

Tuesday, 23rd September, 1924

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COUNCIL OF STATE, 1924.



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COUNCIL OF STATE.

Tuesday, 23rd September, 1924.

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

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

RECRUITMENT OF MUHAMMADANS FOR THE SUPERIOR SERVICE OF THE MILITARY ACCOUNTS DEPARTMENT.

429. THE HONOURABLE MR. YAMIN KHAN : (i) Will the Government state the number of officers in the Superior Service of the Military Accounts Department ?

(ii) Is it a fact that until last year appointments to this service have been made only by nomination ?

(iii) Is it a fact that no Muslim has ever been nominated to the said service ?

(iv) Is it a fact that a cashier, drawing less than Rs. 200 per mensem and declared unfit for the Assistant's grade in the Foreign Office, was nominated for the Superior Service of the Military Accounts Department and is now drawing more than Rs. 1,000 per mensem ? What is his name ?

(v) What steps, if any, do Government propose to take to recruit Muslim officers for this service ?

THE HONOURABLE MR. A. C. McWATTERS : (i) Sixty.

(ii) Before 1st April 1922 appointments to the Superior Service of the Military Accounts Department were, except in certain special cases, made by the Secretary of State for India. Since 1st April 1922 the vacancies in that Department are filled as follows :

1-3rd by promotion of subordinate gazetted officers.

2-3rds by Indians from among the successful candidates at the competitive examination held for the recruitment of Indians for the Indian Audit and Accounts Service.

(iii) The reply is in the affirmative.

(iv) No.

(v) In connection with this year's competitive examination for the Audit and Accounts Service, Customs and Military Finance Department, some posts are being reserved which will be allotted, on consideration of the results of the examination, to the best candidates of communities or Provinces which may otherwise be inadequately represented.

RECRUITMENT OF MUHAMMADANS FOR THE SUBORDINATE SERVICE OF THE MILITARY ACCOUNTS DEPARTMENT.

430. THE HONOURABLE MR. YAMIN KHAN : (i) Will the Government state the number of officers in the Subordinate Service of the Military Accounts Department ?

(1225)

(ii) What is the total number of Muslims in the said service as compared with non-Muslims ?

(iii) What action, if any, do Government propose to take to recruit Muslims for this service ?

THE HONOURABLE MR. A. C. MCWATTERS : (i) Eighty-seven.

(ii) There is at present one Muslim in the above number.

(iii) There is no system of direct recruitment for this service. Appointments thereto are made by selection from among senior accountants in the Department borne on an All-India List, and Muslims have therefore an equal chance of advancement to the gazetted staff of the Subordinate Account Service with the members of other communities in that Service. The claims of any qualified Muslims will be carefully considered.

QUALIFIED MUHAMMADANS ON THE WAITING LIST OF THE STAFF SELECTION BOARD SINCE 1922.

431. THE HONOURABLE MR. YAMIN KHAN : (i) How many qualified Muslims have been on the waiting list of the Staff Selection Board since 1922 ?

(ii) Is it a fact that many of the non-Muslim candidates, who qualified this year, have been provided for, while qualified Muslims of 1922 are still waiting ?

THE HONOURABLE MR. J. CRERAR : (i) Six now remain on the list.

(ii) The answer is in the negative.

REJECTION OF AN APPLICATION FROM A MUHAMMADAN GRADUATE FOR EMPLOYMENT IN THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, WIRELESS.

432. THE HONOURABLE MR. YAMIN KHAN : Is it a fact that a non-Muslim, who had not passed the Matriculation examination, was recently employed in the office of the Director, Wireless, and a Muslim graduate rejected ?

THE HONOURABLE MR. A. H. LEY : The fact is as stated. The non-Muslim had worked for 2½ years temporarily in the Office of the Director of Wireless and had given every satisfaction. He was retrenched in May 1923 and was subsequently employed on a vacancy occurring.

EMPLOYMENT OF MUHAMMADANS IN THE INDIAN STORES DEPARTMENT.

433. THE HONOURABLE MR. YAMIN KHAN : Is it a fact that more than a dozen appointments were recently made by the Staff Selection Board for the Indian Stores Department out of which only one was given to a Muslim ?

THE HONOURABLE MR. A. H. LEY : No. Since the recruitment of the clerical establishment of the Office of the Chief Controller of Stores was made over to the Staff Selection Board, 21 assistants, clerks and stenographers have been appointed in consultation with the Board, of whom 3 were Muslims. Out of the three appointments made to the Upper Division two were filled by Muhammadans.

REJECTION OF A QUALIFIED MUSLIM STENOGRAPHER BY THE RAILWAY BOARD.

434. **THE HONOURABLE MR. YAMIN KHAN:** Is it a fact that a qualified Muslim Stenographer was rejected by the Railway Board Office, while more than half a dozen unqualified non-Muslims were employed as stenographers?

THE HONOURABLE MR. G. L. CORBETT: The answer is in the negative.

SAFEGUARDING OF THE INTERESTS OF MUHAMMADANS IN GOVERNMENT OF INDIA OFFICES.

435. **THE HONOURABLE MR. YAMIN KHAN:** What action, if any, do Government propose to take to safeguard the interests of Muslims in the Government of India offices?

THE HONOURABLE MR. J. CRERAR: Assuming that the Honourable Member alludes to the Departments of the Government of India Secretariat, I would explain, as I did on the 24th March last, in reply to the Honourable Maulvi Abdul Karim, that Departments have already been instructed to bear in mind, when selecting candidates for vacancies, the policy announced by Sir Malcolm Hailey in the debate in the Legislative Assembly on the 10th March 1923, that Government cannot aim at securing the proportionate representation of minorities, but would take steps to prevent a preponderance of any one class or community. That still remains the policy of Government and all Departments have recently been addressed regarding the steps taken to give effect to it.

RECRUITMENT OF PUNJABI MUHAMMADANS FOR ARMY HEADQUARTERS AND THE ARMY SECRETARIAT.

436. **THE HONOURABLE MR. YAMIN KHAN:** (i) Is it a fact that a large portion of the recruitment for the Government of India offices is made from the Punjab?

(ii) Is it a fact that there are 210 non-Muslim Punjabis and only 56 Muslim Punjabis in the Army Headquarters and Army Secretariat?

(iii) Does the same proportion exist in other offices as well?

(iv) If so, what steps, if any, do Government propose to take to bring up the number of Muslims who constitute 56 per cent. of the population of the Punjab?

THE HONOURABLE MR. J. CRERAR: (i) Yes; but recruitment is effected by means of an open examination for which candidates from all provinces are eligible on equal terms, vacancies being filled, as far as possible, from among candidates who qualify at the examination.

(ii) The correct figures are 225 and 72, respectively, the percentage of Muslims working out to 24.2.

(iii) I have checked the figures for all Departments. In the majority of cases the percentage of Muslim Punjabis is a good deal higher.

(iv) I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply just given to his question No. 435.

POSITION OF INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

THE HONOURABLE DR. SIR DEVA PRASAD SARVADHIKARY: Sir, I have given private notice of two questions to the Honourable Sir Narasimha Sarma. May I put them now?

(The Honourable the President signified his assent).

(1) Has the attention of Government been called to the speech of the Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies regarding the Indian question in South Africa and the suggestions in the South African Press that the Government of India and the South African Government should communicate thereabout with one another?

(2) Will the Government be pleased to state what action the Government propose to take in this matter?

(3) Will the Government be pleased to state what measures, if any, have been taken to present the Indian case before the Ormsby-Gore Committee in East Africa?

THE HONOURABLE SIR NARASIMHA SARMA: With your permission, Sir, I shall answer questions (1) and (2) together. The Government of India have seen the comments on the speech made by the Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies but not the speech itself. They have, however, cabled for a text of the speech and, on receipt of it, will consider whether any action on their part is called for.

(3) The question of sending a representative of the Government of India to assist the Ormsby-Gore Committee has been the subject of correspondence, but, since that body is primarily charged with the duty of collecting information locally, it has been decided that it is unnecessary to send one. The Government of India however hope that it may be possible to make representations on matters affecting Indian interests which are likely to come within the purview of the deliberations of the Southborough Committee before that Committee in London.

ELECTION TO THE COURT OF THE DELHI UNIVERSITY.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: Before we proceed to the legislative business of the day I should like to remind Honourable Members that the election by the elected members of the Council of State of two members from among their number to be *ex-officio* members of the Court of the Delhi University will be held in the Members' room as soon as the Chamber rises to-day. Members who wish to take part in this election should present themselves in the Members' room after we rise to-day.

LAND CUSTOMS BILL.

THE HONOURABLE MR. A. C. MCWATTERS (Finance Secretary): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill to consolidate, amend and extend the law relating to the levy of duties of customs on articles imported or exported by land from or to territory outside India, as passed by the Legislative Assembly, be taken into consideration."

Sir, this Bill is one to which Government attach considerable importance. Its object, as the House will readily realise, is in the first instance to safeguard

our customs revenue and to prevent smuggling. In view of the great increase there has been in recent years in the rates of duty on imported articles, and in view of the fact that so many of the highly dutiable articles are of small bulk and easily smuggled, the question of protecting our customs revenue from smuggling has in the last year or two assumed much greater importance than ever before in the past. When the Honourable Sir Charles Innes was speaking on the amendment of the Indian Tariff Bill last February in the other House, he mentioned that we calculated that a sum of not less than Rs. 12 lakhs had been lost during the last year in respect of matches alone. A similar tale I am afraid has to be told with regard to other articles, such as saccharine, cigarettes and gold thread all of which are particularly liable to be smuggled and all of which are tariffed at high rates. Our present machinery is defective in two respects. In the first place, so far as regards the frontiers which border on foreign territories in India, the foreign settlements in Madras and Bombay, we have two Acts which have been in force for the last seventy or eighty years—the Madras Land Customs Act of 1844 and the Bombay Land Customs Act of 1857—both of which Acts are naturally somewhat out-of-date; and the Local Governments have repeatedly pointed out that they are inadequate. They are also inadequate in so far as they do not take account of the change that has been made in bringing the administration of customs under the direct control of the Central Government. In the second place—and this is even more important—there is no machinery at all on other parts of our frontier. The point of greatest danger is the frontier between Burma and Siam, and the danger has been aggravated by the development of railway communications in Siam itself. The result has been that considerable quantities, particularly of matches and cigarettes, have been coming in through the Burma frontier, and cigarettes are actually being sold in places in Burma at rates considerably below those at which they can be imported; so that the second object of this Bill is to safeguard legitimate trade. These are the two objects—one, to safeguard our customs revenue, and the other, to make matters fair for legitimate importers.

As I mentioned, the Indian Tariff Bill was amended in February last and it gave Government power to impose duties on land frontiers and to notify territories which would be regarded as foreign territory; but in the absence of any machinery, it is ineffective. So far as concerns the Burma-Siam frontier the object of this Bill is to provide machinery by which that particular loophole may be stopped.

I wish to impress upon the House particularly that this Bill is a purely temporary measure. The Central Board of Revenue, ever since it was constituted, has been actively considering the whole question of the revision of our Sea Customs Act. Even fourteen years ago, when I was working in the Commerce Department, we had a formidable list of amendments which were considered necessary in that Act, which as the House knows dates from 1878; during the war of course it was impossible to take up this revision; but now the matter is being actively examined in consultation with Local Governments, and the Government of India hope to put before the Legislature early next year a complete revision of the whole of the sea, land and air customs procedure. The development of aviation has introduced an entirely new complication in the course of the last few years.

[Mr. A. C. McWatters.]

The present Bill which is before the House proceeds mainly by reference to the existing Sea Customs Act, and therefore I can quite understand Honourable Members raising important questions both of law and procedure; but I would ask them, in view of the fact that the whole question will come before the Legislature very shortly, to view the present Bill not in a very critical spirit. I do not think it is necessary to go into great detail. As I have said, the Bill attempts to apply the existing provisions, so far as they are applicable, of the Sea Customs Act to land customs. It does make a definite attempt to secure that the provisions will not be applied harshly. For instance, I would call attention to clause 6, which deals with personal luggage, and to clause 5 (4), under which the Chief Customs Authority may relax the provisions of that clause in respect of goods of any particular class or value; in other words he will endeavour to avoid causing the public any undue hardship in the application of these provisions.

One other important point which I think the House would like to hear about is that this Bill makes no difference whatever in the position of Indian States. By amendments which were made in the other House, this Bill has now no application whatever to States in India.

I have only to say finally that the provisions of this Bill have been accepted unanimously by the three Local Governments concerned, Madras, Bombay and Burma; and though it may not provide a final solution, it will at any rate give us machinery to prevent serious loss of revenue in the interval before our whole machinery can be thoroughly revised in consultation with the Legislatures.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS: (Bombay: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I rise to support the motion that the Bill be taken into consideration. This Bill did in the first instance create some misunderstanding. It was thought that the Bill, as it was drafted, might have been aimed at trade between Indian States, especially the Kathiawar States, and the Bombay Presidency. The Bill as amended in the Select Committee makes the position quite clear, that the old powers of the Local Government under the Bombay Act of 1857 remain as they were, and that this Bill does not confer any new power and that, so far as the trade between Indian States and the Bombay Presidency is concerned, there will be no new difficulties raised by this Bill. When the whole question, which the Honourable Mr. McWatters said was likely to come before the Central Legislature very soon, comes up here we will have to go through the whole question in a critical spirit. But, as the Government want these powers to protect their sea customs revenue and to create machinery so that this measure may be put into force in the right manner, I think the Bill ought to receive the unanimous support of this House.

THE HONOURABLE DR. SIR DEVA PRASAD SARVADHIKARY (West Bengal: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I think the House would be well advised in responding to the appeal of the Honourable Mr. McWatters not to view the present Bill in a critical spirit, having regard to the fact that the larger proposals will soon come before us, and that Indian States are excluded from its purview. I desire to give it my support. The only question that I should

like to put to the Honourable Member is as to whether, in view of the treaty with Siam, the position of affairs has not been made easier on that frontier.

THE HONOURABLE MR. A. C. MCWATTERS: Sir, we have been in correspondence with Siam on the subject. There is in existence an earlier agreement which will be terminated by consent of both Governments. I may say that the Siamese Government have no objection whatever to the procedure contemplated in this Bill.

The motion was adopted.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: I will now call the clauses of the Bill in order, and if any Member wishes to speak on any particular clause, he should rise when that clause is called.

Clauses 2 to 10 were added to the Bill.

The Schedule was added to the Bill.

Clause 1 was added to the Bill.

The Title and Preamble were added to the Bill.

THE HONOURABLE MR. A. C. MCWATTERS: Sir, I move that the Bill, as passed by the Legislative Assembly, be passed.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: The question is:

"That the Bill to consolidate, amend and extend the law relating to the levy of duties of customs on articles imported or exported by land from or to territory outside India, as passed by the Legislative Assembly, be passed."

The motion was adopted.

VALEDICTORY SPEECHES IN CONNECTION WITH THE IMPENDING RETIREMENT OF THE HONOURABLE DR. MIAN SIR MUHAMMAD SHAFI. ●

THE HONOURABLE SIR DINSHAW WACHA (Bombay: Nominated Non-Official): Sir, as to-day's meeting will be the last of this Session of the Council of State, I beg to embrace the opportunity on behalf of my Colleagues and myself to bid a hearty and cordial farewell to our popular Leader of the House, Sir Muhammad Shafi. He has proved himself admirable in the conduct of his duties as a Leader of the House and has given every satisfaction to all its Honourable Members. I believe also that as a Member of the Executive Council of His Excellency the Viceroy, Sir Muhammad Shafi's tact and judgment, his political sagacity and experience, have proved of the greatest value and assistance to his Government, and, whenever important questions and problems of State have come before us for consideration, Sir Muhammad Shafi has uniformly presented correctly the views and the attitude of the Government on the subject and, in doing so, what was more admirable was his lucidity of expression, his breadth of vision, his clarity of thought, his catholic sympathy and his tolerance of all shades of opinion. And even these expressions were greatly heightened by his polished manners, his refined culture, and above all his complaisance. These characteristics of Sir Muhammad Shafi as Leader have endeared him to all Members of this House, and, I think,

[Sir Dinshaw Wacha.]

I am really echoing their sentiments when I say we shall certainly miss him and possibly, if I mistake not, His Excellency the Viceroy will miss him even more because he was of great value and assistance to him and his Government by the sage advice and assistance he gave in so far as he was the true interpreter of the feelings and sentiments of the Indian people. We all wish him every success in his *post-Council* career, and hope that he will give the benefit of his close knowledge and experience of the internal administration of the affairs of the State to the country, and that he will be able to assure the people how with his high resolve and endeavour that great and distinguished statesman at the head of affairs is constantly devoting his close attention to their greater moral and material advancement. With these words, Sir, we all bid Sir Muhammad Shafi a cordial farewell and wish him success in his future career.

THE HONOURABLE DR. SIR DEVA PRASAD SARVADHIKARY (West Bengal: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I desire to associate myself and my friends from Bengal very whole-heartedly with the expression of regret that has been voiced by the Honourable Sir Dinshaw Wacha on this occasion, and the sentiments that have fallen from him are all our own. It is not generally known that Sir Muhammad Shafi has held the largest number of portfolios in the Government of India of the whole of the Executive Council. It is not Law alone nor Education, but for a time I believe he held a third portfolio, though temporarily,—I forget whether it was Commerce, Industry or Revenue,—it does not matter. He has had a very large experience in the Government of India, experience which, I hope, will be of the greatest possible use in the life which he is looking forward to unless he is again intercepted.

Sir, when he was Education Member, it was a great privilege of mine to work with him, and I desire publicly to say of what great use he was in restoring academics to their proper place and ridding it of the political influences which at one time the Government of India wanted to bring to bear upon academic matters. That was the help that he gave to all the Universities, and chiefly to mine, for which I shall always be grateful. We shall miss him here but welcome him in the larger life that awaits him; and, wherever he may be, we wish him all success and prosperity.

THE HONOURABLE COLONEL NAWAB SIR UMAR HAYAT KHAN (West Punjab: Muhammadan): Sir, when the veterans from Bengal and Bombay have been so kind as to speak about "our Sir Muhammad Shafi" it is appropriate that one who comes from his own province should also get up on this occasion and say a word. I have known Sir Muhammad Shafi for the last thirty years—that is about three decades, and in all the work that he has been doing in the province I have not only been observing it, but in many of them I have been working with him, so I have got firsthand knowledge in this way of his work. As we may call him, he is a right sort. Above all, he is a Punjabi. Well, you may ask him to plough or you may ask him to fill a Governorship; you may ask him to be at the head of an Army, or you may ask him to be the highest Member of the Government of India, or anything, and he will be able to do it. When he was coming to this post, none of us had any apprehension, Sir, that he would not be a success, and, when

now he has been a success, it is nothing new to us. We all expected this and he has fulfilled this. I am very sorry and I am very glad. I am very sorry because he will not be here to help us, and I am very glad that he is going back to his own province where we badly need him. I wish him all success and long life and a speedy return to us so that we may again utilise his services which have hitherto been utilised by us.

THE HONOURABLE SARDAR JOGENDRA SINGH (Punjab : Sikh) : Sir, I just want to say one word—how proud we are of Sir Muhammad Shafi. His inherent good-will, kindness and statesmanship we have all experienced in this House. His leadership has been a source of joy and of strength.

I have every hope that the fellowship in this House is not going to be dissolved by his disappearance from the Government Benches. I hope he will return to this House again and will not be lured by the blandishments of youth in another place. It has been said that the price of freedom is eternal vigilance. We expect him to exercise that vigilance from the non-official Benches on this side when he leaves the Government Benches, and we have every hope that, whether he is here or outside, all his energies and all his power will be devoted to promote every good cause and to promote the well-being and prosperity of the country. I am quite sure he is taking with him the good wishes of all the Members of this House and the other House, Europeans, Hindus, Muhammadans and Sikhs. May he long prosper and continue his career of usefulness.

THE HONOURABLE SIR ARTHUR FROOM (Bombay Chamber of Commerce) : Sir, I also should like to associate myself with the words which have fallen from the lips of previous speakers and join in the regret that when we meet in Delhi next January or February, we shall not have Sir Muhammad Shafi with us. In our many discussions in this Council, Sir Muhammad Shafi has always been courteous and pleasant even when he has had to oppose Resolutions or answer difficult questions, and that, Sir, I think has been keenly appreciated by all of us. I have been associated with Sir Muhammad Shafi in this Council since it was initiated after the Reforms, and I also sat with him previously in the Imperial Legislative Council, and whenever I have been in difficulties and taken them to Sir Muhammad Shafi, he has always received me with the greatest courtesy and has generally succeeded in explaining them away. If they were not explained away, it was not his fault ; it was mine. Sir, I wish Sir Muhammad Shafi continued success when he returns to the Punjab, and I trust that, although he is leaving the high office which he has held in the Central Legislature, he will continue to do public work and assist the work of Government in his own province so that India will not lose his services entirely.

THE HONOURABLE MR. G. A. NATESAN (Madras : Nominated Non-Official) : Sir, speaking for myself and for my Honourable Colleagues from Madras, I should like to say that I join in the chorus of appreciative words that have been spoken by the previous speakers. Courteous, affable, sympathetic and, above all, tactful, I think he has managed to lead us all with credit to himself and to those that have been more or less his genteel followers. He has even suffered my effusions sometimes and what greater credit can there be in the case of a political leader than to tolerate even me and the way in which I have sometimes expressed myself ? If I were permitted to say so,

[Mr. G. A. Natesan.]

it was in 1921 that a very distinguished popular leader here assured me that at the hands of Sir Muhammad Shafi the interests of India may always be considered to be safe. I can now safely assert that that opinion has been quite justified, witness the tributes paid here and elsewhere. One could also say that he has served his Sovereign and his country very dutifully and loyally, and has set an ideal to others who may take his place. I join in the prayer that he may live long and enjoy a life of usefulness not only to himself but also to the service of his country and of the Sovereign.

THE HONOURABLE SIR ZULFIKAR ALI KHAN (East Punjab : Muhammadan) : Sir, as one who was associated with Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi for a long time in the political work of the country, it is my pleasant duty on this occasion to add my voice to the chorus of applause which we have already listened to in this Council. Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi, 30 years ago when I first knew him, was a young man full of aspirations and full of hopes. I saw him working consistently and with single-minded devotion for the end which leads to the good of the country and to the good of the ruling power in this land. Sir, I am one of those who do not separate the interests of the two, as I think that the good of the country is the good of the Government and the service of Government is the service of the country, and therefore, I as a co-worker with him had the greatest pleasure in supporting him in his ideas. In fact, there was a time when I was not in public life and it was Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi who persuaded me to come out of my sanctum. It was then that he took to political work, and I think I can congratulate the Honourable Member on the good results which he achieved in connection with the uplift of his community. Then, Sir, he overthrew all the difficulties that confronted him. I never saw him down-hearted. In fact in times of the greatest difficulty, I saw him cheerful and optimistic. That is his great virtue, and I think all those who have achieved success possess this great quality. When Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi was raised to his exalted position, he had the goodwill not only of the Muhammadans but of all communities, because they knew that in him they had a friend and well-wisher. We have watched his career for five years in the Government of India, but the seal of secrecy which is put on the official doings of the Honourable Member does not allow his good work to be known to us or the people outside this Council. But I hope that some day, when the seal is broken and there is no harm in his disclosing his great achievements in his present work, we shall know, and the country will know, of what great help he was to the Government and what great good he did to the country. Sir, I have seen many officials who sometimes have risen suddenly to very great positions, and it is not very frequently that we find them keeping their temper and their courtesy in those high positions. The conduct of Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi as a man and as an official was most praiseworthy. It is the same Muhammad Shafi, courteous, hospitable, and devoted to duty, as he was then in his public career. We wish him great success. I do not think that this is an obituary speech, but I think he leaves the Council with greater credit than before. With these few words, I close my remarks.

THE HONOURABLE MR. J. W. A. BELL (Bengal Chamber of Commerce) : Sir, I desire to associate myself with those who have expressed a sense of loss

at the retirement of the Honourable Dr. Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi from this Council. During the time I have been a Member of it I have always been impressed by his courtesy and friendliness, and I think that he has done very much to foster the extremely friendly relations which exist between the different nationalities in the Council. I do not feel that we are saying good-bye to Sir Muhammad Shafi altogether. I do not feel that his retirement from this Council will mean his disappearance from public life in India. But I do feel that his distinguished service here will lead to even a higher position elsewhere. However, whatever the future may have in store for him, he carries with him the very best wishes of his non-official European colleagues in the Council of State.

THE HONOURABLE MR. YAMIN KHAN (United Provinces West : Muhammadan) : Sir, I have had experience of the Honourable Sir Muhammad Shafi in this House for only 20 days, but in this short period I found him to be dealing with problems of great importance with great tact and ability just fitted for a leader of this House. Though my life in this Honourable House has been very short, I had experience of his doings for three years in the other House. He used to come very often to the Legislative Assembly after finishing his work in this House, and every time that he spoke in the Legislative Assembly he made himself respected by that House for those three years. I quite associate myself with all the other words that have been said about him by the other Honourable gentlemen, but I do not agree with one word which has been said about him by my Honourable friend Nawab Sir Umar Hayat Khan, that he is going back to the Punjab and also that Sir Umar Hayat Khan is very glad to receive him back to the Punjab. I think Sir Muhammad Shafi is going back to the whole of India, and I, as a representative from the United Provinces, welcome him equally as any Punjabi would do. His life and his activities as a non-official before he entered into the Government's service were not confined to one Province. His activities, as far as education and politics were concerned, spread to the whole of India. When he presided over the All-India Moslem League, the All-India Muhammadan Educational Conference and many other similar institutions, his activities were really directed to the whole of India and were for the well-being of India, and specially for that of his community. My province, though it contains a very small number of Muhammadans, has got its own traditions and we have got a centre of learning now of course changed into a Moslem University but formerly known as the Aligarh College. He presided over the Muhammadan Educational Conference in Aligarh, and that was the first occasion that I saw him. I welcomed him again as a prominent barrister. He was the leader of the Bar in Lahore and he had his reputation outside the High Court of Lahore, and I think all people who are practising in that profession will welcome him in that rôle also. With these words, Sir, I beg to associate myself with this occasion.

THE HONOURABLE SIRDAR CHARANJIT SINGH (Punjab : Nominated Non-official) : Sir, I heartily associate myself with what has fallen from my Honourable friend Sir Dinshaw Wacha. I have had the pleasure of knowing the Honourable Sir Muhammad Shafi for a long time. He is a very old friend of mine and I can endorse every word which has been said about him. As has been justly said, he has made an excellent leader of this House, and I hope I can safely say without violating the Official Secrets Act that he has made an

[Sirdar Charanjit Singh.]

excellent Indian Member of the Executive Council also in whose hands the interests of majorities and minorities have been absolutely safe. I can assure you, Sir, that the Punjab is proud of him and I join the chorus of hope that he will come back to this House and lead the non-officials as he has done now from the Treasury Benches.

THE HONOURABLE SIR NARASIMHA SARMA (Member for Education, Health and Lands): Sir, it gives me very great pleasure indeed to associate myself and my official Colleagues with all that has been said on this, I may say as far as I am concerned, very regrettable occasion when we have to part with our esteemed Leader and Colleague. With all that has fallen from my non-official Colleagues and friends, official etiquette and reserve prevent me from saying all that I wish to say on this occasion. I cannot forget that Sir Muhammad Shafi will continue to be an official for another three months, all too short a period indeed, and therefore it is not open to me, a brother official and colleague, to say all that I feel and all that I know about him. But this much I may be permitted to say, and that is that by his ability, great tact and skill as a leader, unruffled temper and genial good humour he has endeared himself to every one in this House and in the other House and that he leaves a rich harvest of good-will and harmony among all sections of the House to his successor.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: Before I call upon the Honourable Sir Muhammad Shafi to sing his official swan song, I must say a few words to associate the Chair with all that has fallen from Honourable Members who have spoken this morning. The Honourable Sir Muhammad Shafi has been the Leader of this House almost from its beginning, and the traditions of leadership which have been created here are the work of his hands. A smaller man might have been content to be the leader of the Government forces. The Honourable Sir Muhammad Shafi has never faltered in presenting the Government case, but as Leader of the House he has formed a higher conception of his duty, and has made it his business to represent the interests of the House as a whole, and no one knows that better than the President of the Council. Much of the smooth working of the Council is due, I think, to the fact—and I know my distinguished predecessor would say the same—that the Honourable Sir Muhammad Shafi has always kept the Chair in touch, not only with the feeling of Government, but with that of the House as a whole; and that tradition is a very valuable one, and one which will I know bear fruit after he is gone. Therefore in a very special sense the Chair is grateful to the Honourable Sir Muhammad Shafi.

I do not think I need say any more. We hope that this is not a farewell as some Honourable Members have said. But whether it is or not, all of us here give him God-speed and trust he will have a happy and successful future before him. (Applause).

THE HONOURABLE DR. MIAN SIR MUHAMMAD SHAFI (Law Member): Sir, I confess I cannot find words to give adequate expression to my sense of deep gratitude for all the kindly sentiments which have been expressed towards me by my Honourable Colleagues, non-official and official, on this occasion. If during the years that I have had the honour of occupying the responsible

position of Leader of this House I have achieved some measure of success in the discharge of my responsibilities, it has, I know, been due to that spirit of mutual co-operation and good-will which has all along pervaded the atmosphere of this House. Here in this House we have had an entire absence of factious spirit; we have had displayed from all sides of the House a high sense of responsibility and a consciousness of the duty which every Member, official as well as non-official, owes to this country.

Sir, this is the last occasion when I have the proud privilege of occupying the position which I had in this Honourable House. Believe me that the memory of the associations, the very pleasant associations attaching to that position, will abide with me for many years to come. I have tried to do my duty in accordance with the light with which Providence has endowed me, always bearing in mind the fact that I was the first Punjabi to be called upon to assume high office, and that I am not only a Punjabi but also an Indian and a citizen of the greatest Empire the world has ever known. I regard the citizenship of that Empire as one of my proudest possessions and, convinced as I am after a lifelong study of internal and external conditions that the future of my motherland lies within that Empire, I have always throughout my career, both in public life as well as in the official world, tried to do my little bit in the consciousness of that position as an Indian and as a citizen of the British Empire. My Honourable friend, Nawab Sir Umar Hayat Khan, said that I was returning to the Punjab. Why, I have never left the Punjab. Whether in Simla or in Delhi, which at one time was part of our province, I have been in the Punjab all these five years and more.

Sir, all I can say is this. As a Member of His Excellency the Viceroy's Executive Council, whether I was in charge of one portfolio or another, or whether I was in charge of two portfolios at one period as was alluded to by one of my Honourable friends, I have tried to do my little bit and I can assure the House that when after the 31st December next I go out of official life into professional and public life, I shall continue to do my little bit. (Applause.)

// PROROGATION OF SESSION.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Secretary, is the business of the Council concluded?

SECRETARY OF THE COUNCIL: Yes, Sir.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: It is now my duty to read a Proclamation from His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor General proroguing this Council.

(The Council stood while the Proclamation was read.)

PROCLAMATION.

"In pursuance of sub-section (2) of section 63D of the Government of India Act, I, Rufus Daniel, Earl of Reading, hereby prorogue the Session of the Council of State on the conclusion of its business on Tuesday, the 23rd of September, 1924.

(Sd.) READING,

The 22nd September, 1924.

Viceroy and Governor-General."

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: The Council now stands prorogued. Gentlemen, I bid you fare-well.

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