to the narrowest possible dimensions. I am afraid that in this matter there has been some deterioration in the last five years. The Honourable Mover referred to the fact that the East Indian Railway had been able to dispense with the use of goods wagons, and he asked why other railways could not follow suit. . . .

The HONOURABLE MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS: I said the Sanitary Commissioner wrote to that effect.

The HONOURABLE MR. C. A. INNES: The Honourable Mover seems to forget that since that Report to which he refers was written a good deal of water has come down the Jumna and among other things there has been the little matter of the late war. In the last six years, as I said, the position has worsened. It is true that in 1916 the East Indian Railway had reached a point where it was able to dispense with the use of goods

wagons even on the occasion of great fairs and festivals, but I regret that the position is no longer so. I have here information showing that even on the East Indian Railway on these occasions goods wagons have now to be used. The Honourable Mover referred with pardonable pride to the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway as another instance of a Railway which has been able to dispense with the use of wagons. It is not so. On the metre gauge even the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway has to use these wagons. The explanation is not far to seek. Everybody in this House knows that in the last five years railways in India have deteriorated like the railways of practically every country of the world. Their allotments for capital expenditure were cut down. Their sources of supply were cut off.

The question now is purely one of coaching stock and that means, one of money. The Honourable Mover has in his speech quoted the report of the Railway Finance Committee, and I have not the slightest doubt that he agrees with that Committee that it is up to the Government to devote to the rehabilitation of our railways every pie that we can spare, and I have no doubt also that he agrees with the Railway Finance Committee that in the forefront of our programme we must place the improvement of the conditions of travel of third class passengers. I may say that every railway administration in India has now got this question under examination, and I hope that if we are given the money recommended by the Railway Finance Committee, in five years' time the state of affairs will be very different. I hope that our arrangements for the conveyance of passengers will have been greatly improved. If that is so there will be very much less need for railways to resort, even on the occasion of fairs and festivals, to what we all recognise to be a very objectionable practice. But whether we shall be able to put a stop to the practice altogether in the next five years is a different matter. On some railways we can only obtain this result if we supply them with sufficient funds to enable them to maintain an amount of coaching stock which will suffice not merely for the ordinary requirements of traffic, but will also be sufficient to deal with exceptional rushes, such as occur at times of festivals. That would mean unproductive capital expenditure. In other and richer countries they keep a sufficiently large amount not only of coaching stock, but also wagons to enable them not only to deal with ordinary traffic requirements, but also to deal with rushes of traffic as they occur. But India is a much poorer country. We cannot afford to go in for unproductive capital expenditure, nor could we do so without other undesirable results. It would mean probably very large increase in rates and fares. But I have no doubt that the position will improve, and that as our supplies of coaching stock are increased, the bigger railways will be able to supply coaches more freely to the smaller railways in order to enable them to deal with the rush of traffic in connection with fairs. In this connection there is one point to which I must refer. The Honourable Mr. Lloyd mentioned that on the South Indian Railway they had been able entirely to dispense with the use of wagons even on occasions of great festivals. That is true. But the conditions on the South Indian Railway are to some extent special. It has been said that in the Madras Presidency you can rule a line across the map anywhere you like, and that if you build a railway along that line, that railway will pay on passenger traffic alone. The South Indian Railway is a railway which exists primarily and mainly for passenger traffic. That is why it has a very large supply of coaching stock. Other lines have more goods and less passenger traffic to deal with.

[Mr. C. A. Innes.]

I hope that the Council will accept the amendment to the Resolution which has been proposed by my Honourable Friend, Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy. As the Resolution stands at present, Government would be very reluctant to accept it. My main difficulty is the word 'immediately'. It is well to realise that the remedy in this matter is not merely the buying of so many hundreds or so many thousands of coaching stock. It is no good buying wagons and buying coaching stock if you cannot make the best use of those wagons and coaching stock. If we very largely increase our stock of wagons and of coaches without *pari passu* increasing our general travelling facilities, without remodelling our stations and doubling our lines, the only result would be that we would congest our lines and we should be just as badly off as we are now. The whole of this railway problem has got to be treated as a whole. You cannot take up one part and say: 'We will do this and leave the other parts out of consideration'. This is the main reason why I could not accept the Resolution in its present form. We could not guarantee immediately to put this matter right. What the House has got to do, is to give us time and give us money, and if they can give us time and money, then I hope that in five years' time we shall be able to effect a very great improvement, not only in this matter, but also in all other matters in respect of which the country has got reason to complain at present. I, therefore, support the amendment which has been moved by the Honourable Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy, and I hope that the Council will also accept it.

THE HONOURABLE SIR DUNSHAW WACHA: I am sure this House is gratified by the very enlightened, impartial and lucid way in which the Honourable Member for Commerce has replied to the Resolution, which I hope every Member of the House will appreciate. He gave a very impartial survey of the whole situation, both from the point of view of the pilgrim passengers themselves, as well as from the point of view of the Government, and very clearly pointed out what are the difficulties of the Government at the present moment,—difficulties which have arisen from the state of war during the five years ending 1918 leading to congestion of rolling stock among other things. But the Government are alive to all these difficulties and are trying their very best to restore what has been deteriorated and to rehabilitate, as early as practicable, its locomotive service both for passengers and goods. That being so, and having regard to what has fallen from the Honourable Mr. Innes with reference to what the Government themselves are doing, and to the fact that the reorganization of railway transport is being speedily effected, I think, Sir, the House will be gratified that, on the whole, this question, which has, of course, very much agitated a large number of the unenlightened public is being carefully dealt with. I am sure the public will be able to see that the Government are not slow or are not insensible to their own responsibility in the matter. Pilgrim traffic, of course, in India is a very very difficult matter, because this kind of pilgrim traffic is hardly to be seen either in the United States of America, where there are the largest number of railways, or in Great Britain, where we know there are what you call special excursion or emergent coaching traffic. There, no doubt, many people turn out in millions, but that is only for a day or two. But the pilgrim traffic in India is a more difficult matter in a special way, namely, on account of sanitation. Pilgrims as a rule are orthodox. They have no ideas of sanitation. They have no ideas of even elementary cleanliness. It will be a long long time, I fear,

before education can teach the masses to the point how to keep themselves clean, how to live sanitarily as it were, in a way that lengthens their lives. All these are things which only education can give. To my mind the question of cholera and other kindred diseases or insanitation are concomitant with the question of pilgrim traffic and must be seriously considered. My own suggestion is that every railway train, when there is cholera while a large number of pilgrims return from Hardwar and other places, should have one carriage attached which may be considered a kind of travelling dispensary, where patients who may be suffering during travel from cholera or other infectious diseases might be removed immediately, and in which there should be some medical person or apothecary who will attend to the patients. In that way the germs of infection arising from cholera and spreading to the other pilgrims will greatly diminish. I would humbly suggest to the Member of the Government, and particularly to the Railway Administrations, to see whether it is not possible for purposes of sanitation, when there is a crowded pilgrim traffic, to have attached to each train a kind of travelling dispensary, with an apothecary, where, the cholera stricken, if there are such in a train, might be removed, so as to considerably minimise the spreading of infection to other carriages. Were this suggestion adopted I think a great deal of the difficulties and objectionable practices to which my Honourable Friend, Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas, and other Members, have referred will be mitigated and allayed. As the Honourable Mr. Innes informed us, we might look out and expect for a great improvement in this respect in the next five years. I myself am optimistic and hope to see a great improvement taking place in the railway organization, both for passenger and goods traffic and otherwise, whereby all this evil that we have been considering for years together might be entirely removed. At the same time, I consider, at least for my own part, and I think I can speak for other Honourable Members also, that the Honourable Mr. Innes' speech, so impartial and practical, will greatly reassure the public that the Government are doing and will do, everything possible and practical to mitigate these evils.

THE HONOURABLE KHAN BAHADUR AHMEDTHAMBY MARICAIR: Sir, I wish to say one or two words in this connection. I am just coming from a big pilgrimage, a place about four miles beyond Negapatam. We had 50,000 pilgrims there; both Hindus and Muhammadans visited the place. We have not had the slightest complaint of pilgrims being brought in wagons or any such thing. The South Indian Railway Company managed it very successfully; they were able to bring special trains as well, and the pilgrims have gone back to their places satisfied. If the Resolution moved by my Honourable Friend, Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas, is accepted, I am afraid, as the Honourable Mr. Sethna remarked, that the pilgrims themselves will be blaming not only the Mover of the Resolution, but also those responsible for accepting the Resolution. As we all know, it is not possible for any Railway Company to carry third class pilgrims in suitable carriages and, in special cases, they have to use their discretion, with the consent of the pilgrims. On the other hand, the pilgrims are usually so impatient that they are very particular that they should visit a shrine on a particular day. Now, if this restriction is imposed, and no pilgrim is allowed to be carried, I am afraid that would be a hard and fast rule towards the pilgrims and would be standing in the way of their religious interests, and so—I am sorry I was absent when the Honourable Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy moved the amendment, but I heard the Honourable Mr. Lloyd saying that his amendment will do well for the present until such time when all the railway companies find their way and be

[Khan Bahadur Ahmedthamby Maricair.]

able to make more rolling stock and satisfy the public—in the meantime I support the amendment moved by the Honourable Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy.

The HONOURABLE DIWAN BAHADUR RAMABHADRA NAIDU: Sir, I differ from my Honourable Friend, Mr. Maricair. It is true that South India has got very important pilgrim centres, and every one of us has seen pilgrims, for want of accommodation, being huddled in wagons like cattle,—especially, on the trip to Rameswaram, on the trip to Madura. This is so. Many pilgrims are, without any sense of humanity, huddled together in wagons. If the same evil is not attended to, a tragedy like the Malabar tragedy might take place. The railway authorities are always more or less accustomed to huddling these pilgrims in wagons, but the sooner the Government do away with the practice, the better; and I am glad that the Honourable Government Member, Mr. Innes, assured us that, if sufficient money and sufficient time are given to him, he can rectify the matter. But, I think, in this age of civilization, the sooner we put a stop to this practice of loading pilgrims in wagons, the better. With these words, Sir, I support the Resolution.

The HONOURABLE MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS: Sir, I am very grateful to all the Honourable Members who have supported this Resolution, and I am quite sure that the third class passengers who have to visit the pilgrimages will be equally grateful to the Honourable Members generally, and to the Honourable Member for Commerce and Industry who has shown his sympathy with the principle of the Resolution that I have moved. Sir, I find that some Honourable friends, while sympathetic, were more critical of the proposals that I have made than even the Honourable Mr. Innes. My friend, Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy, asked—I quite understand his point of view—how we can make provision for carrying pilgrims when trade suffers from shortage of wagons. I see his point of view. Trade counts with him; money making counts with him; with him human beings do not count. I am sorry he has taken that capitalistic view and not the humanitarian view which my friend, Mr. Sethna, said actuated my Resolution. I do not know whether he accused me of that humanitarian feeling or whether he meant to compliment me on it. If it was an accusation I plead guilty. I want the House to be humanitarian and I am sorry that my friend, Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy, in taking up the position of a capitalist, forgot for the time being his duty towards his human brethren, which I think is greater than his duty towards trade. Sir, that is the feeling which was created in my mind when I read the Report of the Railway Committee. Almost all the witnesses who appeared before the Railway Committee spoke more of the difficulties they experienced in the way of transporting cotton or jute or other products from one place to another. To them, as to Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy, humanity does not count . . .

The HONOURABLE SIR MANECKJI DADABHOY: Mr. President, may I give a personal explanation?

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: The Honourable Member is perfectly well aware of the rule regarding personal explanations, which has been laid down on previous occasions. If the Honourable Member who is speaking gives way, then the Honourable Member wishing to make an explanation may intervene. In this present case the Honourable Member in possession of the House did not give way.

The HONOURABLE MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS: When I read the conditions under which pilgrims travelled in the summary of the Report of the

Railway Committee in Chapter II, and when I heard Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy, I felt that it would be better for these pilgrims if they were the slaves and property of capitalists like my friend, Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy. He would then care more for them because then their transportation suffering would come within the suffering of trade. . . .

The HONOURABLE SIR MANECKJI DADABHOY: You are absolutely wrong.

The HONOURABLE MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS: My Honourable Friend, Mr. Sethna, asked me a direct question. He asked me whether, as an orthodox Hindu, I would prefer the pilgrims to be conveyed in goods wagons or, failing that, to do without going on pilgrimage. I am prepared to give a direct reply, and that reply is, that I am a human being first and an orthodox Hindu afterwards, and as a human being I do not want my brethren to be carried like cattle or chattels. (*A voice*: What if they do not mind ?) This practice, Sir, de-humanizes them. They do not perhaps mind the discomfort, and that is the greatest tragedy arising out of this practice. If this practice had not been begun we would never have seen people sitting contentedly in goods wagons. It may be due to our Hindu Philosophy, to Shankara's Philosophy, which teaches us that we must keep our eyes on the other world and not on this. But if this practice had not been begun my brethren would have felt the indignity to such an extent that my friends, Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy and Mr. Sethna, would never have said anything against this Resolution.

Sir, the Honourable Member for Commerce and Industry has, as my friend, Sir Dinshaw Wacha, said, in his very lucid and balanced speech, put the case before this House. I realize his difficulties. When I used the word 'immediate' I knew that there would be difficulties in the way; but I wanted to press this point on the attention of the House and especially on the attention of the Members for Commerce and for Finance, so as to enable the Finance Member to give the money that is required and so enable the Member for Commerce to use it for the purpose for which we require it. The Honourable Member for Commerce said that if I had studied the Finance Committee's Report I would have seen the provision of the report for coaching traffic. I may say, Sir, that I have seen the Report and I have found that, whereas 48 crores have been provided for the next five years for wagons, only 18 crores have been set aside for the same period for coaching traffic. Therefore, Sir, it is obvious that the members of the Railway Finance Committee look more to the interests of trade and commerce than to the interests of human beings.

My friend Mr. Sethna said that this is not the only country in which passengers are conveyed in trucks, and he gave us a humorous extract from Sir Henry Lucy's diary in which he says that he met a gentleman—who forget his name—who in 1899 had a vivid recollection of having travelled 60 years back in a cattle truck. That takes us back to 1839. If what was considered allowable in England in 1839 is to be the practice in India after nearly a century. . . .

The HONOURABLE MR. SETHNA: I did not say that.

The HONOURABLE MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS: And if my Honourable friend is satisfied that it should be so, I am not. In this matter I want India to be what England is in 1922, not what she was in 1839.

[Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas.]

One other question was raised by Mr. Sethna about the difference in gauges. I realize that fact also and the necessity which exists of having extra carriages for different gauges. But the chief difficulty to which both the Honourable Member for Commerce and the Honourable Mr. Sethna drew attention, was that the carriages would lie unused for a number of years. The Honourable Member for Commerce and Industry was good enough to say that this unproductive expenditure would perhaps fall heavily on the general tax-payer or the user of the railways. I quite understand the difficulty, but may I point out that certain railways have constructed special trains and carriages for—I will not use a stronger word—pleasure. There are on my side of India 'Race Specials' to take passengers twice a week for three months in the year to Poona, and the whole stock lies unused for the remainder of the year. If the Great Indian Peninsula Railway can afford to do that, surely it can afford to look after the convenience of third class passengers and keep the stock unused when not wanted. I realize the difficulties mentioned by the Member for Commerce and Industry regarding the return journey of pilgrims. He gave us a vivid example and in such a case I realize that it may be proper to use a certain number of wagons in place of regular coaching vehicles for some time; but in that case the wagons must be clean and must be provided with seats in the same way as some recently introduced on the North-Western Railway.

If that is done, there will not be great objection to their temporary use. I would not mind the delay of a few years for carrying out my Resolution in its entirety to enable the completion of the Railway programme within that period. I am prepared, Sir, to accept the amendment moved by my Honourable Friend, Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy, which has been accepted by the Honourable Member for Commerce and Industry, and I hope the House will unanimously pass this amended Resolution.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: The question is that in the Resolution moved by the Honourable Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas, the following amendment moved by the Honourable Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy be made: after the word 'immediately,' the words '*as far as practicable*' be inserted.'

The Amendment was adopted.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: The question is that the following Resolution be adopted:

'This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that steps be taken immediately, *as far as practicable*, to put a stop to the practice of Railways conveying human beings in cattle trucks or goods wagons.'

The Resolution, as amended, was adopted.

DURBAR IN THE FORT.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: Before I adjourn the Council, I would ask Honourable Members to record on the paper, which is laid on the table, whether they do or do not intend to be present at the public arrival of His Royal Highness and at the Durbar in the Fort. This information I have been asked to obtain by those in charge of the arrangement of these functions. By complying with this request, Members:

will not only consult their own convenience, but also that of the officers in charge.

I now adjourn the Council till 2-30 P.M.

The Council met after Lunch at 2-30 P.M. with the Honourable the President in the Chair.

MESSAGE FROM LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

The SECRETARY OF THE COUNCIL: Sir, a message has been received from the Legislative Assembly through the Secretary of that Chamber.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: Let the message be read.

The SECRETARY OF THE COUNCIL: Sir, the message runs as follows:

'I am directed to inform you that the Legislative Assembly at their meeting of the 13th February, 1922, agreed to the amendments to the following Bills which were passed by the Council of State on the 31st January, 1922:—

1. *A Bill to repeal certain special enactments supplementing the ordinary criminal law.*
2. *A Bill to repeal certain provisions in the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1920.'*

RESOLUTION RE WORKING OF MILITARY AND STRATEGIC RAILWAY LINES.

The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM'SARAN DAS: Sir, I beg to move the following Resolution that stands against my name:—

'This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that, in future, a separate revenue and expenditure account should be kept of the working of Military or Strategic Railway Lines; that the losses connected with the working of these Railways should be debited and the profits, if any, credited to the Military Department, and that the capital outlay on new lines or works of this nature should be debited to the Military Accounts.'

I claim that the subject-matter of my Resolution is entirely non-controversial. In this Resolution I do not ask Government to curtail any expenditure or to increase it under any head. My Resolution does not affect the present financial policy of Government in the least. The point that I raise in this Resolution is only a matter of accounts. The public accounts in my opinion should give a faithful picture of the financial results of all State activities. The public is entitled from the State Accounts to know what are the exact receipts from each head of revenue, and what is the real amount spent under each head of expenditure. If the actual receipts do not correspond with the figures of receipts in the public accounts, or if there is a variation between the actual expenditure and the figures of expenditure in the accounts, the Government books fail to exhibit the true picture of the financial affairs of the country. The Government should, therefore, see that the system of accounts adopted by them does not exaggerate or minimise the real amount under each head of revenue or expenditure. In modern times the State performs many

[Rai Bahadur Lala Ram Saran Das.]

functions, protective, social and commercial. The tax-payer is entitled to know the exact cost of different kinds of State activities. For example, the Accounts should show what is real and actual cost of defence in the country. The Accounts should tell us what is the commercial value of each State commercial concern. If the present system of accounts allows Military expenditure to be shown under non-military heads of expenditure, I submit the public accounts fail to inform us as to what is the actual military burden of the country. If, on the other hand, the profits of a commercial department are reduced because in the accounts the department is shown to have incurred an expenditure, which is from a commercial point of view unnecessary, the exact commercial value of the concern is concealed from the public view. Let me, Sir, illustrate my point by giving some examples. In the North-Western Railway, there are certain sections of the line which are known as Military sections. But for military utility these sections of the line would have never been constructed. In the North-Western Railway, the total capital invested on the military sections up to the end of 31st March 1921, was no less than 23 crores and 35 lakhs of rupees. In 1920-21, something like 86 lakhs of rupees was paid in interest on the capital invested on these sections of the line. The figures of the previous ten years that have been supplied to me by the Railway Department show that in four years out of ten the gross earnings of these sections of the line fell considerably short of even the working expenses. In 1911 the working expenses exceeded the gross earnings by Rs. 9,82,000. In 1919-20 the deficit after deducting from the gross earnings, the working expenses was 9½ lakhs of rupees. In 1920-21 the gross earnings fell short of the working expenses by more than 20 lakhs. Out of the remaining six years in the decade 4½ years were occupied by war. During these years there was a considerable amount of military traffic on this section. Had it not been for this traffic I imagine these sections of the Railway would have shown a deficit during these years also. The figures in the accounts therefore show that in ordinary peace times the military sections of the North-Western Railway do not even pay their working expenses. The cost of working and maintaining the sections has to be borne by the commercial sections of the Railway. If to these deficits are added the amount of interest paid every year on the capital invested on these sections of the line, the annual loss becomes enormous. As this entire loss has to be met from the revenues of the commercial sections of the line, it is clear the profits of the commercial sections are unjustifiably reduced. In 1919-20 the percentage of net earnings on the total capital outlay of the commercial sections of the North-Western Railway was 6·38. But after deduction of the loss incurred on the military sections of the line the percentage of net earnings was reduced to 5·00. I have shown that the military sections of the line, though they may be most valuable from the military point of view, are, commercially speaking, absolutely worthless. Had it not been for military necessities, I imagine these sections of the line would have never been constructed. The capital outlay of 23 crores and 35 lakhs on the military sections is really speaking a dead weight on the North-Western Railway. In 1919-20 the net loss on the military sections of the line was Rs. 84,71,000. In 1920-21 the loss was Rs. 1,06,70,000. Before the war the annual loss was never less than Rs. 62 lakhs. In the period of war also the net loss averaged 50 lakhs per annum. I submit, Sir, that a commercial concern like the North-Western Railway is under no obligation to bear a heavy burden of its military section every year. All this expenditure incurred

in the Railway Department is really for the benefit of the Military Department. I venture to urge that it is the Military Department that should, in fairness, be debited with this expenditure. Again, Sir, there is another type of expenditure which is incurred in the Railway Department for the benefit of the military. There are a large number of military cantonments in the country. Extensive sidings are constructed at these stations for the purposes of mobilisation and demobilisation of troops. At important stations a considerable amount of rolling and coaching stock, locomotives, coal and engineering material are kept in reserve for military purposes. Considerable materials for the construction of new and temporary lines for war purposes are also held in readiness at important terminal stations. For the purchase of all this material, and for the construction of Railway works for the benefit of the Military Department, considerable amounts of money are spent by almost every Indian Railway in the country. The annual grant for expenditure on the Indian Railway has very often to be diverted in order to create facilities for the Military Department. In this way not only is the Railway Department compelled to incur heavy expenditure for the benefit of the military, but they are also prevented from improving the commercial utility of the lines and are also prevented from undertaking necessary repairs and renewals due to wear and tear. This is one of the reasons why the efficiency of the different railways in India has run down considerably. In the long run this means lower profits for the Railways. The total amount spent on military sidings, platforms, and other Railway works and other Indian Railways during the past seven years runs to crores of rupees. The interest that is every year paid on the capital invested on the Railway works and Railway material for the benefit of the Military Department, forms a large portion of Railway expenditure. This expenditure returns no commercial profit to the Railway Administration, and from the commercial point of view, I think the railways would have never incurred this expenditure at all. On the other hand under this present system of accounts, the expenditure which is really incurred for military purposes, fails to be shown in the military budget. This system minimises the real expenditure in the Military Department, and thus fails to show to the tax-payers the actual cost of defence of the country. I submit a system which minimises the expenditure on defence and also minimises the actual profits from the commercial department of Railways, cannot be said to exhibit the true accounts of the different Departments of Government. I would, therefore, ask this Council to accept the suggestions made in my Resolution. With these few words, Sir, I commend the Resolution for the favourable consideration of the Council.

THE HONOURABLE SIR MANECKJI DADABHOY: Mr. President, before this debate commences, I would like, with your permission, to propose that before the discussion of this Resolution may be taken as a whole, this Resolution may be divided into two parts. The first part should be separately moved, namely 'that this Council recommends to the Governor General in Council.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: I will decide the manner in which the Resolution is to be put to the Council when I have heard the debate.

THE HONOURABLE SIR MANECKJI DADABHOY: In view of the paucity of time at our disposal this afternoon and the fact that the House is to be adjourned at 4 O'clock, I shall be as brief as possible. So far as the first part of this Resolution is concerned, I appeal to the Government to accept

[Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy.]

it. There is no doubt that much can be said in support of the first part of the Resolution which asks that a separate Revenue and Expenditure account should be kept of the working of Military or Strategic Railway Lines. This point has not been for the first time urged or debated in this Council. I remember that years and years ago the Honourable Mr. Gokhale was very keen on the Government of India showing separately the revenue and expenditure under these different heads. The propriety of this proposal will be easily seen. The public have a right to know how much of the tax-payer's money is spent on military railways and strategic lines. It is within the common knowledge of many that often under the guise of military expenditure, under the guise of strategic railways, much of the ordinary expenditure to which exception may be taken is included under such categories, and I think this Council as well as the Assembly should have detailed information in respect of these matters. Some times Government are of opinion that certain railways are really strategic. The public entertain a different view. Of course the public cannot be expected, and often they are not in a position, to express an opinion with certainty, whether a particular railway is purely strategic or not. But it is only right and proper that the whole position should be placed before them in order to enable them to understand and, if necessary, to take exception to the construction of railways which cannot be justified essentially on strategic grounds. This Resolution seeks no more than that Government should keep separate accounts, details being furnished and revenue and expenditure being separately shown. I can see no objection to Government accepting this modest request which is contained in the first part of the Resolution, and I, therefore, gladly support the first part of the Resolution.

As regards the second part, I am afraid I do not see my way to supporting it. It is a very difficult and a very complicated question, and without full knowledge of the subject, and without the full facts, figures and reasons being placed before us, I do not think this House will be justified in accepting that part of the Resolution. It is a highly technical subject, and I think it will not be fair by merely passing a Resolution to force Government to accept a proposition of a peculiarly technical kind like the one before us. I would prefer that Government should appoint some sort of a Committee of experts, some reasonable and well-chosen Commission, to deal with the matter. It is certainly a matter of great consequence and importance. It needs closer examination and scrutiny; but the House is not in a position at present, not having the facts and figures before it, to pronounce an opinion. I listened carefully to the speech of my Honourable Friend in the hope that he would be able to throw some light on the second part of his Resolution; but unfortunately I have not been able to gather any clear reasons for accepting this part of his Resolution. I, therefore, think that the first part of the Resolution should be accepted; and as regards the second part the Government should only be requested to appoint a committee of experts to deal with the whole matter, and when the proposals of that committee are placed before the House, it will be time enough to consider what action should be taken. I, therefore, support the first part of the Resolution, and I regret that I cannot see my way to supporting the second part.

THE HONOURABLE MAJOR MUHAMMAD AKBAR KHAN: Sir, after the Mutiny the strategic importance of railways was fully realized for the

concentration of troops and transportation of supplies for them. The primary object of railways was strategic, but it was also administrative. Railways are a factor of economic, moral and intellectual progress of humanity. They mitigate famine and equalise its burden. When they serve all the foregoing purposes it is very hard to distinguish the strategic from the other railways. In the name of logic why is not the railway line from Lahore to Peshawar called strategic when used for military purposes, whilst some other lines serving the same object are called strategic, and hence their burden is proposed to be debited to the military accounts? The very presence of the Honourable Members here shows the facilities provided by the so-called strategic and other railways. I fail to understand how it is possible to separate any one part, however small, of the great network of Indian railways whether in India or on its Frontiers, from the rest of it, because the whole system without any objection whatsoever is utilised for military as well as trade purposes. The gates of India are situated on its North-West Frontier, and the extension of railways to it is essential in the interest of better defence. This extension can now be made cheaper than at any time of emergency, when military requirements will not admit of a moment's delay; and may I say, of Honourable Members' permission. These railways, in the absence of a military expedition, are always open to trade and are greatly beneficial for the maintenance of the people of those rugged hills who form the first barrier in the on-rush of the outsider. Few railways have ever been paying concerns from the start, but they have proved to be a source of revenue after the lapse of some time. I, therefore, strongly oppose this Resolution, which seeks to do injustice to my former profession and to my province.

The HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK: Mr. President, this is the second time within a few weeks that I have had to ask the indulgence of the Council. On the last occasion it was because the Finance Member was prevented from attending the Council and from speaking on the very important Resolution moved by my Honourable Friend Mr. Kale on retrenchment. Only this morning, however, Sir Malcolm Hailey was congratulating himself that the state of Financial business in another place had permitted him to come up to this House and speak on this important Resolution. Fate has ruled otherwise. The Finance Member has again at the very last moment been summoned away on very urgent public business. The consequence is that, I myself—and that is why I am asking the indulgence of the Council—did not come here to-day prepared to speak to this Resolution. Lack of preparation is not a small matter for an official whose previous career did not rest on his ability to improvise arguments; although I admit that, in most cases, that handicap or disability is usually counterbalanced somewhat by the soundness of the case that the official has to defend. At the same time I have of course a rough working knowledge of the *pros* and *cons* of this very ancient question, and for what it is worth I shall be glad, in as few words as I can, to place my ideas on the subject at the disposal of Honourable Members. But I am afraid I must utter one word of warning. I may have to lead Honourable Members into the thorny mazes of a technical discussion on accounts matters, and, if so, I hope the House will render its gratitude, if gratitude it feels, in the right place, I mean to the Honourable Mover of this Resolution. Since however the subject is a very technical one and, I am afraid, offers no opportunity whatever for light discussion, I cannot spare the Council and it must bear with me for a time while I speak of somewhat dull matters. But if what I have to say is dull it will at any rate be impartial.

[Mr. E. M. Cook.]

If the Honourable Member who is in charge of the Railway Department were here, I am quite sure he would be only too pleased to lend his full support to this Resolution; whereas, if His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief were here, I have no doubt he would take an exactly opposite position, and although, then, the official attitude might be a little less impartial the debate would possibly be somewhat more lively.

Well, Sir, what, briefly, is the history of this case? I think the House already appreciates, from what has been said by the Honourable Mover, that the question almost entirely turns on these Frontier lines connected with and run by the North-Western Railway. Now, excepting the few

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Railways in India which have been constructed from famine grants and classed as 'protective', all railways, whether paying or not, have been constructed from our general loan funds and those loan funds are the same, no matter whether they are spent on railways or on any other form of capital expenditure. There were a certain number of purely strategic lines, or what at the time were thought to be strategic lines, constructed from the ordinary State funds up to the year 1886. In 1886 these were amalgamated with the lines formerly owned by the Sind Punjab and Delhi Railway Company, and were worked under the name of the North-Western Railway. In 1888, the Secretary of State, to whom the question had been referred, directed that the accounts of the strategic lines should be kept separately from the productive sections of the North-Western Railway, and this has since been done in our Railway Administration accounts. If Honourable Members will turn to Appendix IV, Volume II, of the Railway Administration Report, they will find that the North-Western Railway military section is shown separately. I do not say that that meets entirely the first part of the Resolution, but at any rate, the House will perceive that we have done something to classify these two kinds of railways under separate heads. Some of these particular railways have been mentioned by previous speakers. The most important of them are the Peshawar-Jamrud, the Nowshera-Dargai, the Pindi-thal, the Lala Musa-Kundian, and the Campbellpur-Multan, (which I think is the same as the Sind-Sagar) and the Ruk-Quetta line. These are mainly the lines which are now in issue. The cost of them has been, standard gauge, 21½ crores, and 2 ft. 6 inches about 70 lakhs; altogether then you have a little over 22 crores. First let me pause for a moment and ask the Council to consider what proportion this is to the total capital at charge on account of railways. The total capital at charge on all the State-owned lines is no less than 503 crores, and incidentally let me say that I do not think there is any other country in the world possessing such a magnificent asset. Out of those 503 crores, there is only 22 crores on account of these 'strategic' lines. I come then to my next point, and it is that the whole of this 22 crores has not been spent on railways which are non-remunerative. For example, take the Kalabagh-Bannu Railway; if you look at the map, that seems a strategic railway; as a matter of fact it was built as a commercial railway. The more you come to look at this question, the more difficulties you find. Take a section like the Nowshera-Dargai; that, I believe, is now fully remunerative. Then again, I think I am correct in saying, that the Lala Musa-Kundian line is very remunerative. Even the Sind-Sagar is now paying. So it is not quite such a large question as perhaps the Council might think from what my Honourable Friend said. The first time that this question came up formally for discussion was, I think, in 1887, when there was some division of opinion within the Government. Those

were in the old spacious days when Members of Government, and even Secretaries to Government, sometimes had leisure to write weighty and interesting Minutes putting their point of view thoroughly and exhaustively. These Minutes were then printed and became important State documents. The Government of India at the time were sharply divided on this very issue. Sir Theodore Hope was the Public Works Member and Sir Auckland Colvin, the Finance Member, and I believe they were supported by the Viceroy, Lord Dufferin. Their minutes enunciated the principle that I think my Honourable Friend wants to see enforced. They took this line:—

‘Railways being a Commercial department, the cost of Military lines and other works required for purely military purposes should be charged against the Military grant.’

On the other hand, the majority of their Colleagues, headed by General Chesney, who was the Army Member (not the Commander-in-Chief, who was of course Sir Frederick Roberts, as he was then) laid down a different principle, which is of great importance and runs through the whole of our accounts system. They said that—

‘The services rendered to a Department of Government by another Department should be borne by the Department in which the expenditure is incurred.’

That is to say, any railways that are built should be regarded as part of the railway machinery, and charged under the heading ‘Railways,’ any profit or loss going to the railway account. This issue was referred to the Secretary of State, who decided, not so much on the question of principle as on practical convenience—

‘That all works required for military requirements on the frontier lines should be met from railway funds.’

Although he agreed that when work was carried out, such as railway sidings, for purely military purposes on any line outside the North-Western Railway, that should be debited to military funds. I admit that the position then set up seems a little anomalous. But it is the position which has existed ever since then. The actual procedure is that on all other railways, excepting the North-Western, any work of a railway nature actually required by the Military Department has to be paid for from Military funds, although on what are called the Military sections of the North-Western Railway, the works required by the Military Department are charged to Railway funds. That distinction may not seem very logical. The real reason for it was probably that the North-Western Railway, being State-owned, it did not make very much difference, because the money came out of the same pocket, while as regards other lines, when you come to a company line it would be difficult to carry out the same principle there. As I have said, it does seem rather anomalous that we should have this differentiation between Military lines on the frontier and railway works constructed for Military reasons elsewhere. I agree too that the general position is liable to the attack brought against it by my Honourable friend, namely, that we are charging to the Railway capital account certain items which are required for non-commercial purposes. Although, as I have pointed out, many of the co-called strategic lines are really now commercial lines, still I will take one concrete case, namely, the Khyber Railway, which is certainly not a commercial railway. I quite admit as regards a railway like that, the Honourable Mover’s contention is justified, so far as it goes. The next point I want to emphasise is this. But once we move away from the present position, are we quite so sure that we can at one jump get to a more suitable and more accurate

[Mr. E. M. Cook.]

arrangement? It is going to land you in a lot of difficulties, which perhaps my Honourable friend has not thought of. I do not say that you cannot move, but I say it will not be an easy thing. My Honourable friend laid down a rather wide proposition about accounts always showing the true object of expenditure. He would find it extraordinarily difficult to apply that principle right through all the public accounts, and I guarantee that if he started to do so, he would very soon find our accounts in chaos. In our accounts, we divide our departments into what are called Public Service Departments and Commercial Departments. As regards Public Service Departments, these are not allowed to charge other departments for services which fall within the class of duties for which they have been constituted. In other words, you cannot classify expenditure strictly by the object which it is intended to serve. Take, for example, the Police. I think Honourable Members must have seen some uniformed gentlemen outside this Council Chamber, who are there partly, no doubt, for the security but partly also for the dignity of this House; their cost is debited to the Police, it is not debited to the Legislative Department. The scene of their work changes from day to day. To-day there may be a certain Inspector outside this room, but to-morrow he may be running after volunteers. Therefore, if you try to keep your accounts purely with reference to the object of the expenditure, you are going to get into very serious trouble. I admit that in the case of our Commercial Departments you must, so far as you can, keep their accounts on commercial lines, and in the same way as an ordinary firm keeps its books, and that is why we do not apply the same principle all the way through. We stop short at the commercial accounts, and we endeavour to recover all expenditure incurred by railways on behalf of other departments, while the railways have also to pay other departments for expenditure which the latter incur on behalf of railways. For example, if a battalion of troops is moved from one part of the country to another, the Accounts Officer of the railway line concerned raises a debit against the Military Department. My Honourable friend may say:

'This is all very nice. You have given away the case; Why don't you charge the military railways straight off to the military account.'

I quite admit that there is much to be said for this view, but at the same time there are a number of quite substantial reasons which might be urged on the other side. I could hear some people say:

'Is it so very illogical after all, to debit the Khyber Railway to the military account? Is it not the function of the Railway Department to provide railways, where railways are unquestionably needed for the general purposes of the country?'

I can imagine people saying that, and I want Honourable Members of this Council to see that there are two sides to the question. There is moreover no doubt a good deal of value in showing what we spend on railways as a whole under one head, for example, we do not exclude the Assam Bengal Railway, although I am sorry to say it is not a productive railway at present. Further, there will be some very difficult questions which will arise as regards interconnection between the two different classes of railways, especially as regards long distance traffic. Then there is another point which I have already established, namely, that our strategic railways have a habit of becoming productive, and some of them very productive. So altogether I think this question is not so one-sided as might appear at first sight. You will anyhow at once raise some awkward questions. Take, for instance, the Moplah rising. That has been

put down mainly by the troops, and they cannot withdraw from that area yet, although military operations, in the proper sense, are over, and the troops are, as a matter of fact, doing ordinary police duties. Are we going to send in a bill to the Madras Government for the cost of the troops down there. Are we going to charge the cost of suppressing the Moplah rebellion to some Civil Estimates? At present all such expenditure is being debited, and will continue to be debited, to the Military Estimates, although I could of course imagine the Army turning round and saying;

'We exist for external aggression. We do not exist primarily for preserving internal security, and if you are going to use us for internal security purposes, and move us from place to place, the departments primarily responsible for law and order ought to pay us, that is, the provinces ought to pay us the cost of keeping up those battalions of the Army which are earmarked for internal security.'

One of two nice questions will arise if you are going to make claims of that sort. The point I am trying to make is that this is not a question to be decided offhand on the floor of this House. I have invlved the Council into considerations of both sides of the question, but it was not certainly my intention, when I talked of a maze, to leave the Council in that maze. Government realises perfectly well, as a result of the greater public attention that has been given to railways by the Indian public during the last few years, a very welcome attention I may say, an attention which has been much stimulated by the Report of the Acworth Committee, that there are a number of questions which have been under discussion for years and years and ought now to be faced, and decisions arrived at. Take, for example, one of the most important recommendations of the Acworth Committee, namely, that the Railway Budget should be completely separated from the general Budget. As we know, that question has not been finally decided on its merits. If such a separation ever takes place, then you will obviously have to take away from the Railway budget any purely military expenditure. There is, therefore, I admit, much to be said, especially for the first part of this Resolution and for a redistribution of railway capital expenditure into productive and non-productive. I presume that when and if that is done the non-productive section of the Railway account will be further sub-divided into strategic, military and provincial, and when that is done any person who likes to look at the figures can see at once what we are spending, and what the railway debit to the military ought to be. However, I think I have said enough to show that this question is a difficult and technical one; I should have to speak for another half hour if I were to explain fully all the technicalities of the subject. What Government proposes to do is to have this matter thoroughly threshed out. As I think Honourable Members are aware, we had in Calcutta in December a Railway Finance Committee, which considered certain very important matters connected with the Acworth Report on its financial side. Government now propose to reconstitute that Committee, not perhaps in its original form or for its original purpose, but rather to form what I imagine will be a Central Advisory Committee to advise Government on all large questions of railways. The Committee, I think I am correct in saying, will be mainly non-official, and composed of Members of both Houses of the Legislature. It is proposed to refer this question to that Committee. It will then be able to sit down and calmly examine both sides of this very technical question in all its aspects, and to make such recommendations as seem necessary. The question has been going on for at least the last 26 years, and I think I can appeal to the Honourable Mover to be a little patient for a few more weeks, or perhaps a month or two, until the meeting of this Committee, which I

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understand will very shortly be appointed—if the Honourable the Commerce Member were here, he would have been able to give more information than I can about its actual composition and propable sittings. The Committee will not be convened specially for this particular matter, but will deal also with certain other large questions of principle arising out of the Acworth Committee's Report, but this will be one of the questions which will be referred to it. I hope, now that I have given that undertaking, my Honourable Friend will see fit not to press the Resolution, but if he does press it, then I certainly could not vote for it, especially the second part.

The HONOURABLE MR. V. G. KALE: Sir, I stand to support the Resolution. In my view of the whole matter, the explanation which has been given to us by the Honourable Mr. Cook is neither satisfactory nor convincing. To me, the question is a question of principle. The Honourable Sir Maneckji Dadabhoi divided the Resolution into two parts, the first of which he was inclined to accept, and the second of which he would like us to reject. The first relates to the system of keeping accounts; and so far as that system is concerned, we have been told that accounts are already separately maintained, and that we can see from the Railway Administration Report what is the expenditure incurred upon strategic and other railways. But the most important part of the Resolution is the second part. After all, it is comparatively immaterial in what way the accounts are kept; that is a technical matter. What is of the greatest importance is that the public must know how the national money is being spent. What the Honourable Mover of the Resolution wants is that the country should know how much is being really spent upon the Army and how much is being spent upon the Railways. As matters stand, from the statistics that are published, the public is likely to receive an entirely inaccurate impression of the financial position of the railways and the financial position of the Army. It has been already shown, and the fact has been admitted, that there has been a distinct continuous loss on the so-called strategic railways; and whereas the military expenditure should have been shown as having been greater by the amount of that loss, *viz.*, 1 crore, and 60 lakhs or 50 lakhs even before the war,—that loss is merged in the general account of the railways. I repeat that this gives a very false impression of the financial position of the railways and of the general finances of the country. What we want—and especially in these times when military expenditure is being subjected to a severe criticism—what we do want really to know is what the Army costs the country. It is entirely a different matter whether that expenditure is absolutely essential or not. My Honourable Friend opposite, I am afraid, took quite a wrong view of the whole situation when he said that we were, as it were, going to discourage railway travel or railway construction. We do not want to do anything of the kind. Everyone in this House appreciates the great importance of the railways to the economic progress of the country. What the proposition wants is not to curtail expenditure upon the railways,—what the proposition wants is not that expenditure upon the Army should be curtailed. This proposition has nothing to do with that question at all. We are not discussing at the present moment how much we should spend upon the Army. We may spend more, we may spend less; the question is, we ought to know how much is being really spent upon the Army, and how much upon our railways. The railway accounts are being vitiated by their mixture with the military accounts, and they are not very clearly shown. The impression about the military expenditure and about railway revenue and railway expenditure, the impression that we get from the Budget is, from what we have already seen,

not what it should be. Consequently the railway receipts should have gone up by 50 lakhs to one crore, while the military expenditure would have increased to the same extent if the system now proposed had been adopted. So that is the principle underlying the proposition, and I do not think that there is anything wrong or anything hasty about it, and I have not been able to follow my friend when he appeals to us to wait and to leave the question to a Committee. I do not want to suggest that a Committee cannot go into this question; the Resolution also does not say that a Committee should not be appointed to consider the question. The Resolution simply suggests a certain principle, and as the Honourable Mr. Cook has pointed out, this is a question which has been under the consideration of the Government for more than a generation. He also went to the length of saying that a part of the Government at one time was inclined to accept the principle underlying this Resolution. The principle, therefore, is not a new one. There is nothing in that principle of which we should be afraid. And I think if the Honourable Members of this House are inclined to think that the principle is a sound one, not only from the point of view of mere accounting, but also from the point of view of a clear knowledge, a clear idea of what is the true military expenditure and the other expenditure which is entailed for the good government of the country, the progressive government of the country. There were many observations made by the Honourable Mr. Cook with regard to the difficulties which would be encountered in recasting the accounts, and the complexity of the accounts of the various Departments, and I do not think that he was happy in one or two illustrations that he gave. He gave the illustration of the Moplah rising. He said that the Moplah rising is now being put down by the military, that the primary duty of the police is to maintain peace and order and that it is not the duty of the Army. . . .

THE HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK: Sir, I never went so far. I did not say that it was not the duty of the military to help the police.

THE HONOURABLE MR. V. G. KALE: However, the Honourable Mr. Cook made that distinction. Whether he did not go so far as I am doing in repeating what I think he said, the analogy is there,—that the rising is being put down in Malabar by the military and the question is raised whether the expenditure should be put down to the Police Department or to the Military Department. I do not think, Sir, that this question arises at all, because if disorder in the country has advanced beyond certain limits, it is the military who have to take charge of the whole business. It is for that purpose that the Military Department exists and that the Army exists, and certainly this expenditure has to be put down to the military. Government is quite entitled to say that on account of the disorder which has had to be repressed, military expenditure has gone up, and I am quite sure that when the next year's Budget comes this will be one of the arguments advanced from the Government Benches, in defence of the increased military expenditure. Government will say:

'There is disorder in the country, and there is serious unrest; you put it down, and the military expenditure will go down.'

If this is the argument raised from the Government side, does it not strengthen my case when I say that this is a duty which the military has clearly to perform, and consequently we know exactly how expenditure is distributable between the Police and the Army? Similarly, with regard to the other instance that he gave, namely, the police officers who have to maintain the dignity of this House. Are they to be paid by the Legislative

[Mr. V. G. Kale.]

Department? Certainly not, because it is one of the duties of the Police Department to maintain the dignity of this House. The police are performing here one of those duties which are assigned to that Department, and consequently the question of the distribution of expenditure does not arise even in that case. Therefore I am inclined to think that the difficulties put forward by the Honourable Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy and others have been—if they will pardon me for saying that—slightly exaggerated. The Mover of the Resolution did not say that there were no difficulties; it was because there were difficulties that he has asked Government to take steps to remove them and to keep separate accounts, so that the public may clearly understand the whole situation with regard to the finances of the railways and of the army. In these circumstances, I think that the Mover of the Resolution has certainly proposed a very important reform, not only in the technical matter of keeping accounts, but also in the way in which the expenditure entailed in the defence of the country and the expenditure incurred on commercial undertakings like railways, ought to be clearly distinguished. There is so much discussion now-a-days about railway finance. We are told that the railways should be carried on as business propositions, that the general budget should be entirely separated from the railway budget, and so forth. If we are so keen that railways should be carried on as successful business concerns, is it not reasonable that they should not be charged with expenditure which really does not belong to them but to the military? I must make it clear once more that the object of the Resolution is not in any way to curtail army expenditure or to increase railway revenues in an unfair or indirect manner. That is not the object at all. The object is to arrive at a clear understanding of the finances of the two Departments and a classification of all the issues which have been raised by the present financial situation of the country. For these reasons I think the Resolution should be accepted by this Council.

THE HONOURABLE SIR EDGAR HOLBERTON: Sir, with reference to the remarks that have fallen from the lips of the Honourable Mr. Kale, I feel myself in some considerable doubt as to the principle which he has put forward, and I do not know whether it is possible to get it cleared up. His trouble apparently is that at the moment we know that the strategic railways are working at a yearly loss, which, as far as I remember, he put at something like 50 lakhs of rupees—I am not sure of the figures—and he desires that this should be definitely debited to the military accounts and not to the general railway account. This is rather an attractive proposition in many ways, but I think in considering it we ought to bear in mind that there will be a large credit to come to the military side, because very many of the railways in this country were originally opened for strategic purposes and have turned into exceedingly valuable commercial propositions. Is it the intention of the Honourable Mr. Kale and his supporters that a very careful investigation should be made and all the credits arising out of railways which began their life strategically and finished up as commercial proposition should year by year be put to the credit of the Military Department? If that were so then he might gain my support; but as it is I think his principle is a most dangerous one relying as it does on casual debits which come into account year by year and which may unduly distort the relation between general railway accounts and military accounts without the most careful examination over a very long period of years of the exact outgoings and incomings from all railways which have had a strategic beginning. I consider this an emphatically dangerous proposition.

The HONOURABLE LALA RAM SARAN DAS: Sir, I am glad that Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy has agreed with the principle of my Resolution, which he has divided into two parts; he gives his support to the first part, namely, that in future separate accounts of revenue and expenditure should be kept of the working of military or strategic Railways. The Honourable Khan of Hoti happens to live in a frontier part of the country and so he only appreciates the strategic Railways from his own point of convenience. As regards the matter of accounts, he has not said one thing or the other. The Honourable the Finance Secretary has been kind enough to tell this Council that this proposition came up before Government a few decades ago. It is a matter for regret that, although some decades have passed, Government has not been able to solve this difficulty. But, as a matter of fact, questions like this are generally referred to Commissions of Inquiry, and when, in due course, the reports are received, Government generally casts them aside and ignores them. I was myself a member of the Railway Finance Committee and possibly the Honourable the Finance Secretary might ask why I did not raise a discordant note there. My reply is that, at that time, I understood that the accounts of strategic lines of Railways would be kept separately in order that we may see how military accounts really stand. Railways are productive works, and as productive works they are generally carried out by capital raised by loans. I think it is an unwise policy to mix productive and unproductive works together in the Commerce Department. The Honourable the Finance Secretary said that the Peshawar-Jamrud and the Nowshera-Dargai lines are now paying. That does not affect me. I never said that these Railways are not required. On the other hand, I say that they are very essential for the defence of our country and for enabling us to meet successfully an invading army. My Resolution makes it quite clear that, if there is any profit, it should be credited to the Military Department. Sir Edgar Holberton apparently did not see my point. I did not say that the profits should not be credited to the army side but that they should be. After all, this will make no difference in our total income and expenditure. All we want is that the public should have a clear and true accounting of all the grants that are asked for under the various heads. Government ought not to conceal anything from the people. I hope I will be excused for saying that, so far, I think the Government has been concealing this state of accounts, notwithstanding Executive Councillors holding popular views.

Then, Sir, the Honourable the Finance Secretary quoted General Chesney. I beg to put a different interpretation on that quotation to what he does. Then, the Finance Secretary said that all Railways, whether strategic or otherwise, should be treated the same. I hold a different view. All these strategic Railways should be regarded as defence Railways, and like the Public Works Department works, kept quite separate from the military works, which are carried out by the Military Works Services, which is a distinct and separate Department. I suggest to this Honourable Council that these Railways which are now termed 'strategic' should hereafter be termed as 'defence Railways.' The Honourable the Finance Secretary says that, excepting the North-Western Railway, all expenses on such Military works and sidings are debited to the Military Department. I cannot understand this argument, as, in reply to my question, it has already been said that, except on the North-Western Railway, on no Railways are there strategic lines. Now, on the only Railway where there are strategic lines the Military expenditure, we are told, is not debited to the Military Department, so I have not been convinced with the argument put forward by the Finance Secretary. As far as I see, such sidings and

[Lala Ram Saran Das.]

works result in no remunerative traffic. Loi-Shilman Railway cost over a crore of rupees. This line was built on the North-West Frontier as a strategic railway and for certain military reasons it was dismantled soon after completion, and now we see no more of it. The capital, on this construction, I understand, was debited to the ordinary Railway accounts, while it ought to have been debited to the Military Department. Difficulties are always encountered by public men and by Government the most, and Government ought to make a serious effort to solve them. They, in my opinion, have failed during the last few decades to put before the tax-payer the true state of affairs. I quite welcome the Committee which my Friend wants to appoint, and that is his practical support to my Resolution, because it will be a Committee to solve difficulties of the kind referred to by the Honourable the Finance Secretary. Perhaps he is afraid that in case he fully accepts my Resolution, military expenditure, which is already enormously high, will swell up further. I do not say that only debits should be made to the Military Department, but, if there are any credits, they should also be given to that Department. Then he says that strategic lines are sometimes of great use as connecting links. There, again, I beg to submit that in case the connecting links are not commercially profitable concerns, they ought to be treated purely as Military lines. My Friend, the Honourable Mr. Kale, has replied to the question of the Moplah rebellion and the debit of the army charges in that connection, to the civil, so I need not dwell any further on this point. I think his answer is quite correct. In a similar way many services are done by the Civil Department for the Military Department, but are not charged for. The military are meant for external as well as for internal security. It has been said that in case separate accounts are kept, people will then know the various items, but my question will not be solved as it will not even then exhibit the true state of affairs as far as accounts are concerned. I have not at all been convinced by what the Finance Secretary has stated. As far as I can gather, he has agreed with me in principle; although he finds it difficult to agree to it fully on account of some technical difficulties in account matters, which he will be able to solve if he gives it a serious consideration. I hope the Council will agree to my Resolution.

The HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK: I am sorry that my Honourable Friend, Mr. Kale, in his constitutional and continual dislike of committees, should endeavour to, if I may say so, stampede this Council into committing itself on this very difficult question. The Honourable Mover rather implied that this question has been under the consideration of Government for a generation and a half and that it is time the Government made up its mind. That is not the case at all. Government did make up its mind, and its mind hitherto has been against my Honourable Friend's proposal. Government now has a somewhat more open mind on the matter, and it is anxious to go into this question and thresh it out by an expert committee mainly composed of non-officials. The Committee would then consider the exact position in regard to the Military estimates as a whole, and whether the Military estimates should not be given credit, for certain expenditure, such as the construction of certain frontier roads which are debited to the Military works estimates though mostly used by the Civil population, and other similar questions. When they have considered all such points, then they will say whether it is worth while or desirable to separate entirely the finances of these strategic lines from the rest, or whether on the whole it is not better to leave things as they are. . . .

The HONOURABLE LALA RAM SARAN DAS: That action supports my Resolution.

The HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK: And that is why I think that on the whole the course which I have suggested is the best course for this Honourable House to take.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: The question is that the first part of the Resolution, which is as follows:

'That this Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that in future a separate revenue and expenditure account should be kept of the working of military or strategic railway lines.'

be accepted.

The motion was adopted.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: The question is that the second part of the Resolution, which is as follows:

'That this Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that the losses connected with the working of these Railways should be debited and the profits, if any, credited to the Military Department, and that the capital outlay on new lines or works of this nature should be debited to the Military Accounts.'

be accepted.

The Council divided as follows:—

AYES—16.

Acharyya Chaudhuri, Maharaja S. K.
Ayyangar, Mr. K. V. R.
Boroah, Mr. C.
Jaffer, Khan Bahadur E. H.
Kale, Mr. V. G.
Khaparde, Mr. G. S.
Lalubhai Samaldas, Mr.
Maricair, Khan Bahadur A.

Naidu, Diwan Bahadur V. R.
Rampal Singh, Raja Sir.
Ram Saran Das, Rai Bahadur Lala.
Raza Ali, Saiyid.
Roy, Raja P. N., of Dighapatia.
Sukhbir Sinha, Lala.
Wacha, Sir Dinshaw.
Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Sir.

NOES—18.

Akbar Khan, Major Mohamed.
Amin-ul-Islam, Khan Bahadur.
Bahram Khan, Nawab Sir.
Cook, Mr. E. M.
Dadabhoy, Sir M. B.
Forrest, Mr. H. S.
Froom, Sir A.
Ganga Nath Jha, Mahamahopadhyaya Dr.
Holberton, Sir E. J.

Lindsay, Mr. H. A. F.
Lloyd, Mr. E. S.
Mayhew, Mr. A. I.
O'Donnell, Mr. S. P.
Sarma, Rao Bahadur B. N.
Shafi, Mian Sir M.
Smith, Mr. H. Moncrieff.
Tek Chand, Diwan.
Zahir-ud-din, Khan Bahadur S.

The motion was negatived.

The HONOURABLE KHAN BAHADUR AHMEDTHAMBY MARICAIR: May I move my Resolution later in view of the adjournment?

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: The Honourable Member has one minute to speak (Laughter). The time of the House is at his disposal. If he does not want to move his Resolution I shall call upon the next Member.

RESOLUTION *RE* OPENING OF THE PORT OF MADRAS FOR PILGRIM TRAFFIC.

The HONOURABLE KHAN BAHADUR AHMEDTHAMBY MARICAIR: Sir, the Resolution that stands in my name runs as follows:—

'This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that early steps be taken to open the port of Madras for pilgrim traffic to Mecca and other holy places.'

[Khan Bahadur Ahmedthamby Maricair.]

In moving this Resolution I beg to make the following observations. This is a very important Resolution that affects the religious interests of my community. I have been receiving numerous appeals from my community to take up this question with the Government of India, and on careful consideration and scrutiny, I have come forward to appeal to the Government to open the Port of Madras for the embarkation of pilgrims to Mecca and other holy places. At present all the pilgrims are embarking at Bombay which gives most inconvenience and hardship especially for those who are going from distant places. My object in bringing this Resolution is not only to give convenience to pilgrims leaving from the Madras Presidency, but also to minimise the inconvenience and hardship the people at Bombay are undergoing in getting all the pilgrims crowded together. . .

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: The business of the day is now interrupted. We shall proceed with the motion for adjournment that stands in the name of the Honourable Saiyid Raza Ali.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT ON RAILWAY STRIKE.

The HONOURABLE SAIYID RAZA ALI: Sir, I rise to move the adjournment of the House to discuss the grave situation that has arisen on account of the strike on a large section of the East Indian Railway. The trouble which arose on the morning of the 2nd February at Tundla has since spread from Kalka on the one hand to Moghalseraï on the other. It has further extended to Jubbulpore towards the south. The Indian staff on all the principal stations on the section which I have named is in many places on complete, and in other places almost complete, strike. So difficult indeed is travelling on this section in these days that one cannot find even coolies in some stations to take one's luggage. In fact I myself had to bring my servants to the railway station to put my things in the train. Now this is the situation with which we are confronted. All the goods trains on this section have had to be stopped. All passenger traffic also has been cancelled except two trains, one the Mail and the other the Express train running between Kalka and Moghalseraï. Now, Sir, quite apart from the question of convenience and comfort which are simply non-existent on this section, the East Indian Railway is losing a very large sum of money which, I believe, will come to many lakhs.

The situation at Jamalpur, which is a very important place on the East Indian Railway, is difficult. The reports are that the men have gone on a partial strike. The trouble is also spreading to the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway. The men on that line also contemplate going on a sympathetic strike in the near future. The condition of the North-Western Railway is far from satisfactory. As is known to those Honourable Members of this Council who come from the Punjab, the men have served their Administration with a notice that, unless their grievances are redressed, they propose to go on strike on the 15th February: So that all this is far from comforting. Now I believe I owe it to the Council to state in a few words as to what is alleged to have taken place at Tundla on the 2nd instant. There are two versions of this story. The first is the version of those, the Indian staff, who have gone on strike, and the second is the version of the Railway, which has accepted the statement of the European employees. It is alleged by the strikers that on the 2nd of this month, early in the morning at about 3 o'clock, one Indian

4 P.M.

freeman (the work is known by the name of Jack) was assaulted by two Europeans, one being a shunter and the other a driver. The man and his friends complained to the authorities, but the authorities disregarded their complaint and took no action on that. Since this assault was entirely unprovoked, therefore they went on strike to bring the matter prominently before the authorities concerned. In the meantime news of what had happened at Tundla spread, but in perhaps an exaggerated form, to other stations, with the result that the members of the staff at other important stations started joining in the strike. When the authorities were informed that the matter could not be overlooked or disregarded, they gave to the men the option of an inquiry, and some inquiries were made, with the result which I will state in a minute. Up till now, according to the Indian statement nothing has been done by way of punishing those who are alleged to have assaulted Ram Lal. Now the version put forward by the Railway is that this man, Ram Lal, came and complained that he had been beaten by two European employees; that no complaint was made to the authorities by the strikers before they actually went on strike; that as soon as the authorities discovered that the men had gone out, they gave them the option of the matter being inquired into either by the departmental officers or by the Magistrate; that the strikers accepted the latter alternative, that the Magistrate inquired into the matter, that a medical examination of the injured person was held, and that the Magistrate was informed that no injuries were visible on the person of this man, Ram Lal, and that as the case was not a true one, they dropped the proceedings. This is the other side of the explanation. Now the Council will see that the matter is no longer *sub judice*, unless the Sessions Judge or the High Court set aside the order of discharge, and there is no motion to that effect so far as I know. Now, Sir, the question is whether the Administration of the East Indian Railway has acted in the manner in which it ought to have acted. I invite the attention of the Council to that very important matter. I submit that the Agent of this important Railway, which I believe is the most important in this country, has not left Calcutta for a minute to come to the spot and listen to the grievances of these men, and to find out for himself as to whether their complaint is true or otherwise. A Locomotive Superintendent no doubt was deputed to Tundla, but he contented himself with the Magisterial inquiry and accepted the decision of the Magistrate. Now unfortunately the Railway is one of those Departments where, in the treatment of Indians by Europeans, racial considerations play a much greater and more prominent part than in any other Department under the Government. I am very sorry to invite the attention of the Council to that aspect of the matter, but unfortunately that has been so, and to a large extent that is so even to this day. Of course time was—though fortunately there has been some slight change in the angle of vision, if I may say so—when an Indian belonging to the Indian Civil Service was maltreated by certain military officers in the form of dogs being set upon him . . .

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: The Honourable Member is getting rather irrelevant.

The HONOURABLE SAYYID RAZA ALI: I take due note of the warning, Sir, though I think that in the matter of general treatment I was not irrelevant. Now I can say that even up to this day the treatment that is meted out is far from satisfactory. This is so as far as the passenger class of the public is concerned. Much more unsatisfactory is the treatment that is meted out to the Indian subordinates by European officials on

[Saiyid Raza Ali.]

the railways; so that looking at the proposition as a whole, there is nothing inherently absurd in the story of an Indian subordinate being beaten by a European officer. That is the crux of the matter. There is nothing inherently suspicious in that story. Now the Magistrate's report which is with me—in fact I have very many papers but I do not wish to weary the Council with them all—states; I will read a passage to show the Council how far reliance can be placed on this Magisterial inquiry

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: Order, order. Do I understand from the Honourable Member that a judicial inquiry was held in this matter by a Magistrate?

The HONOURABLE SAIYID RAZA ALI: That is so.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: If that is so it is not open to the Honourable Member to traverse that judicial finding in this Council. He may not argue in this Council that a Court of law in the exercise of its judicial functions has acted improperly.

The HONOURABLE SAIYID RAZA ALI: What I proposed to show to this Council, Sir, was that the public is not satisfied with the result of the judicial inquiry.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: That it is open to you to do. What it is not open to you to do is to argue the question on the facts.

The HONOURABLE SAIYID RAZA ALI: I just wanted to place a certain passage from that judicial inquiry before this Council and I wanted to say that the public is not satisfied with the result. If I am within my rights I will do so; if you rule, Sir, that I have no right to mention that the public

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: It is quite open to the Honourable Member to prove that the public is satisfied or dissatisfied with the inquiry. What it is not open to him to do is to traverse the judicial inquiry and reargue the facts before this Council. If he will refer to Standing Order No. 28 he will see that it is not open to him to reflect upon the conduct of any Court of law in the exercise of its judicial functions. That he cannot be permitted to do.

As he has now exceeded his time I must call on another Member.

The HONOURABLE SAIYID RAZA ALI: I have got some more facts to place before the Council. No doubt I have exceeded the time-limit, but in this important matter

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: Order, order.

I must make it quite clear that the object of a discussion on a motion for the adjournment is to bring to the notice of the House in a very concise form something of urgent public importance. The Honourable Member has got the permission of the House to do that. But a motion for adjournment is not in any sense a substitute for procedure by Resolution. The rules recognize that and allot 15 minutes, and 15 minutes only, to each Member. The total time available for the discussion is two hours; and if individual Members exceed their time it means depriving other Members of their right to speak. I, therefore, propose in discussions on motions for adjournment to adhere very strictly to the rule fixing the time-limit.

The HONOURABLE MR. C. A. INNES: Sir, I do not deny for one moment the gravity of the situation caused by this unfortunate strike. It

is indeed unfortunate that the Honourable Saiyid Raza Ali, when he went to the station, could not find a coolie to put his luggage on the train and had to send his own servants to do that. It is indeed unfortunate that the East Indian Railway is losing lakhs of rupees by this strike. But, Sir, the real gravity of a railway strike of this magnitude does not lie in comparatively minor inconveniences of that kind. The strike is a most serious matter, for it may mean that the sources of supply, not only of the industries of Northern India, but even the food supplies of the towns may be cut off. I am afraid, Sir, I cannot congratulate the Honourable Member on the way in which he has placed his case before this Council. Every assumption that he could make against the East Indian Railway he has made, and I cannot regard the account he has placed before the Council as in any way corresponding to the facts. I have said, Sir, that the strike is a very serious matter; but one thing I can say is that the consciences of the East Indian Railway and of the Railway Board are perfectly clear. I will now give the Council a plain unvarnished account of the strike from the beginning.

In the early morning of the 2nd of February there was an altercation between an Indian fireman named Ram Lal and a European fireman and European shunter. The Indian fireman said that he had been severely assaulted, and at once the local Indian at Tundla stampeded on strike. They made no representation to the Heads of their Departments at Tundla; they made no representation to the Agent of the East Indian Railway; they made no demand for any independent inquiry; they went straight out on strike, and, what is more, the strike spread from station to station like wildfire. Now Sir, Saiyid Raza Ali has said that the East Indian Railway have handled this matter improperly. I received news of the strike myself on the morning of the 3rd of February, and the Railway Board, under my instructions, at once wired down to the Agent and suggested that an independent inquiry should be promised into the case. But the Agent, as might have been expected, did not wait for a wire of that kind. As soon as he heard of the strike, he wired up to his officers at Tundla and authorized them, if they saw reason to suppose that the story of the assault was a true story, to place the Europeans under suspension pending an independent inquiry. He suggested a joint inquiry of the senior officers of the railway. That was put to the men; they refused it. At their request an inquiry was held by the District Superintendent of Police and the men said that they would be bound by that inquiry. The inquiry was held and it showed that the assault was a fabrication; the men thereupon repudiated that inquiry, and again at their request, an open inquiry was held in judicial form by the Joint Magistrate of Agra. That inquiry was held, as I have said, in public. Any one who liked to give evidence could come and do so; and after making an inquiry in this proper judicial form, the Joint Magistrate gave his decision that the story of the assault was a fabrication.

Now, Sir, I think the authorities, both of the Railway and of the Railway Board, have reason to complain of the way in which they have been treated in this matter. As I have said, it is a serious matter for a railway staff to come out on strike, so serious that in some countries a strike of railway servants is a penal offence. We are not so severe in India; we try to treat our men better; and yet they have gone out on strike. They are doing their best to paralyse industries and even the social life of the whole of Northern India. They did that without waiting for the result of an independent inquiry; and when that inquiry has been held, and when

[Mr. C. A. Innes.]

it has been proved, as far as it can be proved, that the assault was an entire fabrication, they refuse to come back. Surely, Sir, the explanation is perfectly obvious. This is not a genuine economic strike; it is a purely political strike. My information is—I am unable to say whether it is true or not—that for days before this strike, in connection no doubt with His Royal Highness' visit to Agra, certain non-co-operator agitators had been at work among the loco staff at Tundla; and this merely trivial excuse was manufactured. The ground had been carefully prepared and the men were stamped out on strike.

The HONOURABLE SAIYID RAZA ALI: Give the dog a bad name and hang him.

The HONOURABLE MR. C. A. INNES: That is exactly what the Honourable Saiyid Raza Ali has tried to do with the East Indian Railway. We have had a sample of this kind of agitation a short time ago. We all know about the Assam-Bengal Railway strike. We know how political agitators exploited unfortunate ignorant labour; how they kept the men out on strike starving for two or three months; and how after that time had passed many of these unfortunate people discovered that they had been deluded when they found that they were unable to return to their places on the railway. Their places had been filled up. And, Sir, we have all read in the public press the statement made by some of these unfortunate men in which they charged those political agitators with having misled them and having destroyed their source of livelihood; and that is, Sir, what is happening to-day on the East Indian Railway. The Honourable Saiyid Raza Ali accused the Agent of the Railway of not having left Calcutta. The strike, Sir, is not merely a strike at Tundla. It is a strike, which, as the Honourable Member told us, extends from Ambala to Moghalsarai and has extended also to Jubbulpore. That means that the Agent feels, and feels rightly, that his place is at the head-quarters of his administration, where he can receive reports from every station that is affected. The Honourable Member then accused the Railway Department of being a department full of racial distinctions, and he said that the Indian subordinates in that Railway were badly treated.

The HONOURABLE SAIYID RAZA ALI: I did not say that particular Railway, but I said they were generally badly treated.

The HONOURABLE MR. C. A. INNES: The Honourable Member did not give us one word of proof in support of that statement. It is a pure assumption, and I do say, Sir, that Members of the Legislature should refrain from making statements of this kind which reverberate throughout India and which may do incalculable harm. Surely, Sir, we have enough in this country at this time of this unfortunate racial feeling. Speaking on behalf of people of my colour, it is not of our seeking. We all regret it and if it is allowed to continue, it will do India an immense amount of harm. I think, Sir, that anybody in this Council who speaks about this unfortunate strike should refrain from accentuating that racial feeling. As I have said, Sir, it is purely a political strike. That statement can be proved in other ways. What is the demand that we have had from the strikers? One demand is that we should hand over this European shunter and the European fireman to the Strike Committee for punishment. Is that a reasonable demand? Is that a demand which any Railway administration could agree to, especially when the charge has been proved to be a

fabrication? The Honourable Member referred to a strike in the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway. I myself have seen the report of that strike, and what is the demand there? It is that the grievances of the strikers should be referred to the local Khilafat Committee. That shows, Sir, the state of things which is now spreading from one Railway on to another in India. It is simply a case of mischievous men trying to exploit labour for their own purposes. The last thing they look at or think of is the interests of the labourers themselves. The whole thing is political and the end which these men have in view is to destroy the British Government in India. (Applause).

The HONOURABLE LALA RAM SARAN DAS: Sir, there is a chance of a strike occurring in the near future even on the North-Western Railway. I happen to be a resident of Lahore, which is the headquarters of that administration and where the biggest Railway shops in India are located. Some time back, there was a general strike in the Loco and Carriage shops and that strike went on for some considerable time. So far, I have not been able to know officially what has been the reason of that strike, but, as far as I have been able to gather, I understand that the strike started on account of the rude treatment of an Indian by a European mechanic in the workshops. That is the rumour. I may be wrong. But nothing political happened and there was no contradiction by the authorities. The Honourable the Commerce Member has said that the cause of the strike on the East Indian Railway is political. As far as the North-Western Railway goes, so far I think the strike there has been purely on economic grounds as it led to a considerable rise in wages. The strike continued in the workshops in the North-Western Railway for a considerable time which resulted in abnormal delay to the repairs to rolling stock and engines and thereby resulted in the accumulation of traffic, dislocation of trade and industry. It also resulted in the loss of about 30 lakhs of rupees in the shape of gratuity to the poor work people who were then misled. To these people, who were misled by sentimental grounds, the loss of that big amount of their gratuity is a great hardship. I would say that Government ought to take a lenient view. From what I gather from the various reports that I hear in Lahore, I think a strike is coming on. I see three reasons mentioned for that. One, they say, is the colour question, because certain Indians are being superseded by Anglo-Indians for the stereotyped reason of unfitness. Of course, I do not blame the Railway authorities if this is the wrong reason of complaint; the second reason is low salaries particularly in the Traffic Department and Loco, running staff; while the third is overwork. I think that inquiries are not made properly. I would mention that all we non-officials are quite happy to co-operate with the Government to bring about the solution of these questions. Railways being a source of great revenue to India, these strikes affect Government earnings considerably. These strikes give another tool to the political agitators to agitate people, who, but for the discontent, cannot be misled. So, in the interests of the Government and the general public, serious efforts should be made to find out the underlying cause of these recurring strikes and thereby to remove the discontent.

The HONOURABLE SIR EDGAR HOLBERTON: Sir, I think the House should be grateful for the opportunity given to it to discuss this question on the suggestion that the House should be adjourned, as it has enabled us to hear the exceedingly lucid, straightforward and honourable explanation given us by the Commerce Member. As we are all aware, there is nothing economic about this strike. It is purely a political move

[Sir Edgar Holberton.]

brought about without the slightest consideration for the feelings and welfare of the poor people who are themselves involved in the strike. It was time, I think, that a responsible Member of the Government came forward and made some sort of statement, such as we have heard from Mr. Innes to-day, and I am perfectly certain that it will ease the general situation and the present state of things. The Honourable Mover has, I am sure, earned the thanks of this House for having made the suggestion.

The HONOURABLE SIR MANECKJI DADABHOY: Sir, as one of the oldest Members of this Council and one who has taken part in many interesting debates in this House, I feel that I would be wanting in my duty if I remained silent on this occasion. I have heard with deep regret the speech and the manner in which this motion for adjournment has been piloted through the Council by my Friend, the Honourable Saiyid Raza Ali. I have noticed with the deepest sorrow that in a discussion of a most important question affecting the industrial work of this country, he should have made some allegations which have been already disproved in a Court of law. It must be borne in mind that when an application for an adjournment of the House is made, and when the ordinary business of the House is sought to be suspended, it is only on important grounds, grounds which would justify the necessity of an immediate debate, that a motion is ordinarily allowed. When I supported the Honourable Member this morning in the matter of his motion I had not the remotest idea that, instead of suggesting the means of alleviating the present critical situation, he would make the position of the Railway administration more difficult by repeating charges, disproved in a Court of law, in the forum of the Council Chamber. Even at the risk of some unpopularity on an occasion like this, I feel that the matter should not be allowed to pass unnoticed. As regards the genesis of this strike we have heard two contrary versions, one from the Honourable Saiyid Raza Ali and one from the Honourable Mr. Innes. I am perfectly satisfied with the explanation given by Mr. Innes that it was not an economic trouble of any kind, and that the strike was due to political agitation. It is a political strike, and in view of this fact it was incumbent upon Saiyid Raza Ali to have at least taken the precaution of directing his discussion in a manner that would not further perpetuate racial animosity and bitterness. To use the forum of this Chamber for perpetuating such racial distinctions is not a wise policy. My friend has made two reprehensible statements, especially after the judicial finding given in the case. It is deplorable that a Barrister of his experience and his knowledge should have attacked the finding of a Court of law and ascribed the strike to racial causes.

The HONOURABLE SAIYID RAZA ALI: I did not give any reasons against the Magistrate's decision. I said that the public was dissatisfied with it.

The HONOURABLE SIR MANECKJI DADABHOY: You said that racial considerations played a prominent part and you added that there is nothing inherently absurd in the story of an Indian subordinate being beaten by a European driver. I deplore this method of debate in this Council. I say both Indians and Europeans should avoid statements causing racial bitterness in this Council. If representations have to be made, they must be made in an open and straightforward manner without imputing

motives. This Council will lose all its dignity, its prestige, not only in the eyes of our own people, not only in the eyes of Government, but in the eyes of the world, if this Council Chamber is used for the ventilation of flimsy and unfounded racial grievances. As such I think the attitude taken up to-day by my Honourable Friend is exceedingly deplorable. However, in view of what was said by my Honourable Friend, Mr. Innes, I hope the Honourable Saiyid Raza Ali will now see his way to ask that no further action should be taken and the Council will forthwith proceed with its ordinary work.

The HONOURABLE SIR ZULFIKAR ALI KHAN: I stand out not to strike a racial note in this debate, because nobody deprecates it more deeply than I do, but the question which has been brought forward before the Council this evening is one of very serious import. As the Honourable Member has explained, the strike on the East Indian Railway has assumed very great proportions, and the Honourable Member from Lahore has said that it may affect the North-Western Railway also. If this happens I am afraid there will be great dislocation, not only of business, but of traffic and general comfort. This is indeed a serious state of affairs. Whatever the facts of this particular case are, one thing is certain and that is the Administration must deal strongly and drastically with those who are the authors of misunderstandings and those who go out of their way to create racial prejudices. I do not know whether in this particular case the Indian or the European is to blame, but I insist, whether he is an Indian or European, that the Administration should deal with him drastically. Sir, most of us here in this Council may have suffered from the treatment of railway authorities. I myself have been a victim to this treatment several times. It is not my intention to give a story of all those grievances, but I may say that sometimes when complaining of this treatment to the officers, the officer in spite of the promise to me on the spot that he will make inquiries and inform me of the result has failed entirely to do so. This time when coming from Lahore to Delhi, I applied for accommodation which was not. . .

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: Am I wrong in thinking that this debate relates to a strike of railway workers and not to a strike of railway passengers? (Laughter).

The HONOURABLE SIR ZULFIKAR ALI KHAN: My idea in giving the instance is to point out that even Honourable Members suffer from the treatment given by these people.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: So far as I can understand, the discussion is confined to the position created by the strike of the workers.

The HONOURABLE MR. V. G. KALE: In view of the turn the discussion has taken, I find myself in a somewhat difficult position and I am afraid many of my colleagues share that difficulty. There has been a strike the character of which has been described as extremely grave and the seriousness of the situation has not been disputed. It has been alleged on one side that the fault was entirely due to certain European officers of the railway, while it has been contended, on the other, that they were not to blame and that the strike is a got-up affair created for political ends. It is not possible to go into the merits of this case. The situation that we have got to face is that there is this strike on a very large scale. There is also a danger of that strike spreading to different parts of the country. What are we going to do under the circumstances is the question? To my mind it may be right to say—and it has proved correct in certain instances—that

[Mr. V. G. Kale.]

economic grievances of labour have been exploited for political purposes. That interpretation may be right even in this case, and it may be true there has been this kind of political exploitation; but can the problem be solved only by explaining it away in this fashion? The undoubted fact is there, that there is so much economic discontent in the country. The fact is also there that there is so much political discontent in the country. There is danger of these two combining together, and then of there being an outburst. Under these circumstances, I think it will be only right and proper on the part of Government to treat labour that goes on strike more leniently than Government would otherwise be inclined to do. Labour in many cases is misguided, and misled, into the commission of certain acts which, under ordinary circumstances, it would not commit. Many of the recent strikes have been strikes of this character. There is, however, some substratum of grievance at the bottom. That little grievance is elaborated and exaggerated, with the result that there is a dangerous strike. It may be mainly of a political character. But admitting that it is of a political character, are we to sit silent, and, because it partakes of a political character, fold our hands and do nothing? I think that that would be a very dangerous thing to do, and I wish that the railway authorities may go further than they have felt inclined to do,—and still further inquire into the real grievances, or fancied grievances, of the workers that have gone on strike, and, if possible, go out of their way to meet them. We cannot allow an economic strike to be mixed up with a political strike. If there is a political strike in the country and also an economic strike, it would be a very dangerous risk to run to allow the economic strike to assume the dimensions and dangerous character of a political strike. The only way to defeat those political agitators who may be trying to exploit the economic grievances of labourers is to face labour,—is to go to labour and try to meet their grievances, though they may be in many cases unreasonable. I think Government and the general public ought to take a generous view of this matter. Strikes of this character can succeed only if there is public sympathy enlisted on their side. Honourable Members of this House are aware that England, a short time ago, was threatened with a general coal strike and eleven lakhs of people were involved. And the coal miners were going to be joined by the labourers in the docks and on the railways and to combine themselves into what was called the Triple Alliance. But Government there faced the strike and succeeded in putting it down and seeing it utterly defeated. Why? Because public sympathy was enlisted. In this matter, Government ought to see to it that the public is furnished with the true facts in each and every case. What happens is this. Rumours, misleading rumours, always go ahead, and the information that the Government supplies lags behind by many days. In the meanwhile the rumours have had their effect, and a mischievous effect: it is here that the public must be placed in possession of facts which the Government knows. It is unfortunate that the Honourable Saiyid Raza Ali was not in a position to explain his own case. He was not able to elaborate his arguments or his facts. The fact is, however, there. If we had had the fuller information that he wanted to place before us, so that we might have been enabled to form a clear judgment about the strike, it would have been much better. We have got the Government account, and we see what the Government has got to say, *viz.*, that the strike is entirely of a political character. I am inclined to accept that view, and therefore I will appeal to the Government to leave aside mere technicalities in this matter—even to be generous and to go out of its way and try to conciliate labour, because

this is a time when we cannot afford to fight about small matters. Under ordinary conditions it might have been feasible and proper to face the strike in the ordinary way, but as the situation has been growing worse, day after day, during the last few weeks, I would appeal to the Government to see that every effort is made to try and conciliate labour in this matter; and if this step is taken by Government, Government will have handled the situation in the best manner possible.

The HONOURABLE MR. BOROOAH: Sir, I am one of those who generally do not sympathise with strikers; for, in my humble opinion, strikes are neither the just nor the constitutional methods of getting redress for our grievances. But I hold at the same time that it is far better to find out means for the removal of the causes that give rise to strikes than to put down strikes drastically. I, therefore, would most respectfully ask the Government to punish adequately those people who, by their conduct, afforded a plea to the strikers to make a strike.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: The question is:

'That the Council do now adjourn.'

I have to explain to those Honourable Members who may not be very familiar with the forms of these motions that the effect of resolving the motion in the affirmative would be that the Council was giving its opinion that it was dissatisfied with the line which Government is taking in regard to this matter. If the motion is negatived, it will be interpreted as an expression that Government have met the case in a satisfactory manner.

The question is:

'That the Council now adjourn.'

The motion was negatived.

RESOLUTION RE: OPENING OF THE PORT OF MADRAS FOR PILGRIM TRAFFIC.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: Will the Honourable Mr. Maricair kindly now proceed with his Resolution?

The HONOURABLE KHAN BAHADUR AHMEDTHAMBY MARICAIR: My object in bringing this Resolution is not only to give convenience to pilgrims leaving from the Madras Presidency, but also to minimise the inconvenience and hardship the people at Bombay are undergoing in getting all the pilgrims crowded together in their city and to avoid insanitation of the place. In this connection I received a demi-official from the Government of India, Health and Sanitary Department, dated 7th October, 1921, in which they say that on consultation with the Government of Madras they are not in favour of opening the port for pilgrim traffic on the following grounds:

- (1) A large number of pilgrims from the Madras Presidency come from the District of Malabar where there is a decided preference for the shorter and more economical Bombay route.
- (2) There has been no indication of any spontaneous and pressing demand from the Muslim community of the Presidency for a port of embarkation at Madras and that there is no need to open the port of Madras for pilgrim traffic.

[Khan Bahadur Ahmedthamby Maricair.].

- (3) No provision of *musafir-khanas* exists at present in Madras.
- (4) No appreciable number of pilgrims are offering.
- (5) Another possible difficulty in the way of opening the port of Madras is that of the provision of an adequate number of ships for pilgrim traffic from that port and no advantages will be secured by the opening of the port of Madras to pilgrim traffic unless the number of pilgrim ships is adequate.
- (6) Lastly, it would mean heavy and unnecessary expenditure on the part of the Government if the port of Madras is opened.

I am sorry I have to contradict all that the Madras Government said. I may at once say that the Government of Madras have taken no pains whatever in making proper inquiries of the question. As a matter of fact neither myself nor any of the members of their local Legislative Council, nor any other non-official leaders of the Presidency, were consulted. To prove my statement I wish to make a comparison between the figures the Madras Government has given to the Government of India and the figures the Government of Bombay has kindly given me.

According to the figures given by the Government of Bombay, 2,442 pilgrims embarked at Bombay in the year 1911, whereas no figure was given by the Government of Madras for that year. In the year 1912, 1,642 pilgrims embarked at Bombay. In the year 1913, 1,402 pilgrims. I did not get the figures for 1914, 1915, 1916 and 1917 because those are the years in which the great war was in existence.

| | | | | | | |
|-------------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| In the year | 1918 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 512 |
| „ „ | 1919 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1,233 |
| „ „ | 1920 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 2,947 |
| „ „ | 1921 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 964 |

Whereas the figures given by the Madras Government are not worth mentioning here. They say:

| | | | | | |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1912 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 86 |
| 1913 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 32 |
| 1914 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 34 |
| 1915 | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil |
| 1916 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| 1917 | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil |
| 1918 | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil |
| 1919 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 38 |
| 1920 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 371 |

The figures given by the Bombay Government are the figures obtained from the Protector of Pilgrims, Bombay. From this Government will be able to realise how far the Government of Madras have taken the interest of helping the scheme. One important point I wish to draw the attention of the Government is that out of the figures given by the Government of Bombay a large number of pilgrims come from Malaya who embark at Straits Settlements by the weekly steamers arriving at Madras and enrail to Bombay and catch their steamers there. These pilgrims are obliged to go to Madras as there is no direct steamer from the Straits Settlements to Bombay, and the passage from Singapore and Penang is so cheap that they prefer going to Madras. Consequently, if the port of Madras is opened for pilgrims, they will find it very convenient to embark at Madras.

I now give an explanation to the objections raised by the Madras Government.

- (1) The pilgrims from Malabar will surely prefer getting steamers at Madras than going to Bombay by steamers. Further, they will avoid embarking two steamers. Naturally the Indian pilgrims will prefer rail journey to a steamer journey.
- (2) I have already mentioned above that upon the pressing demand made by the Muhammadan community I have come forward to appeal to the Government of India for opening the port of Madras and there is no necessity of appealing to the Madras Government, as this is a matter purely concerning the Government of India.
- (3) There is a *Musafirkhana* recently constructed by one Mr. C. Abdul Hakeem Sahib at Madras purely for the use of Muhammadans and will accommodate from 700 to 800 persons. I have consulted several philanthropic Muhammadan gentlemen at Madras who have readily announced their willingness to open as many choultries as are required if the port of Madras is opened for the pilgrim traffic.
- (4) The statement I got from the Government of Bombay will bear testimony that there are appreciable numbers of pilgrims embarking at an average of 1,500 pilgrims per year.
- (5) With reference to the number of pilgrim steamers the Government are well aware that at present numbers of steamers are lying idle for want of traffic and the Honourable Sir Arthur Froom will bear testimony that there will be no difficulty whatever in getting these pilgrims carried through in the weekly homeline steamers of the British India Steam Navigation Company, Limited, leaving Madras. I am in communication with Messrs. MacKinnon MacKenzie & Co., Managing Agents of the British India Steam Navigation Company, on this subject, and I trust that there is every likelihood of the Company arranging this traffic.
- (6) With regard to the remark made by the Government of Madras stating 'that it would mean heavy and unnecessary expenditure,' I may say, from the fact I mentioned before and on the face of the figure given by the Government of Bombay, it is not at all an unnecessary expenditure. On the other hand, the Government of India will be doing a great piece of charity in opening the port of Madras for the pilgrim purpose. It will also be appreciated by my community at large, as it is a matter touching their religious interest.

Under these circumstances, I fully trust the Government will not hesitate in accepting my Resolution and make necessary arrangements to open the port of Madras for pilgrim traffic to Mecca and other holy places at an early date.

With these few remarks I commend my Resolution.

The HONOURABLE MR. E. H. JAFFER: Sir, I rise to support the Resolution of my friend, the Honourable Mr. Maricair, and I do so as much on behalf of the constituency which I represent from Bombay as on my own behalf. The House will see that my Honourable Friend has made out

[Mr. E. H. Jaffer.]

a good case in favour of the proposal and has completely met the objections which have been raised against it. The Muhammadan community in my part of the country will strongly support a proposal which is intended to facilitate and help the pilgrimage to Mecca of their co-religionists in the Madras Presidency.

I do not think that whatever difficulties may be pleaded against the opening of the port of Madras for pilgrim traffic to Mecca, are insuperable. There is no doubt that there is a sore grievance, to which my Honourable Friend, Mr. Maricair, amply testifies. There is clearly a demand for the opening of the port of Madras as proposed, and I think Government should meet the wishes of the Muhammadan community in this matter of the greatest religious importance to that community. I hope the House will realise the urgency of the question and will accept the Resolution. With these few words, I accord my hearty support to the Resolution.

The HONOURABLE COLONEL SIR UMAR HAYAT KHAN: I strongly support the Resolution.

The HONOURABLE LALA RAM SARAN DAS: I also support the Resolution.

The HONOURABLE MR. SETHNA: Sir, the Honourable Mr. H. Jaffer in his speech said that the Honourable Mover has given ample facts to this Council as to the necessity of opening Madras as a pilgrim port. I, for one, am somewhat surprised at that statement, because in the speech which my friend made, the figures he gave were by no means convincing. As far as I understood him, he said that the Madras Muhammadans who go *viâ* Bombay average about 1,500 or thereabouts. Assuming, Sir, that is the correct number, 1,500 is a very small fraction of the Muhammadan pilgrims that do embark for their religious places from Bombay. But my point is this. Even if Madras is opened as a pilgrim port, I contend that because of the proximity of Bombay to various parts of the Madras Presidency and because of the greater facilities in Bombay afforded to pilgrims, perhaps half that number will still prefer to go *viâ* Bombay rather than from Madras. These are points on which I should have thought that my Honourable Friend, Mr. Maricair or Mr. Jaffer, would have thrown some light. Again, they have given us no details in regard to the special expenditure that will be involved in making Madras a port of embarkation. In the absence of these facts, it will be somewhat difficult for the Council to support the Resolution, and I hope, therefore, that in the course of his reply, Mr. Maricair will endeavour to enlighten us on these points to enable us to give our support, if possible.

The HONOURABLE MIAN SIR MUHAMMAD SHAFI: Sir, the question raised by the Honourable Mr. Maricair in the Resolution brought forward by him is not a new one. It was raised as far back as the year 1902 by the Government of India when they inquired from the Madras Government whether the circumstances of the case justified the opening of Madras as a port for pilgrimage. The Madras Government on that occasion, after making necessary inquiries, reported against the proposal. Subsequently in the year 1912, the Honourable Sir Ibrahim Rahimtullah, when he was a non-official Member of the Bombay Legislative Council, moved a Resolution in connection with the opening of ports for pilgrimage to the Hedjaz. The terms

of the Resolution I need not trouble the Council with. What is important to bear in mind is this. At the end of the debate on that Resolution, the Honourable Sir Ibrahim Rahimtullah accepted a modification of his Resolution to the effect that the Government of Bombay be requested to inquire of the Government of India whether there were any reasons for not throwing open the ports of Calcutta, Chittagong and Madras for the embarkation of pilgrims, and the Resolution thus modified was agreed to by the Council. In accordance with this Resolution the Government of Bombay communicated to the Government of India the proposal that had been adopted in the Bombay Council. The Government of India in due course consulted the Madras Government again with regard to the opening of Madras as a port for pilgrimage, and in the reply received from the Government of Madras occurs one paragraph, to which I wish to invite the attention of this House in particular. In paragraph 2 of their letter, this is what the Government of Madras said :

‘ His Excellency the Governor in Council has given the matter his careful consideration and has in particular instituted inquiries to ascertain whether the port of Madras or a port on the West coast of the presidency would prove to be a suitable embarking place for pilgrims. The main difficulty is that neither Madras nor any West coast port is so situated as to attract a preponderance of pilgrims from the Presidency. The latter would only serve the West coast and Madras would serve neither the West coast nor the northern districts of this Presidency. Pilgrims from Malabar and South Canara, who form the bulk of the pilgrim population of this presidency, would, if the port of Madras were thrown open for pilgrim traffic, naturally prefer the cheaper route *via* Bombay, and pilgrims of the northern districts and Hyderabad would find it cheaper to go to Bombay direct instead of to Madras. The number of pilgrims visiting the Hedjaz from the southern districts of the presidency is so small as to be negligible.’

Now, these are very cogent arguments against the opening of Madras as a port for pilgrimage, and I waited in vain to hear from the Honourable Mr. Maricair any sound reason which would demolish the case made out by the Madras Government in the paragraph which I have just read out. My Honourable Friend, Mr. Maricair, referred to certain paragraphs in the letter of the Madras Government sent to the Government of India, of which a copy was furnished to him sometime ago.

Now, let me explain to the Council what occurred last year when the Madras Government sent up that letter. My Honourable Friend gave notice of a question in connection with the proposal which he has now put forward in this House in the form of a Resolution. We wrote to the Madras Government a letter in connection with the question, of which my Honourable Friend had given notice, and the Madras Government in reply furnished us with the information as well as the arguments to which the Honourable Mr. Maricair has invited the attention of the House. He has pointed out that, while the figures given by the Madras Government with regard to the number of pilgrims from Madras are wrong, the figures which he has obtained from the Bombay authorities show that a much larger number of pilgrims go to the Hedjaz from the Madras Presidency. I am afraid if my Honourable Friend had read the letter of the Madras Government with a little care, he would have found that the figures given by the Madras Government are not figures of the pilgrims who have, during the years mentioned therein, proceeded from the Madras Presidency to the Hedjaz. On the contrary, they are figures only of pilgrims who applied for passports in Madras for leaving India. Indeed the charge brought by him against the Madras Government is really entirely unfounded. Now, I do not know where he has got the figures that he gave the House from.

[Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi.]

But the total figures for the very years mentioned by him are as follows:— In 1911 there were altogether 22,856 pilgrims from India, out of whom only 1,248 were from the Madras Presidency. In the year 1912, there were 15,464 pilgrims from India, out of whom only 617 were from the Madras Presidency. Did my Honourable Friend give the figures for the year 1918?

The HONOURABLE KHAN BAHADUR AHMEDTHAMBY MARICAIR: Yes, 1918.

The HONOURABLE MIAN SIR MUHAMMAD SHAFI: In the year 1918, the total number of pilgrims from India was 1,361, out of whom only 16 came from the Madras Presidency. In the year 1919 the total number was 9,218, out of whom 238 were Madrasis and in the year 1920, 18,008 visited the Hedjaz from India, out of whom only 1,085 were Madrasis. As has been rightly pointed out by the Madras Government in the reply to which my Honourable Friend alluded, the majority of Muhammadan pilgrims from the Madras Presidency come from the West coast or Malabar and from another district of which the name was mentioned and it is obvious that no man in his senses will choose a longer and more costly route when he has a shorter and a cheaper route open to him to take in order to perform the pilgrimage. The arguments adduced by the Madras Government against the opening of Madras as a port of pilgrimage have been read out by my Honourable Friend himself, and therefore it is unnecessary for me to refer to them. I leave it to the House to judge between the Madras Government and himself. It seems to me that each and every one of the arguments mentioned in the Madras Government letter is strong and cogent and a mere denial of those arguments will not help my Honourable Friend. The Madras Government have pointed out that there is no spontaneous or large demand for the opening of Madras as a port for pilgrimage. My Honourable Friend said 'Oh no, there is considerable demand'. In fact he told the House that a large number of his co-religionists had appealed to him to come forward and advocate their cause in this respect. Unfortunately my friend did not mention to the House the name of a single Muslim Association in Madras who had passed a Resolution authorising him to present that Resolution to this House (*A Voice*: Mr. Maricair is the spokesman of the Muhammadans of the Madras Presidency). My Honourable Friend is no doubt an elected Member for Madras, but that is not the point. The statement made by my Honourable Friend was that there was a considerable demand amongst the Muhammadans of the Madras Presidency for opening the port of Madras for pilgrimage. That statement has got to be supported by facts and figures, and the mere fact that an Honourable Member may represent a certain constituency is not in itself evidence of the fact that the demand is supported by the members of the community concerned. They know how to express themselves and the Government of India have not received from any Muslim Association or from any Muslim body in Madras a single Resolution or a single representation putting forward the demand which the Honourable Mr. Maricair has done in his Resolution. The Local Government have distinctly stated that there is no spontaneous or large demand for the opening of Madras as a port of pilgrimage for the Muhammadans of Madras. There you have the positive statement of the Local Government and along with that you have the absence of any representation or any Resolution by any Muhammadan body or of any section of the Muhammadan community, and the two things taken together, I submit, are conclusive of the fact that the

position as stated by the Madras Government is really correct. The number of pilgrims from Madras is very small. The Bombay route is the shorter route and the cheaper route. The opening of a new port for pilgrimage is not a matter which involves no expenditure or no trouble and there is no real demand for the request put forward by the Honourable Mr. Maricair. On these grounds I ask this House not to accept the Resolution.

THE HONOURABLE KHAN BAHADUR AHMEDTHAMBY MARICAIR: I am sadly disappointed at the way in which the Honourable Member in charge of the portfolio has dealt with my Resolution. First and foremost I must bring to the notice of the Council that I am an elected Member of this House representing the Muhammadans of the whole of the Madras Presidency. I have got much more influence than an ordinary Association or Anjuman could hold and as a matter of fact I am the President of several Anjuman and Associations in the Madras Presidency. In the year 1916 when I was in the Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States. I was asked by a large number of Malay gentlemen and pilgrims to move the question with the Government and make Madras the port of pilgrimage to Mecca, as they found it most convenient and a cheaper route. I really cannot understand how a Madras man could travel cheaper by going to Bombay and taking steamer there than getting his steamer in Madras itself. An argument like this is not at all satisfactory. Again with regard to the facts and figures I have got a copy of the Madras Government letter before me. I have not forgotten what they said about 'those who obtained passports outside the Madras Presidency.' The mistake which has been committed by the Madras Government and the Honourable Member in charge of the portfolio is that they have omitted the large number of Muhammadan pilgrims that embark in the Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States and arrive at Madras through the weekly steamers, entrain at Madras for Bombay for want of a steamer at Madras. The figures are:

| | | | |
|------|---|-------|-----|
| 1911 | Straits Settlements and Dutch East Indies | ... | 891 |
| 1912 | Ditto | Ditto | 631 |
| 1913 | Ditto | Ditto | 698 |

My Honourable Friend stated that in 1918 the number that came from Madras was 16 and he has omitted to show the figure of 495 pilgrims disembarked at Madras who entrained to Bombay to take the steamer there. There is a great deal of demand. The figures for 1918 are 495, 1919, 893 and 1920, 1,781 and in the year 1921, 201. I really cannot understand why the Government of India have not secured these figures. After all, these are the pilgrims who have landed at Madras who went all the way to Bombay for want of steamer; that means these figures include Madras. The remark that has been made that I have not got proper facts and figures which I can place before the Council is not right. I have got the original letter which I got from the Secretary to the Government of Bombay, General Department,—with facts and figures. The statement was signed by the Protector of Pilgrims, Bombay, and I can challenge this figure against the figure given by the Honourable Member in charge of the portfolio; 1,500 pilgrims are sufficient to be carried in a passenger steamer to start from the port. It is most inconvenient and a great hardship and expensive for passengers to go all the way from Madras to Bombay and there to embark in a costly place like Bombay, a crowded place, where they suffer from all sorts of nuisance and inconvenience, and it is in the interest of Bombay, Honourable Members of Bombay should say, 'all right, you go out of Bombay, and

[Khan Bahadur Ahmedthamby Maricair.]

get your steamer in Madras.' The Honourable Mr. Sethna asked me to give information as to the facts and figures of expenditure. The Government of India should look into that; I can get the facts and figures, if necessary, I can submit the figures later on. I again contradict, Sir, the report sent by the Government of Madras; their report is quite wrong; and they have not at all taken any steps or any trouble to look into the question minutely. As a matter of fact I had the pleasure of meeting one of the high officials of Madras the other day. I said the same thing to him. I wrote to them and told them that they had committed a serious mistake in not looking into the figures carefully and in studying the question and in not inviting the opinion of the Muhammadan public broadcast. As a matter of fact I myself know what happened in Madras. My son-in-law, who is in the Madras Council, represented to me, now that I am in this Council, that no inquiry whatever was made by the Madras Government. There are 13 Muhammadan Members in their Council and none of them said that any inquiry whatever has been made. So I am sorry I have had to say something about the Madras Government, but I am obliged to say that they have not acted on this subject properly. I have got facts and figures in my possession. You must admit that my case is quite strong, and it is a quite serious matter. My community are strongly pressing me that I should take up the question with the Government of India. As the Honourable Member in charge of the portfolio said that hereafter if any question like this comes up I will have to take a written statement. It looks to me, Sir, as if my word is not valuable before the Government,—as if the words of Anjumans and Associations who are adopting mostly Khilafat and non-operation tactics, can be accepted, and in this way the Honourable Members of the Government are trying to shirk off this question, by excuses of this nature. I can only tell you, Sir, that this is an important question which concerns the religious interest of my community in Madras and in the whole of the Malaya area, and I have got appeals from my community that I should take up this question with the Government and see that the port of Madras is opened. What more can I do with the Government. The Government must accept my statement and see its way to help the Madras Muhammadan community, more especially now that an Honourable Member of the Executive Council is a Muhammadan (Hear, hear), and I am sure he will reconsider his decision and see his way to accept my Resolution and do something for my community who are really and actually suffering for want of a suitable port of embarkation in Madras. As a matter of fact, Sir, when I was coming to Delhi—this is the second time I passed through Bombay—I myself found great difficulty in stopping in Bombay comfortably. As a matter of fact I had not had even my bath the other day when I came to Bombay because I did not get a suitable place in which I could get a bath. (Laughter). Well, the place is such. The Honourable Mr. Sethna says that every convenient arrangement has been made, and various facilities have been made, in Bombay. . . .

THE HONOURABLE MR. SETHNA: We have got a *musafirkhana*.

THE HONOURABLE KHAN BAHADUR AHMEDTHAMBY MARICAIR: I am sure the Government of Madras when writing were not at all aware of the fact that a *musafirkhana* already exists,—it is intended purely for the convenience of Muhammadans, and I think a large number of Muhammadans in Madras would be quite willing to open more *musafirkhanas*.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: I would remind the Honourable Member that he is approaching his allotted time-limit, and would ask him to bring his subject to a conclusion as soon as may be.

The HONOURABLE KHAN BAHADUR AHMEDTHAMBY MARICAIR: We must open some house in addition to the one already in existence.

With regard to the costly route, I think, Sir, as a business-man having an experience in the seaborne trade, I know much better in regard to expenditure on travelling. I mean to say the passage and other things. As I already explained, I am in communication with a great Company, the British India Steamship Company. The Honourable Sir Arthur Froom is also one of the Heads of the Departments. I think I can do my best, with the help of my supporter in the Department, in getting steamers to carry these pilgrims without any difficulty. The only difficulty that we have now to consider is the one of *musafirkhana*. I said, there is already one. Then again with regard to the want of a steamer, I said I am negotiating and trying to get steamers easily. With regard to the demand, I have given you facts and figures. It comes to 1,500 pilgrims. I think it is more than sufficient for us to arrange for a pilgrim ship to carry these pilgrims.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: The Honourable Member has exceeded his time.

The question is that the following Resolution be accepted:

'This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that early steps be taken to open the port of Madras for pilgrim traffic to Mecca and other holy places.'

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: The House will divide by a show of hands.

· AYES—15.

NOES—12.

The Resolution was adopted.

CASKET FOR ROYAL ADDRESS.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: Before adjourning the Council I should like to inform Honourable Members that I made a promise on the last occasion that the casket in which the address to His Royal Highness is to be presented would be exhibited on the table at this meeting. Whether owing to the railway strike or to other causes, I am informed by my Colleague in the other House that the casket has not yet arrived. I do not know whether we can ask for any facilities from Government for getting the casket here, but it will be rather unfortunate if on the occasion of the Durbar the casket in which the address is to be presented is not available. In the meantime however the illuminated address which is to be enclosed in the casket is here and is open to the inspection of Members.

The Council adjourned till Wednesday, the 22nd February 1922, at Eleven of the Clock.