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SECOND SESSION

OF THE

THIRD LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 1928



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Legislative Assembly.

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MR. JAMNADAS M. MEHTA, M.L.A.

DR. A. SUHRAWARDY, M.L.A.

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CORRIGENDUM.

In Legislative Assembly Debates, 1928, Vol. I, No. 13, page 616, in the fourth line from the bottom,

for "I may call questions"

read "I may call encouraging questions".

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Saturday, 25th February, 1928.

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

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

SUSPENSION OF MR. K. P. SANKUNNI NAIR, SUB-POSTMASTER, TATTAMANGALAM-PALGHAT, ETC.

304. *Mr. G. Sarvothamp Rao: (a) Is it a fact that Mr. K. P. Sankunni Nair, Sub-Postmaster, Tattamangalam-Palghat, was placed under suspension from the 20th September, 1926?

(b) Did the proceedings against him in a court of law end in honorable acquittal?

(c) If so, when was he acquitted and when was he re-instated?

(d) Did the aggrieved official repeatedly represent to the Superintendent of Post Offices, Nilgiri Division, his pecuniary difficulties and request him to issue final orders in the case to enable the Postmasters, Coimbatore and Calicut, to draw and disburse his pay?

(e) Did the Superintendent of Post Offices, Nilgiri Division, order the Postmaster, Coimbatore, to disburse the pay of the official at the rate of pay he drew prior to suspension? If so, for how many months was he paid and how long after his reinstatement?

(f) Has the pay of the official been refixed under the revised scale of Rs. 35-5-135? If not, why not?

(g) When did the Postmaster General, Madras, pass final orders in the case against the official, and when was the official completely paid his dues?

(h) Is it required of the department to make enquiries into cases even after the verdict of the court of law?

Mr. H. A. Sams: Government have no information. If the individual referred to has any grievance, it is open to him to address the Director General in the usual manner.

SUPERSESSION OF CERTAIN SUPERINTENDENTS OF POST OFFICES FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR GENERAL OF POST OFFICES, BENGAL.

305. *Mr. A. H. Ghaznavi: 1. Will Government be pleased to state if it is a fact that in a vacancy which occurred on 17th November 1927 in the grade of Assistant Director General of Post Offices, Bengal, a Superintendent of Post Offices, whose name was 14th in the general gradation list of his cadre, was permanently promoted to that post?

2. Was the question of promotion of Superintendents of Post Offices to the grade of Assistant Director General and Deputy Postmasters General referred to the Public Service Commission before the promotion of the officer in question was ordered; and if so, was the case of each of the 13 officers who were senior to the particular officer in question placed before the Public Service Commission with necessary remarks as to his past services?

3. (a) Is it a fact that among the 13 officers who were thus superseded there were 5 officers who had worked as officiating Assistant Directors General for considerable periods, and 4 of them were officiating in that capacity at the time when their supersession took place?

(b) And is it also a fact that one of these officers has almost immediately after his supersession been made permanent in the next vacancy in the grade of Assistant Director General, while 2 or 3 others who were officiating in that grade for considerable periods have been allowed to continue in these officiating appointments?

(c) And if the answers to the above are in the affirmative, will Government be pleased to state the reasons why these officers were superseded?

4. Will Government be pleased to state if any appeals against this supersession were received by Government and if so, were the applicants informed individually of the reasons why they were superseded?

Mr. H. A. Sams: 1. Yes, except that Assistant Directors General are attached to the Directorate, Delhi.

2. Yes.

3. (a) 5 of the 13 officers referred to had worked as officiating Assistant Directors General for certain periods, but only three of them were officiating in that capacity when their supersession took place.

(b) Yes.

(c) Promotion to the grade of Assistant Director General is entirely by selection. Promotions are made in accordance with the order of preference recommended by the Public Service Commission under rule 6 (iii) of the Public Service Commission (Functions) Rules, 1926.

4. Yes.

THE RAILWAY BUDGET—LIST OF DEMANDS—*contd.*

SECOND STAGE—*contd.*

Expenditure from Revenue—contd.

DEMAND NO. 1—RAILWAY BOARD—*contd.*

Racial Distinctions in Subordinate Establishment—contd.

Mr. President: The House will now resume further consideration of the following motion moved yesterday by Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru:

“That the Demand under the head ‘Railway Board’ be reduced by Rs. 10,000.”

Mr. N. G. Kelkar (Bombay Central Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, the question underlying this cut has already been discussed

exhaustively by my Honourable friend Mr. Kunzru, but I will just add one or two points to this discussion. In doing so, however, I will adopt the direct and categorical method and put to my friend certain definite questions and request him to answer them categorically in his own frank manner. Sometimes we appear to be speaking in these matters at cross purposes, and it may be pretended on one side or the other that what is said in reply to questions is not just the thing that is wanted or something of the kind. Therefore, Sir, I want to put categorical questions to him and I request him to give categorical answers in the matter of this alleged, if you may like it, racial discrimination in the subordinate railway services. My questions are these. Does he admit that there is racial discrimination in the matter of the subordinate services in the Railway department? My second question is, if he does not admit that, will he kindly disprove the charge which we on this side are prepared to allege by facts and figures? My third question is, if he admits that charge, will he try to justify and give an explanation as to why that discrimination is made? Will he specifically point out branches of work in any department for which Indians, it can be said, are incapacitated by nature or training or experience or intellect or anything of the kind to do the work? Can he give us any reason whatever? Of course, I am now speaking for the subordinate services. I am not speaking at this moment about the superior services in connection with which perhaps it may be alleged that some of those services require very expert knowledge and technical skill and so on. But here I am dealing only with the ordinary subordinate services for which, to my mind, no such expert knowledge or technical experience is necessary. Even supposing that there are certain items of work in any branch of the subordinate services which do require a little training or experience or knowledge of certain things, is the Honourable Member prepared to say that Indians as a class have proved themselves incompetent to acquire that knowledge or that experience or that training? Have they been tried, and if so, have they failed to come up to the proper standard? If they have not been tried, why have they not been tried? To all these definite questions, Sir, I should like to have categorical answer so that we may know exactly where we are and what is the policy of the Government in the matter.

Now, on my own side I will just give a few instances. Take the posts of Traffic Inspectors. May I know why Indians are disqualified from holding these posts? What percentage of these Traffic Inspectors' posts is held really by Indians, and what percentage is held by Anglo-Indians, Eurasians and Europeans? Take the head of Telegraph Inspectors. Have Indians proved themselves unfit to do the work of inspecting the telegraph lines and put things right whenever there was trouble? Drivers and guards. I may just mention a fact which I have seen myself. When travelling on the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway I find that, as a rule, the guards and drivers are Parsees.—they are Indians. But while travelling on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway and the East Indian Railway, I find, as a rule, that the guards and drivers are not Indians. May I know what difference lies between the working of an Indian guard or driver on the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway and the working of a non-Indian on the Great Indian Peninsula and East Indian Railways to necessitate the change and to observe racial discrimination against the Indians? Will the Honourable Member tell me

[Mr. N. C. Kelkar.]

what accounts for this fact? Is the explanation to be sought only in the fact that one line is a Company-managed line while the others are State-managed lines? Now that Government have taken over some of the other lines into their own hands for management, will they continue that racial discrimination, which we could not question when they were under the management of the Companies?

In this connection, I would like to draw the attention of the Honourable the Commerce Member to what the subordinate services themselves say in the matter. We in this House make certain complaints and speak about the grievances of railway servants which are as it were reflected grievances. We derive knowledge from them, and the Honourable Member derives knowledge of these grievances from us. That is a process of reflection. But I have got in my hand a copy of a Great Indian Peninsula Railway Magazine in which the workers I find state their own grievances openly. The other day I said that the Honourable the Railway Member has got before his mind's eye only the superior services and the officers, but he never keeps before him the case of the men in his own department who labour and toil as much as the superior service people. (*An Honourable Member*: "More.") Yes, these people do even more work than the men of the superior services. That is of course another point. But in the case of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway they are openly conducting a magazine through their Unions and they openly place their complaints and grievances before their superiors which are not being replied to, and when we sometimes put questions for them, answers are given which perhaps for the moment on the floor of the House may satisfy us, because we have not got sufficient information to put supplementary questions, but those answers do not satisfy the workers themselves. In the issue of the 1st December of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Magazine, I find some ridicule cast upon the Members of the Assembly who appear to be silenced by the wrong information which Government supplies to them and which of course has got to be accepted for the moment because we have not got sufficient information to contradict the answers which Government gives us. Now, I wish to draw the attention of the Honourable the Railway Member to what the workers themselves say in this matter. Some time ago the men of the subordinate services presented a petition to the Home Board through the Agent, Great Indian Peninsula Railway, and they definitely prayed in that petition that the racial distinction in the matter of recruitment for both the line and office staff should be abolished, and that appointments and promotions be made and governed by one set of rules applicable to all classes of employes as is being done on the Railways worked by the direct agency of the State. Now, the Agent in forwarding it to the Home Board made certain remarks. I want to get things cleared up—whether or not there is a distinction observed in this matter on the Company lines and the State lines. In forwarding the memorial the Agent observed as follows:

"As regards (a) the memorialists state their chief cause of complaint is that a distinction is made in the service rules of the Company between the two classes of employees (1) Indian and (2) Europeans and Anglo-Indians."

This is his responsible observation on that:

"Except in so far as the leave rules are concerned, this statement is incorrect as the various schedules were revised some time ago and although we still retain classes of employees in different departments, class "A" and class "B", etc., the distinction on grounds of nationality has been abolished."

I do want to know definitely whether that abolition is a fact. The men are not satisfied with this reply. They say that what the Agent says is not a fact, that it is untrue and that the distinction is still observed. But what is the distinction between "A" and "B"? A cynically minded man, unlike myself, would say that "A" stands for "Anglo-Indians" and "B" for "Black". Is that the meaning of "A" and "B" or has it any other meaning? I want this to be made clear.

Now, hear what the workmen themselves say about this reply. They say:

"Comment is unnecessary, because we see that still Anglo-Indians and Europeans are called "A" graded and the Indians are called "B" graded staff."

Is it not a coincidence, as I said, that "A" representing, perhaps alphabetically, "Anglo-Indian" should be reserved for Anglo-Indians and "B" representing "Black" should be reserved for Indians? (*Some Honourable Members*: "Brown.") Just as well "Brown" as "Black".

"Not only this, but all the officers' posts such as Divisional Traffic Manager, Chief Traffic Manager, Divisional Transportation Superintendent, Chief Transportation Superintendent, Chief Telegraph Superintendent and their Assistants and Divisional Transportation Inspector are reserved for Anglo-Indians and Europeans."

I want to ask specifically whether it is not a fact.

"We regret the Agent's misrepresentation of Indians' cause when he replied to the request of the staff that 'the request that "B" grade ticket collectors should be eligible for promotion to "A" grade ticket collectors cannot be accepted.' If the distinction on grounds of nationality has been abolished why are Indians not promoted to officers' posts and why are Europeans and Anglo-Indians not employed as clerks on the line?"

I think it is a very pertinent question for the Honourable Member to answer. Then if there is one distinction another naturally follows. If you make a distinction as between "A" and "B" grade service, it naturally follows that there must be a distinction in the matter of pay also. They advert to that in this manner.

"The Chief Ticket Inspector, Bombay, is the third for whom a post of Rs. 500 was created."

One wonders really whether the post of Chief Ticket Collector does require as fat a salary as Rs. 500.

A little further and the Agent is seen to say that:

"The question of higher wages which have to be paid to Europeans and Anglo-Indians is dependent on the different standards of living and it is not likely that a railway company would, without good reason, employ Europeans on high pay for posts which they were satisfied that Indians could fill equally well at less cost. When they find it necessary to do so it is because the Administration must have a reserve of men on which to draw for the more responsible posts for which they know by experience that Indians are rarely fitted."

Now they bitterly complain, and of course being uneducated or uncultured they have put their feeling and sentiments in a direct and straight forward manner. They say:

"The Agent is quite right because Indians do not drink brandy and eat mutton and fish, do not know to live in decent quarters and enjoy dances and balls, wear *dhoti* instead of pants and hats, and as such whatever they are paid is more than enough."

[Mr. N. C. Kelkar.]

Then they give a specific complaint :

"While Anglo-Indian or 'A' Grade Ticket Collectors having Rs. 60-3-90 grade are permitted to go as guards on Rs. 115-3-155 on goods service and Rs. 180-3-210 on Passenger and Mail services, our Indian Ticket Collectors are not given the same privilege and are told to seek promotion in their own line, viz., T. T. I.'s line or clerical line. Why so? Is it because Anglo-Indians cannot stoop to work as clerks or that they are future soldiers to kill Indian aspirations please?"

Of course they are putting it in a crude way. You must enter into the spirit of what they write in their own crude style and must be prepared to redress their grievances.

I do not want to say anything further because the question has already been dealt with nor do I want to speak above the occasion. Of course the occasion relates only to certain grievances of the subordinate service and I do not want to bring into this discussion any high consideration, but curiously enough, only this morning, I got the *Times of India* from Bombay in which I find that Professor Mackenzie, at a meeting of the Royal Asiatic Society, speaking on Anthropology, delivered a lecture on racial discrimination, and I do want to commend a few sentences from that speech to the Honourable Member. If he is going to allege that racial distinction is maintained because it is justified I will just point out to him these two or three sentences. Speaking about race superiority, the *Times* says :

"With regard to the second question, he referred to some of the views which had been held in the course of history regarding racial superiority, and held that in the light of history it was a dangerous thing to urge that because a backward people had been for a century or for two centuries in contact with alien peoples possessed of a higher culture without assimilating or perfectly adjusting itself to that culture, its inherent inferiority had been established. He drew attention to a remarkable article by Professor Hoernle, based on a study of the Bantus of South Africa, in which the writer argued that the difference between the average white man's mind and the average black man's mind was a difference of social heritage rather than a difference of constitution or capacity between the average individual minds as such."

I do not want to pursue this line further. I am putting the matter in all earnestness to the Honourable Member. I am not going to play lightly with the subject. I do want him to tell me definitely the position and then I shall be done with it. If he acknowledges openly that Government do deliberately intend to maintain a policy of racial distinction, I have got nothing more to say. If he says that that is the Government policy, if he says that the maxim is "Woe to the conquered", then I shall not say one word more. If he says and thinks it reasonable that the best men, whether Indians or Anglo-Indians or Europeans, should be appointed for a particular post which would require a particular kind of service, then I want him to take the present facts and figures about recruitment into consideration and tell me definitely whether he accepts the allegation that racial discrimination is maintained, and further if he accepts the allegation and confesses that there is racial distinction, in what manner he is prepared to justify it.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons (Financial Commissioner, Railways): Sir, I rise thus early on the resumption of this debate to make as clear as I possibly can the attitude of the Railway Board and of Government towards this important question. I should like, to start with, to deal with the subject which has occupied most of the speeches of my Honourable friends, that

is to say, whether Government holds that Indians are incapacitated constitutionally or otherwise from carrying out properly the duties of the subordinate posts which we are now discussing. The answer is immediately and directly "No". Government do not propose to have any policy of racial discrimination in that matter. It has then been pointed out by my Honourable friends that in certain specific instances which they have brought before the House there appears, I should prefer to call it, a remnant of racial discrimination either in the terms which are offered for initial employment or in the treatment after employment of different communities. I wish to say here and now that the Railway Board do not countenance any such discrimination. They have definitely informed all railway administrations that discrimination of that character should be abolished and they have obtained assurances from the railway administrations that they are taking steps to abolish that discrimination.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru (Agra Division: Non-Muhammadian Rural): May I ask when these assurances were received?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I do not think I have the exact date. We addressed the Agents in August 1925 and we subsequently called for a report from them. Though I have summaries of the replies we have received from them, I have not here the exact date on which those replies were received.

I will now turn briefly, if I may, to the individual instances in which a policy of racial discrimination is still alleged. I do not want to deal with those specific instances at any great length. Some of them we have already examined, some of them in response to questions put to us I have already undertaken to examine, and I can assure the House that we shall continue to examine any cases which are brought before us, and we shall welcome such cases being brought before us, in which there appears to be a suspicion of racial discrimination. I am asked, or, probably shall be asked, why in the case of guards on the East Indian Railway, which my Honourable friend Pandit Kunzru brought to my notice the other day, there is still racial discrimination. I cannot admit without further details that in any particular case there is racial discrimination, but I do not think it possible that traces of it may linger in certain departments of the Railways, which if they are brought to our notice we shall only be too ready to get rid of. We do propose in this matter to have,—how shall I put it,—a fair field and no favour. That undertaking which I have given to examine cases I may say applies to one or two cases mentioned by Mr. Kelkar and also to several which I had not been aware of mentioned by my Honourable friend Pandit Kunzru, that is to say, the question of promotion of firemen to drivers on the East Indian Railway, the Jamalpur apprentices, and the like. Before leaving this part of the subject I should like to add one further word. As I have said, we do not desire racial discrimination in the terms offered for initial employment, or in the terms given after employment to our subordinate employees. . . .

Mr. N. O. Kelkar: May I ask the Honourable Member one question? Will he tell me what is the significance of A and B grades? What is A grade for and what is B grade for? And what is the criterion of recruitment to these two grades?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: On the East Indian Railway?

Mr. N. O. Kelkar: On the Great Indian Peninsula Railway.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: If the position is the same on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway as on the East Indian Railway, A grade is partly intended for men of rather higher qualifications whom we can look upon as a recruiting ground for certain superior appointments. That I understand to be the position. Before leaving this particular side of the alleged racial discrimination I wish further to say—I have dealt with the terms of service offered on engagement and subsequently during service

Mr. N. C. Kelkar: If the Honourable Member will pardon me, may I put one more question with regard to A grade? How does it happen that in A grade there is a larger percentage of Anglo Indians and others and in B grade only Indians? Is there a public test or a public examination in which these qualifications are ascertained and tested, and has it been found that in competition Anglo Indians and others rise superior and of course the Indians have failed? Otherwise; how are the qualifications tested? What is the standard of the qualifications?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I regret I am unable to answer the Honourable Member's question. If he had given earlier notice I should have attempted to get information from the Agents of the East Indian Railway and the Great Indian Peninsula Railway. I have dealt as I have said before, with racial discrimination or alleged racial discrimination in the initial terms of employment and in the terms after employment. I further want to make it clear that where an employee has been taken into service we hold quite definitely that his subsequent career should depend entirely on himself, and when as it often does and should, promotion depends on merit the question how he obtained his entry into railway service or whether he belongs to a particular race or community should not be given any weight at all or be allowed in any way to influence the decision.

I must now turn to a wider, and I think a more difficult, subject which was briefly touched upon at the beginning of Pandit Kunzru's speech. There is a community whose interests are most ably represented in this House by Colonel Gidney, who by their energies did obtain a very considerable proportion of the appointments with which we are now dealing

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: By their energies solely?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I should be obliged if the Honourable Member will do me the courtesy of not interrupting me when I am attempting to make a statement on behalf of Government on an extremely difficult and troublesome problem.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: I am listening to him very attentively.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: There is a community whose energies were given to the great benefit of Railways at a time, I think I am right in saying, when railway work of that character did not make the appeal to, at any rate, some other classes of the inhabitants of this country which it now does. We are not dealing here with any question of providing, in accordance with the policy of the Government, for the representation of a minority community in certain services. Those orders are well known and I do not think affect the present case, for it is certain that the Anglo-Indian community have at least their share of these appointments. On the other hand, times have changed. The Railway Board recognise that there are now members of other communities who would like to come

into these appointments, and I am sure that my Honourable friend himself has no objection to these appointments being thrown open to them and has no fear that his own community will in the long run suffer by a severer competition in a wider field.

Mr. N. C. Kelkar: Is Colonel Gidney the dictator in this matter that he should allow or not allow?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I am attempting to make an appeal to this House to deal in a spirit of no heat with an important question. The position actually is, therefore, that the Railway Board have informed Agents that they consider that Indians should be given the same opportunities of showing their aptitude and capacity for these posts as Anglo-Indians, with the result that they are obtaining an increasing number of these posts. The latest figures I have got show, for example, that in 1927 among the subordinates drawing Rs. 250 per mensem and over, there was a reduction of 50 Europeans, a reduction of 44 Anglo-Indians, an increase of 121 Hindus, an increase of 38 Muslims and an increase of 57 of other classes.

I think that is all that it is right I should say on that question. I hope I have made it clear that the Railway Board do not consider Indians of any community unfitted for these particular appointments, and I have made it clear that where there are vestiges of racial discrimination left, if they are brought to our notice, we are prepared to examine them; and, if we can, remove them. We do not want to have different grades of pay or different terms of service for any particular community in this country, and, while hoping that we shall still retain the services of that community which has served us so well in the past, we do hope to see a larger number of young Indian boys coming into these subordinate services.

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney (Nominated: Anglo-Indians): I rise to support my Honourable friend Pandit Kunzru in many of the things he has said when moving his motion. I wish also to offer my warm tribute of appreciation to my friend Mr. Kelkar for the very moderate way, I should say the kind way, in which he spoke of my people employed on the Railways as contrasted with the venomous and cowardly attack made yesterday on my community by another Member of this House. I really do think the time has come when, as the Honourable Mr. Parsons pointed out, that the order of things must be readjusted on Railways. I readily agree that the day of monopoly of appointments by any one community has gone and that the old order giveth place to the new. Times are changing and with it the administration of the Railways must change. No one is more prepared to admit and accept that fact than I am, representing as I do in this Honourable House a community which has played a very glorious and important part in the development of Railways in India. Sir, I am prepared, on behalf of my community, to openly state here and now that we Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans are not afraid of honest competition with any Indian. Let the best man win, whether he belongs to the A, B or C categories as described by Mr. Kelkar. There is, however, one other letter in the alphabet which Mr. Kelkar did not include in his list, and that is the letter I, which stands for "Inexperience". I say let anyone fill any appointment be he white, brown or black, provided he has the necessary knowledge and

[Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney.]

experience. Mr. Kelkar and some other Honourable Members are inclined to think that there is a preponderance of my community in certain railway appointments. If it is so,—and I do not deny the fact—it has been necessitated by the evolution of the Railways in this country. No one in this House will deny—and I challenge contradiction—that Anglo-Indians laid down the first sleepers on the Railways in this country and put up the first posts in the Telegraph Department. It is therefore only natural that they should to-day be employed in most of the upper subordinate appointments, for it is only recently that Indians have evinced a desire for railway employment. You cannot put junior and inexperienced Indians or even Anglo-Indians in these upper grades. The same logic can be applied to the front benchers—the leaders in this Honourable House, should the inexperienced back benchers desire to replace them. I submit, Sir, that my Honourable friend Lala Rajpat Rai would assuredly strongly protest if the Honourable Mr. Neogy tried to replace him and occupy his seat. Mr. Neogy, as the House knows, is quite a youngster and he is rather inexperienced, impulsive and irresponsible. The railway administration must therefore take experience as their primary consideration. At the same time my friend Mr. Kunzru, when talking on this matter, did bring up certain figures showing the preponderance of Anglo-Indians in certain upper subordinate appointments, but the Honourable Mr. Parsons, to whom I offer the grateful thanks of my community for the very appreciative reference he made to their services on the Railways, admitted that in 1927 there was a reduction of about 100 Anglo-Indians and Europeans in these upper subordinate departments. I view this with some considerable degree of apprehension. I have however been at some pains to extract certain figures from the Railway Board Report on Railways, 1926-27, and I find that on all Railways in India during this period the total number of employees of all ranks in 1925-26 is 721,242 as compared with 732,000 in 1926-27. The difference between these totals is 11,000. Further, I find that out of these 11,000 there was an increase of 8,500 Hindus employed. It will I know interest my Muslim friends to know that during the same period there was an increase of only 80 Muslims employed and there were increases of 325 Anglo-Indians and 2,000 other classes employed. From this Anglo-Indian total I must deduct the 100 reductions mentioned by Mr. Parsons. In those Railways classified as 2 and 3 the difference is more marked for there has been a decrease in both European and Anglo-Indian employment. These figures clearly show that the Railway Board is alive to the cry of India, namely, Indianisation and which I hope in time will not spell ex-Anglo-Indianisation and so lessen efficiency.

Lala Rajpat Rai (Jullundur Division: Non-Muhammadan): How many of these posts were those of peons?

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): You find an army of peons in the Agent's offices.

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney: I know that but not on engines and brake vans; then my friend Mr. Kunzru spoke about racial differences in the medical attendance on railway employees. As a medical man who has held collateral medical employment on Indian Railways, I can talk from my own personal experience, and I wish here and now to tell my friend Mr. Kunzru and to assure this House, excluding of course exceptions, that there is no difference whatever made as regards such medical

treatment which is given according to the grade in which the employee is stationed. There are, as the House knows, different grades in the various Railway Departments the same as obtains in the civil services. My friend Mr. Kunzru may shake his head at this, but I repeat that certain grades carrying a particular rate of salary are entitled to treatment from a certain class of medical officer. For example, people drawing say about Rs. 200 per mensem are entitled to the attendance of the District Medical Officer free of charge, whether he be European, Indian or Anglo-Indian. Their families are entitled to the same medical officer for a small consideration—I think 2 per cent. of their pay. Employees on a lower scale of salary, drawing say from Rs. 50 or 60 to 200 per mensem, are entitled to the Assistant Surgeon, be he a military or a civil Assistant Surgeon. Those drawing salaries smaller than 50 per mensem are entitled to the attendance of the Sub-Assistant Surgeon. However, I do think that Railways should pay more attention than they do to the medical needs of their subordinates, especially those Indians who are in the lower and menial grades.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: What about separate buildings?

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney: I quite agree with you there. I think Railways are spending more money on the medical care of their officials and higher subordinates, and I opine that the point brought out by my friend Mr. Kunzru was a very desirable one, one in which I support him whole-heartedly. But, I feel this is due to the eternal question of no money, for I am sure that no Chief Medical Officer of any Railway would wantonly refuse medical relief to any of the employees of his Railway purely on racial prejudice and bias. I feel that Mr. Kunzru has rendered a great service to the subordinate railway employees of all castes and creeds by bringing this matter to the notice of the Railway Board, and I hope the Honourable Member will give it his personal and early consideration.

Munshi Iswar Saran (Lucknow Division: Non-Muhammadian Rural): I have heard with great interest the announcement which has been made on behalf of Government, and I must confess there was a ring of sincerity in it. Now, before I ask your permission to deal with other matters, I should like to make two requests to Government in this connection. The first is—will they very kindly place on the table of this House the letter that it is said was issued to the heads of different railway companies in India and the assurances which they received. The next request is—will they be pleased to let us know at Simla what further assurances they receive in response to the communication which they say they are going to send.

I have listened to the speech of my Honourable and gallant friend Colonel Gidney, who is not so combative to-day as he was yesterday, and I congratulate him on the improvement in temper a good night's sleep has brought about. Speaking for myself I should lose all right to call myself a nationalist if I denied to any Indian community its legitimate claims, be that community Indian, Anglo-Indian or domiciled European. My position is this, and I venture to hope that this position is common to my fellow Nationalists, that every one, irrespective of caste, colour or creed, who calls India his mother is entitled to the same rights and opportunities as well as responsibilities. My friend Colonel Gidney has said that Lala Lajpat Rai would object if my friend Mr. Neogy were to occupy the front bench. May I tell Colonel Gidney in all sincerity that I would walk out of this party if there was a bar which prevented my friend

[Munshi Iswar Saran.]

Mr. Neogy from going to the front bench. If Mr. Neogy by his ability, patriotism, hard work and industry entitles himself to a seat on that bench, neither Lala Lajpat Rai nor anybody should have the right to say to him "Thou shalt go so far and no further". Then my friend Colonel Gidney talked about experience. My Honourable and gallant friend in the heat which is generated in the debate becomes more rhetorical than logical. We only want equal opportunities for all, be he an Indian or Anglo-Indian. I say, give to an Anglo-Indian lad of eighteen and an Indian lad of eighteen the same opportunities, the same facilities, the same prospects and we on this side of the House shall have no complaint. (Hear, hear.) My Honourable friend has quoted figures. I hope he will pardon me if I say that a certain individual is said to quote a certain book for his own purposes. (Laughter). Figures can be made to tell any tale. I hope the House will forgive a personal reference. There was a debate in England in which Sir Michael O'Dwyer took a very important part which I had the honour of opening. Sir Michael got up and said, "Where are these many Englishmen in India in the services? Look to their number and look to your numbers. Your number is so vast, and the number of Englishmen employed in India is so small." I got up, and said, "does Sir Michael O'Dwyer want Englishmen to go out to India and occupy posts of clerks on Rs. 15 and 20 and posts of chaprasis on Rs. 10 and Rs. 15?" My Honourable friend when he quotes these figures forgets that in them are included jobs on very low pay which no Anglo-Indian would care to take up.

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney: Have I included them? Take the figures I gave.

Munshi Iswar Saran: I shall prove it to him now. You include in these figures, for instance, what is unfortunately called in this country the menial staff. Then take the posts of booking clerks or other minor posts. You do not find many Anglo-Indians filling these posts. I am very anxious, I earnestly assure my Honourable and gallant friend, to say not a word against the Anglo-Indians, because I do feel that sooner than later these people will realize that they are Indians, if they have not realized it so far. I hope they will realize it very soon that they are Indians and that they must sink or swim with us. That realization will come, and I hope the sooner it comes the better, and therefore I am anxious not to say a word against them. But I ask my Honourable and gallant friend to look to facts. Take for instance the Delhi station. How many people on low salaries are Indians? You cannot get Anglo-Indians and Europeans to take up those posts on small salaries, and in order to form a correct idea about the question at issue, you must not take the entire total of employees who are in service.

Sir, I hope Government will forgive me if I say that we have listened to the statement which has been made with pathetic interest,—pathetic, Sir—I advisedly use the word because this is not the first time that this question has been brought forward on the floor of this House. There is our perpetual complaint in regard to the Indianization of the services. We are told every year that the policy of the Railway Board and of Government is that there shall be no racial discrimination. I read, Sir, when I was young that a tree is known by its fruits. A policy, its sincerity, its efficacy, is known by its results. I ask with great respect what has been the result of that policy so far? You will say, "Yes, look to the employees.

There is an increasing number which is employed every year." Yes, if five have been employed last year and if you employ five and a half this year, the number has increased. If you employ five and a half this year and seven and three quarters next year, the number has increased. But I shall ask Government to consider whether this is what justice demands. Ignore for the moment this side of the House. Ignore our pleading, ignore our appeal, but I put it to you in all seriousness, are you really pursuing the policy of Indianization? We have been told that Government would be very pleased if specific instances were brought to their notice where justice was not done. May I ask what is the Railway Board there for? Remember, it is an Indian Railway Board. Is it not its clear duty to look into this matter itself very carefully and to see whether the legitimate and the just claims of Indians have or have not been recognized? Is it or is it not the duty of Government and of the Railway Board to see that encouragement, special treatment is given to Indians so that in a very short time they should occupy the positions which should be theirs? It is, I submit, for the Railway Board to see to it, and if the Railway Board does not do it, then I say without meaning any offence, the Railway Board signally fails in the discharge of its duty. Sir, I find that an assurance has been given which, as I have said before, has a ring of sincerity about it. Let us forget the past and let us now start with a clean slate as it were. I really wish that it may be the proud and happy privilege of Government next year to get up and say that a real and solid improvement has been made, and not only that the number of Indians has increased, but that Indians have got what has been so far withheld from them and that there remains no justification for any Indian to put forward the objection that their claims are not recognized. I do sincerely hope that Government and the Railway Board will make a note of this point so that next year there may be no occasion for us to repeat in this House our tale of woe.

Mr. H. G. Cocke (Bombay: European): Sir, I should like first of all to congratulate the Railway Board on being still in existence to-day and on not being busy booking their passages. Sir, if there is a time when I get alarmed about the State management of Railways in this country it is when we have a debate here on the subject of staff recruitment, pay, promotion, pension and so on. I wish it were possible to exclude from the consideration of this House these matters (Ironical cheers from the non-official Benches). (*An Honourable Member*: "That is honest".) for they would be better not being discussed here, particularly where you have individual cases of certain station masters who have not been promoted quite so quickly as they think they ought to have been, and such cases are brought up by way of question and answer or in the course of debate. (*An Honourable Member*: "Ask this House to discuss Lee concessions.") The Honourable the Financial Commissioner gave us certain figures just now of the number of the staff on Railways on salaries over Rs. 250 per mensem in which he showed that Europeans and Anglo-Indians were about a hundred less in 1927 than in the previous year; about 130 more Hindus and as regards Moslems and others I think about 70 or 80 more. That, I take it, Sir, is reasonable progress. Possibly it is not quite quick enough for some of my Honourable friends, but I hope the Railway Board will not allow themselves to be driven into this policy of Indianization quicker than they really consider they ought to go, in order to be able to produce tables showing that so many more Indians are employed year by year. I do not object to reasonable progress towards Indianisation, but I say that the Anglo-Indian and the European, if he is efficient, has got a reasonable right to

[Mr. H. G. Cooke.]

continue in his employment, and ought equally to be considered as entitled to employment and recruitment. That may be inconsistent with the policy of Indianization to which the Railway Board is committed. I have no objection to that policy at all, but I say that to be driven unreasonably fast to satisfy the aspirations of this House is in my view not altogether desirable. Efficiency is the main thing. That we must have, and in certain posts Indians may not be as efficient as Europeans. (*Mr. Lajpat Rai*: "There are no such posts." *Another Honourable Member*: "What are those posts?") We have all seen an Indian policeman arguing with a bullock cart driver very loudly and at considerable length because the bullock cart driver would not obey him. It is in driving power and in ensuring discipline that possibly in some cases Europeans and Anglo-Indians may do better on the Railways than Indians, but as I have said the reverse may apply in other cases. But do not let us make a fetish of this Indianization. Let us consider efficiency first, and Indianization afterwards.

Mr. Varahagiri Venkata Jogiah (*Ganjam cum Vizagapatam*: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, my Honourable friend Colonel Gidney stated last year and repeated this year that the Anglo-Indians were pioneers of the Railways in this country. I do not know how he got this, and what foundation there is for making such a claim. Is it based on statements now and then made by certain high officials with whom Colonel Gidney may have had some interviews and into whose favour he may have ingratiated himself? Or are there any official reports of responsible officers made to support his contention? So far as I can see, there is no report which justifies the remark that he has made. If any reports are to be looked into which justify such a remark, it is the reports submitted to the British Parliament before the year 1880 by men like the late Sir Juland Danvers. But a perusal of these reports does not show anything in favour of the claim that he makes. On the other hand, these reports indicate something against such a claim. If there is any community, Sir, which claims preferential treatment and which has done much by way of promoting the Railways in this country, it is the Indians, I mean as opposed to Anglo-Indians. (*Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney*: "What is your record? Look up records.")

No doubt the Government of India has put it on paper that racial distinctions should be abolished. But what do we find as a matter of fact? We find that it is abolished only in theory, but that it continues in fact as rampant as ever. My Honourable friend Mr. Parsons has referred to a letter of the Railway Board which was addressed in August 1925 to the Agents of all railway companies that racial distinction should not prevail in the matter of appointments in this country on railways. I say, Sir, that this discrimination is not confined merely to the preponderance in the matter of appointments. But it extends to other matters to which, I believe, the letter of the Railway Board does not refer. Take for instance the question of housing accommodation. There is a marked difference between the accommodation that is given to Anglo-Indians and to Indians. That letter does not refer to this question at all. Again, in the matter of promotions and in the matter of leave rules and allowances, there is a difference made, as can be seen from the rules that are now being observed. In the matter of hours of work also, Indians and Anglo-Indians are treated differently. In fact Indians are treated as inferiors throughout their service. No doubt it has become a fashion among high circles to state that Anglo-Indians

possess a special aptitude for any branch of the railway service. I can assert Indians have as much aptitude as, if not, better aptitude than the Anglo-Indians and no such claim can be made by Anglo-Indians. In spite of the claims of the Indians and the capacity and aptitude, we stand merely for equal rights and insist only on impartial treatment, in the services, for all, without regard to caste, colour or creed.

I may just mention, Sir, what is going on now in certain workshops. Indian workmen are being discharged on flimsy grounds, such as absence from duty for half a day or on grounds of superannuation of age, while Anglo-Indians even after retirement after the age of 60 are being re-entered on daily pay in the railway workshops and are being continued until the age of 65 or even 75 without any objection being raised. Practically, with reference to these men the railway workshops are treated as poor houses. As an instance, I may refer the House to the Loco. and Carriage Workshops at Ajmer. There I find that there are certain Anglo-Indians who have retired from the service at the age of 60 but they were re-entered and continued in service after they reached 70 or more. With these words I support the amendment.

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated: Labour Interests): Sir, I was shocked to hear the statements made by my Honourable friend, Mr. Cocke. He seems to think that Indians are excluded from the railway service on account of the fact that they are inefficient and Englishmen are efficient. Sir, an Indian is not afraid of a proper trial in this matter. But the Indian insists that the man who examines and tests the efficiency or inefficiency of Britishers and Indians should be an impartial judge. If the Railway Board is willing and if my Honourable friend has no objection, I would like the Railway Board to ask the President of the German Republic or the President of the Soviet Republic to send to India a judge to see whether the Indian railway servants or the British railway servants are more efficient. Sir, I for one shall be quite willing to abide by the decision given by either a German judge or a Soviet judge. (*Lala Lajpat Rai*: "Even a Japanese".) But, Sir, I have not seen any Europeans making that suggestion. They want the British Railway Board to judge of the efficiency or inefficiency of Europeans and Indians. Sir, we are not willing to accept the decision of a British Railway Board in this matter. If my Honourable friend is quite willing, let us have a German arbitrator or a German judge to find out whether the Britishers are efficient or the Indians are efficient. Moreover, my Honourable friend was unwilling that the question of the services should be discussed in the Legislature. May I know, Sir, what other place is there where these questions can be discussed?

Mr. B. K. Shanmukham Chetty (Salem and Coimbatore *cum* North Arcot: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Where were the Lee Commission concessions discussed?

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Can the Indian in the service expect a European Railway Board to do justice to them when, as a matter of fact, there is great pressure from the European side brought to bear upon them to see that the monopoly of the European is preserved for all time? I think, Sir, it is wrong that this House should give up its right to protect the Indian employees of the Indian Railways.

[Mr. N. M. Joshi.]

On the first day when I spoke, I said that the Indian Railways were originally started not to provide comfortable travelling facilities for the Indian people, but in order that the Europeans should get employment here and also a market for their goods; and also a good and safe investment for their money. Sir, the speech of my friend, Mr. Cocke, proves that that was the real object for which the Indian Railways were started, and it seems to me that that object is still kept in mind by my European friends in this House. They are unwilling to part with this monopoly which they had enjoyed so far, but, Sir, this House must see that the Indian Railways are not intended for the Europeans as a grazing ground; the Indian Railways are intended to provide comfortable facilities for the common people of this country.

Sir, the statement of policy made by my Honourable friend, Mr. Parsons, as regards racial discrimination is satisfactory as far as it goes. But, Sir, the Honourable Member did not tell us how he proposes to enforce that policy. It is good that the Railway Board should announce in this House that they did not want any racial discrimination. But I think the Honourable Member was somewhat unfair in throwing the burden of finding out whether the racial discrimination exists upon the Members of this Assembly. The Railway Board has a large establishment and they have very large sums at their disposal. The Railway Board is in the habit of appointing special expert officers and expert Committees for all sorts of purposes. If you see the list of special officers and the expert Committees given in one of the books which are provided us, you will find that their number is not very small. It is quite possible for the Railway Board to appoint one officer specially to find out in which matters there is racial discrimination made even now. Let that officer go to all the Railways, take evidence from Indian employes and then certainly you will get a good list of the points on which there is still racial discrimination. I hope, Sir, the Honourable Member in charge of this Department will not mind spending a little money in appointing an officer, and that officer should, I suggest, be an Indian to find out the points on which racial discrimination still exists

Mr. H. G. Cocke: Why not German?

Lala Lajpat Rai: Because this is India and not Germany.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: All right; I do not mind it. I am not afraid of a German being appointed; if you are willing I am.

Lala Lajpat Rai: What is the use of all this hypocrisy?

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I suggest, therefore, that the Honourable Member should appoint an officer to inquire and find out on which points racial discrimination exists.

Secondly, Sir, I would like the Railway Board to have some machinery in their office to watch how the progress of Indianisation is going on and how the policy is being enforced, and they should make a special report to this House as to what progress has been made. It is not sufficient to give the figures which are at present being given. As regards the figures given in the report for upper subordinates and the lower subordinates, the figures do not give the number of vacancies that occurred in the year and how those vacancies were filled up. These figures are given as regards the

superior services. I suggest, Sir, that the Railway Board should hereafter give in their report the figures of the vacancies that occurred in all the ranks of their employees and how they were filled. That will give some indication to the Members of this House as to how the work of Indianization is progressing.

There is only one more aspect of the subject which I want to touch, namely, the question of experience and efficiency and inefficiency. I remember that once Sir Charles Innes, who was then the Member in charge of the Railway Board, told this House that there is something in the blood of the Englishman and the Anglo-Indian which makes them better fitted for railway work. Then he also said that there is some difference in their training in childhood. He said: "A European child and an Anglo-Indian child is given a toy-engine to play with." I suggested to him at that time that the Railway Board should make a grant of a lakh of rupees to distribute toy engines among the Indian children. (Laughter). I feel, Sir, that this question of efficiency and inexperience need not be talked about in this House. Even the Railway Board in their heart of hearts know that a partiality was shown to Europeans and Anglo-Indians at one time. I am glad that they are willing to change their policy. If there had been nothing wrong in that policy, I am sure they would not have changed it. But the very fact that they now say in this House that they have changed the policy is proof positive that the policy which they had followed in the past was a wrong one. I hope, therefore, that this House will carry this motion.

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas (Indian Merchants' Chamber: Indian Commerce): Sir, I rise to support the motion before the House. I should hardly have risen to speak on this motion but for what I look upon as the signally unfortunate speech of my Honourable friend from Bombay, Mr. Cocke. After the statement by the Honourable the Financial Commissioner, I had thought, Sir, that the discussion would end to the satisfaction at least of the Mover of the motion and of the Government. I perceived in the speech of Mr. Parsons at least a note of apology to the section for whose benefit and in justice to whom this motion has been tabled. And my friend Colonel Gidney was more discreet to-day than he was yesterday, and even he greatly sympathised with the motion. As we were proceeding along like this, my friend from Bombay got up to sound a note of warning to the Railway Board. I wish to say a few words exactly against that note of warning and to point out how unfair that note of warning is and how Mr. Cocke chooses deliberately, if I may say so, to overlook the main aspect of the question before the House. Mr. Cocke wishes to say that efficiency should be kept in mind in these matters. None on this side of the House has ever said that appointments must be given to Indians simply because they happen to be Indians. Our main complaint is that all these years the Railways of India have kept out Indians, and to that end I will quote only one set of figures which I have before me. On the East Indian Railway, of the total number of drivers which is 286, Europeans are 284 and Indians 2.

Mr. K. C. Neogy (Dacca Division: Non-Muhammadan Bural): Indians have no driving power!

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas: These figures alone should be sufficient to make Mr. Cocke hold his views absolutely to himself. The East Indian

[Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas.]

Railway was the first railway to be started in India and if, since 1850 till now (the latest year of the report being 1925 if not 1926) they have not been able to get more than 2 Indian drivers and presumably they are in class B and not A, then all I can say is that Mr. Cocke's warning is absolutely out of place and, if I may say so, is unfair to Indians.

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney: I challenge that statement.

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas: Those figures are taken from the Report of the Railway Board and, if Colonel Gidney wishes to compare notes, I will be at his disposal after I have resumed my seat.

Sir, even the Government spokesman had to admit that there is a remnant of racial discrimination in the recruitment of the staff. And Mr. Cocke appears to have either not heard or he has forgotten that even Mr. Parsons had to say that a circular was issued to the various Railways in 1925 asking for the abolition of this racial discrimination. Sir, if these are facts and if even since 1925 conditions have not improved materially, is it wrong to bring this to the notice of the House? And what other opportunity can there be for doing so than the present one? Mr. Cocke says: "What is the good of discussing individual cases?" Has he throughout this discussion heard a single individual case being mentioned or even referred to? And if Mr. Cocke cannot have the patience even to listen to the general observations based on the important principle which the Government of India have accepted and which, I venture to submit, even the European Group cannot challenge, then all that I can say to Mr. Cocke is that when a discussion of this nature is going on, he might, if he so wishes, play bridge or leave this hall.

Mr. Cocke further complained that the discussion regarding staff is a handicap of State management. Sir, I am responsible in my humble way to a certain extent for State management of Railways, and I deliberately say that one of the greatest advantages that we look forward to by this system of management is justice to our people, justice in railway service and in railway administration as customers. I say to Mr. Cocke: you have had an unfair advantage over us during all the long years of Company management and you have simply exasperated us, with the result that we do not trust any sort of Company management. We only trust what we ourselves can judge of and nothing else. And any Member in this House who gets up to say that this is a bane of State management has only to thank himself and his predecessors who exasperated Indians by the injustice that they wrought on our men and on our commercial community and on the whole of India by looking to the Railways of India as their sole preserve.

Sir, I feel that Mr. Cocke and his friends—I hope many of them do not agree with him—will have patience with us until we get justice to Indians in this matter. I rarely wish to take part in matters or questions where communal or racial differences are concerned, but I have ventured to speak to-day because I am convinced from what Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru has said, and indeed from what has fallen from Mr. Parsons, that grave injustice is still being perpetrated and continued on the Indian section, and it is only to ask the House to help in the earliest possible removal of this injustice that I press this motion. I know it is easy—and Colonel Gidney tried it—in cases of this sort to put one community against the other. Colonel Gidney, while quoting certain figures regarding Hindus,

remarked: Let the Muhammadans note this. Hardly an effort worthy of the gallant Colonel, as he wishes us to understand him. But I know this is a natural handicap of such discussions. I look upon it as a humiliation to India and to us in this House that we must bring such cases up continuously. It is all very fine for Mr. Cocke to say, "Why do we Europeans not have to table such Resolutions?" You have your clubs and other convenient methods of bringing your grievances to the notice of the authorities, and what is more important still is, you have behind you such power including social excommunication—I use this word for want of a better one. (*Several Honourable Members*: "No, no.") I know what it is. It is no use your saying "No." I know that the European members of the Railway Board dare not oppose you, if the representatives of the European commercial community want a thing to be done. The day that we have your power all that I will say is that we will not plead in the name of efficiency to discount such pleading and such just pleading as has been ably made in the course of the debate for Indians. Efficiency is what we all want. All that I say is, in the name of efficiency do not commit any more murders on the aspirations of India, and do not try to smother our rising and young generation.

Mr. M. E. Jayakar (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Sir. I did not wish to interpose in this debate, especially towards the end, but I am tempted to do so by reason of the provoking speech which was made before this House by Mr. Cocke.

Sir, I shall briefly state my criticism of that speech and will do so because I see in the box two or three members of the Railway Board listening to this debate, and I am anxious that they should not take a wrong impression, which is likely to arise if we remained silent under Mr. Cocke's attack. If Mr. Cocke were a lesser man than he is in British commerce, I should have thought that he was developing the right sort of temper to be on the Railway Board; that he was cultivating a mentality illustrating the principle on which the railway administration runs at present. One may not like the brutal frankness of his speech when he delivered himself of three or four characteristic sentences, but I have no doubt that if he were a lesser man and had need to apply to the Railway Board for a place there, his application would have been favourably considered by Sir Austen Hadow. I cannot say that with this mentality he would be a desirable Railway Member, for I feel that the traditions of fairness and courtesy which have been created for that office by its present occupant, would materially conflict with Mr. Cocke's mentality. He asks, "Why are you making a fetish of Indianisation?" Just as if Indianization in India can ever be a fetish! The country has a right to claim to have more Indians employed, subject to efficiency. No responsible Indian has raised the claim higher than this. But my Honourable friend in 1928 raises antiquated pleas against this reasonable claim. Indianisation a fetish! He may well say life itself is a fetish! My Honourable friend reminded me, as a fossil reminds me, of what the world has once been. His outlook is a fossil mentality of fifty years ago, a hard, dried crust which does not respond to stimuli. I congratulate my Honourable friend on the singularity of his views, which I am sure are not shared even by the Leader of his group.

Coming to the merits of Mr. Cocke's remark that we are at present unnecessarily raising these questions in this House, my friend, Mr. Joshi, asked in all seriousness, "Where else can we raise this question?" Mr. Joshi, obviously forgot that there is such a place as the Byculla Club

[Mr. M. R. Jayakar.]

and the Yacht Club in Bombay and similar clubs in every station, where Mr. Cocke and his European friends can have meetings, and over a glass of cocktail can have their grievances redressed. I can imagine many clubs in this country where informal discussions go on between mighty "Burra Sabs", and the fates of the Indian Empire are decided silently under the cover of conviviality. We poor Indians have no such secret opportunities and therefore we have to come only to these places for ventilating our grievances.

Coming to the main question, which is the subject-matter of this debate, I was very glad to have the assurance of Mr. Parsons, which was very carefully worded, that the policy of the Railway Board is to encourage the removal of all distinctions between class and class. I have no doubt that the Railway Board in their isolation from hard facts have laid down this policy, but notwithstanding this pleasant assurance I cannot disguise the facts which I see with my eyes open from day to day, as a frequent traveller on the Railways. I cannot forget the fact that there are few places in this country where railway quarters exist, where this distinction between class and class is not observed. My Honourable friend, Mr. Parsons asked "Where does it exist?" I make him a sporting offer. Will he travel with me with a pigment on his skin and dressed as an Indian and see for himself? I make the same offer to the European members of the Railway Board. After the Assembly Session is over let them disguise themselves as Indians and take a first class ticket and travel with me. Let them put on Indian dress and disguise themselves for the moment, hiding the fact that they are "Burra Sabs" connected with the Railways. I will allow them the luxury of travelling in a first class compartment, though to have the best advantage I would prefer a second or third. I say without the least exaggeration, that it would be a marvel if they did not come at the very next station across a case of racial insolence or disrespect. Let them get out and go to the guard and say, "Will you kindly wake me up at 5 o'clock at such and such a station where I have to get down to-morrow morning?" and see what he replies. I have seen notices in railway compartments, "Guards are asked particularly to be civil and courteous to passengers." I regard such notices with the same pious hope of eventual actualization with which I regard a statement in the Bhagvad Gita. The Honourable Member doubted the existence of racial discrimination. I say in reply "Where does it not exist?" It dogs us from place to place, and it is so clear to our eyes that I can almost grade the different Railways according to the extent of their offences, some coming on the top, others coming next. I do not wish to name these Railways because it would be invidious to do so, but I can point out with perfect precision the various wrongs of the railway system. I am prepared to give Sir Austen Hadow a complete statement of these if he will promise to look into them and redress the same. Where does it not exist, this racial discrimination? Will he come with me to a place called Lonavla on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway? I will point him out racial discrimination with a vengeance. There is a Railway Institute there constructed out of railway revenues. There is a billiard table provided and two or three tennis courts. There are railway quarters about 50 in number, with nice roads, beautiful little gardens which fairies of ancient times might envy in their cleanliness and beauty, with nice

flowers growing in them. Who occupies them? Not one Indian. There is a pretty little school which reminds one of Goldsmith's *Deserted Village* or Gray's *Elegy*, so nicely situated in rustic surroundings. Who occupies it? European children. There is a co-operative society where tempting articles are displayed on the counters, nice preserves and pickles. I often feel tempted to buy. Who manages it? European members of the railway staff. And yet we are told that there is no racial discrimination. I see this every day of my life. I travel very frequently on these railways. I say, where does not racial discrimination exist? Go to Dohad now. I ask my Honourable friends Sir Austen Hadow and Mr. Parsons to do it. Go to Dohad where the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway is building quarters for the staff. Make inquiries disguised as an Indian all the time. That is necessary. Go there disguised as an Indian, with a beard or in a *sadhu's* garb if you please. Do not disclose your identity as a railway magnate. Go there and make inquiries. I give the challenge. Let the Railway Board go there and see whether they do not find superior quarters provided for employees who are blessed with a little more bleached skin than myself. They are to-day being given quarters superior to those intended for people who have a little more pigment in their skin. Dohad is going to be a big railway colony in course of time; and to-day we find this discrimination perpetuated. And yet Mr. Parsons solemnly gets up and says that the policy of the Railway Board is "No discrimination." My teacher used to teach me, Sir, "God is merciful." I went out of the school room and found a hawk devouring a sparrow. It took a lot of faith to remember God is merciful. But some day, after several births, I hope to discover and realize that God is merciful. My Honourable friend Mr. Parsons is asking me to wait similarly to realize that the policy of the Railway Board is "no racial discrimination." His denials do not convince me because I see it every day of my life. I will make another offer to Mr. Parsons. Will my Honourable friend come with me to a railway platform and find files of European men and women allowed to go in without being required to purchase platform tickets? Will he come with me to a railway station like the Victoria Terminus in Bombay where an insolent looking young lad from my friend Colonel Gidney's community will ask in an insolent tone "Where is your ticket?" A large part of overbearing insolence is imported into Railways by this class of employees if my Honourable friend Colonel Gidney will allow me to say so. He knows perfectly well that I am one of those who want this community to work with us as one Indian community, but I cannot disguise facts. That is the gist of my grievance. Whereas crowds of white men and women are allowed on platforms free, every Indian has to produce a platform ticket. Very often the platform ticket is not available at that station, then he has to stand out. He cannot enter the platform. His wife may be coming with her child out of confinement. But that does not matter. The station masters, Sir, at the most important railway stations are Anglo-Indians. Will my Honourable friend state how many booking clerks are there who are Anglo-Indians? Take, Sir, the railway stations in Bombay, a big place where a number of Indians have shown their capacity for responsibility. Is there any Indian on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway station, Victoria Terminus, who is a station master? Take all the important stations, Bhusaval, *e.g.*, all the important stations where there is any control or responsibility. Are Indian station masters there? My Honourable friend said "Oh, Indians have no

[Mr. M. R. Jayakar.]

experience." But, may I say, "If you do not put Indians in the situation where they can gather experience, what is the good of talking about experience at all?" I was very glad to have the assurance of my Honourable friend Mr. Parsons that the policy of the Railway Board is perfect equality of treatment; may I go a bit further and request the Railway Board not to be content with that only, but take daily steps to see that this policy does not remain merely in the pigeon-holes of their archives but is carried out from day to day in practice as observed at several stations? I am aware, Sir, that this is a grievance intimately connected with the inferior political status of Indians in their own country. I am aware, Sir, that as long as Indians politically do not rise, do not become the masters of their destiny in their own country, this grievance will always remain. I know, Sir, that there is an inseparable connection between the general political condition of Indians and their status in particular departments of public service. I am aware of that connection. I admit this limitation. But I cannot help feeling that even subject to that limitation, there is a great deal which the Railways can do if only they have the will to do it. It is no use comforting this House with mere statements of pious wishes and ideals. That is not the question. The Railway Board may lay down hundreds of pious and ideal injunctions. The question is, "Are they carried out in practice and if a case is reported to them, will they take the trouble to see that the rule is enforced?" Will Mr. Parsons promise that he will look into every grievance which Honourable Members may send him in the course of the year? He dare not promise this, because he knows that the number will be too large, too numerous. There is no use his disguising the fact. He knows the difficulties, and let him frankly own them.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy (Member for Commerce and Railways): I do not propose, Mr. President, to speak at any length, but there are one or two points about which, before the debate terminates, I might say something on. My Honourable friend, Mr. Kelkar, put certain questions and asked for categorical replies. I think that the statement made by my Honourable friend Mr. Parsons in effect covered all these questions, and I do not think there is any one of them to which the statement made by Mr. Parsons does not give the answer of Government. My Honourable friend, Munshi Iswar Saran, was anxious that the letter conveying the instructions of the Government of India and the Railway Board to the Agents of the Railways should be laid upon the table. I will look into that. I cannot say offhand whether we can do that or not, because my impression is that that letter deals with other matters as well as the particular matter of racial discrimination. But I hope it will be possible to comply with the wishes of my Honourable friend.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: The letter and the replies.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I will certainly consider that also. I can still less give any answer at present about the replies, because they are not at the moment before me and I have had no opportunity of examining them sufficiently.

The somewhat unexpected turn which the discussion took during the latter part of it has caused me a certain amount of trepidation in rising

to speak, because, on the one hand, if I take one line I am obviously exposing myself to the violent drum fire from the benches opposite, whereas if I took a line agreeable to them, I should be exposing myself to the social ex-communication which my Honourable friend Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas said was likely to follow from conduct of that kind.

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas: I did not include the Honourable the Commerce Member in that. Sir George may remember that I referred to the Railway Board only.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: It may be that the penalty of social ex-communication is reserved solely for members of the Railway Board.

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas: That is it.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: If so, that is another case of racial discrimination, I suppose. Nevertheless, taking my courage in both hands, and taking the risk of social ex-communication, I should like to say just a few words.

The Honourable Mr. Parsons in his statement indicated what the views of the Government of India and the Railway Board were as regards racial discrimination in the matter of subordinate appointments under the Railways. I am not going to add to it, nor am I going to amplify it, but there are one or two aspects of the case to which I should like to refer. Now, my Honourable friend Mr. Kelkar mentioned that if one travelled on the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway, one could not help noticing the fact that many of the guards and drivers were Parsees. I take it from him that that is so; for he is in a position to know. Supposing it was proposed in this House that the Government of India and the Railway Board should issue instructions to the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway and say "You are employing too many Parsees and not giving sufficient encouragement to other communities, and it is now time

Mr. N. C. Kelkar: I did not complain of Parsees at all. I said that they were Indians, and I approvingly mentioned them as being Indians.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I think if my Honourable friend will recollect what he actually said, he stated that one would notice that they were Parsees

Mr. N. C. Kelkar: Parsees are Indians, and I said so.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I am afraid I certainly understood my friend in that sense. However, it is undoubtedly for him to say what his meaning was. Let me put it in a slightly different way. If it were found that one community like the Parsee community, which has undoubtedly special aptitudes for certain kinds of work, were filling a considerable proportion of appointments of a particular class, would it be just on the part of Government or on the part of this House to ask for a summary and immediate reduction in the number of appointments which they are holding? (*An Honourable Member:* "No one said so".)

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: It is an entirely wrong line to take.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: That is the point which I was trying to establish. As Mr. Parsons pointed out, there is no question at all that the Anglo-Indian community at present hold a very much larger proportion of the appointments in the subordinate services than one would naturally expect in proportion to the size of the community. Mr. Parsons also said that the policy of the Railway Board for the future was "fair field and no favour" and that he did not doubt that under these conditions the Anglo-Indian community would be perfectly capable of holding its own.

Now, my friend Munshi Iswar Saran, I think, was anxious to see rapid results as regards the progress of Indianization. He did not indicate very clearly what kind of measures he advocated for that purpose. But the point I want to make plain, if I can, is this. There are certain things that we cannot do. For one thing, we could not—I think my friend Sir Charles Innes said so before—oust Anglo-Indians from the appointments the individuals actually hold in order to replace them by Indians.

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas: We do not want it.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: There is also another aspect of the case to which I think it is necessary to refer here. When, as a matter of history, members of a particular community have held a very large number of appointments of a particular class, inevitably the whole economic organization of the community becomes involved with that fact. That is a point that the Government of India cannot possibly ignore and to take measures which would summarily involve a sudden violent dislocation of the economic existence of an important community would clearly be a matter in which the Government of India ought to proceed very cautiously. I want to give that warning. But my belief is that the other side do not want suddenly to deprive the Anglo-Indian community of the appointments they hold, but what they do feel is that members of the other Indian communities ought to have a real chance of showing their fitness and a real chance of filling the class of appointment that hitherto they had very small chance of filling. That is precisely the policy of the Government. We do want to give them a real chance, and I recognise the obligation resting on Government and on the Railway Board to see that they do get it.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: May I put a question to the Honourable Member. I want to draw his attention to it, because he has not answered it. It is a very brief question.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member is not bound to answer every argument.

The question is:

"That the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 10,000."

The motion was negatived.

Education of the Children of Railway Employees.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: I beg to move:

"That the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 10,000."

I fear, Sir, I am again going to raise a question which will hurt the delicate susceptibilities of my Honourable friend, Mr. Cocke. He is

one of those men who deprecate racial discussions but who do not mind to what extent racial considerations are allowed to prevail in practice. (Mr. H. G. Cocke: "No.") The question of the facilities given for the education of the children of railway employees has been one which has been engaging the attention of this House for the last two or three years. In November 1926 Government appointed a special officer, Mr. C. E. W. Jones, I.E.S., to report to what extent and in what ways assistance was given to railway employees in this matter in order to enable the Railway Board to formulate a definite policy for the future. This report has now been published and a copy of it was placed the other day in the Library of the House. But it is not available to the public, nor have copies of the report even been supplied to the school authorities. I do not know why the school authorities have not been supplied with copies of the report. Perhaps it is the intention of Government to decide questions affecting them without giving them any opportunity of representing their views. Indeed, I understood that such was the intention from the replies that Mr. Parsons gave to some of my questions in September last. If so, I should protest strongly against this policy. Government are in common justice bound to let the school authorities, who may be seriously affected by any decision that Government may arrive at, have an opportunity of knowing what the facts are and of making such representations as they might consider necessary to protect their own interests. I myself was able to obtain a copy of this report only as a matter of favour from Mr. Parsons!

(At this stage Mr. President vacated the Chair, which was occupied by Mr. Deputy President.)

The special officer states in his report that:

"the educational facilities provided by the railways seem to have had their origin in the necessity felt by the railways in the absence of other agencies of providing some form of education to the children of imported European employees, who in the earliest days formed a considerable proportion of the railway companies' employees and many of whom were stationed at places where no European schools were available."

The Government of India issued two Resolutions, one in 1878 and the other in 1881, drawing the attention of the Railways to the need for promoting education among the children of railway employees, that is to say, Anglo-Indian and European railway employees:

"Not only is expenditure in this matter",

said the Resolution of 1878:

"required in the interests of the railway employees themselves, but the railways will be indirectly reimbursed by the greatly improved recruits they will be able to secure locally without indenting, as they now do, on England. It should be the object of these schools to bring up as many lads as possible for employment as guards, drivers, fitters, etc., and they should not be encouraged, as so many Indian school boys seem to wish to do, to qualify merely for clerkships and such like employments."

The Government of India who have a responsibility for the whole of the country drew the attention of the railway administrations merely to the needs of the children of European and Anglo-Indian employees. In 1881 another Resolution was issued in which the Government of India again said that they:

"will be glad to see a more practical direction given to the instruction in the middle and higher schools and will specially favour attempts to give a sound commercial or mechanical education to the elder boys."

[Pandit Hirday, Nath Kunzru.]

I do not know whether the Government of India have ever shown one quarter of this solicitude for the children of Indian employees. They have shown themselves particularly solicitous only for the children of European and Anglo-Indian employees, and there is no wonder that the railway administrations have followed the policy which began with them.

At the present time, Sir, there are about 95 European and Anglo-Indian schools and 57 Indian schools. Now the total expenditure on these purely railway schools from railway funds amounts to about Rs. 3,60,000 for European schools and only about Rs. 1,20,000 for Indian schools. That is, what is spent on Indian education is about one-third of what is spent on the education of the children of Europeans and Anglo-Indians. The opening of railway schools is not the only form in which the Railways assist their employees in giving education to their children. There are four other methods which are used. I do not say that all of them are used on every railway; all or any of them might be employed by any railway. The first form of assistance to which I would draw attention is what Mr. Jones, the special officer, has called "parental assistance", that is, assistance given by parents to enable them to pay the school fees of their children. Now I find from this report that while about 3 lakhs, or, to be exact, Rs. 2,90,000, represents the assistance given to Europeans and Anglo-Indians, only about Rs. 19,000 is spent for the benefit of Indians. The second form of assistance consists in helping non-railway schools by means of grants-in-aid. Here again, in spite of the larger number of Indian students, there is an appreciable disparity between the amounts spent on European and on Indian education. While about Rs. 62,000 is spent in grants-in-aid to non-railway schools for European education, only Rs. 45,000 is spent for Indian education. Thirdly, assistance is given by means of scholarships, and here also there is a marked difference between what is done for Europeans and for Indians. About Rs. 10,000 is spent on scholarships to Europeans and only about Rs. 1,800 on those given to Indians. The last form of assistance consists in allowing pupils attending schools outside those places where they live to travel at concession rates. The total cost of such concessions is about 3½ lakhs in the case of Europeans and Anglo-Indians and about Rs. 1,85,000 in the case of Indian children. Now if we take all these various forms of assistance and also consider the expenditure incurred by the Railways in connection with provident funds and one or two other items, we find that in 1925-26 the Railways spent about 11½ lakhs on European and Anglo-Indian education and only about 4 lakhs on Indian education. Thus we once more find that the Indians receive only about one-third of the assistance that Europeans and Anglo-Indians do. I should like, Sir, to draw attention to one more point in this connection, because it enables us so to say to summarise the effect of what I have said so far. If we take the various grades of schools and compare the amounts the Railways are spending from their own funds on railway schools for Europeans and Indians we find that while the expenditure in European primary schools is Rs. 57 per pupil, that in Indian schools is only about Rs. 9 per pupil. In the middle schools the corresponding figures are 62 and 14, and the case of high schools 205 and 16.

Before I sit down, Sir, I should like to draw special attention to the difference in the treatment of European and Indian education by the

East Indian Railway. It is a railway in which I am more interested than in any other and about which I have been supplied with more information than I happen to possess in regard to any other line. The East Indian Railway, Sir, spends about Rs. 3,65,000 on the education of European and Anglo-Indian children, but the sum it spends on Indian education is only about Rs. 75,000. Again, Sir, in regard to the schools maintained by the East Indian Railway for European and Indian children, it is noticeable that there is a school at Mussoorie known as the Oakgrove School on which a very large sum of money is spent annually, a sum which is in striking contrast with that spent on all the Indian high schools put together. I should like to give the House a few particulars with regard to this Oakgrove boarding school at Mussoorie. The school is situated on an estate covering about 245 acres. It has a high school section, a junior department and a girls' department. It has also attached to it a school hospital with two separate wings, one for boys and the other for girls. The fees, which include boarding charges, are charged in accordance with a sliding scale. Parents receiving salaries of Rs. 200 and under are required to pay Rs. 14 per mensem per child. Those drawing from Rs. 201 to Rs. 324 per mensem have to pay a fee of Rs. 19 per child, and those drawing Rs. 325 per mensem and over have to pay Rs. 21 per mensem. In addition to the sliding scale, reductions are made in fees if the same person has more than one child attending the school. The total expenditure on the school comes to about Rs. 2,85,000, and the deficit amounting to about Rs. 1,34,000 is met by the East Indian Railway. This school, theoretically speaking, is maintained jointly by the North Western and East Indian Railways, but more than 75 per cent. of the pupils at that school are the children of the employees of the East Indian Railway and, as I have just pointed out, the entire deficit is met by the East Indian Railway. It would therefore be correct to say that the Oakgrove School is practically an East Indian Railway school. An Honourable Member asks whether Indians are allowed there. One or two Indians might be studying at the school, but the school, as Mr. Parsons told me in September last, is meant mainly for the children of European and Anglo-Indian employees. (*An Honourable Member*: "There is an Indian doctor".) But the Indian doctor would not be studying at the school. Now, Sir, contrast the magnificent grant given to this school by the East Indian Railway with the grants given to Indian high schools. The highest grant given to an Indian high school is Rs. 4,500 and all of them, taken together, receive only Rs. 14,700. Further there is no girls' section attached to any Indian school. I asked a question on this point the other day and Mr. Parsons promised to look into the matter and let me have a reply. My question was whether there was a girls' department attached to any school, and the reply is that "the East Indian Railway administration does not maintain any school solely for girls either European or Indian". This certainly is no reply to my question. I never asked whether any schools were solely maintained for Indian or European girls. What I asked was whether there was a girls' section attached to any Indian school, and the reply to that question has been very cleverly evaded by the Railway Board.

The expenditure incurred on the Oakgrove School must have given the House an idea of the scale on which it is maintained. But in order to enable Honourable Members to grasp the facts fully I would give the

[Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru.]

number and the salaries of the teachers employed there. I asked my Honourable friend Mr. Parsons on the 1st February what the number of gazetted officers in that school was, and I was told that there was only one gazetted officer, the Principal of the School. Now in the classified list of State Railway establishment I find the names of more than one teacher of the Oakgrove School. These names are given in what is technically known as the distribution return which is attached at the end of the classified list. I take it that the men whose names are mentioned in the distribution return are gazetted officers.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: As far as I know, no, Sir. You will also find in that distribution list I think a number of teachers of Indian high schools who are not gazetted.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: I do not find the names of any headmasters of Indian high schools there, but I am quite prepared to accept the statement of the Honourable Member that the inclusion of a man's name in the distribution return does not show that he is a gazetted officer. That however does not affect the facts that I am going to narrate to the House. In this school, Sir, there is a Principal on about Rs. 1,000 per mensem. There is a headmaster getting about Rs. 600 and there are about 6 teachers in the high school section getting over Rs. 300. In the other sections of the school too salaries are given which compare very favourably with those received by teachers of Indian high schools. The teachers of Indian high schools receive not merely much lower salaries than those of the teachers in the Oakgrove School but in many instances less than what is received by the head mistresses of European primary schools. I had figures collected this morning with regard to the salaries of the head mistresses of the European primary schools maintained by the East Indian Railway. They receive from Rs. 120 to Rs. 207-8-0 per mensem. As regards the Indian high schools, of the five high schools, the headmaster of one of them is receiving Rs. 325 per mensem, another is receiving Rs. 235 and the rest receive salaries ranging between Rs. 130 and Rs. 180. It would thus be true to say that in the majority of cases the headmasters of Indian schools are practically on the same level as or on a lower level than that occupied by the head mistresses of European primary schools.

The facts that I have brought to the notice of the House do not constitute the only grievances which the Indian employees of the East Indian Railway or the teachers of Indian schools have. There is a committee which looks after every Indian high school and generally the appointment and dismissal of teachers is left to this committee. When teachers have appealed against the decision of this committee to the Agent, he has, I understand, declined to interfere on the ground that the teachers were not railway servants. The Indian teachers were greatly relieved to know for the first time from the welcome reply given by Mr. Parsons to a question of mine on the 1st February that the Indian teachers as railway servants are Government servants. They had never been given that assurance before and had been treated as if they were not railway servants.

I take it, Sir, in view of the publication of the report of the special officer that the Government will not allow things to remain where they are. I hope it is intended to formulate a policy which shall be more

in accord with present day facts than the one which we are considering now, and I trust that every endeavour will be made to remove racial distinctions. Now, it is necessary if all these distinctions are to be removed and if the Indian teachers are to be dealt with fairly that the Oakgrove School, if it is decided to maintain it, should be open to the children of both European and Indian employees. Mr. Parsons told us in September last that the matter was under the consideration of Government and I trust that the decision will be one which will give satisfaction both to the House and to the railway employees. The other thing which requires reform is that some provision should be made for girls' education. I do not say, Sir, that schools should be opened in places where there is no need for them or that separate girls' schools should be started if a sufficient number of girls are not forthcoming. But surely in some of the more important places, for instance, in places where there are high schools, it may be possible to have a department dealing entirely with girls. And the last question which I would like to draw attention to is that the Indian high schools should have their position considerably improved. If their teachers are Government servants, it is not unreasonable to ask that they should draw their salaries on the same scale which is applied to Government schools by the Government of the United Provinces or by the Governments of other provinces where these schools happen to situate.

The Honourable the Commerce Member yesterday wondered that during the course of the debate no one said a word about cheap and efficient transportation which is, after all, the main consideration to be borne in mind in considering railway policy. Now, I ask him whether the exclusion of Indians is in pursuance of a campaign of economy? I ask him whether the preferential treatment given to Europeans in the matter of technical services, even when competitive examinations are held, is in pursuance of considerations of efficiency? It can scarcely be contended that the exclusion of Indians will lead either to economical or efficient transportation. I hope, Sir, that the Honourable Member will not listen to the advice of Members like my Honourable friend Mr. Cocke. When the Honourable Member spoke in connection with the last motion, I had an uncomfortable feeling that Mr. Cocke's observations had had some effect on him, for I must candidly confess that Mr. Parsons' speech seemed to me appreciably more reassuring than the Honourable Member's own speech. I regret that the Honourable Member in introducing the Railway Budget refrained from telling us what his future policy would be out of a spirit of modesty. I sincerely hope, however, that one of the points which he will always bear in mind during his regime will be that all racial distinctions wherever and in whatever form they exist shall be completely wiped out.

The Revd. J. C. Chatterjee (Nominated: Indian Christians): Sir, I rise to support the motion proposed by my Honourable friend Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru, but I do so on somewhat different grounds to what he has done. I cannot feel that this motion should be pressed on the ground that Government or railway companies are doing too much for the education of the children of a certain community. I believe that education for whomsoever it is meant and to whomsoever it is given is for the good of the people who receive it, for the good of the country in which they reside and for the advantage of that particular sphere of public service in which they

[The Revd. J. C. Chatterjee.]

are called upon to work. As an educationist, I cannot for one moment say that any school, however efficient and however well run it may be, is too good. No educationist is worth his salt who would admit such a proposition. I do not feel grieved that so fine a school as Oakgrove, which I have seen myself, provides facilities which are confined at present to the children of a particular community. But I press the motion because I feel that the Railways or those who are responsible for the Railways are not paying that attention to the education of the children of their Indian employees as they ought to do, and as they are bound to do. If the figures given by my Honourable friend Pandit Kunzru are correct, and I have no reason to believe that they are not, that the highest grant to a high school for Indian children is Rs. 4,500, it seems to me that that is a deplorable state of affairs. I give you the example of this City of Delhi. I know that at least one aided school—a high school for Indian children—receives as much as Rs. 17,000 a year. That is a very much better figure, and even that is not sufficient. So if the railway schools run for Indian children only get Rs. 4,500 as the highest grant, there must be something deficient in what the Railway Board is doing for the education of the children of their Indian employees.

There are other instances also in which I find that the education of the children of Indian employees is not so well looked after as it ought to be. I will give you the case of a small town, Shakur Busti, situated a few miles from Delhi. From that small *bustee* I am absolutely certain that fifty children or more of railway servants have to come into Delhi for their education, because the Railway has not seen fit to provide any school, not even a primary school, for them. And that is not all. These children are not given the concession to come to Delhi to school by the Punjab Mail, simply because it is not usual to allow such concessions by mail trains. If they come by the next available train they get here half an hour or forty-five minutes after the opening of the Delhi schools. So they either miss forty-five minutes of teaching, or if their parents are more careful they send their children by an early train and they have to loiter about for two hours. I am simply giving that as an instance, where something could be done for the children of these employees. (*An Honourable Member*: "Have a school special.") I am not asking for a school special, but why not give them the concession of coming by the mail train? It is not a law of the Medes and Persians that they should not be allowed to travel by a train that comes in at the right time.

I also support my friend's motion on the score that the Railway is not doing what it should do for the education of the girls of their Indian employees. That I think is a very strong point. I have not the exact figures, but so far as I know, hardly a school exists that is maintained by the railway authorities for the education of Indian girls. They cannot obviously go into a boys' school, because that is not our custom. Therefore, it is right that special facilities for the education of girls should be given to the daughters of Indian employees of Railways.

I also press the appeal that has been made by the Honourable Pandit for the admission of these children into the Oakgrove School. I am perfectly sensible of several difficulties that do arise in that kind of mixing up, but I think the time has come when at least the children of those people who can afford to send their children to a school like that, and whose children will benefit by going to a school which is at present largely

European, should be allowed to do so. Those who can live according to those conditions should be given that right. It is on the ground that enough is not being done for the children of Indian employees that I press the motion. I do not grudge the facilities given to children of other communities. We wish them luck, and there is no discontent on that score, but there is discontent because enough is not being done for the children of our own people.

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

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Half Past Two of the Clock, Mr. President in the Chair.

Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava (Ambala Division: Non-Muhammadian): Sir, when the Resolution relating to the depressed classes was discussed in this House, it was asked in what particular and special way these depressed classes were to be supported in the matter of education. Now, I wish to make a present of the speech of Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru to the Secretary for Education and in his speech he will find enough food for reflection; he will know the particular ways in which the depressed classes could be helped in the matter of education. We have been told that assistance to parents is given in the case of Anglo-Indians, grants-in-aid to schools, scholarships, travelling concessions and a host of other things: not that I grudge these things to my fellow-countrymen, the Anglo-Indians,—not in that spirit at all; but I only indicate the ways in which the depressed classes can be helped in this matter.

Now, Sir, the previous speaker has told us that he also supports this amendment on this basis, that he wants that the same kind of help should be extended to the children of the Indian employees of the Railways. I join with him and would further submit that I should like that the same facilities be provided for the children of Indian employees as are provided for the children of European and Anglo-Indian employees. We have been told, Sir, that Anglo-Indians are entitled to the special protection of the Railways because they have helped the growth and the development of the railway systems in India. May I humbly ask whether this thing has been brought about by the inaction or neglect of the Indians or by a combination of circumstances in which this was the only course which could shape the destiny of the Railway? I mean that in the beginning, when these Railways were started, Anglo-Indians and Europeans alone could be trusted and Indians were not trusted. Therefore, in the making of this history and in the shaping of the circumstances, it is not the Indians—Hindus and Mussalmans—who are responsible, but the system which was distrustful of Indians; and to-day there is one great difficulty in which I find myself when I submit that either all the children of all employees be given the same status or some such steps may be taken that the children of the Indian employees be afforded the same facilities even if the present schools for Anglo-Indians and Europeans are allowed to continue.

Now, Sir, we have heard much of the caste system of India. The other day we heard one of the Members of this House speaking to us and saying that this one crore of rupees should be spent on the education of those who were responsible for the existence of these depressed classes. May I submit the same and say that it applies with greater force to the present case. In the present case we have got another caste, and the

[Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava.]

rigidity of that caste can only be seen through Indian eyes in order to understand its significance. Sir, we have just been told by the Honourable Member in charge of Railways that Anglo-Indians have got special aptitudes, that they have got a certain standard of living which the Government of India cannot ignore. Now, Sir, it is exactly the argument of those who are the supporters of the caste system. I do not in any way grudge any Anglo-Indian, any domiciled European or any other Indian who calls himself such, any facilities for education. I wish that all Indians were afforded all the facilities which are now enjoyed by the favoured class. But, Sir, it appears that on the one hand we have got the depressed classes, and on the other hand we have got the favoured classes in relation to whom all the Indians are depressed classes. And further, the House will be pleased to see that if this system is allowed to continue, if the House allows Government to adopt the present policy of students being brought up in those schools in quite different circumstances with a view to enabling them to get jobs in the Railways when they have completed their education, I say, if this policy of racial discrimination is followed, then great dissatisfaction will be caused among the Indian employees and there will again be a political vicious question as to what should be done with those students. If the racial discrimination is really to disappear from our system, I would submit for the consideration of the Honourable Member for Railways that the railway schools should be thrown open to all classes of people. These different schools educating students from different standards and for different purposes are bound to prove a great obstacle so far as nationalism is concerned. Now, Sir, I understand that when vacancies occur in the Railway Department, it happens that with a view to favour the students of these schools, advertisements are published in the newspapers and intimation is also sent to the Principals of those schools, and when the applications are received, preference is always given to students who are educated in the railway schools. If that is so, then I humbly submit that we should say good-bye to the theory of equality of status and opportunities.

Mr. Anwar-ul-Azim (Chittagong Division: Muhammadan Rural): Have we got a quorum, Sir?

Mr. President: More than a quorum.

Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava: Sir, looked at from every standpoint, I wish to submit that, so far as this favoured class is concerned, give them all the facilities which they now enjoy, but the rest of the Indians should also be given the same facilities as are afforded to this favoured class. If that is done, I should certainly support the continuance of these schools. If that is not done, I am not one of those who will not have the courage to say 'pull down all these high proclivities, fill up the declivities and bring them all to the level of average Indian acclivity'. Mr. Chatterjee may be right. He is an educationist of a sort. But a politician has to look to all sides and has got a different stand point entirely. I support this amendment that the children of Indian employees should be afforded the same facilities as are afforded to the children of European or Anglo-Indian employees, but in the ordinary course if this is not done, I would submit that no special facilities be provided for any person.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Sir, the question of the education of the railway employees is one on which the railway authorities can very fairly be charged with communal partiality. Sir, my friend Mr. Cocke only an hour ago said that Europeans may be more efficient than Indians . . .

Mr. H. G. Cocke: In certain cases.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: In certain cases. If that is so, Sir, I thought that the Railway Board would spend more money on the education of the Indian than of the European. But, unfortunately, the Railway Board has followed a different policy, perhaps believing that education is not an element which makes a man efficient. The reason given in the report which has recently been published by the railway administration for spending more money on the education of Europeans is that in their case ordinary facilities were not available to such a degree as the facilities for the education of Indian children. Sir, this is the apology given for the differential treatment given by the Railway Board for the education of the children of railway employees. Some of the other figures given in this very report prove that this is not a sound justification. At page 32 of that report, towards the end, some figures are given of the aid given to the children of European employees for attending schools in the hills. Out of 2,199 children who attend schools with the aid of the railway administration, 739 children come from places where there are already European schools quite efficient for the purpose of educating the children of the railway employees. So it is quite clear that the railway administration does not restrict their aid to Europeans only in those cases where the facilities for education are wanting. Not only that. On the very next page you will find, Sir, that in the case of the Oakgrove School, out of a total number of 483 students, 212 students, or nearly half, come from places where there are already European schools. So, the justification for the apology given that European schools are started or scholarships are given to the children of European employees because facilities for their education are not available is not really based on facts. What I want to say now is this. Education is necessary not only for the children of Europeans and Anglo-Indians but also for the children of all railway employees. I therefore suggest to the Railway Board that they should adopt a progressive and a fair policy in the matter of helping the education of their employees' children. I do not want to cut down any grant which they are giving to European schools, but at the same time let them not make any distinction in the case of children according to the colour of their parents. Sir, it may be a sin for a man to have either a white, brown, or black colour, but I am quite sure that children of these people have not certainly committed any sin that they were born of particular parents. The Railway Board have absolutely no justification for making any distinction in providing facilities for the education of the children of their European and Indian employees. The children may be of European parentage or of Indian parentage. All children want good education, and the Railway Board in giving education to their employees should make no distinction. If they are going to give a scholarship of Rs. 10 each for the children of Europeans, let them give the same amount for the children of Indians. If they are spending a lakh of rupees for the education of 400 children of one community, let them spend the same amount for the education of the children of the other communities. Certainly there is absolutely no justification why any

[Mr. N. M. Joshi.]

distinction should be made in providing educational facilities for any class of people. Sir, there are many Indian employees on the Railways who cannot give education to their children on account of want of facilities. A number of railway employees are serving in small places at way-side stations. Every one of these employees should have a right to get sufficient scholarships for the education of his children, or schools should be provided for the education of the children of such employees. There should be no distinction made as regards this between European and Indian. Sir, recently I visited one of the biggest railway centres in India, I mean Kharagpur, and from several people I learnt that in the case of the Indian schools, there was not even sufficient accommodation for the children of the Indian employees, and I was told, and told on very reliable authority that children of Indian employees have to wait for two years and sometimes for three years before they can get entrance into the school.

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney: It is the same in the Oakgrove School.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I am not talking of any particular school on which a lakh of rupees is spent for the sake of 400 children. There may not be vacancies in a particular European school which has got a plot of 200 acres. It is wrong for the railway authorities to place their employees in such a position that they have to wait for two or three years after their children attain the school-going age, before they can get entrance for their children in any school, or that they should be compelled to send their children to a distant place. I hope, Sir, the Railway Board will examine this question very thoroughly. The present report which is before us, relates to the facts of the education of children of railway employees as they exist to-day. The report does not state whether the facilities provided either for Europeans or Indians are adequate. It would have been better if the Railway Board had asked the same officer to inquire whether the facilities provided for the education of Indian employees are adequate or not and, if they were found to be inadequate, how the necessary facilities should be provided. I hope, Sir, the Railway Board will take up this question seriously and remove the difference which at present exists between the treatment of European employees and Indian employees.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: The Honourable the Mover of the amendment traced in my last speech, I regret to say, some indication of the contaminating influence of Mr. Cocke. I was unconscious myself that any contamination of that sort had occurred and I can only express the hope that the Honourable the Mover will not on this occasion be able to attribute any part of what I am going to say to any sinister influence from that quarter. The state of things disclosed in the report of Mr. Jones as regards the educational activities of our railways is clearly one which calls for close examination and action on the part of the Government. The educational system, such as it is, has grown up in a haphazard way and is in its origin at any rate due to causes which are no longer operative to anything like the same extent. And now that the schools of two of the biggest of the Company Railways have come under the direct control of the State, I think it is clear that the examination of the subject cannot be any longer postponed and that it will

be necessary to look into the matter and to determine what our policy is going to be. There will be a number of questions that will have to be examined in that connection, and I think those Honourable Members who to-day have taken the line that they do not want the expenditure on Anglo-Indian education cut down but that they do want proportionate expenditure by the Railways on Indian education, are perhaps moving a little too fast. That may be the eventual solution—I do not at this stage wish to rule out any solution—but there are certain preliminary questions which will have to be answered first, and I should like to indicate briefly to the House some of these questions which I think we shall have to examine and try to find an answer. In the first place, what exactly are the obligations resting on the Railways to provide for the education of their employees. I do not suppose any one would hold that it was obligatory on the Railways to provide the whole cost of the education of the whole of their employees. That would be very strong doctrine and would involve very heavy expenditure; but if we are not prepared to go as far as that, what exactly are the obligations resting on the Railways. For instance, take the children of railway employees in big centres like Calcutta, Bombay or Madras where there are abundant educational facilities for children of every class. Is it obligatory, or desirable, or expedient that the railway should incur expenditure at all as regards the education of their servants who are stationed at such places? That is a question we will have to consider and answer. I do not suggest any answer at present because it is a matter on which I want to hear all shades of opinion. Then, what are the obligations which should rest on the Railways to provide educational facilities for the children of those employees who are stationed at particular places where there are no facilities to obtain education suitable for the class of employee concerned? That question was referred to by my friend Mr. Joshi as being one of the defences put forward for the present system. There again, some determination will have to be come to on that point and an affirmative answer might have certain consequences. It might be that on that basis it could be shown that more expenditure was justifiable for the children of Anglo-Indian employees than for the children of Indian employees generally. I do not say that it would be so, but it might be so; and it would also follow I think that in a province like Burma larger expenditure would be justifiable on the children of Indian employees than might be justifiable on the children of Burmese employees, just because in Burma there might be at a given place quite suitable provision for teaching the children of the Burmese employees and no proper provision for teaching the children of the Indian employees. These questions have all got to be looked into and we have got to find the answer. As I said yesterday, it seems to me a matter which might very suitably be laid before the Central Advisory Council and examined by them. It is quite possible they may want further information and want certain points more fully looked into before they come to any decision or make any recommendation. Naturally in that case we shall be very glad to obtain such information as they require for their assistance. But until the matter has been more fully examined I do not think it is possible either for the Government of India or for this House to come to any final decision on the subject. I do not think, Mr. President, I can usefully add anything more to-day, but I hope what I have said will convince the House that the Government of India are prepared to examine this question with an open

[Sir George Rainy.]

mind, but subject to one qualification. I think we have to keep in view the fact that the railway schools provide at present for the education of a considerable section of the Anglo-Indian community and that if it was decided to make a change by which the Railways incurred a good deal less expenditure on that object, it would be reasonable not to make the change suddenly or abruptly, but to give ample notice so that the other authorities responsible for Anglo-Indian education could consider the matter fully and see what provision ought to be made to fill up the gap. I will leave it at that, Mr. President.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: Do I understand that both the Central Advisory Council and the Standing Finance Committee will be consulted?

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: What I said was that I thought it was a matter which would be very suitable for consideration by the Central Advisory Council. At this stage we have no proposals to put before the Standing Finance Committee.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: On that understanding. Sir, I ask for leave to withdraw my amendment.

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

Local Traffic Service.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: Sir, I move:

"That the Demand under head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 1,000."

Sir, the local traffic service was created in 1921 and recruitment to it continued till 1924. It was stopped in 1925. This service exists only on three State Railways, namely, the North Western, the East Indian and the Eastern Bengal Railways. The Agent of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway was consulted in regard to its institution, but as the service was not started on that line I think it is fair to infer from that fact that the Agent was opposed to its creation. According to a reply given recently by Mr. Parsons to a question of mine, there are 29 men in this service, of whom 14 are direct recruits and 15 promoted subordinates. As regards the qualifications of these men, Mr. Parsons said:

"Of the direct recruits five received their railway training on English railways and the remainder possessed good educational qualifications."

It will be interesting to the House also to learn that before admission to the superior traffic service came to be regulated by means of a competitive examination the Railway Board had by nomination recruited 9 men who were not graduates. It will thus be seen that the men directly recruited to the local traffic service possess excellent qualifications, not lower generally speaking than those possessed by the superior traffic service men, and in some cases even superior. The pay, however, of this local traffic service is much lower than that of the superior traffic service. While the men belonging to the superior service are on a scale of salary commencing with Rs. 300 and ending with Rs. 1,300, the local traffic service men receive an initial salary of Rs. 250 and rise by increments of Rs. 20 to Rs. 750 per mensem. Now, in view of the reply given by Mr. Parsons about the qualifications possessed by the

directly recruited men, we have never been able to understand why these people are being treated differently from those Indians who have been recruited to the superior traffic service. Mr. Parsons, replying to a question on the 2nd September 1927, said that the question of — abolishing the local traffic service was under the consideration of Government; and he added:

"they wish to settle it as quickly as they can but it involves intricate questions of organization of the railway services as a whole and it must therefore take some time still to come to a decision."

It is an open secret, Sir, that the local traffic service has failed as a system of organization. It has failed to give satisfaction. That is why Government want to abolish it. As the recruitment to that service has been stopped abolition in these circumstances would naturally mean that the men already serving in it are to be promoted to the superior service. And I suppose it is in this connection that Mr. Parsons referred to the intricate questions of organization which would have to be settled before Government could arrive at a decision. I do not know what these intricate questions are. The only difficult and delicate question which I can think of at the present moment is that of the exact place which the promoted local traffic service men should occupy in the list of men belonging to the superior service. Now the question of abolition has been under consideration since 1925. I should have thought, Sir, that the difficult and delicate questions to which Mr. Parsons referred might have been settled in three years. I am afraid that the Railway Board have not dealt with this matter as expeditiously as they should have done. Perhaps they were not inclined to move forward, and if they are now giving any consideration to the matter at all it is because it has been found that this House attaches considerable importance to it. Now, it may be an advantage, Sir, to subordinates in the railway services to have even a local service to which they could rise and which offered them better prospects than the services in which they are at present employed, but I submit that the case of the directly recruited men stands on a different footing. Government have already decided the ratio of British and Indian recruitment to the superior services. If the men in the local traffic service are promoted to the superior service, it need not affect the ratio of recruitment which has already been fixed. They will form part of the Indian share of the recruitment. It is rather difficult for me therefore to understand why the directly recruited men, five of whom possess English qualifications and all the rest of whom possess good educational qualifications, are still allowed to rot in this interior local traffic service. I asked a few days ago whether the Government would be prepared to consider the case of the directly recruited men separately from that of promoted subordinates. I was informed that while the question of the abolition of the entire service was under consideration, there was no intention of treating the direct recruits differently from the promoted subordinates. I know, Sir, that there are some men who entered that service in the hope that they would soon be promoted to the superior service. The local traffic service, it is recognised, should cease to exist; recruitment to it has already been stopped. What is the reason, then, why men who possess as good qualifications as those in the superior service should not now be promoted to the higher service? Have they been adversely reported upon by the Agents? We have never been told that.

[Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru.]

In fact I understand that there is no report to their discredit at present. My Honourable friend, Colonel Gidney, asked Mr. Parsons on the 2nd September, 1927:

"whether the continued entertainment of subordinate officers in the local service is a means of economising and getting good first class labour at cheap rates and at a far less cost than the covenanted officials whose very duties they were performing at very much less cost."

The answer of course was "No," but we can all see, Sir, that if the local traffic service, which has been recognised to be a mistake, had not been started, the directly recruited men would probably have found their way into the superior service. Their present position in the service is exceedingly unsatisfactory and Government have not been able to put forward adequate reasons for keeping these men in the local service. I do not know, Sir, what is the stamp of men that Government are now getting in the superior service, but from the reply given by Mr. Parsons to a question regarding the qualifications of the men in the local traffic service, it will be difficult to infer that the superior traffic service men are, in point of educational qualifications, better than the directly recruited local traffic service officers. Just as Government take their chance in recruiting men through competition, they might promote these men in the local service to the superior service and give them an opportunity of showing their worth. If they are men with good qualifications, we may be sure that the majority of them will make good officers. In every service there are some men who are below the mark, but simply for fear of the fact that some of the local traffic service men may not justify their promotion to the superior service, to keep them in the lower service, is not fair or equitable. I trust, therefore, that this matter will receive the early consideration of Government and that the directly recruited local traffic service men will soon receive the justice that is their due.

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney: Sir, I feel I must offer my thanks and appreciation to my Honourable friend Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru for having pleaded the cause of the local traffic service so ably and so thoroughly, particularly because there are so many members of my community in that service. Sir, what my Honourable friend Pandit Kunzru has said is, in the main, quite correct. It is a subject on which I have frequently been approached by members of the Anglo-Indian community in that service, it is a subject about which I have frequently written to the Agents of various Railways as also to the Railway Board and it is a subject on which I have asked questions in this House. Now, Sir, the Local Traffic Service, to my mind, can be summed up in one word: it is the plaything and convenience of the Railway Board and railway officials. A splendid body of sweated upper subordinates camouflaged as officials performing equal duties with equal responsibilities but receiving only half or less than that of the officials wages—a blot on the Indian railway administration. I believe the Service has been in existence for some time; it still exists to-day, though,—and I speak subject to correction—I believe it was abolished by orders of the Secretary of State in 1922. I am sure my Honourable friend Mr. Parsons will contradict me if I am wrong. I therefore ask why does it still exist in its present formation and inadequate recognition? The replies I have received to the frequent references I have made has been the stereotyped one, namely, that "the

matter is under the consideration of Government." In fact, on one occasion I was told that the matter has been referred to the Secretary of State, a reference which, I believe, was to the effect that the continuance of this service was not necessary. I ask, for how long is this state to continue? Now, Sir, what does this local traffic service consist of? The majority of its members are Domiciled Europeans and Anglo-Indians. Originally, this service played a very important part in Indian Railways for it was the recruiting ground from which subordinates were promoted to the superior grade. This promotion of subordinates to the superior grade was a practice largely resorted to by every railway before the introduction of the Reforms. I believe I am correct in stating that till the Lee Commission visited this country, in 1924, about 50 per cent. of the officials of almost every railway in India consisted of promoted worthy subordinates, some of whom rose to such high positions as that of Agents. To-day we have quite a different state of affairs for the scale of promotion of subordinates to the official grades, is 1·5 of every 10 vacancies. Sir, it requires a very simple calculation to show how seriously the railway subordinates are prejudiced by this altered percentage of promotion as recommended by the Lee Commission and which is being operated to-day on Railways.

Now, this local traffic service, i.e., the employment of upper subordinates as officials exists practically on all State Railways but under varying names. In the East Indian Railway, taking as my guide the budget figures that have been presented to us, out of a total of 88 officials in the operating branch, there are in all 47 who, I think, come in the same class and category as do members of the local traffic service. That is to say, over 50 per cent. of officials in the operating branch consists of promoted upper subordinates camouflaged as officials who start on a pay of Rs. 300 or Rs. 350 rising to a maximum of about Rs. 900, or Rs. 750 and some to only Rs. 400 while those officials recruited from England start on Rs. 600 per mensem and can rise to Rs. 3,000 per mensem. In the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, taking similar statistics but under different names, because this railway though it refused to entertain a local traffic service employs its upper subordinates, as camouflaged officials, we find that out of the total cadre of 78 officials in the Transportation Department, there are 47 promoted upper subordinates, i.e., about 65 per cent of the total cadre. In the North Western Railway there are 51 local service officers, who come under the same category. They start on Rs. 250—20—750, less than $\frac{1}{3}$ of the salaries given to European officials recruited from England and who perform the same work. On the Eastern Bengal Railway there are 31 such promoted subordinates. This means that nearly 50 per cent of Transportation Department officials in our State Railways consists of these local traffic service officers, i.e., subordinates acting as officials, and enjoying a variety of names when so employed. If you compare the pay of these men with that of the officials recruited from England or India, you will find, as I have already stated, that there is a great difference indeed. I will now confine my remarks to the East Indian Railway. These local traffic service officers enjoy certain annual increases which amount to a little more than they would receive in their substantive appointments, but though they are given the same responsibilities, the same work, and are expected to live up to the same social status as European

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recruited officers they are given only half and less than half of their pay. I ask in all seriousness how can they do so? Moreover, when these men, who slog and slog, go on sick or any other leave they go on their substantive pay and forfeit their allowances as camouflaged officials. I ask my Honourable friend Mr. Parsons whether this is honest or correct economy. Is it right to have almost half your railway official staff manned and worked by upper subordinates, by men who have proved their worth in every way, at the pauper wages you give them? By doing so you get first class labour at a minimum wage. I consider the principle entirely wrong and the practice distinctly dishonest. I consider that this local traffic service should be either abolished, or that these men should be properly cadred and adequately remunerated and not sweated at such low wages. I believed that all such appointments are now entirely in the hands of the Public Service Commission. My suggestion is that the Railway Board should carefully and sympathetically look into this matter, take a broadminded view of it and realise that Indian Railways have in the past produced from its subordinates some of the finest railway officials, and that they are still capable of doing so. The Railway Board should take a sympathetic view and not rely on importation from England for all such appointments. The time has come when the Railway Board will have to consider what they intend doing in the matter of this large number of railway officials, and I would suggest to them that this practice of conveniently using at low wages, this army of officiating appointments—the railway is full of such officiating appointments from the guard right up—should be stopped. Even subordinate officiating appointments carry with them great disadvantages to the men and gain to the Railway. For instance, a guard who officiates as an assistant station master gets the pay of an assistant station master, but he gets no increments so long as he is only officiating and he may do this for many years. That is how this much boasted railway economy is secured. That is how the East Indian Railway has this year been able to show such economy in the maintenance of its staff and running expenses. I submit that this is a question which should be seriously considered and remedied at an early date by the Railway Board. The figures I have quoted, I repeat, are subject to correction. I am not an expert in dissecting the various columns supplied us in these pink and blue books, but, from the facts and figures I have ascertained I support my friend, Pandit Kunzru, in the motion he has moved and would commend it to the early, thorough and sympathetic consideration of the Honourable Member in charge of Railways, and so reward a body of employees to whose zeal and work is due in a large measure the prosperous Budget he has presented to the House this year.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Sir, the facts with regard to the local traffic service were correctly stated by the Honourable the Mover of this motion, that is to say, the service at present consists of 29 members, of whom 14 are direct recruits and 15 are promoted subordinates. I mention those figures again to give the House an idea of the numbers with which we are now concerned.

The service when it was originally started in 1921 was started for one main purpose, namely, with the idea of providing the majority of officers for charges usually held by officials of lower rank than District Traffic Superintendents. It was also intended then to use it to a considerable

extent for the promotion of suitable subordinates to the officers' grade. The experiment, I think I can certainly say, was not successful. I do not think the rate of pay was high enough for the type of men we should expect as officers as regards the direct recruits; and it put the promoted subordinate in a very difficult position. He was, I think, neither fish, flesh nor good red herring, and I have a great deal of sympathy for the point of view that was expressed by Colonel Gidney. I need not recount the intermediate history of this service except to say that when we were considering how to obtain Indian recruits after the acceptance of the Lee Commission's recommendations and the matter came before the Central Advisory Council in, I think, August, 1925, that Council advised us that this particular service should be abolished; and as the House is aware we have now published another set of regulations providing for obtaining our direct recruits. In those regulations we provide for 20 per cent. of our recruits to officers' grades to be taken from promoted subordinates, or from the direct recruits or promoted subordinates who are now in the local traffic service; and that is at the moment the position.

At the same time—and this is where I think there has been a slight misunderstanding on the part of Mr. Kunzru—we are going into the much larger question of the organization of our officers' grades as a whole on the State-managed Railways. It is not a question merely of choosing which of these 29 gentlemen in the local traffic service are fit for promotion to the officers' grades and seeing where they should come in comparatively with other officers. It is a question actually of how under any re-organization we should provide for filling those charges which I have mentioned as being usually held by officers below the rank of District Traffic Superintendents. Until we have settled that question—and it is a very intricate one—it is not possible to say that anything more can be done for the local traffic service officers than is done at present, by giving them an opportunity of being promoted to officer's grades under the 20 per cent. regulation.

That is actually the position as it stands. There is one further remark I wish to make. Mr. Kunzru made an eloquent plea for the direct recruits as opposed to the subordinates promoted to the local traffic service. I am afraid there I must adhere to what I said in another debate earlier this morning, that where an employé has been taken into our service, his subsequent career must depend upon himself and that his promotion will depend entirely upon his merits and not upon how he obtained entry into railway service. I do not see any grounds on which it is possible to differentiate between the direct recruit in the local traffic service and the promoted subordinate except upon their record as railway men.

Mr. Mukhtar Singh (Meerut Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, may I point out to Mr. Parsons that he admitted that out of these local traffic men three were of superior service and they were transferred to the local traffic service? He seems to have admitted that fact in answer to a supplementary question put by Mr. Kunzru on the 6th of February, 1928. This clearly means, Sir, that out of those gentlemen who are serving in the local traffic service, three at least have already served in the superior services. They have therefore not only the claim but the right to remain in that service. And now, Sir, though one of them has resigned, two still remain, and they have certainly a right to claim promotion to the superior services. This shows that at least these two gentlemen are fully qualified to serve as superior service men and they should be so promoted.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Sir, may I make a personal explanation? When I gave that reply to a supplementary question put by Mr. Kunzru, I am afraid I did not clearly catch the question. So far as my information goes, my original answer and not my reply to the supplementary question was correct, and I am not aware who these three gentlemen are. But if the Honourable Pandit will let me have details of their cases, I will certainly look into them. My own information is that we are not aware of any one appointed to the local traffic service who has subsequently been reverted to a subordinate grade. There were certain gentlemen in that service who were not taken over by Government into their service when the East Indian Railway was taken over by Government, men in fact who have never been Government servants. Whether those men have subsequently obtained appointments as subordinates in the East Indian Railway, I am not aware.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: Sir, may I just say a word about what has just been said by Mr. Parsons? These men were, of course, originally appointed by the East Indian Railway, but as the House knows, when the Great Indian Peninsula Railway and the East Indian Railway were taken over by Government, a general assurance was given by His Excellency the Viceroy himself that the prospects of those who were so taken over would not be injured. It is only fair to assume that those Indians who were in the Railway Department when the East Indian Railway was taken over were entitled to retain their posts and prospects equally with Europeans. The responsibility of Government in this matter is therefore as great as that of the East Indian Railway.

Mr. President: The question is:

"That the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 1,000."

The motion was negatived.

Stores Purchase Policy.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: Sir, I move:

"That the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 1,000."

When the question of the purchase of stores was discussed last year, Sir Charles Innes brought forward two important points against my motion. He pointed out that in accordance with the Acworth Committee's recommendations the Agents of the various Railways had been made responsible for the financial results of their lines. Now, action was taken on the report of the Stores Purchase Committee, I believe, after the Acworth report had been published. If so, Government were well aware that the Stores Purchase Committee had recommended that the Railways along with other Government Departments should make use of the Indian Stores Department. The argument advanced by Sir Charles Innes does not, therefore, seem to me to be a convincing one. The other point made by Sir Charles Innes was that a heavier charge would have to be incurred if materials were purchased through the Indian Stores Department than if they were purchased directly by the Railways themselves as the Stores Purchase Department charge a commission of one per cent. on purchases and one per cent. for inspection.

In this connection it may interest the House to know the remarks and proposals of the Public Accounts Committee of 1925-26. The Committee in its report says.

"Recourse to the Department is not yet compulsory but we were informed that a proposal has been put forward to institute a Standing Committee to deal with the co-ordination of purchases for various departments, and that, if this matures, it might be possible to work the Department more economically than at present. Meanwhile other Departments have in some cases complained against the charges levied, but we are of opinion that the work undertaken by the Stores Department on behalf of other departments justifies the charge. We agree that, until the turnover is considerably improved, it is impossible to reduce the percentage commission now charged by the Stores Department on the purchases made on behalf of the Government of India and also of the Provincial Governments and other quasi-commercial bodies. The commission should be so fixed as to enable the Department to pay its way and no more."

If, Sir, the Stores Department charges a higher commission than the Railways are willing to pay, the remedy is in their own hands. If they make their purchases through the Stores Department it will become quite easily practicable for the Department to reduce its commission as the Public Accounts Committee points out. There is, however, another suggestion made by the Public Accounts Committee which might reduce the expenses of the Stores Department. The Committee says that the activities of the Stores Purchase Department might be divided into two branches, commercial and non-commercial, and it suggests that the deficit on account of its non-commercial activities should be exhibited under a special account, Development of Indian Industries. If this is done, I take it that the Indian Stores Department not being under any obligation to meet all its charges from its earnings would be further able to reduce the commission which it has at present to charge to all its customers.

There is another important point, Sir, which it is necessary to bring out in this connection. The Dickinson report makes some proposals in regard to the purchase of stores which might take us further from the goal which this House has in view. Sir Arthur Dickinson makes the following remarks about the activities of the Indian Stores Department :

"This Department is entirely independent of the Railway Board so that the latter has no control over the purchases of materials required for the Railways for which it is responsible. Moreover, the Indian Stores Department has no special knowledge of railway requirements and specific instances have been brought before me of unsuitable stores having been purchased and passed by that Department."

Sir Walter Willson (Associated Chambers of Commerce: Nominated Non-Official): What page is that?

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: It is page 50.

Sir Walter Willson: Thank you.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: I hold no brief on behalf of the Stores Department. It is human to err and the Stores Department might as easily make mistakes as any other Department of Government. The Railways, however, should be the last body to point the finger of scorn at the Stores Department. The Raven Committee has shown how they organised their workshops and if there were another inquiry into the purchase of stores, who knows that disclosures would not be made which would compel Government to overhaul the present procedure. Apart from this, Sir, I do not know whether Sir Arthur Dickinson before making his remarks asked the

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Indian Stores Department if they accepted the validity of the charges brought against them. I think, Sir, in a matter of this kind it is necessary that the House should not come to any decision on what I may call an *ex parte* statement. If the Stores Department is to be condemned, it should be condemned only after it has been allowed a fair opportunity of offering an explanation. Sir Arthur Dickinson's recommendations are that the functions of purchase and custody of stores should be completely separated and that there should be appointed a Chief Supply Officer "immediately responsible to the Agent and authorised to exercise all the latter's powers of purchase." I commented on this recommendation when the Railway Budget was under discussion. It is some consolation to note that Sir Arthur Dickinson has not recommended finally that every Railway should be allowed to purchase its stores separately. He says:

"If it should be decided to constitute one purchasing department for all State Railways, then the Chief Supply Officer should be an official of the Railway Board and directly responsible to them."

Thus Sir Arthur Dickinson contemplates the possibility of there being one department for making purchases on behalf of all Railways. That department may not be the Indian Stores Department, but the main point is that Sir Arthur Dickinson is not wholly against the centralisation of purchases on behalf of Railways. Now, Sir, if it is possible to form a new department for purchasing materials on behalf of railway departments, why should it not be possible to constitute it a section of the Stores Department which should contain men who are specially conversant with railway requirements? I made that suggestion last year but no serious answer was attempted to it during the course of the debate. I should like to know what objection there can be to this proposal from the point of view of the Railways. Much has been made of the fact that the Railways are separate entities and that as the managers of these Railways are responsible for their financial results it is only fair that a free hand should be left to them in one of the most important of their activities, namely, the purchase of stores. It has, however, to be remembered that almost all these Railways are owned by the State and that four of them are also managed by it. If the proprietors are the same I do not see what canons of financial or business propriety would be violated if they insisted on having some central arrangement for the purchase of such materials as they wanted for their concerns. The failure of Government to use the Stores Department established by itself, which it was originally contemplated should purchase stores also for Railways, is scarcely creditable to them. Last year, that is, during the year 1926-27, I admit that the Railways purchased more stores through the Indian Stores Department than in the previous year, but the total quantity so purchased is, according to the Railway Report, a little over Rs. 67 lakhs, and according to the report of the Indian Stores Department, a little over Rs. 75 lakhs. The total amount of material bought by the Railways in 1926-27, according to the Railway report, was however about Rs. 28 crores. Thus whichever figure we accept, whether that given in the Railway report or that given in the report of the Indian Stores Department, we see that the purchases made by the Railways through the Indian Stores Department form an insignificant, an infinitesimal proportion of what they

buy themselves. Unless Government can put forward adequate reasons for continuing the present arrangement, the Assembly will be bound to insist year after year that the present arrangement shall be changed and that their original intentions shall be fully given effect to.

Mr. B. Das (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, the Stores Purchase Committee came into existence at the unanimous demand of the European and Indian commercial communities. I want to remind my friend Mr. Cocke that sometimes in commercial matters we are in agreement with them, though in the matter of strategic and military policy we can never be in agreement. That Committee consisted of 9 members of which, I find, four members belong to the Railway Department, the President being a member of the then Railway Board and the Secretary was the Assistant Secretary of the Railway Board. It was unanimously recommended that stores should be purchased by a Stores Department created under the Government of India in India. The next step that was taken in that direction was Mr. Jinnah's Resolution on Rupee tenders moved in 1924, in which we had the unanimous support of our European friends. In 1924, when we were discussing the separation of railway from general finance, we concerned the Government again and then my friend Sir Charles Innes made same observations which were evasive and non-committal. Sir Charles Innes said that they had circulated the new stores rules issued in May 1924 to the Agents of both State and Company Railways and that they expected the Agents to carry out the policy of the Government of India as expressed by those rules and also informed us that he was negotiating with Mr. Pitkeathley, the Chief Controller of Indian Stores, and they would come to some sort of arrangement whereby railway stores would be purchased through Mr. Pitkeathley's Department. In the meantime the Railway Board including the Railway Member have pursued a different policy of purchase, the climax of which is embodied in the Dickinson Committee's Report in bold outlines. In the same year 1924-25 the report of the High Commissioner in London gives a different story. I find that the Indian Stores Department we created went on increasing its permanent staff of Europeans—while the recommendation of the Stores Purchase Committee was that the entire staff under the control of my friend Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra should be Indians. The plea was set forth that the military would not purchase and that the Railway departments would not purchase through this department unless they had retired railway officials or officials recommended by the Railway Board and the Army on the staff of the Indian Stores Department, and although the Indian Stores Department under my friend Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra is a department not under the control of the Secretary of State, yet to our surprise we find that the higher officers are still 50 per cent. European and 50 per cent. Indian. Now the letter of the High Commissioner addressed to the Government of India in 1924-25 gives the other side of the stores purchase policy. The letter does not refer to this aspect of the question at all. Why? Because we anticipated that the stores purchase policy of the Government of India would be centralized in India and that the Railway Department and the Military Department would not have separate establishments and would not go through the merry processes of wasting the nation's money according to the humour of individual officers or departments. I shall now quote a passage from

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the report of the High Commissioner. This is from the report for 1924-25, paragraph 5. The Secretary to the High Commissioner writes:

"In paragraphs 36-37 of the Report Colonel Paddon has furnished interesting particulars regarding the effect of the new rules for the supply of articles for the public service which were recently adopted by the Government of India."

Sir Atul Chatterjee was occupying the position of Member for Industries and Labour in the Government of India and was a party to the rupee tender Resolution and to the various assurances that the Government of India gave us that they would centralize their stores purchase policy in India.

The letter goes on:

"Sir Atul Chatterjee is unable to endorse what he presumes to be the implications of the Director General in this matter."

At that time Sir Atul Chatterjee was just new to the High Commissioner's position, but in the subsequent reports of 1925-26 and 1926-27 I find he completely endorses the views of Colonel Paddon:

"It is true that under the new rules permission is given to indentors in India in certain circumstances to purchase articles not manufactured in India when they are already in India at the time of order or are on their way out. The Director General is inclined to think that if a British or Continental firm starts a branch house in India, the price in London would be raised in correspondence with the price charged in India. Sir Atul Chatterjee does not think it likely that branch houses would be forthwith established in India by all the important manufacturers in a particular class of goods. So long as competitive prices are obtained in this country from all important manufacturers in Great Britain and on the Continent, he does not think that the establishment of a few branch houses will prejudice the Indian Stores Department in London."

Sir Atul Chatterjee being High Commissioner, he subsequently forgets the promises and assurances given to this House and he pats Colonel Paddon on the back and gives assurances that the Indian Stores Department in London will not melt away. Well, my friends representing European commerce will reply, "whether the prices of foreign goods in India when imported by representative Houses in India are higher than the prices quoted in London." But the subsequent reports of Colonel Paddon and of the High Commissioner for 1925-26 and 1926-27 show that a definite attempt had been made by the Director of the London Indian Stores Department to show that prices quoted in India had been always higher and that the London Stores Department's existence was necessary because it had always secured cheap prices and wherever it had not been able to secure cheap prices Colonel Paddon had laid the whole blame on the Government officials in India who had asked for previous quotations from those firms and had thereby raised the prices of these tenders, when subsequently called for. Some of these officials in their zeal to spend a certain allotted grant, I think it refers mostly to railway and military officials, demand that certain indents must be supplied in a very limited space of time, say two or three months, and thereby they encourage the prices to go up. Well, this is the slow and indirect process by which the Indian Stores Department in London has been talking all along that there should be no creation of an Indian Stores Department or that there should be no centralization of purchase of stores in India. Well, the rupee tender Resolution that my Honourable friend, Mr. Jinnah, moved

and which was passed by this House suggested that all tenders should be called in rupee and all stores purchased in India should be called in the national money of the country which is the rupee and our European friends also supported that and by this rupee tender an indirect attempt would have been made to force the Government to abolish the London Stores Department and to purchase everything in India. I read in the papers the other day that the Government had at last arrived at the decision to give effect to the policy of rupee tender. I do not know whether the Honourable Members present there on the Treasury Benches are going to give effect to that policy but in the meantime the Railway Department appointed the Dickinson Committee and asked Sir Arthur Dickinson among other things about the Indian stores accounting but that gentleman has gone a step further. He has recommended, as was quoted by Pandit Kunzru, what should be the right method. Well, he has not only suggested that there should be a Controller of Stores for every railway; he has suggested also that there should be a purchasing agent for every railway, and in the end he says:

"If it should be decided to constitute one purchasing Department for all State Railways, then the chief supply official should be an official of the Railway Board and directly responsible to them."

That means the burial of the Indian Stores Department. We know the Military Department never buy their ammunition and guns through the Indian Stores Department, and occasionally they only give them orders for a few thousand yards of linen cloth or khaki for their soldiers; that is all; and if the Indian Railways also, which buy stores to the extent of 20 crores a year, do not patronise and occasionally give the Indian Stores Department orders for a paltry 75 lakhs of rupees, then the Indian Stores Department under my Honourable friend, Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra, ought to go and suffer burial, and among the pall bearers would probably be my Honourable friend, the Member for Railways, and Members on this side of the House; and probably my Honourable friend Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra would be present as the only mourner at the burial of that Department. From the terms of reference to Sir Arthur Dickinson I do not find he was asked to give his opinion or to give his views at all about the purchase of stores or the method of purchase of stores for the Railway Department. That shows how the Railway Board are working behind—I do not know if they are working behind the Railway Member, but any way the Government of India are supposed to have got a definite policy and they are definitely going against the recommendations of the Stores Purchase Committee to which a previous member of the Railway Board and certain other members were parties. It also shows definitely how they want that everything that concerns Railways should be controlled by the railway officials, and that surely confirms our views as expressed on the floor of this House that the Railway Department is getting more and more strategic. But I am not concerned with the strategic part of it now and I am concerned with the stores purchase policy. Are the Railway Board the masters of the Government of India or are the Government of India the masters of the Railway Board? Why should the Government of India have a different policy for the purchase of stores for the Railways? Why have they got different policies for small departments, knowing that these small departments cannot place huge orders with the Indian Stores Department and maintain a very

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costly establishment, and what is the use of maintaining that huge Department of Indian Stores in London under the High Commissioner?

I find every year the expenses in the London establishment are growing. Of course the excuse is there. The excuse may be right, that the Great Indian Peninsula and the East Indian Railways came under the Government of India and so large orders were put on the Indian Stores Department, London, and the staff had to be increased. I have been looking into the list of staff given at the end of the High Commissioner's report and I find to my surprise the names of only two Indians occupying very minor positions in the list of higher technical officials in the London Indian Stores Department under the High Commissioner who happens to be an Indian and an old colleague of ours in this House knowing strongly our views on Indianisation. Well, such are the *golmals* and anomalies going on. There is the Indian Stores Department in India and there is one in London and here our friends, the Railway Board, say blindly that they would have another Railway Department, another Chief Controller of Stores, a series of purchasing officers. Of the new posts, very few will go to Indians, and we know the oft-repeated tale that Indians are not experts in testing bolts and nuts, structural steel, etc. That the Indians who are employed in the Indian Stores Department are not able to inspect orders given by the Railways is nothing but trade unionism among the European section of engineers employed under the Railway Board. It may not be a racial question with them, but this policy of trade unionism is nothing less than criminal on the part of these railway officials. They would not allow Indians in the Indian Stores Department to do this work and that goes against the principle of the creation of that Department, which was solely meant to be Indian. They have gone on terrorising us and putting Europeans in that Department. Sir, these are the tangles which the Government have brought upon themselves by their dilatory policy, by not coming to a definite decision. I believe we will have again to discuss it when we discuss the Dickinson Report. But before they say anything about the creation of another Stores Department, another Chief Controller of Stores, centralisation of stores purchase under the Railway Board, the Government of India must come forward with their definite views whether they want to abolish either the London Indian Stores Department or the Indian Stores Department here before they agree on behalf of the Railway Board to the establishment of a Central Stores Purchasing Department for the various Railways.

Sir Walter Willson: Sir, I do not know how far I can agree with my Honourable friend who last sat down, whether it is I cannot read my shorthand notes of what he said or whether I did not understand him, but I should like to take up the point made by my friend Pandit Kunzru. In reference to paragraph 197 of the Dickinson Report I understood him to say that if it should be decided to constitute one purchasing department for all State Railways and to have one Supply Officer, he would like that officer, if appointed, to be under the Indian Stores Department.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: What I said was that if the arrangements were to be centralised, the new department might be made part of the Indian Stores Department.

Sir Walter Willson: That is what I understood him to say. In that I entirely agree with him. The Indian Stores Department has succeeded to a very large extent in satisfying a commercial body not extraordinarily easy to satisfy, namely, those who wish to secure orders. It has established a considerable degree of confidence and therefore we would much prefer a system as outlined by my friend to having an entirely separate department under the Railway Board, whose principal object would be the purchase of stores and not as we believe the work and governing policy of the Indian Stores Department to be, namely, the procuring of its stores in India from firms established in India and incidentally who pay income-tax upon their profits. I would like to make a present to Sir George Rainy at once of a question which I want to ask him later on in connection with Indian made wagons: "How much income-tax is paid to the Government per annum by the firms who are making standard wagons?"

I pass now, Sir, to the other point mentioned by my Honourable friend Pandit Kunzru. He pointed out paragraph 196 of the Dickinson Report where it is said "that specific instances have been brought before me of unsuitable stores having been purchased and passed by that department". Sir, I have no doubt whatsoever that unsuitable and unserviceable stores have been purchased and will always be delivered to people who do not take sufficient trouble in placing their orders. I submit, Sir, that you know perfectly well what kind of hat you wear outside this Assembly. So, if you wrote to the man, "Send me another hat", it is certainly your fault if he sends you one of khaddar made in Birmingham. If you want a hat made in India, surely it is the business of the person giving the order to make it plain what his requirements are. It is a business axiom that if a telegram is not understood by the recipient, it is the sender's fault, and I submit that the same principle applies exactly in the case of orders for stores.

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra (Member for Industries and Labour): Sir, I had no desire to take part in this debate but I am compelled to do so because I find that my friend Mr. B. Das has imported into the discussion of this matter things which are not wholly relevant to it.

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas: You do not appreciate what he did for your Department.

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: It is not a question of not appreciating what he is trying to do for my department, but the bulk of his speech was full of misapprehensions in certain matters. For example, he began by quoting from the report of the London Stores Department which referred to certain stores purchase rules and he apparently jumped to the conclusion that the reference there was to the system of rupee tenders. Sir, the system of rupee tenders has not yet been definitely adopted by the Government of India, though, as was mentioned on the floor of this House last year either by Sir Charles Innes or by myself, the Government of India had just about a year ago come to a final decision that they were going to adopt the system of rupee tenders except in the case of certain military stores, etc. Thereafter, we applied ourselves to working out the detailed rules; and in working out those rules we came across this snag, *vis.*, that if we were going to have a system of rupee tenders, there must be some arrangements for the inspection of articles manufactured outside India which might be tendered to us by

[Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra.]

the importing firms. In the course of the last two months we have entered into an arrangement with our consulting engineers in England by which they will establish an agency of theirs in India; and the Standing Finance Committee in their last session agreed to the necessary provision being made in the Budget. Having provided for that agency, we hope before long to announce the rules relating to the system of rupee tenders, which we propose hereafter to adopt.

Having explained the true position, I must state that I am extremely thankful to my friends Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru and Mr. B. Das for their advocacy of the Indian Stores Department, which is one of my children. But I do not think they are wholly correct when they say that the Railway Department have some mischievous intentions in regard to that department, whether those intentions are deliberate or unconscious. I shall leave it to my Honourable colleague, Sir George Rainy, to deal with the aspect of the matter which is connected with the Dickinson Committee's report, but I believe I am correct in saying that the statements and recommendations made in that report will not in any way affect the relations of the Railway Board with the Indian Stores Department. As was admitted by my friend Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru, the Indian Stores Department is getting, in an increasing degree, the custom of the Railway Department.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: But very slowly.

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: I admit that the increase is slow, but there is a good reason for that. The Railway Department can come to the Indian Stores Department only for the purchase of those articles for which the Indian Stores Department is at present fully equipped. A large quantity of stores which the Railways require is in the nature of locomotives, wagons, etc., and for the purchase of stores of these classes the Indian Stores Department is not yet fully equipped. I am sure that if and when it is decided that the Indian Stores Department should be provided with that equipment, the Railway Department will make use of the Indian Stores Department for the purchase of those classes of stores. But in the meanwhile the position will probably be very largely altered, owing to the introduction of the system of rupee tenders; for, if any particular class of stores is required by a single department and that department can purchase it through the system of rupee tenders, it may not be necessary, so far as the purchase is concerned, to take the assistance of another centralised department, though undoubtedly the assistance of that department will have to be obtained in regard to inspection, and it is for that reason that the agency of the firm of consulting engineers, which will be established in India, will be placed primarily under the Indian Stores Department.

Mr. Sarabhai Nemchand Haji (Bombay Central Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, as the Honourable the Industries Member has just pointed out, the Government of India are at the moment engaged in framing rules in connection with the rupee tender, and I hope in framing those rules it will remain one of the main intentions of the Government that everything is done to promote the development of Indian industries in this country by way of the railway requirements being obtained therefrom.

I would like, as far as possible, Sir, to restrict myself to the stores question, but it is difficult to deal with it without saying a word with regard to the currency policy of the country, and, as I do not want to dilate upon that bigger issue, I only state this, that if definite measures are not taken by Government to meet the difficulties that have been artificially placed in the way of Indian industries by the new ratio, if the foreign goods that come into this country at a discount of $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. are allowed to have unequal and unfair competition with indigenous products, then the establishment of the rupee tender in India and the framing of these rules will not do much good to the industrial development of the country. But I hope the Government will find it possible to lay down rules by which preference could be given to articles made in India. For my own part I would like that preference should be given to Indian goods even when they are slightly inferior in quality to the outside product; but if the departments of the Government of India and particularly if the Railway Department is to be run on commercial lines, I shall be told that they must have the same standard of quality maintained. Very well, Sir. In that case I hope the Government of India will give preference to Indian products when other things are equal, and I feel sure that we on this side of the House would much appreciate an expression of opinion on the part of the Government on this subject while this question of stores purchase policy is being discussed.

One other point with regard to this matter and I shall have done; and that is with regard to the surplus stores that are locked up as surplus and not readily required during a particular year. This is a very important subject and much has been said, year in and year out, about it. It came prominently before the Inchcape Committee and in that year when that subject was discussed by the Inchcape Committee the surplus stores had gone up to over Rs. 22 crores; and very rightly the Committee laid down that steps should be taken by a careful scrutiny of indents to effect an early and very substantial reduction. Now, when the surplus stores amounted to Rs. 22 crores in value it was stated that because the goods received during the year 1921-22 were those that were indented for in the earlier year, there was a sort of overlapping; I take it, therefore, that for that year alone the surplus stores amounted to, say, about Rs. 19 or 20 crores. I understand that the surplus stores now amount to Rs. 16 crores of rupees. My Honourable friend Mr. Das, who is an expert on these details, says that it is slightly more but I would prefer to take the smaller figure. Even the Government, Sir, would not maintain that a reduction from 20 crores to 16 crores is a very substantial reduction as was recommended by the Inchcape Committee. If, as I have suggested, the Government of India and the Railway Department will look to Indian industries for their stores, it will not be necessary for them to keep these large surplus stores which it is perhaps necessary now to keep in stock because they rely largely upon foreign produce. That being so, I hope while laying down rules with regard to the rupee tender, the Government of India will see their way to do all they can by rules as also by means of adopting the particular policy of favouring Indian industries—I hope they will be able to see to it that Indian industries get the benefit of the large sums of money that are annually spent upon railway stores.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I shall try to be brief, Mr. President, in dealing with this matter, as one of my Honourable colleagues has already addressed the House. My Honourable friend, Pandit Hirday Nath

[Sir George Rainy.]

Kunzru, moved a Resolution on the same subject last year and I dare say he will remember the reply that was then given by Sir Charles Innes and possibly like myself he has during the last day or two been refreshing his memory with regard to what Sir Charles Innes said.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: I have referred to it myself.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I do not know that I have very much to say in the way of addition to or qualification of what was said by Sir Charles Innes then. He explained the reasons why it had not been found possible to persist in what was undoubtedly the original intention, to hand over gradually the whole of the purchases of stores for the Railways to the Indian Stores Department. It is a matter to which I have given a great deal of attention and study during the year, for I regard it as important, and I came slowly, and I may say reluctantly, to the conclusion—reluctantly, because my original inclination was in the opposite direction—that the view taken by Sir Charles Innes was right and that, at any rate at present, it was not possible to contemplate a very big and extensive transfer of store purchases from the Railways to the Indian Stores Department. The main reason which influenced me was this. I think it would be altogether premature to attempt anything like a complete centralisation of purchases for the Indian Railways, and I should be afraid it would end in the establishment of a gigantic office at headquarters which would be so large as to be unmanageable. India is a very large country, and if there was one office (say) at Delhi which made purchases on behalf of the Railways in Burma and in Southern India, it might prove to be anything but an economical arrangement. My Honourable friend the Mover suggested that it would be a simple matter to add a section to the Central Indian Stores Department to deal with railway purchases. It reminded me a little of an incident in a poem which may be familiar to some of the European Members in this House about the young bird in the bush which was four times as big as the bush (Laughter from the non-official European Benches), because I am afraid the section dealing with railway purchases would be a great deal larger than all the rest of the Indian Stores Department put together. If then the Indian Stores Department was mainly occupied with the purchase of stores on behalf of Railways, might there not be a temptation to that grasping body, the Railway Board, to reach forth and slowly gather the Indian Stores Department in its own hospitable bosom? I would draw the attention of the advocates of the transfer of railway purchases to the Indian Stores Department to a possible danger in that direction. However that may be, that was the conclusion at which I arrived.

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes mentioned another difficulty in the way of transferring the work to the Indian Stores Department, namely, the fact that the Agents were held responsible for the financial results of their lines, that these results depended to a large extent upon the economical purchase of stores, and that if that work was taken away from them, it would be difficult to hold them responsible. That also applies to headquarters. It would be very difficult, if purchase were centralised, to hold the Railway Board fully responsible financially for the administration of the Railways when the actual purchases were not under their control. The volume of these purchases is very considerable, and from the figures I have

here, leaving out such stores as coal, coke, stone, lime and ballast, I find that the cost of the stores imported direct, of the imported stores purchased in India, and of the stores of Indian manufacture taken together, amounts to something like 22 crores a year. This is a very considerable sum, and obviously when we are dealing with sums of that kind, any failure to purchase economically may have a very serious effect on the financial position of the Railways. I find also from these figures that in 1926-27 the purchases of stores of Indian manufacture went up by nearly 2 crores as compared with the previous year, whereas the imported stores, whether imported direct or purchased in India, decreased by almost the same amount. Therefore, I think that is an indication that the stores purchase policy of the Railways is at present in the direction in which the supporters of this motion would like to see it move.

My Honourable friend Mr. Das inquired why there were two different stores policies, one for the Railway Department and another for the other departments of Government. Well, Mr. President, I deny that there are two policies and I deny the possibility of there being two policies. Clearly it is a matter in which the policy of the Government of India must determine the action of all the departments subordinate to it.

In conclusion, there is only one other point to which I shall very briefly refer and that is what my friend Mr. Haji said about what he called the surplus stores—I should prefer to call them stores balances, because the word "surplus" is not really appropriate in that connection. He invited me also to say something about the principles to be followed when the system of rupee purchases is introduced. I am afraid I cannot accept that invitation because clearly, until the rules can be published, it is not possible for any one to make a statement about them, and in any case, when the time comes to make the statement, it will fall to my colleague Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra to make it and not to me. But I would like to endorse one thing that Mr. Haji said, namely, that the adoption of the rupee tender system ought to have the advantage of diminishing the amount of money we have locked up in our stores balances. I think that is perfectly true. We should be very disappointed indeed in the Railway Board if one of the results of the adoption of that system is not this that we lock up less money by holding stores ourselves in this country. We hope that the system will lead to larger imports by private firms and to stores being held in stock to a larger extent by these firms.

Mr. President: The question is:

"That the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 1,000."

The motion was negatived.

Railway Concessions to Scouts belonging to the Seva Samiti Boy Scouts' Association.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: Sir, I move:

"That the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 1,000."

The object of this cut, Sir, is to ask Government to allow scouts belonging to the Seva Samiti Boy Scouts' Association to travel at concession rates. This Association, Sir, was started at Allahabad in the year 1913. It was started at a time when Indian scouts were not admitted into the

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Baden Powell Boy Scouts' Association. Sir Harcourt Butler was the Governor of the United Provinces at the time when the Association was started. In 1920 he consented to be its Patron. The United Provinces Government to-day are treating it on the same footing as another Boy Scouts' Association which is affiliated to the Baden Powell Boy Scouts' Association and they give it the same grant as they give to the other Association, i.e., Rs. 12,000 a year. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya is the Chief Scout of this Association and I too happen to be one of its chief office bearers.

The present rule relating to the concessions allowed to boy scouts provides that scouts belonging to the All-India Boy Scouts' Association or to any Association recognised by it or recommended by it should be allowed to travel, roughly speaking, on payment of half the usual fare. I have no complaint to make against the concession allowed to the scouts of the All-India Boy Scouts' Association. The Association which calls itself by that name is affiliated to the Imperial Boy Scouts' Association in London and the Seva Samiti Boy Scouts' Association is not, but it cannot be said that the Seva Samiti Boy Scouts' Association is not an all-India Association. It has scouts not only in the United Provinces but also in the Central Provinces, in Bihar, in Bengal, in the Punjab, Delhi, Rajputana, and other places. I submit that there is no reason why the scouts of the Seva Samiti Boy Scouts' Association should be discriminated against. The rule to which I have referred just now requires that only such scouts should be given concessions as belong to the All-India Boy Scouts' Association or an Association recognised by it. But there is another rule which allows parties of school or college students to travel at concession rates and I do not know that it is laid down in their case that they shall get a certificate signed not by an officer belonging to their institution but by the headmaster of a Government college. All students, no matter to what institution they belong, are treated on the same footing. Is it unreasonable then to ask that boy scouts, no matter to which association they belong, should also be treated on the same footing? Government, I am sure, do not wish, either directly or indirectly, to compel us to give up our identity and emerge ourselves in another boy scouts' association. It may be that the All-India Boy Scouts' Association has the Viceroy as its Chief Scout. But that surely is no reason for denying concessions to the Seva Samiti Boy Scouts' Association which are granted to the scouts of the All-India Boy Scouts' Association. Our relations with the Railways with whom we have had to deal have been very good. Of all the Railways the East Indian Railway used to be most suspicious when we approached it for permission to allow our scouts to work on particular occasions on railway premises, but it is that Railway now which asks us to send our volunteers or scouts to help its men in managing *melas* and helping pilgrims if we do not send them ourselves. That has happened several times, it happened only a few days ago in connection with the Magh Mela at Allahabad. We have also had occasion to work outside the United Provinces, for instance, in the Punjab, and whenever we have gone to work in the Punjab the services of our scouts have been unreservedly appreciated by the North Western Railway.

In 1928 the attention of the Government was drawn to this matter by my Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi. His question related only to the Outh and Rohilkhand Railway and Sir Charles Innes promised to look into the

matter. As a result of the enquiries made by him the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway agreed to treat us on the same footing as those scouts whom I may for brevity's sake call B. P. scouts. The East Indian Railway now gives us the concessions that the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway used to do formerly. I should have thought that the North Western Railway also had agreed to treat us and the B. P. scouts on the same footing. It wrote to us in 1924 that in order to establish that boy scouts asking for concessions were *bona fide* scouts "it will be necessary for the application to be signed by a responsible officer of your organisation, for example, the Provincial Secretary, before submitting it to the District Traffic Superintendent." But in December last when we held a big scouts *mela* at Amritsar the North Western Railway in many cases refused to allow our scouts to travel at concession rates.

Sir, I need not dwell upon the matter any further. All that I ask is that our Association being an established association, being recognised by the United Provinces Government and having earned the encomiums of the various Railways it has come into contact with, has a right to ask that its scouts should not be regarded as inferior to the scouts belonging to any other association. The fact that we are not affiliated to an Imperial movement is no reason why we should be discriminated against. I trust that so far as the Government Railways are concerned Government will see that differential treatment is not meted out to us merely on political grounds.

Mr. A. A. I. Parsons: Sir, I can assure my Honourable friend that the Railway authorities have quite sufficient on their hands already without wishing to force the particular scouts' association with which he is connected to subordinate itself to the B. P. Scouts' Association. I think my own view is that in giving concessions of this kind Railways should look to one aspect only, namely, whether they will bring more traffic and that they should not consider the motives or objects of particular organisations; but in saying so, I do not wish to suggest that the motives and objects of the Seva Samiti Boy Scouts' Association are not excellent. So far as my knowledge of that association goes, they are. I can answer very briefly the main question raised by the Honourable Member. The matter of giving these concessions rests with the Indian Railway Conference Association at any rate as regards Railways which are not State-managed Railways, and the Railway Board will discuss the matter with the Indian Railway Conference Association.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: What about the State-managed Railways?

Mr. President: The question is:

"That the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 1,000."

The motion was negatived.

Through Booking on Government Railways and Railway Fares.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: I move:

"That the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 1,000."

I have only two points to bring to the notice of Government in this connection. The first is that there should be what is technically known amongst railway men as a telescopic lead. At present if a man travels on two different lines, even though they may belong to Government, then for

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each portion the fare is calculated as if he had begun the journey on that line. In regard to the Government-managed Railways, I think it is fair to urge that no matter where a man begins his journey and where he ends it the entire distance should be treated as one and that the whole distance should be taken into consideration in applying the rates which have been fixed by Government.

The other point is that return tickets should be issued on more favourable conditions than they are at present on the East Indian Railway. I speak of the East Indian Railway because I am familiar only with the conditions prevailing there. At present the duration of the return tickets is determined generally speaking by the distance which a man has to travel. I submit that return tickets should be issued for a definite period irrespective of the distance. If a return ticket is issued for a week or a fortnight, that will be far more convenient than the system which is in force at present. I trust that Government will find nothing objectionable in what I have said and will be willing to accept the suggestion.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy (Member for Commerce and Railways): I do not propose to say more than a very few words in reply to my friend the Honourable Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru. The first suggestion he made, namely, that telescopic rates of freight should be adopted as if the State-managed railway systems were all a single system, is one which was put before me by the Indian Chambers of Commerce in Calcutta, last April I think, and the advice I then gave to that body was that they had far better not raise it as a general question, for it was not free from a good deal of difficulty and complication, and that if they wanted to test the possibility of getting something done they should raise it in respect of one or two commodities in which they were chiefly interested. Whether they have since then approached the Railway Board with definite and specific proposals of that kind I do not know. If they have, or if they do, the proposals put forward will be carefully considered. But I do know that there are practical difficulties in the way of carrying out any far-reaching scheme of that kind, and in particular it might affect the financial independence, if I may call it so, of the various railway administrations. I do not say that that would be a conclusive objection but it is certainly one we have to take into account. As regards the second point I think I had better leave it to my Honourable friend Mr. Parsons to reply, as he knows more about the subject than I do.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Sir, I am afraid my knowledge of that subject is very little greater than that of my Honourable Member, nor have I in the brief moments since the Honourable Mr. Kunzru made his speech been able to add to that knowledge. I will have the matter looked into.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: I ask for leave to withdraw my amendment.

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

Mr. President: I think the next two motions have already been dealt with.

Mr. B. Das: Sir, no reply was given about Indianization in the company-managed railways. That is a definite issue and we came to a definite agreement on that point after the Lee concessions.

Mr. President: Mr. Das.

Indianisation of Superior Services.

Mr. B. Das: Sir, I move:

"That the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 100."

The subject to which I shall refer is the Indianization of the superior services. The Honourable Sir George Rainy said that this year in the State Railways the recruitment would be 70 per cent. of Indians, but he did not say anything as to the recruitment in the Company-managed Railways. Sir, since the Lee Commission's Report was given effect to and the concessions were agreed to by this House, we expect that the Government will give effect to the other side of the bargain also, namely, that 75 per cent. of the recruits in the engineering and other services of the Railways should be Indians. We expect some day to reach the percentage of 75. As I quoted the other day, in the State Railways the percentage which in 1925-26 was 33.2 has gone up to 34.64; but in the Company-managed Railways the recruitment in some cases is as low as 15 or 20 per cent. and the situation wants careful watching on the part of the Railway Board and the Railway Member. The Company-managed lines must not only increase their recruitment to 75 per cent. but the matter must be expedited to attain the full quota of Indianization. I would like to know from the Honourable Member for Railways what policy he has initiated to enforce the decision of Government on the Company-managed Railways? The Company-managed railways by accepting the Lee concessions are a party to that agreement, and I would like to know what steps Government are taking to enforce that decision.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: Sir, I do not think it will be necessary for me to say more than a very few words in reply to my Honourable friend Mr. Das. As regards the State-managed Railways I adopted the course which I thought would be most to the convenience of the House in introducing the Budget. I devoted a paragraph of my speech to giving the most up-to-date facts and figures we had about Indianization on the State-managed Railways, and I am afraid it is impossible for me to supplement those figures further. As regards the Company-managed lines my Honourable friend seemed to discount the progress we had actually made and to feel considerable apprehension as to what the Company Railways might do or fail to do in the way of Indianization. I think I am right in saying that the Companies have definitely accepted the percentage suggested in the Lee Commission's Report, namely, 75 per cent. and I do not think there is any reason for apprehension that they will not honourably carry out the undertaking they have given. At the same time of course it is the business of the Government of India to watch the matter and to keep itself informed as to what the Companies are actually doing.

Mr. B. Das: Are you doing that?

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: The Honourable Member may rest assured that of course we are doing that. I am quite unable to understand the extraordinary suspiciousness of my Honourable friend's temperament. He seems to suspect that if his eye is not on me I am

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likely to be engaged in the most nefarious pursuits. But in this particular matter my conscience acquits me for it is a matter which we constantly look into. It is also a matter to which Honourable Members of this House, if not by Resolution or motion, at any rate by questions, frequently direct our attention, and I do not see how it would be possible for us, even if we wished, to overlook it. The most recent figures published in the Railway Administration Report for 1926-27, with which the Honourable Member is no doubt familiar, will show the very marked progress which has been made as regards Indian recruitment in the last two years, that is to say, from 1925-26 when the percentage of statutory Indians recruited to the number of vacancies filled was 31·9; the percentage to-day is 60·2. Therefore, we are making very rapid progress towards the 75 per cent. which is what we hope to attain.

Mr. President: The question is:

"That the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 100."

The motion was negatived.

Mr. President: The next item, No. 12, has already been dealt with. Nos. 13 to 18 drop by default, as Mr. Neogy is not present. No. 19 has already been dealt with, and the Honourable Member (Mr. Joshi) might go on with No. 20.

Form of the Demands for Grants.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Sir, I move:

"That the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Sir, I have given notice of this motion of reduction in order to draw the attention of the Railway Board to the remarks made by the Public Accounts Committee in their last report that the form of the Demands for Grants of the Railway Budget should be reconsidered and revised so that the book for the Demands for Grants will give the same details and the Budget will be presented in the same form in which the appropriation report is presented. Sir, the present book of Demands for Grants has now been reduced to a very manageable size. We used to have a big book for the Budget, but now the Railway Board have brought it to a size in which we find it difficult to compare the figures for the different Railways, and sometimes it is difficult to understand from the figures what the policy of the Railway Board is. I would specially draw the attention of the Railway Board to the fact that when we deal with very large sums it is better that we should get some more details for comparison. For instance, in the charges, working expenses, they show a certain amount against fuel. We would like to get the figures for fuel for different Railways placed one after another, so that we can compare them and see which Railway is spending more than other Railways and we shall be able to make some deduction. I do not say that these figures are not given anywhere at all. The Railway Board give us, I think, about a dozen volumes of the pink books. Now, Sir, the difficulty is that we have, during the few days at our disposal, to tabulate all these figures in a way in which we really want them and in a way in which they will be useful. But if the Railway Board themselves appoint one officer or two officers, if necessary, to place the figures in the form in which we want them, the convenience

of the Members will be better served and I think, Sir, the interests of the railway administration will also be better served. It is with this object that I have moved my motion for reduction. I hope, Sir, the Railway Board and the Government of India will give very serious consideration to this matter.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Sir, I think Mr. Joshi has only one or two Members with him in this House if he wants more details than we already give in the budget papers.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I want these details in a more understandable, a more useful form.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: And the form which Mr. Joshi himself suggested would be better and more useful would also be much more voluminous! The other point which he raised was that we should give the details in a form which accorded more with that of the Appropriation Accounts prepared by the Accountant General, Railways. I feel that here I am treading on rather delicate ground, for I myself am naturally concerned with the rights and responsibilities of the Standing Finance Committee for Railways, to whom under the terms of the convention for the separation of finances the form of the Demands for Grants was left. At the same time, there is the very important Committee presided over by the Honourable the Finance Member which has, I think, recommended in a report that we should go into this question, though I am not sure that it has recommended that the question should be taken out of the hands of the Standing Finance Committee. That, I think, is how matters now stand.

As I see it, however, it is a matter that we cannot discuss very usefully now, because when we have gone through Sir Arthur Dickinson's report, we shall no doubt have to make a good many changes in the forms in which all these documents are presented to the Assembly and to these Committees, and I suggest that the matter might well be left over till that revision is made.

Mr. B. Das: Sir, I should like to add one word to this debate because I took up this very subject in the Public Accounts Committee. My Honourable friend Mr. Parsons arrogated the same sacrosanct position that he has taken up to-day to the Standing Finance Committee of the Railways. Sir, the Standing Finance Committee is a committee appointed by this House to scrutinise the Budget of the Railway Department while the Public Accounts Committee is a statutory body which has got definite statutory powers and has a definite right to recommend the different forms which are to be adopted for the presentation of the Budget. The Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, my Honourable friend Sir Basil Blackett, while we were discussing this subject, said:

"If there is a feeling that the system should be changed, we must refer in our report that reference should be made to the Standing Finance Committee for Railways."

Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar demurred to this proposal at first because he was a member of the first Standing Finance Committee which settled this form of presentation of the Railway Budget. Sir, I drew the attention of the House to these pink and blue books which we cannot understand at all because no summary is given in the Railway Budget under different

[Mr. B. Das.]

Railways. I am sure my Honourable friend Mr. Parsons could easily do what my Honourable friend Mr. Joshi and I had asked him to do. If our suggestion was carried out, he would have added only 30 to 40 pages more to the book on Demands for Grants. If he does not want to give us the details, at least he ought to give us a summary such as is given in the Audit and Appropriation Accounts, where the items of expenditure are shown under each Railway. As it is, we cannot understand what we are talking about and nobody is in a position to compare even the expenditure under different Railways. If he wants to fool us so that we may not be able to go through the accounts in the short time at our disposal and thus be not in a position to discuss them, he is welcome to do so. But we are here to do justice to your Budget and therefore it is but right that you should present it to us in a form that can be understood by us.

Sir, I had just now referred to my friend Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar, who, I am sorry to say, is not here. He had to agree in the Public Accounts Committee that it was the established convention that in respect of the form of Demands for Grants the Public Accounts Committee should be the proper authority to be consulted. Now, the Chairman of that Committee, Sir Basil Blackett, also ruled that the Public Accounts Committee was the final authority in the matter. So we recommended certain process and my friend Mr. Parsons ought to have presented an extract of this discussion to the Standing Finance Committee for Railways. May I ask, Sir, why did he not do so? After all, the views of the Public Accounts Committee are advisory and they are not final, but in this case they made a definite suggestion. So, when there is a difference between the Public Accounts Committee and the department, then it is up to this House to decide in what form the Demands for Grants should be presented. My friend Mr. Joshi and I hold the same view. Sir, in spite of my being an engineer and I also occasionally dabble in statistics and figures, I find it very difficult to understand these pink books. Sir, there are certain demands involving heavy expenditure, for example, Demands Nos. 4 and 5, of which a very brief account is given; it is just like a summary, but without head or tail to them. Even the different Railways are not indicated in their allotment of funds. If we come to the later Demands, we find that unnecessary details are given there. For instance, small surveys that are carried out in some out of the way places where Rs. 5,000 are spent, are mentioned in that particular Demand (Demand No. 11). But where we spend crores of rupees, the details of expenditure are not shown,—the different items are not shown, and Members on this side of the House have their just grievances. There are certain Company-managed Railways that are mismanaged, for instance, the Bengal Nagpur Railway, which is very much mismanaged. I have not got the opportunity like Mr. Aney, who is a member of the Standing Finance Committee, to get fully acquainted with the Budget of the Bengal Nagpur Railway, so I cannot discuss the Bengal Nagpur Railway Budget fully. I think Government should consider this point, which was discussed so thoroughly in the Public Accounts Committee, and Mr. Parsons being a member of the Finance Department ought to know the difficulties that we are presented with, and look at the matter as a member of the Finance Department of the Government of India and not of the Railway Board.

Mr. M. S. Aney (Berar Representative): Sir, the reason for my taking part in this debate is that I find some constitutional issue raised in the speech of Mr. B. Das. (*An Honourable Member*: Don't oppose the motion.) I am not opposing the motion, but am going to say that the statements which he made are not absolutely correct so far as I understand the position to-day. I only want to say this. All that I have heard has not convinced me that the right of settling the forms of Demands is not the business of the Standing Finance Committee. On that point I have not heard any arguments cogent and convincing. The ruling to which reference was made I have heard of, but I do not see on what grounds that ruling was based. So far we have not heard any strong grounds. I do not see why the Railway Finance Committee should part with its rights. The forms may be altered, but I do not think the right of altering the forms and settling new forms for the Railway Budget lies with the Public Accounts Committee.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett (Finance Member): Sir, I should be very sorry to see a quarrel between the Public Accounts Committee and the Standing Finance Committee. Both exist primarily to assist this House to do its duty, and I do not think that any ruling of mine was to the effect that we had the right to determine the form of account. I think I said, in view of the existence of the convention, it was obviously a matter that will have to be discussed with the Standing Finance Committee. I would suggest that the two Committees settle this matter on the basis of what is most convenient to the House.

Mr. President: The question is:

"That the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 100."

The motion was negatived.

Need for a separate Establishment for looking after the Welfare of the Employees.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Sir, I move:

"That the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Notice of this cut has been given in order to draw the attention of this House to the necessity of the Railway Board as employers making provision for some machinery for looking after the welfare of their employees.

Sir, the Railway Board are employers of about 700,000 employees, and as good employers it is their duty to look after the welfare of their employees. In modern times many employers consider it their duty to start some welfare activities for their employees. They try to look after the employees' welfare in matters of hours of work, in matters of wages, in matters of education and housing, and by the establishment of some provision for sickness, old age, and unemployment also. Now, Sir, the Railway Board as employers must make some similar provision for their employees. It may be said that the Railway Board does not directly control the employees; that the employees work on different lines under different Agents and it is the duty of the Agents to look after the welfare of the employees. But, Sir, the Railway Board is an authority superior

[Mr. N. M. Joshi.]

to the different Agents and therefore it is necessary that the Railway Board should control the policy as regards labour welfare. It is their duty to guide the Agents in the policy of the railway employees' welfare. It is the duty of the Railway Board to look into the policy regarding the hours of work; it is their duty to look into the question of the wages; it is their duty to look into the question of the provision of housing as well as the provision for insurance for sickness, old age and unemployment. The actual work in these matters may be done by the different Agents, but certainly the policy as to how far the different Railways should go in making provision for these matters devolves upon the Railway Board. Therefore, the Railway Board must have with them some machinery to consider these questions. Secondly, Sir, the railway employees have many grievances; I do not wish to speak about those grievances to-day; I think I shall get another opportunity to speak about them; but to-day what I want to speak about is that these employees have got many grievances and it is necessary if the employees are to be content with the terms of their service, that their grievances should be looked into by some body. It is necessary in my judgment that not only should there be somebody specially whose duty it is to look into the grievances of the employees at the headquarters of each railway, but it is necessary that the Government of India should have somebody at their headquarters whose business it will be to determine the policy regarding the welfare of their employees. Sir, the large employers in England and in other parts of Europe and in America have recognised this duty. They have established some bureau or some office or some machinery to look after these matters. The Railway Board is a big employer and it should at least be a good employer. I therefore think that if the Railway Board creates some machinery to look after the welfare of its employees, to hear their grievances and to secure the redress of these grievances the Railway Board will get better service from them.

Sir Victor Sassoon (Bombay Millowners' Association: Indian Commerce): Sir, the suggestion which has been put before the House by the Honourable Member for Labour is rather wider than I should have thought that even he would have considered this is a suitable moment for bringing forward. What does he in fact ask for? He suggests that a range of benefits, sickness, insurance, old age, unemployment benefits—all these matters should be provided for the benefit of labour. And by whom? By the Railway Board. But he forgot to tell us who was to pay for all these benefits. It was that little lapse on his part that has caused me to rise to my feet. Does the Honourable Member expect that all these benefits should be paid for out of the vote under this head, Demand No. 1? If so, I do not think that even the rupee that my friend Mr. Jamnadas Mehta in his cut was prepared to leave for running the Railway Board would exist. I am afraid there would be a deficit. And I think that even if he were to say that the sinews of war which were to be obtained for these benefits were to be supplied, if not out of the vote for the Railway Board but from the earnings of the Company, I think even then he would be raising or assuming a state of affairs which does not exist in any country in the world. Even in America, where admittedly large corporations do a great deal for the benefit of their employees, probably because they earn a great deal more than similar corporations in this poor country can earn, I do not think it will be found that they supply to their employees benefits

of this nature. Where these benefits are supplied, they are supplied on a national basis by the nation, and I feel that this is not the place nor the time where a suggestion of this kind should be made.

Now, Sir, when we come to the question of grievances, I think my Honourable friend may be treading on surer ground, but I am not quite certain in my own mind whether the machinery for investigating such grievances should be established by the Railway Board, which is more or less a supervising body, or whether it should not exist in the management of the Railways themselves. I think that it will probably be more useful to establish such machinery there by which the management and the representatives of labour can come together and discuss amicably their points of difference and the best means of overcoming them without friction. Therefore, Sir, I suggest that if the Honourable Member in charge were to consider this question, it might be done in the form of encouraging the Agents or the management of the Railways to arrange for such machinery and not to ask the Railway Board to do so.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: It is a little difficult, Mr. President, to reply to the remarks made by the Honourable Mover of the motion, because, on the one hand, as has been pointed out by my friend Sir Victor Sassoon, his ideas were very extensive; he cast his net very wide, while at the same time his ideas were somewhat nebulous as to the exact form the organization he desired should take, and as to the manner in which it was to perform the very onerous and numerous duties which he was prepared to impose upon it. It seemed to me that perhaps he had been carried away a little by enthusiasm for an ideal, and did not give sufficient attention to the question of what was practicable at the moment. The motion does draw attention, however, to an aspect of things which, as time goes on, all railway administrations and the Railway Board itself will have to consider more and more. I agree with Sir Victor Sassoon that if an officer, or a series of officers, at headquarters acting directly under the Railway Board were appointed, it would be very difficult for them to effect anything of much value, and probably what is more necessary at the start is some form of organisation under the railway administrations themselves. In the nature of the case, it would be difficult for me to commit Government to any definite statement of policy as regards these matters, because we have not yet had an opportunity of considering them. All I can say is that I do not in any way slam the door against suggestions of that kind, because I think we shall have to consider what is practicable and advisable in these matters, and that for the present we ought to keep our minds open to see what line of advance is practicable and is likely to be useful. I am afraid I cannot go further at the moment than that, Mr. President.

Mr. President: The question is:

"That the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 100."

The motion was negatived.

Mr. President: The next two items

Mr. Varahagiri Venkata Jogiah: I move, Sir, that the House be now adjourned.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member is not entitled to move an adjournment of the House.

The next two items drop for default. Maulvi Muhammad Yakub.

Refusal of the Agent of the East Indian Railway to grant Facilities to the East Indian Railway Union, Moradabad.

Maulvi Muhammad Yakub (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions—Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Demand No. 1 under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 100."

I move this motion as a protest against the action of the Agent of the East Indian Railway to grant facilities to the East Indian Railway Union, Moradabad. I will not make a long speech at this late hour but I will only give in very brief words the history of this Union. This Union was formed in July, 1926, under the guidance of a responsible gentleman in order to protect the legitimate rights and secure relief for the legitimate grievances of the railway employees. The number of the members of the Union is about 2,500 belonging to different classes and different branches of the railway service. The Union has been successfully working since its inception. Not only are the rights of the railway employees protected by the Union, but it also aims at creating a spirit of discipline and sense of duty amongst its members. In November last, this Union was registered under the Trade Unions Act and the Agent of the East Indian Railway was informed of this fact. In December, 1927, the President of the Union wrote to the Agent of the East Indian Railway requesting him to grant recognition to this Union as some other railway unions had already been recognised. It was pointed out to the Agent that the Union was being conducted on strictly constitutional lines by those who held moderate views. It was also pointed out that the Union would supplement the efforts of the Welfare Committees in the interests of the railway men. On being asked by the Agent what the term "recognition" denoted he was informed that it implied the necessary facilities for organisation such as card passes for the office bearers, special casual leave to attend the Union functions to those of its office bearers who held permanent appointment in the railway service. It may here be pointed out these concessions were not in the character of a novelty but they are at present accorded by some other railway administrations, for instance, the North Western and the Eastern Bengal Railways, to their Unions. Moreover, in February, 1926, this point was raised in the Council of State by the Honourable Mr. Ramadas Pantulu and replying on behalf of the Government the Honourable Mr. Chadwick stated that the Agents of the Railways would be instructed to allow freedom to the Unions and not to curtail their movements. The Agent of the East Indian Railway, however, refused to grant the said facilities asked for in a curt and unceremonious manner. I consider this action on the part of the Agent of the East Indian Railway quite contrary to the spirit of the statement made by the Honourable Mr. Chadwick. To suppress the legitimate aspirations of the Union movements can never promote that spirit of confidence between employer and employees which is necessary for the smooth running of the work. I hope that the Railway Board will give its best consideration to the matter and direct the Agent of the East Indian Railway to review his order.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: By the courtesy of the Honourable Member I have seen his papers. He has to a certain extent sprung this matter on me, but I understand the position to be that the Agent of the East Indian Railway has recognised this particular Union to the extent that he is prepared to deal with and correspond with the officials of the Union on matters affecting the general interests of its members. As I understand

from the Honourable Member's papers, the outstanding points are merely these; namely, when the Agent is prepared to do that, whether he should not also give special facilities having some monetary value to the officials and members of the Union, such as the issuing of card passes, special casual leave and so on. These are points which I think we should leave to the Agent of the Railway. I should not like to see a railway refusing when possible to give its men leave or to give its men passes to go to meetings of the Union or to transact the business of the Union provided the leave is taken as part of their ordinary leave and the passes as part of their allowance of passes. But I am very doubtful whether anything more than that is necessary. The third point—I am not sure whether the Honourable Member mentioned it—which I understand is still outstanding with the Agent is whether the Union should have the use of railway premises or halls which the railway authorities could make available to them. I am sure the Agent will not refuse any reasonable use of any such hall when it can be spared.

Mr. President: The question is:

“That the Demand under the head ‘Railway Board’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

The motion was negatived.

Mr. G. Sarvotham Rao (West Coast and Nilgiris: Non-Muhammadan Rural): On a point of order, Sir. Is there a quorum in the House?

(There being no quorum.)

Mr. President: The House now stands adjourned till 11 A.M. on Monday next.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Monday, the 27th February, 1928.