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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES

(Official Report)

Volume I

SECOND SESSION

OF THE

THIRD LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 1928



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Legislative Assembly.

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

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Monday, 27th 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.

GRANT OF FACILITIES TO PILGRIMS TO EXCHANGE THEIR MONEY ON THE HAJ.

306. *Mr. Anwar-ul-Azim: Will the Government be pleased to state what facilities are given to the Muslim pilgrims during Haj time for changing their money in terms of Arab and other coins at Jeddah, Mecca and Medina? What are the exchange agencies there, international and Indian?

Sir Denys Bray: I have ascertained from His Majesty's Consul that our pilgrims experience no difficulty over changing their money on the Haj. Indian currency is accepted freely, by merchants, and the rupee can be changed by brokers in all towns. There is thus no need for any international or Indian agency, and none exists.

GRANT OF SPLIT DUTY ALLOWANCE TO POSTAL EMPLOYEES.

307. *Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtulla: (a) Will the Government be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the Postal Enquiry Committee made the following observations with reference to the split duty obtaining in the Postal Department?

" We think that something should be done to obviate the hardship which this system entails

We have been told of cases in which men spend 4 hours of the day, and cover 12 miles or more in walking to and from office. We suggest that in such cases men required to put in split duty should be provided with quarters at a rental not exceeding 10 per cent. of pay, at or near the Post Office, or in cases in which this is not possible be granted a small conveyance allowance if living at a distance of a mile or more from the Post Office."

(b) Has the Honourable Member in charge of Industries and Labour promised to look into this matter favourably before the deputation of the All-India Postal and R. M. S. Union?

(c) Is it a fact that various proposals and suggestions were circulated for opinion by the Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs, during the last three years to no effect?

(d) Do Government intend to make provision for split duty allowance in the Budget for the year 1928-29?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (a) The Postal Enquiry Committee used the word "alleviate" and not "obviate". The observations quoted are otherwise substantially correct.

(b) Yes.

(c) The attention of the Honourable Member is drawn to the reply given by me to Mr. M. S. Sesha Ayyangar's unstarred question No. 61 in the Legislative Assembly on the 15th February 1928.

(d) No provision is necessary in view of the reply to (c) above.

PROMOTION OF CITY INSPECTORS OF POST OFFICES TO THE NEW SELECTION GRADE.

308. ***Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtulla:** (a) Has the attention of the Government been drawn to the article under the caption "Promotion of City Inspectors to the New Selection Grade" published in the General Letter of the All-India Postal and R. M. S. Union, Madras Circle, November, 1927 issue?

(b) Is it a fact that the Government of India in their letter No. 11-P. T. E., dated the 5th August, 1927, to the Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs, decided that the existing incumbents of the posts of Town Inspectors of Post Offices attached to First Class Head Offices who were in the time-scale of pay should be brought on to the new scale of Rs. 160—250?

(c) Is it a fact that many junior officials in the time-scale were holding these appointments at many towns?

(d) Is it a fact that as a result of the representation made by the General Secretary of the All-India Postal and R. M. S. Union, Calcutta, to the Honourable Member in charge of Industries and Labour at the interview granted to them at Simla on the 28th August, 1927, the order mentioned in the above question was modified and revised orders issued directing that preference to the newly created posts of Town Inspectors on Rs. 160—250 should be given to the senior qualified officials and that the existing incumbents should be reverted?

(e) How many junior officials were reverted to the time-scale and how many senior men were promoted in the whole of India to the new cadre as a result of the above order?

(f) If the reply to the above question is in the negative, will the Government be pleased to state why the revised orders of the Government of India have not been given effect to by the local officers?

(g) Is it a fact that communications on the above subject addressed by the General Secretaries of the All-India Postal and R. M. S. Union, Calcutta, to the Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs and the Madras Provincial Branch of that Union to the Post Master General, Madras, are still awaiting the decision of the Director-General?

(h) Are Government prepared to take any steps to give promotion to the senior competent officials at an early date?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (a) Yes.

(b) The decision referred to merely prescribed the manner in which existing incumbents would be brought on to the new scale, i.e., in accordance with the Fundamental Rules. It was not intended to declare all existing incumbents eligible for appointment to the new posts.

(c) Yes.

(d) The facts are not as stated by the Honourable Member. The orders of September 15th merely amplified and explained the intention of the

original orders. They did not involve the reversion of all existing incumbents.

(e) Government have no information.

(f) Government have no reason to believe that the orders have not been given effect to.

(g) No.

(h) Does not arise in view of the reply to part (f).

CONTINGENT ALLOWANCE FOR POST OFFICES IN THE MADRAS CIRCLE.

309. ***Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtulla:** (a) With reference to the reply of the Government to starred question No. 218 of the 1st February, 1927, will Government be pleased to state whether the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs has since re-examined the formula fixed for granting contingent allowance for a Post Office and issued orders on the subject? If not, why not?

(b) Is it a fact that in the Madras Circle in many of the Post Offices, especially in the Head Offices of Chittoor and Anantapur and their Sub-Offices, the contingent allowance is paid at a rate lower than that arrived at by applying the formula fixed by the Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs?

(c) Are the lower rates paid due to financial stringency or due to the economy practised by the Circle Office at Madras?

(d) Do Government propose to direct that the full amount of contingent allowance due to an office is paid in future to all Post Offices in the Madras Circle?

Mr. H. A. Sams: (a) The matter is still under consideration.

(b), (c) and (d). The information is being obtained and will be furnished to the Honourable Member in due course.

RESERVATION OF A CERTAIN PERCENTAGE OF VACANCIES IN THE POST OFFICE FOR THE SONS OF DEPARTMENTAL OFFICIALS.

310. ***Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtulla:** Has the All-India Postal and R. M. S. Union, Calcutta, addressed the Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs to reserve a certain percentage of vacancies for the duly qualified sons of departmental officials and, if so, what is the nature of the action taken by the Government in the matter?

Mr. H. A. Sams: Yes. The matter is under consideration.

ADDITION TO SELECTION GRADE APPOINTMENTS IN THE POSTAL DEPARTMENT.

311. ***Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtulla:** Have the Government promised to consider the question of addition to the posts of selection grade appointments above the time-scale of pay in the Postal Department in their reply given in the statement placed on the table of the Assembly in March, 1926? If the reply of the Government be in the affirmative, how many additions have since been made? Do the Government propose to increase further the number of appointments?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: Yes. During 1926-27, 80 additions were made to the selection grade appointments while 54 posts were raised from a lower to a higher selection grade. During the current financial year, several additions have been made, but information about the exact number is not readily available. The number of appointments in the selection grade will be increased wherever justified.

GRANT OF OUTSTATION ALLOWANCES TO MAIL AND LINE OVERSEERS OF POST OFFICES.

312. Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtallah: (a) Are not mail and line overseers of Posts Offices and village postmen required to be out of headquarters for a varying number of days during their duty time?

(b) Are they paid any out-station allowance when they are out of headquarters as in the case of Superintendents of Post Offices, Inspectors and sorters of the Railway Mail Service? If the reply be in the negative, do the Government intend to grant these low-paid subordinates allowances as in the case of the high paid officials? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (a) Yes.

(b) No. The question is receiving consideration.

GRIEVANCES OF EXAMINEES WHO APPEARED AT THE POSTAL ACCOUNTANTS' EXAMINATION IN 1927.

313. *Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtulla: (a) Will the Government be pleased to state whether they have perused the article on accountants' examination in the year 1927, which was published in the general letter of the All-India Postal and R. M. S. Union, Madras Circle, October, 1927 issue?

(b) Is it a fact that some books were not supplied to the candidates for answering the fourth paper which was to be answered with the aid of books?

(c) Is it a fact that certain particulars which were necessary for answering the first question of the fourth paper were not furnished in the question paper?

(d) Is it a fact that ready reckoners were supplied to some candidates at some stations and not to others at other stations?

(e) What was the nature of the action taken on the article to remove the grievances complained of?

Mr. H. A. Sams: (a) Yes.

(b) No complaints to that effect have been received by the Postmaster-General, Madras.

(c) No.

(d) Government have no information but understand that it was not necessary for the proper answering of the question to supply ready reckoners.

(e) It was decided to adopt for the fourth paper a lower percentage for a pass.

AREA OF THE HALL IN WHICH THE SOWCARPET POST OFFICE IN MADRAS CITY IS SITUATED, ETC.

314. ***Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtulla:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state the area of the hall in which the Sowcarpet Post Office in Madras city is situated?

(b) Is this space sufficient according to the requirements laid down by the Department? If it is not sufficient, do the Government propose shifting the Post Office to a new building and if so, when?

(c) Is it a fact that there is no free ventilation in the building?

(d) What is the total strength of the staff of the office?

(e) Is it a fact that there is only one punkah in the hall for the use of the Sub-Postmaster in the hot season?

(f) Is it a fact that the Madras City Branch of the All-India Postal and R. M. S. Union addressed the Presidency Postmaster, Madras, early in the year 1927, for increasing the number of punkahs or to fit up electric fans for the benefit of all the staff and that no additional punkahs or fans have been fitted up to date?

(g) Do Government propose to take any steps to have additional punkahs fitted for the staff?

Mr. H. A. Sams: The matter is within the competence of the Postmaster-General, Madras, to settle. A copy of the question and reply will be sent to him.

NON-RECEIPT OF REPLIES FROM THE PRESIDENCY POSTMASTER, MADRAS, TO COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MADRAS CITY BRANCH OF THE ALL-INDIA POSTAL AND R. M. S. UNION.

315. ***Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtulla:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state whether the Madras City Branch of the All-India Postal and R. M. S. Union has been recognised by the Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs?

(b) Do the rules of recognition require that communications from the Union are to be acknowledged by the Presidency Postmaster, Madras, and that the nature of action taken should be intimated in due course?

(c) What was the number of communications addressed by the Secretary of the Madras City Branch from the 1st April, 1927, to the 31st December, 1927?

(d) What was the number of communications which were acknowledged by the Presidency Postmaster, Madras, and on which action was taken and a reply sent?

(e) What was the number of publications which were not acknowledged and on which no action was taken in spite of repeated reminders from the Union?

(f) Did not the Madras Circle Postal Union represent to the Postmaster General, Madras, about the non-receipt of replies by the Madras City Union from the Presidency Postmaster, Madras, and if so, what was the nature of the action taken in the matter by the Postmaster General, Madras?

(g) Has not the Director General issued a D. O., dated 22nd November 1927, to the General Secretary of the All-India Postal and R. M. S. Union, Calcutta, suggesting that the local Union should settle all local grievances with the local officers?

(h) Has a copy of the above D. O. been sent to the Presidency Postmaster, Madras; if not, do Government propose to send a copy of the D. O. to the Presidency Postmaster?

Mr. H. A. Sams: (a) Yes.

(b) No, but it is usual to acknowledge the communications and intimate final decisions.

(c), (d), (e) and (f). Information is being collected and will be supplied to the Honourable Member in due course.

(g) Yes, by *personal* representation.

(h) Not by the Director-General. The Director-General will take suitable action.

LEAVE RESERVES FOR THE POST OFFICE AND THE RAILWAY MAIL SERVICE.

316. ***Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtulla:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state if it is a fact that the Government have sanctioned a leave reserve of 17 per cent. for the Post Office and 20 per cent. for the R. M. S.?

(b) Why is the percentage of leave reserve for the R. M. S. in excess of that of the Post Office?

(c) Is it a fact that the All-India Postal and R. M. S. Union has represented that the present leave reserve for the Post Office and R. M. S. is inadequate? If so, what action was taken by the Government in the matter?

(d) Does the leave reserve include any reserve staff for filling vacancies caused by men going on casual leave?

(e) If so, what is the percentage intended for use for vacancies caused by absentees on privilege leave and for absentees on casual leave?

(f) If no reserve staff has been sanctioned in place of officials who have gone on casual leave, is it intended to sanction a reserve staff for this purpose?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (a) Yes.

(b) Because the conditions of service in the Railway Mail Service are of a more exacting nature than those in the Post Office.

(c) The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the reply given by me on the 21st March, 1927, to Mr. Amar Nath Dutt's question No. 1003 in the Legislative Assembly.

(d) Yes.

(e) There are no separate percentages for the two kinds of leave.

(f) Does not arise.

PAY OF GRADUATES IN THE POST OFFICE AND THE RAILWAY MAIL SERVICE.

317. ***Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtulla:** With reference to the reply of the Government to question No. 100, dated the 6th September, 1927, will Government be pleased to state the decision of the Government in the matter. If no decision has been arrived at, do Government propose to expedite an early decision?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: The matter is still under examination and a decision will be given as soon as possible.

GRANT OF COMPENSATORY ALLOWANCES TO NON-GAZETTED SELECTION GRADE OFFICIALS OF THE POST OFFICE IN MADRAS CITY.

318. ***Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtulla:** Is any compensatory allowance paid to the non-gazetted selection grade officials of the Post Office in Calcutta and Bombay? If the reply is in the affirmative, what are the rates of allowances paid and why are similar allowances not paid to similar classes of employees in Madras City?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: The reply to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. The rates are Rs. 10 a month for those on pay not exceeding Rs. 170 a month and Rs. 20 a month for those on pay exceeding Rs. 170 a month. Similar allowances are not paid to similar classes of officials in the Madras City because Madras is in the opinion of Government not comparable with Calcutta and Bombay in regard to general expensiveness.

CASUAL LEAVE OF VAN PEONS AND PORTERS IN THE RAILWAY MAIL SERVICE.

319. ***Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtulla:** Is it a fact that provision for additional expenditure is made in the working expenses of the Post and Telegraphs Department for the grant of casual leave to postmen and lower grade staff in the Post Office and no such provision is made for van peons and porters in the Railway Mail Service? If the reply be in the affirmative, are Government prepared to make provision in the Budget for the year 1928-29?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: A scheme has been experimentally sanctioned for two years by Government authorising the employment of substitutes in casual leave vacancies of postmen under certain conditions. The experimental period has not yet expired. The question of the extension of the scheme to van peons and porters in the Railway Mail Service will be considered after the experimental period is over.

REVIEW OF THE EXISTING TIME ALLOWANCES FOR VARIOUS ITEMS OF WORK IN THE POST OFFICE.

320. ***Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtulla:** (a) With reference to the reply to parts B and C of Diwan Chaman Lall's starred question No. 1214, dated the 26th March, 1927, will the Government be pleased to state whether they have completed the examination of time allowances for items of work not covered by the time test, and, if so, with what result?

(b) Is it a fact that mistakes are committed by the staff and audit objections are on the increase?

(c) Is it a fact that the clerks are punished for mistakes committed?

(d) Is it a fact that even out of the small establishment of 8 clerks in the Department the services of more than one clerk are utilised for the disposal of the correspondence work relating to the Savings Bank Department?

(e) Are Government prepared to consider the question of transferring the correspondence work done in the Savings Bank Department to the

Correspondence Department and of sanctioning early the additional establishment asked for by the Presidency Postmaster, Madras?

Mr. H. A. Sams: (a) The question of reviewing the existing time allowances for various items of work in the Post Office is under consideration.

(b) Government are not aware of the fact.

(c) It depends on the nature of the mistake.

(d) Apparently the Honourable Member refers to the Madras General Post Office. The strength of the department is 10 clerks and not 8 as mentioned by the Honourable Member. Government are not aware of the alleged fact.

(e) The Postmaster-General, Madras, is fully competent to take necessary action in the matter and Government see no reason to issue any orders. A copy of this question and answer will be sent to the Postmaster-General.

REDUCTION OF THE WORKING HOURS OF THE SUB-POSTMASTER, ADYAR POST OFFICE.

321. ***Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtulla:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state the working hours of the Sub-Postmaster, Adyar Post Office?

(b) Is it a fact that he has to be in the office on duty for more than 10 hours?

(c) Is it not a fact that the working hours of a postal official is 8 hours a day?

(d) Is it a fact that the Madras City Branch represented to the Presidency Postmaster, Madras, pointing out the longer hours of work of the Sub-Postmaster, Adyar, and asking for the reduction of hours of duty to 8 hours?

(e) Has the Presidency Postmaster replied that the matter was one which does not concern the Union but that the aggrieved official should represent the matter to him directly?

(f) Do the Government propose to reduce the working hours of the Sub-Postmaster to 8 hours?

Mr. H. A. Sams: (a) From 5 to 11 hours and from 14/30 to 19 hours.

(b), (c) and (d). Yes.

(e) The Presidency Postmaster informed the Union that it was open to the official concerned to represent his grievances through the proper channel.

(f) I am taking up the matter with the Postmaster-General, Madras.

PROVISION OF ELECTRIC FANS FOR THE STAFF EMPLOYED IN THE POST OFFICES AT TRIPPLICANE AND MYLAPORE.

322. ***Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtulla:** 1. Will the Government be pleased to state:

(a) the number of officials working in the Triplicane Post Office;

(b) the number of officials working in the Mylapore Post Office;

(c) whether both the buildings are owned by one Mr. Venkataramier who is doing a good deal of Post office contract in the Madras Circle;

- (d) whether the two buildings are provided with electric lights and fans? If not, why not?
- (e) whether the department has fitted a punkah in each of the two offices and if so, what is the length of the punkah;
- (f) whether the punkah is solely for the use of the Sub-Postmaster of the office?

2. Is it proposed to fit up electric installation early in those offices or in the alternative to put up punkahs for the whole staff?

Mr. H. A. Sams: The matter is within the competence of the Postmaster-General, Madras, to decide to whom a copy of the question and of this answer is being sent.

INCREASED ESTABLISHMENT FOR THE CORRESPONDENCE DEPARTMENT OF THE GENERAL POST OFFICE, MADRAS.

323. ***Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtulla:** (a) Is it a fact that the All-India Postal and R. M. S. Union, Madras City Branch, has passed a resolution on the 10th May 1927, about the undermanning of the Correspondence Department of the Madras General Post Office, and forwarded it to the Presidency Postmaster for taking necessary action in the matter?

(b) Is it a fact that although it is now nearly 4 months since the resolution was passed no proposal has been sent by the Presidency Postmaster, Madras, to the Postmaster General for increase of establishment?

(c) Is it a fact that subsequent to Diwan Chaman Lall's starred question No. 1212, dated the 26th March 1927, all the additional establishment attached to the various groups in the department has been withdrawn and the staff is made to overwork, staying longer in the evening on week days and Saturdays than the prescribed hours, and taking papers home for disposal?

(d) Is it not a fact that about two years ago the Postmaster General, Madras, was approached by the Presidency Postmaster for an increase of the staff by 24 additional men based on figures verified by the Deputy Postmaster General, Madras, and that only 11 men were sanctioned; and is it not a fact that successive Presidency Postmasters were keeping additional clerks in the department from that time up to the date of Diwan Chaman Lall's question?

(e) Is it a fact that on account of inadequacy of establishment in the Correspondence Department:

- (1) the disposal of the correspondence relating to Savings Bank work of the Madras General Post Office and its T. S. O., is done by the limited establishment of the Savings Bank Department?
- (2) two of the additional establishment of 4 clerks recently sanctioned for the Foreign Money Order Department are solely utilised for correspondence work?
- (3) one clerk of the Foreign Parcel Department is solely attending to the disposal of correspondence work?

(f) Do Government propose to take up early the question of increasing the establishment of the Correspondence Department of the Madras General Post Office?

Mr. H. A. Sams: The information has been called for and will be furnished to the Honourable Member in due course.

EXTRA PAY FOR SUNDAY AND HOLIDAY WORK DONE BY POSTAL OFFICIALS.

324. ***Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtulla:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the Honourable Member in charge of the Post Office stated regarding the claim for extra pay for Sunday and holiday work before the deputation of the All-India Postal and R. M. S. Union that waited on him in March 1925, in the following words:—

"The question of Sunday is one that *prima facie* appeals to me; the matter will be carefully looked into?"

(b) Is it a fact that the Honourable Member in the statement he presented to the Legislative Assembly in March 1926, stated that Sunday work is one of the conditions of postal service and that this factor was taken into account in fixing the pay of the postal officials?

(c) Is it a fact that in England in most of the Post Offices no work is done on Sundays and holidays and that the staff of the offices which are kept open are paid extra allowances?

(d) Is the Honourable Member prepared to reconsider the matter and grant the Sunday allowance early?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (a) Yes.

(b) Yes.

(c) The answer to the first part of the question is in the negative. In regard to the second part, extra allowances are paid to certain classes of employees for weekly attendance in excess of a prescribed limit.

(d) The question whether any action is to be taken in the matter in addition to that indicated in the statement referred to in part (b) of the question is under consideration

ABOLITION OF DIVISIONAL COMMISSIONERSHIPS, ETC.

325. ***Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** (a) What is the number of Divisional Commissionerships in each province?

(b) Have any such posts of Commissioners been abolished in any province during the past six years?

(c) If so, how many and in which province or provinces and when?

(d) What is the policy of the Government with regard to the popular demand for the abolition of such Commissionerships?

(e) Is there any proposal to recruit a certain percentage of members of the I. C. S. from among Provincial Civil Service officers in each province?

(f) If so, what is the number proposed for allotment to each province and when is a decision likely to be reached in the matter?

The Honourable Mr. J. O'rourke: (a) I lay on the table a statement giving the information required.

(b) and (c). One Commissionership was abolished in Burma in 1925 owing to a redistribution of territory.

(d) The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the answer given by Sir Alexander Muddiman to part (a) of Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh's question No. 301 in this House on the 1st September 1925.

(e) and (f). In accordance with the recommendation of the Lee Commission it has been decided that 20 per cent. of superior posts in each Province shall eventually be filled from the Provincial Civil Services. The actual number of posts to be so filled in each Province is shown in a statement which I lay on the table.

STATEMENT.

Number of Divisional Commissioners.

Madras	Nil
Bombay	4
Bengal	5
United Provinces	10
Punjab	5
Burma	8
Bihar and Orissa	5
Central Provinces	5
Assam	2

Number of posts to be filled from the Provincial Civil Service and the Bar.

Madras	21
Bombay	18
Bengal	23
United Provinces	25
Punjab	18
Burma	20
Bihar and Orissa	13
Central Provinces	12
Assam	5

NUMBER OF SANCTIONED APPOINTMENTS IN THE FOREIGN AND POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

326. *Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava: (a) What is the present number of sanctioned appointments under the Foreign and Political Department?

(b) What was the number of such appointments in 1921?

(c) How many vacancies have occurred in that Department since 1921?

(d) How many out of these vacancies were filled up by (i) military officers, (ii) members of the I.C.S., (iii) members of the P. C. S. and (iv) others respectively?

(e) How many of these vacancies were filled by (i) Europeans and (ii) Indians, respectively?

(f) How were the provinces represented in the matter of filling these vacancies?

Sir Denys Bray: A fuller statement giving the information is laid on the table.

I		II	III								IV
Sanctioned number of appointments in Political Department.		Number of vacancies in the Political Department that occurred between 1st January, 1921, to 31st December, 1927.	Number of vacancies (in column II) filled by								*Distribution by Provinces of officers (excluding Military Officers) recruited between 1st January, 1921 and 31st December, 1927.
Present number.	Number on 1st January, 1921.		Military officers.		I. C. S. officers.		P. C. S. officers.		Other officers.		
			European.	Indian.	European.	Indian.	European.	Indian.	European.	Indian.	
105	104	70	37	5	15	2	Nil.	9	1 Indian Police Service.	Nil	7 Officers from United Provinces. 5 " " the Punjab. 4 " " North-West Frontier Province. 2 " " Bengal. 2 " " Madras. 2 " " Baluchistan. 1 Officer " Central Provinces. 1 " " Assam. 2 Officers " Bihar and Orissa. 1 Officer " Foreign and Political Department Secretariat.
			42		17		9		1		
			69								

* Provincial representation is not taken into account in making selections for the Political Department.

NUMBER OF OFFICERS OF THE I. C. S. WHO HAVE RETIRED ON PROPORTIONATE PENSION SINCE 1921.

327. ***Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** (a) How many members of the I. C. S., have retired on proportionate pension in each province since 1921?

(b) Have any members of the I. C. S. notified their intention of retirement in anticipation of the extension of further reforms as a consequence of the appointment of the Simon Commission?

The Honourable Mr. J. Grewar: (a) The following are the figures:

Madras	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	15
Bombay	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	10
Bengal	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	22
United Provinces	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	17
Punjab	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	12
Burma	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	14
Bihar and Orissa	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	7
Central Provinces	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	8
Assam	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1

(b) No.

PROVIDENT FUND FOR GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.

328. ***Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** (a) With reference to the reply given by the Honourable the Finance Member to question No. 143 regarding the Provident Fund put in this Assembly by Mr. Joshi on 23rd August, 1927, will the Government state when a decision is likely to be reached in the matter?

(b) When were the Local Governments addressed and from which of them are replies still awaited?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: (a) I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply which I gave on the 1st February to part (a) of Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtulla's question No. 79.

(b) Local Governments have not been addressed. They have now full authority to make rules prescribing conditions of service, including provident funds, for members of the provincial and subordinate services under their control.

FALLING OFF IN THE RATES OF BONUS ON POSTAL LIFE INSURANCE AND ENDOWMENT ASSURANCE POLICIES.

329. ***Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** (a) Will the Government kindly state if it is a fact that the rates of bonus both on life insurance and endowment assurance policies under the Post Office Insurance Fund have been steadily falling during the past three quinquenniums despite a corresponding increase in the rate of premia payable on such policies?

(b) If the reply is in the affirmative, what is the reason for this falling off?

Mr. H. A. Sams: (a) Yes. It is not entirely correct to say that there has been a corresponding increase in the rates. There has been an increase in some of the rates and a decrease in others.

(b) The reason is that all the profit which had accumulated had been absorbed in the grant of bonuses in the first two quinquenniums and that in the third period there was an excessive mortality due to influenza.

STAFF EMPLOYED IN THE SPECIAL REFORMS BRANCH OF THE HOME DEPARTMENT.

380. ***Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state the number separately of officers, assistants, clerks, etc., employed in the Special Reforms Branch of the Home Department for the collection and tabulation of material for the Statutory Commission?

(b) Since when has this branch been opened and for how long is the work of this branch expected to last?

(c) What salaries and allowances are being given to each of the staff employed in the said branch?

(d) Are there any Indians employed in the said branch and if so, what are their designations and emoluments?

The Honourable Mr. J. Orerar: (a), (c) and (d). I am placing in the Library a statement which gives the information required.

(b) The staff was engaged from time to time as indicated in the fourth column of the statement, and, as at present anticipated, will be required until about the end of March 1929.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

RUNNING OF AN EXPRESS TRAIN OVER THE ALLAHABAD-ITARSI SECTION OF THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY.

117. **Seth Jamnadas:** (a) Is it a fact that before the destruction of the Nerbudda Bridge on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, Allahabad-Itarsi section, Government sanctioned the proposal of running an express train in addition to mail and passenger trains on that line?

(b) Has the proposal referred to above been abandoned?

(c) Do Government propose to consider the desirability of giving effect to the proposal mentioned in (a) above at an early date?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) No.

(b) and (c). The Great Indian Peninsula Railway are proposing to run an express train over the Itarsi-Allahabad section on completion of the Nerbudda Bridge.

PROVISION OF INTERMEDIATE CLASS CARRIAGES ON TRAINS RUNNING BETWEEN JUBBULPORE AND ITARSI ON THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY.

188. **Seth Jamnadas:** (a) Is it a fact that there are no intermediate class carriages on trains running between Jubbulpore and Itarsi on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, while there are such carriages on trains running between Jubbulpore and Allahabad junctions and is not accommodation in the second class very limited?

(b) Are Government aware of the inconvenience to the travelling public who would prefer to travel intermediate class for want of accommodation in the second class but are obliged to travel third class?

(c) Do Government propose to consider the advisability of introducing intermediate class carriages in that part of the section referred to in (a) at an early date for the convenience of the public?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) and (b). Intermediate class accommodation is ordinarily provided on the mail trains between Jubbulpore and Itarsi. but owing to the Nerbudda Bridge being washed away the mail is at present travelling via Bina. The Government are not aware of any shortage of second class accommodation between Jubbulpore and Itarsi.

(c) This is a matter within the competence of the Agent to whom a copy of the question and this reply is being forwarded.

DEATH OF MR. RAMCHAND, SUB-POSTMASTER, TURBELA, IN THE CAMPBELLPUR POSTAL DIVISION.

119. Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava: (a) Will the Government be pleased to state, (i) the date of death, (ii) duration of illness, and (iii) nature of illness of Mr. Ramchand, Sub-Postmaster, Turbela, in the Campbellpur Postal Division?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state the date and particulars of applications for leave submitted by Mr. Ramchand, Sub-Postmaster, Turbela, as well as the replies sent by the Superintendent of Post Offices, Campbellpur, to these applications?

(c) Will the Government be pleased to state if Mr. Ramchand, Sub-Postmaster, Turbela, belonged to Rawalpindi Postal Division?

(d) Is it a fact that the Superintendent of Post Offices, Rawalpindi, asked the Superintendent of Campbellpur, to relieve Mr. Ramchand at once?

(e) Will the Government be pleased to state why Mr. Ramchand was not relieved at once?

(f) Is it a fact that as a consequence of not being relieved in time Mr. Ramchand went on with his duties and died while on duty?

(g) Have the Government made some provision for the family of the late Mr. Ramchand treating it as a special case in which death resulted as a consequence of not being relieved in time?

Mr. H. A. Sams: (a) to (g). The information is being collected and will be supplied to the Honourable Member in due course.

INCREASE OF FREIGHTS ON THE RAILWAY LINE BETWEEN GUNJYAL AND WARDHA.

120. Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava: (a) Is it a fact that railway freights were increased with effect from the 1st June, 1927, on the railway line between Gunjyal and Wardha?

(b) Is it a fact that these freights have again been brought down to their previous level from the 1st January, 1928?

(c) If the reply to these questions is in the affirmative, will the Government kindly give reasons for the intermediate increase?

(d) Do the Government propose to refund the excess charged on this line during these six months in respect of freights?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: If the Honourable Member will let me know the particular commodity or commodities to an increase in the freight rates on which he refers, I will see if I can obtain the information for him.

TOWN INSPECTORS IN FIRST CLASS HEAD POST OFFICES IN THE PUNJAB AND NORTH-WEST FRONTIER CIRCLE.

121. Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava: (a) Is it a fact that the posts of Town Inspectors in the first class Head Post Offices in the Punjab and North-West Frontier Circle have been made of the selection grade of Rs. 160—10—250, with effect from the 1st September, 1927?

- (b) Is it a fact that the Government of India (Department of Industries and Labour) decided in their letter No. 11-P. T. E., dated 16th September, 1927, "that if there are other time-scale clerks whose qualifications and seniority justify their being given preference over the existing incumbents, it will be necessary to revert the existing Town Inspectors to the time-scale and appoint the most suitable candidates"?

(c) Was it the intention that the retention of any existing Town Inspector was permissible only if he was suitable for the selection grade in preference to any of his seniors?

Mr. H. A. Sams: (a) Yes.

(b) Yes.

(c) No.

TOWN INSPECTORS IN FIRST CLASS HEAD POST OFFICES IN THE PUNJAB AND NORTH-WEST FRONTIER CIRCLE.

122. Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava: (a) Will the Government be pleased to state:

- (i) names,
- (ii) length of service,
- (iii) position in Circle Gradation list, and
- (iv) position in the Divisional Gradation List,

of all the existing Town Inspectors in the first class Head Post Offices in the Punjab and North-West Frontier Circle?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state if the existing Town Inspectors were selected according to the orders contained in the Government of India (Industries and Labour Department) letter No. 11-P. T. E., dated the 16th September, 1927, or were they allowed to continue temporarily simply because they already held the appointments when they were of the ordinary time-scale?

(c) Will the Government be pleased to state if any other officials senior to the existing junior Town Inspectors were tried as Town Inspectors after the 1st September, 1927, and if so, with what result?

(d) Will the Government be pleased to state if any senior officials were recommended for the posts by any Postmasters and, if so, what are their names, their length of service, and nature of recommendation?

Mr. H. A. Sams: The information required by the Honourable Member has been called for and will be supplied to him in due course.

**TOWN INSPECTORS OF FIRST CLASS HEAD POST OFFICES IN THE PUNJAB
AND NORTH-WEST FRONTIER CIRCLE.**

123. **Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state if any representations were received by the Postmaster General, Punjab and North-West Frontier Circle, from senior officials against the appointment of the existing Town Inspectors in first class Head Post Offices?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state particulars of the representations referred to in the question above?

(c) Will the Government be pleased to state what action, if any, was taken on these representations?

Mr. H. A. Sams: (a), (b) and (c). Government have no information. Government have no doubt that the Postmaster-General, Punjab, has passed orders on these representations. If any official is dissatisfied with the decision of the Postmaster-General, he has the usual remedy of appealing to the Director-General.

**EXTRA PAY DRAWN BY TOWN INSPECTORS IN FIRST CLASS HEAD POST
OFFICES IN THE PUNJAB AND NORTH-WEST FRONTIER CIRCLE.**

124. **Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** Will the Government be pleased to state separately for each official the extra pay drawn by the existing Town Inspectors (in addition to their permanent pay as clerk) by virtue of their acting as Town Inspectors in first class Head Post Offices in the Punjab and North-West Frontier Circle?

Mr. H. A. Sams: Town Inspectors in first class head Post Offices in the Punjab and North-West Frontier Circle are in the selection grade of Rs. 160—250 and do not draw extra pay.

**PERMISSION TO TOWN INSPECTORS IN FIRST CLASS HEAD POST OFFICES IN
THE PUNJAB AND NORTH-WEST FRONTIER CIRCLE TO APPEAR FOR THE
EXAMINATION FOR THE SELECTION GRADE.**

125. **Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state the names of the existing Town Inspectors in the first class Head Post Offices in the Punjab and North-West Frontier Circle who are not eligible to appear at the next and first examination for the selection grade according to the existing orders?

(b) Do Government propose to ignore the priority of the claims of the seniors? If so, why?

Mr. H. A. Sams: (a) A copy of the Director-General's G. O. No. 5, dated the 19th July, 1927, dealing with the selection grade examinations is being supplied to the Honourable Member. The first examination is to be held in December, 1928, and the number of officials who will be permitted to appear for the examination will be ten times the number of vacancies expected to occur in the selection grade in the succeeding year. It is not possible therefore at present to supply the information asked for by the Honourable Member.

(b) In view of the reply to (a) of the question, this does not arise.

TRANSFERS OF POSTAL CLERKS AND SUB-POSTMASTERS IN THE CAMPBELLPUR DIVISION.

126. Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava: (a) Will the Government be pleased to state the total number of postal clerks and sub-postmasters transferred in the Campbellpur Division since the constitution of that division in 1927?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state the amount of travelling allowance paid to the officials transferred in the Campbellpur Division?

(c) Will the Government be pleased to state the names of the postal clerks and sub-postmasters who were transferred without travelling allowance in the Campbellpur Division giving reasons for each case for disallowing travelling allowance?

Mr. H. A. Sams: (a), (b) and (c). The information is being collected and will be furnished to the Honourable Member in due course.

PAY WHILE ON LEAVE OF NON-GAZETTED OFFICERS AND CLERKS OF THE POSTAL DEPARTMENT.

127. Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava: (a) Is it a fact that prior to the 12th November, 1924, officers and clerks of the Postal Department were entitled to the pay drawn at the time of proceeding on leave on average pay or substantive pay whichever was greater?

(b) Has the rule been amended since in regard to staff in receipt of less than Rs. 300 pay?

(c) If the reply is in the affirmative, will the Government kindly state the reason for this distinction?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (a) Under a rule which was in force from the 1st January, 1922, to the 8th October, 1924, non-gazetted officers and clerks whose pay was less than Rs. 300 per mensem and who had elected the Fundamental Rules, were given as leave allowance the pay of the post last held before they went on leave, or the average pay whichever was greater.

(b) and (c). There have been two alterations in the rule which I have just mentioned. Under an amendment which was in force universally from the 8th October, 1924, to the 24th August, 1927, and which still applies to individuals appointed after the latter date, the leave allowance of Government servants of the categories mentioned in my reply to (a) was restricted to the pay of the permanent post held substantively at the time of taking leave. Under a second amendment made on the 24th August, 1927, this restriction was withdrawn in the case of individuals serving on that date, namely, the 24th of August, 1927, and leave allowance was fixed at substantive pay of the permanent post held or average pay, whichever is greater. The scale of leave allowance authorised by the original rule of 1922 was held to be excessive, and the scale which has now been generally adopted for the future is considered to be adequate. But as my Honourable friend will observe, the rights of existing incumbents have been preserved to the extent which I have stated.

INCREASE OF THE PERMANENT SUPERIOR ESTABLISHMENT SINCE THE INTRODUCTION OF THE DIVISIONAL SYSTEM ON THE NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

128. **Pandit Thakurdas Bhargava:** Has the number of the permanent superior establishment been increased since the introduction of the Divisional scheme on the North Western Railway? If so, will Government kindly state the extent of such increase?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: On the introduction of the Divisional system the number of permanent superior posts on the North Western Railway was reduced from 237 to 229.

Since then the following permanent posts have been created:

Bridge Engineers, Senior Scale	...	...	2
Bridge Engineers, Junior Scale	...	...	6
Assistant Electrical Engineer		...	1
Assistant Works Manager	...	..	1

and the following posts have been transferred to the North Western Railway with the Delhi-Umbala-Kalka Railway from the East Indian Railway:

Mechanical (Junior Scale)	...	...	1
Engineering (Junior Scale)	...	...	1
Transportation (Junior Scale)	...	...	1

EXPENDITURE INCURRED BY THE NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY ON THE EDUCATION OF THE CHILDREN OF ITS EMPLOYEES.

129. **Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** Will the Government state the amount of money spent on the North Western Railway in connection with the education of the children of its European employees as well as the amount spent in connection with the education of its Indian employees?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I would invite the Honourable Member's attention to appendices VIII and IX of the report on the expenditure of the Railways on the education of the children of employees in 1925-26, a copy of which is in the Library.

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES ON THE NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

130. **Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** Will the Government kindly state the number of railway employees on the North Western Railway and how many of them are Europeans?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: The Honourable Member will find the statistics which he desires in appendix C of the Report by the Railway Board on Indian Railways for 1926-27, Volume II.

PROVISION OF CUSHIONED UPPER BERTHS IN INTERMEDIATE CLASS CARRIAGES ON THE NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

131. **Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** (a) Are the upper berths of the intermediate class carriages on the East Indian Railway cushioned?

(b) Are the upper berths of the intermediate class carriages on the North Western Railway cushioned?

(c) By what time, do the Government propose to bring the North Western Railway intermediate class carriages in the same line in this respect with those of the East Indian Railway?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) The reply is in the affirmative.

(b) and (c). In August, 1926, it was decided that all new intermediate class coaches on the North Western Railway should be provided with cushioned upper berths and that when upper berths of existing stock required renewal they were also to be cushioned. I do not know when the latter work will be completed, but it is being carried out.

LATRINE ACCOMMODATION IN THIRD CLASS CARRIAGES ON THE NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

132. **Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** Are Government aware that the latrine accommodation on the North Western Railway third class carriages is very small, inconvenient and insufficient?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Government have received no complaints on the subject.

REDUCTION OF LOW-PAID INDIAN CLERKS ON THE NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

133. **Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** Is it a fact that the activities of the Reduction Officer appointed by the North Western Railway are confined to the reduction of low-paid Indian clerks and that he has not reduced even a single subordinate and superior officer?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I am not sure that I know whom the Honourable Member means by the Reduction Officer appointed by the North Western Railway. But if he refers to an officer who was placed on special duty on that Railway at the end of last year, his special duty consisted solely of investigating the possibilities of effecting reductions in the clerical establishments in the headquarters and Divisional offices. An enquiry into the possibilities of reducing the numbers of subordinates and superior officers was not within the scope of his duties.

STRENGTH OF THE SUBORDINATE AND CLERICAL STAFF ON THE NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

134. **Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** Will the Government lay on the table a statement for the last four years showing the increase or decrease, as the case may be, in the permanent strength of subordinates and officers in the Engineering, Locomotive, Carriage, Traffic (Operating and Commercial), Stores and Agency Departments and in the clerical strength on the North Western Railway?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: The information regarding subordinate and clerical strength on the North Western Railway is not available.

As regards officer establishment the permanent strength in 1924 was 237 distributed between Departments as follows:

Agency	...	...	...	...	8
Engineering	...	...	...	...	95
Traffic	...	...	...	...	64
Loco. and Carriage and Wagon	...	...	...	...	60
Stores	...	...	...	...	10
					<hr/> 237 <hr/>

As the Departmental system of organisation was replaced in October, 1924, by the Divisional system the present permanent strength of officers cannot be distributed by Departments. It is however 242.

NON-REPRESENTATION OF THE TWO LEADING INDIAN MERCANTILE BODIES OF KARACHI ON THE LAHORE RAILWAY ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

135. **Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** Are Government aware that while the Karachi Chamber of Commerce have one representative on the Lahore Railway Advisory Committee, the two leading Indian mercantile bodies of Karachi have no representative on that Committee?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Yes.

REPRESENTATION OF THE KARACHI INDIAN MERCHANTS' ASSOCIATION AND THE BUYERS' AND SHIPPERS' CHAMBER ON THE LAHORE RAILWAY ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

136. **Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** Are Government aware that the Karachi Railway Advisory Committee at their meeting held on 24th August, 1927, unanimously recommended to the Agent, North Western Railway, Chairman of the Committee who presided at that meeting, to convey to the Railway Board the Committee's recommendation that representation be granted to the Karachi Indian Merchants' Association and the Buyers' and Shippers' Chamber on the Lahore Railway Advisory Committee?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Yes.

REPRESENTATION OF THE KARACHI INDIAN MERCHANTS' ASSOCIATION AND THE BUYERS' AND SHIPPERS' CHAMBER ON THE LAHORE RAILWAY ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

137. **Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** (a) Is it a fact that the mercantile bodies concerned approached the Railway Board for representation on the Lahore Railway Advisory Committee, through the Agent?

(b) Is it a fact that the Railway Board refused to grant the request? If so, for what reasons?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) The Buyers' and Shippers' Chamber addressed the Railway Board direct and the Karachi Indian Merchants' Association through the Agent.

(b) The request was refused. The reason for the refusal was the undesirability of increasing unduly the size of the Lahore Committee.

REPRESENTATION OF MERCANTILE BODIES ON THE KARACHI RAILWAY ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

138. **Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** Is it a fact that the Chamber of Commerce have two representatives and that the Indian mercantile bodies have two representatives on the Karachi Railway Advisory Committee?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE CHARACTER OF THE KARACHI INDIAN MERCHANTS' ASSOCIATION AND THE BUYERS' AND SHIPPERS' CHAMBER;

139. **Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** Are Government aware that the Karachi Indian Merchants' Association and the Buyers' and Shippers' Chamber represent leading mercantile interests of Karachi having very close relations with merchants dealing in imports and exports in Karachi?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Yes.

REPRESENTATION OF THE KARACHI INDIAN MERCHANTS' ASSOCIATION AND THE BUYERS' AND SHIPPERS' CHAMBER ON THE LAHORE RAILWAY ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

140. **Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** Will Government be pleased to state why this distinction has been created between the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and the Indian mercantile bodies for representation on the Lahore Railway Advisory Committee?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: The representation given to the Karachi Chamber of Commerce was given as far back as 1923 when the Lahore Committee was first formed, and when, as far as then known, that Chamber represented the only interests materially concerned.

REPRESENTATION OF THE KARACHI INDIAN MERCHANTS' ASSOCIATION AND THE BUYERS' AND SHIPPERS' CHAMBER ON THE LAHORE RAILWAY ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

141. **Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** Is it a fact that the Karachi Indian Merchants' Association and the Buyers' and Shippers' Chamber have also made a joint representation to the Railway Board for joint representation?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Yes.

REPRESENTATION OF THE KARACHI INDIAN MERCHANTS' ASSOCIATION AND THE BUYERS' AND SHIPPERS' CHAMBER ON THE LAHORE RAILWAY ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

142. **Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** Are Government aware that both the Indian mercantile bodies have strongly protested against this partial and one-sided representation to commercial interests in Karachi on the Lahore Railway Advisory Committee?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Yes.

ELECTION OF THE PANEL FOR THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON EMIGRATION.

Mr. President: I have to inform the Assembly that the number of candidates nominated for election to the panel for the Standing Committee to advise on questions relating to Emigration is equal to the number

required and, therefore, I announce that the following Members are declared to be duly elected:

Khan Bahadur Haji Abdullah Haji Kasim.
 Sir Hari Singh Gour.
 Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas.
 Mr. N. M. Joshi.
 Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru.
 Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum.
 Dr. B. S. Moonje.
 Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah.
 Sardar Bahadur Sardar Jowahir Singh.
 Khan Bahadur Nawabzada Sayid Ashrafuddin Ahmad.
 Mr. M. S. Aney.
 Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney.
 Mr. W. M. P. Ghulam Kadir Khan Dakhan.
 Mr. Muhammad Yamin Khan.
 Sir Darcy Lindsay.
 Mr. William Alexander.

THE STEEL INDUSTRY (PROTECTION) BILL.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy (Member for Commerce and Railways): With your permission, Mr. President, I should like to make a statement about one of the Bills for which I am responsible,—I mean the Steel Industry (Protection) Bill, copies of which were circulated to Members, I think, on Saturday evening. I am exceedingly sorry that it was not possible to place that Bill in the hands of Members at an earlier date but it is very desirable that the Bill should be passed this Session and it will be necessary to take it up at an early date. The announcement, therefore, which I should like to make is that on Thursday, the 1st of March, I propose to move asking for leave to introduce the Bill and on the same day to move also that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee. The desirability of adopting this procedure lies in this that in that way I hope it will be possible to get the Bill through all its stages this Session.

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

SECOND STAGE—*contd.*

Expenditure from Revenue—contd.

DEMAND No. 1—RAILWAY BOARD—*contd.*

Opening of a Branch of the Railway Clearing House at Lucknow.

Mr. President: The House will now resume further discussion of the following motion moved by Mauvi Muhammad Yakub:

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

Maulvi Muhammad Yakub (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, this amendment I have moved in order to discuss the question of opening a branch of the Clearing House at Lucknow. It will be remembered that the question of locating the Clearing House was discussed at great length in the Assembly last year. The claims of Lucknow on that occasion were laid fully before the House. But it is unfortunate that those arguments did not appeal to the Honourable Members of the Railway Board. The Clearing House, though it was removed from Lahore, was situated at Delhi and not at Lucknow. Now, Sir, in order that the work of the Clearing House may be performed efficiently and the returns vouchers and other documents from further stations should be received sooner, there must be at least one or two branches of the Clearing House located at central places. And in this connection, Sir, Lucknow is one of the most suitable places where a branch of the Clearing House should be established. Lucknow claims to be a central place for the Government-worked lines and the big and commodious houses which were constructed at Bandaria Bagh for the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway Offices are available for the offices of the Clearing House. The establishment of a branch of this Clearing House at Lucknow will also to a certain extent remove a long-standing grievance of an important section of the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway employees and is a matter worthy of the best consideration. In this connection three memorials were also submitted from the clerical staff of the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway, and two memorials from the citizens of Lucknow, full of weighty reasons, to His Excellency the Viceroy and the Financial Commissioner of Railways. But unfortunately nothing has come out of it. Now, when I think it is also felt by the Railway Board that there ought to be some branches of the Clearing House, I hope that the first branch of the Clearing House which is opened will be located at Lucknow. With these words, Sir, I move my motion.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons (Financial Commissioner, Railways): Sir, I think the main object behind my Honourable friend's motion is to secure that those employees of the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway who have after the amalgamation with the East Indian Railway been transferred from their old homes should be able to find again some avenue of railway employment in their own town. Last year, when this question was raised in the course of the budget debates, I explained at some length the action we were taking to relieve what we admitted to be a considerable hardship and, so far as I am aware, that action has been fairly successful; that is to say, a considerable number of Lucknow employees of the old Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway have been transferred, if not back to Lucknow, at least back to places nearer their homes. Recently when I inspected the Clearing House here, I asked two or three of these employees how they were getting on and, though I think they would have preferred to have been in Lucknow to-day, at any rate they preferred being in Delhi to being in Calcutta. I am afraid I cannot hold out much hope to the Honourable Members that we shall establish a branch of the Clearing Accounts Office at Lucknow. I cannot at the moment see what work we could economically do there. It is true that we might deal with the traffic exchanged between the Rohilkund and Kumaon Railway and the Bengal and North Western Railway, but neither of these two railways have as yet come into the Clearing House system. Further, I am very doubtful if we should find it economical to deal with the traffic of two comparatively small railways at

a separate place. It has to be remembered that the greatest advantage is derived from a Clearing Accounts Office when it can occupy itself on a great mass of work, and the distribution of its activities over a large number of places is not economical and does not make for efficiency. Of course, where railways are very far distant from the centre at which the Clearing House is located, it may be desirable to establish a separate branch of the Clearing Accounts Office. We are at the moment considering the establishment of such a branch in Madras, because the various documents which are required for the work of the Clearing House from the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway, the South Indian Railway, the Nizam's Guaranteed State Railway and the Mysore Railway cannot be brought sufficiently quickly to Delhi. But I am sure my Honourable friend will recognise that it is a far cry to Madras and a much nearer distance from Delhi to the Railways which I have mentioned, the Bengal and North Western and the Rohilkhand and Kumaon Railways. Sir, I must oppose the motion.

Mr. President: The question is:

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

The Assembly divided:

AYES—25.

Abdullah Haji Kasim, Khan Bahadur
Haji.

Acharya, Mr. M. K.

Ayyangar, Mr. K. V. Rangaswami.

Ayyangar, Mr. M. S. Sessa.

Chetty, Mr. B. K. Shanmukham.

Das, Mr. B.

Iswar Saran, Munshi.

Iyengar, Mr. S. Srinivasa.

Jeyakar, Mr. M. R.

Jogiah, Mr. Varahagiri Venkata.

Joshi, Mr. N. M.

Kidwai, Mr. Rafi Ahmad.

Kunzru, Pandit Hirday Nath.

Lahiri Chandbary, Mr. Dhirendra
Kanta.

Lajpat Rai, Lala.

Mehta, Mr. Jamnadas M.

Neogy, Mr. K. C.

Pandya, Mr. Vidya Sagar.

Phookun, Sriput Tarun Ram.

Purshotamdas Thakurdas, Sir.

Rafique, Mr. Muhammad.

Rao, Mr. G. Sarvotham.

Singh, Kumar Rananjaya.

Tok Kyi, U.

Yakub, Maulvi Muhammad.

NOES—45.

Abdul Aziz, Khan Bahadur Mian.

Abdul Qiyyum, Nawab Sir Sahibzada.

Ahmad, Khan Bahadur Nasir-ud-din.

Alexander, Mr. William.

Allison, Mr. F. W.

Anwar-ul-Azim, Mr.

Ashrafuddin Ahmad, Khan Bahadur

Nawabzada Sayid.

Ayyangar, Mr. V. K. Aravamudha.

Bajpai, Mr. G. S.

Blackett, The Honourable Sir Basil.

Bray, Sir Denys.

Chalmers, Mr. T. A.

Chatterjee, Revd. J. C.

Chatterji, Rai Bahadur B. M.

Coatman, Mr. J.

Cocke, Mr. H. G.

Cosgrave, Mr. W. A.

Couper, Mr. T.

Courtenay, Mr. R. H.

Crawford, Colonel J. D.

Cresser, The Honourable Mr. J.

Dalal, Sardar Sir Bomanji.

Gidney, Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J.

Graham, Mr. L.

Irwin, Mr. C. J.

Jowahir Singh, Sardar Bahadur
Sardar.

Kabul Singh Bahadur, Captain.

Keane, Mr. M.

Lamb, Mr. W. S.

Lindsay, Sir Darcy.

Mitra, The Honourable Sir Bhupendra
Nath.

Moore, Mr. Arthur.

Mukherjee, Mr. S. C.

Parsons, Mr. A. A. L.

Rainy, The Honourable Sir George.

Rao, Mr. V. Pandurang.

Roy, Mr. K. C.

Roy, Mr. S. N.

Sams, Mr. H. A.

Sassoon, Sir Victor.

Shamaldhari Lall, Mr.

Shillidy, Mr. J. A.

Stokes, Mr. E. F.

Taylor, Mr. E. Gawan.

Willson, Sir Walter.

"The motion was negatived.

Complaints Department or Committee of Enquiry into Railway Grievances.

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney (Nominated: Anglo-Indians): Sir, I beg to move the motion standing in my name:

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

Sir, judging from the past history of this important matter which has been variously presented to this House in the shape of demands, of non-official Resolutions and of various questions, one gets to look upon it as the hardy annual of this Honourable House. I believe, Sir, it was presented three times, it was passed three times; it was refused three times by the Government and this is the fourth effort in my own public work, Sir, as representative of the domiciled community who are largely employed on the Railways. I receive many complaints from people employed on Railways. Many of these grievances are false and many are genuine. But that grievances do exist on the Railways even the Honourable Member's predecessor Sir Charles Innes admitted during last year's discussion on this very subject. I do not propose to-day to catalogue a large number of these grievances; I merely wish to confine my remarks to the most important. The most important to my mind is the grievance in connection with the service agreement that is executed to-day between the Railway Administration and its employees. Now this agreement is, as every Honourable Member in this House knows, a one man show—dismissal or discharge with one month's notice or a month's pay in lieu of notice. This agreement carries with it very little if any security of service, specially when it is harshly applied to those railway servants who have performed from 5 to 10, 15 or 20 years of good and faithful of railway service; in fact I am inclined to call this agreement the insignia of temporary employment. Let me assure the Honourable Member that employees do not object so much to the terms of this agreement as to the manner in which it is used or, shall I say, misused. Instances are numerous in which railway officials—particularly junior officials—who are ignorant of India and its communities and who are inflated with a sense of their own importance, ruthlessly apply this term of one month's agreement to railway employees many of whom have rendered 10 years and over of good service unmindful of the misery and ruin such action entails to the man and his family. Indeed I go further and say that this term of agreement is made cheap market of and in some cases it is used as an unjust and unfair means to satisfy or meet the arrogant ends of certain spiteful or revengeful railway officials, I am referring mainly to the junior officials who think themselves little tin gods and infallible beings. Take a small railway station where you often find a junior railway official in charge who considers himself the lord and master of that station—one who from inexperience or ignorance is entirely dependent on his upper subordinates, be he the loco. foreman or the traffic inspector. The moment a railway employee is reported for any *fauz pas* and he tries to defend himself, he is told to "Shut up" and if he does not do so he is considered insubordinate and is either warned or suspended. Now say he has grit in him and he decides to respectfully object to the orders passed—he is told—"This correspondence must cease—Cæsar has spoken. Let no one else speak". If he again appeals, he is either transferred or told to seek employment elsewhere, or is discharged in terms of his agreement without rhyme or reason and refused any appeal. It is against this unjust and cowardly use of the terms of agreement

that I seek to protect the railway employee by this motion. This was made use of to such an extent on the East Indian Railway that it necessitated the recent issue of an order from the Agent of that Railway to his officials warning them against this indiscriminate use of their powers and it stands greatly to the credit of that Agent to have issued such a circular. The Agent of the East Indian Railway realised that many discharges were taking place without adequate enquiry and reasons, he realised also that certain of his officials did not correctly enquire into the grievances of their men and that they had acted unjustly in some cases. The circular he issued I commend to the notice of the Honourable Member for circulation to all Railways. This circular requests all officers to be more careful in discharging their servants and to enquire carefully into their grievances, and injustices, before passing orders and such severe sentences as discharges and dismissals. It is this instability and insecurity of employment from which the men suffer, that has led me to give such prominence to this grievance.

Sir Charles Innes when he was Member in charge of this Department stated he was prepared to agree that grievances did exist on the Railways but, he was not prepared to remedy them by appointing a Committee of enquiry. Now, Sir, I ask, why is it that the Railways in India reserve to themselves, *i.e.*, their officers, a power that is denied to every other Department in the Government of India. State Railways are under State management, and I ask why should their officers, including the Agents, possess such autocratic powers against which there is very little, if any, appeal. Why should they alone be allowed to be judge and accuser in all such matters? Why, even the red-coat chaprasi who stands around this House has an appeal if he is discharged? I have no doubt that a Railway Department viewed as a commercial undertaking believes it should give its officers power to summarily dismiss or discharge its undesirable employees. I have very little fault to find with this, but there must be ample appeals. Sir, I am not speaking on behalf of the rotter, or the slacker; I am speaking on behalf of the railway employee who has given 15, 20 or 25 years of good and faithful service and who for some reason—may be his first fault—is discharged. I submit, that the Railway should introduce a proper system or Department of enquiry into all such cases. If a man has proved himself by years of good service fit for employment in a certain grade, I ask, why should power be given to any railway official to discharge him because he has committed a minor offence and because he is afraid to dismiss him. Moreover, why is he afraid to dismiss him? Because dismissal demands a searching enquiry in which evidence is taken and the man has a chance to defend himself and get acquitted. Whereas in the case of "discharge" the man has no chance to defend himself, and therefore has to submit to this autocratic power—the whims and temper of some junior official. If a man is discharged by a junior officer of any department his appeal lies to the head of that department; if he is discharged by the head of the department, his appeal lies to the Agent, and I refuse to believe that the Agent sees all appeals. These are generally done by his Deputy Agents or Chiefs. The Agent is too busy a man to see these appeals. With all respect to my Honourable friend, Sir George Rainy, who is in charge of this portfolio and who I know is desirous of administering justice to every one, however humble he be, I say that Agents do not see these appeals, and I will give this House an instance. Questions were asked by me in this House, last year, on a well-known case of discharge in the East Indian

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

Railway of a senior subordinate, namely, Mr. Holguette. He was forced to resign and the Agent did not himself see the appeal that was preferred to him by Mr. Holguette till after it was brought to his notice by the Railway Board, who had been threatened by Mr. Holguette's solicitors. Enquiry showed that this man had been falsely accused and unjustly punished by the head of his Department and he was reinstated and given Rs. 10,000 as damages. If the Agent is to be an appellate court, then he should be provided with an adequate staff to examine these cases. I submit with all respect that Agents are too hardworked officials to have time to go through these appeals and they relegate such work to their under officers, who seldom upset the findings of their Departmental junior officers. This is where the injustice comes in. Moreover, the Agent as a rule refuses to interfere in the circumstances. It is only when a man is dismissed without a month's notice or dismissed without having been paid all his dues from the provident fund, etc., that he can appeal to the Railway Board. Let me here draw the attention of the House to certain questions I asked Sir Charles Innes when he worked the railway portfolio, and his reply. When I asked him how many appeals had been received by the Railway Board direct or from the Viceroy, he said he "could not tell me, but there were not many". When I asked him whether the Railway Board had an adequate staff to deal with all appeals, he said that it had an adequate staff. Now, Sir, if the Railway Board had an adequate staff to deal with these cases, why was he unable to tell me how many appeals had been received. In my opinion the Railway Board has such an inadequate staff that for about three months before the presentation of its Budget every one is suffering from a bad attack of insomnia due to brain fag. They had got no time for anything else than the preparation of the Budget and I ask during these three months have they any spare time to go into the grievances and appeals of any of their subordinates? I know that the Honourable Member in charge of this department is prepared to help his employees in any way he can, but he too must admit that such things do exist and that it requires remedy. It is for this reason that to most appeals one gets the stereotyped reply "The Railway Board regret they cannot interfere with the orders of the Agent".

Having dealt with discharges and dismissals I shall refer to some other grievances which I do not desire to labour. I refer to certain offences for which men are punished twice. If a man commits an offence, such as a derailment, he is punished departmentally by being dismissed or reduced and he is then handed over to the police and tried for a criminal offence and is at times given jail and his departmental punishment and judgment are often used as evidence against him. Then there are cases in which men are hardly dealt with in respect of their gratuities and bonuses. I have recently had to bring to the notice of some railway agents cases of their subordinates who have been harshly dealt with in regard to their gratuities being withheld and I am happy to say that most of my appeals have met with a sympathetic response, but this only emphasises the urgent necessity for adequate channels of appeals even beyond the Agent and the creation of properly constituted Complaints Departments. The Agent of the East Indian Railway in his recent circular to his officers realising that the grievances of the men should not be lightly put aside enjoins them to

look carefully into every grievance and rarely to resort to drastic punishments especially with long service men. I remember asking the Honourable Sir Charles Innes when he held office as to whether Rule 14 of 1924 applied to dismissals of railway employees and I was answered that it only applied to servants of Provincial Governments and not the Central Government. When the Honourable Mr. Parsons was asked a question about it in this House he said:

"Appeals from non-pensionable subordinate railway employees will only be entertained by the Railway Board where the appellant has been dismissed without notice or a month's pay in lieu of notice; in other cases the orders discharging a subordinate which will be final will be (i) those of the head of the appellant's department if the order of discharge was issued by a District Officer or other officer of corresponding rank, (ii) those of the Agent if the order of discharge was issued by the head of the appellant's department."

Such is the state of affairs on the Railways in India. I am almost prepared to concede that for the administration of Railways discipline almost akin to that of a regiment is necessary and there are certain departments which demand summary enquiries and summary treatment, but even a soldier can appeal to the Commander-in-Chief against an unjust punishment, in fact no private can be discharged or dismissed without His Excellency's sanction. Compare the treatment that is given to the railway men in India with the treatment given to the railway men in England. I can quite understand it being said that there is a vast difference between the two systems and types of employees and I am prepared to admit it, but let me quote, so as to show to my Honourable friend in charge of the department, what is the practice on English Railways with regard to offences, punishments and appeals:

"Men charged with misconduct, neglect of duty, or other breaches of discipline will be permitted to state their defence, to call witnesses and to advance any extenuating circumstances before their officers, prior to a final decision being arrived at. At such interview the man may be accompanied by an advocate. In all cases the man shall be informed in writing of the nature of his offence and the punishment it is proposed to inflict. Where doubts arise or where serious results to men are likely to follow, the cases should be placed before the higher officials of the company. Appeals after punishment lead to a difficult position and the necessity for them should be avoided. If after such investigation of a charge against an employee, he is adjudged guilty and is to be punished for the offence, he shall have the right of appeal to a superior officer for a reconsideration of the case, provided that such right of appeal shall not extend to cases of a trivial character. Any such appeal must be made in writing within seven days. If the employee so desires, he may be heard in person and in that case also he may be accompanied at the interview with the superior officer by a spokesman who may be either a workman or a representative nominated by the man's Trade Union."

This was the agreement that was made between the Railway unions and railway officials at a National Wages Board and is to-day in operation on British Railways. Now, Sir, I am willing to concede that a certain difference in conditions does exist on the Indian Railways, because here one is dealing largely with an illiterate crowd of labourers. In India one is also dealing in many cases, as has been shown recently, with undisciplined crowds, under the influence of political unions, but that should not stand in the way of justice being meted out to all employees, where an injustice has been done to him. It is with this object that I have made a comparison with what obtains on Railways in England. I know comparisons are odious, but they are often beneficial if in the end they lead to an improvement in the position of these employees.

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

Another matter to which I want to briefly refer is this question of sweating of labour on Indian Railways. It is not a nice name to give it; but it certainly does exist on many Railways. Men are called upon to perform almost inhuman and superhuman duties, when instead of performing 8 or 9, or 10 hours' work a day he is frequently called upon to do 14, 16 and even 18 hours and more. Then there is another pernicious system. I call it pernicious because it is used perniciously and leads to pernicious results. I refer to the practice of demi-official confidential correspondence on Railways which cannot be too strongly condemned. By this system of demi-official confidential communications, subordinates are often transferred from one station to another for reasons unknown to the employee, and before he goes to his new station, a confidential communication precedes him on matters unknown to him and that man's future is blighted and he is condemned by his new official and denied an honest chance of making good. Moreover, a man is often punished for what is contained in these confidential communications and he has no means of knowing what he is being punished for except vague charges often untrue. In all Government of India Departments, when an unfavourable or a favourable confidential report is made on an official or subordinate, he is allowed the privilege of seeing the confidential report and signing it. I do not ask that this be done in the case of every railway employee, but I do consider that this pernicious system of confidential communications between officials on their subordinates should be stopped at once as it leads to a great deal of unhappiness. This is certainly one of the serious grievances among railway employees.

Sir, I shall not go on detailing these grievances because most of them must be known to many Members here. I shall conclude my remarks on what should be the remedies for these grievances. I am aware of Government's views on the appointment of a Committee for they have indicated in no uncertain terms their disapproval of it. Government have repeatedly refused to appoint such a Committee. Perhaps Government are right. I say perhaps I am prepared to admit that railway men receive justice in the majority of cases, but they do not receive it in entirety. From the correspondence I have had with the Railway Board and Agents and from what I have been able to investigate, I know there are many cases of grave injustice to railway employees. When discussing this question last year Sir Charles Innes in expressing his fears said that for 22 years there had been no strikes on Railways but that since Mr. Acharya's Resolution for such a Committee was passed, there had been a series of trouble. The history of the last few years certainly bears out Sir Charles Innes' fears, but that does not negative the question I have placed before this House. I cannot understand why there should be so much fear of unrest, etc., in the mind of the Honourable Member in appointing such a committee of inquiry. I do not want a roving committee which will sow the seeds of unrest in the minds of every linesman and peon. I want a committee such as has in the past been appointed in connection with Roads, Posts and Telegraphs, Customs, and the Lee Commission. Have any of these committees resulted in strikes, unrest or disaffection? Have they resulted in any dire consequences to Government? I feel that a committee properly constituted will unearth many points, many grievances and abuses of powers which the Railway Board is totally unaware

of to-day. All I want to secure by my motion is that the railway subordinate especially gets a fair and a square deal in every case, which he is denied to-day. That is the kind of committee I desire the Government to appoint. Sir Charles Innes further promised that he would bring last year's discussions on this subject to the notice of Agents and suggest to them the advisability of careful enquiry and taking more care. But the question is, has the Railway Board done so? I believe that certain communications have passed between the Railway Board and the Agents of various Railways, and I believe that some Agents have taken this matter seriously to heart. But has that action made any difference? I submit, with all respect, that there is very little, if any difference and as the book of complaints of railway employees grows larger its pages still scintillate with cases of gross injustice. I am not going to mention those cases in detail, because it would take me too long. But I am quite prepared to submit specific cases for the consideration of the Railway Board if required. The fact still remains that such cases do exist and I want to know what the Railway Board has done and is doing to-day. There is certainly in consequence a great sense of uneasiness and unrest among certain classes of railway employees. I therefore submit for the serious consideration of the Honourable Member in charge that something tangible must be done to remedy this. If he is not prepared to recommend a committee of inquiry there are other remedies open to him. Would he give his consent to the appointment of a Complaints Department in every Railway with one railway official and an upper subordinate as its members, something similar to the Whitley Committees appointed in England which are working with such splendid results. I know that certain Railways, the Bengal Nagpur Railway and the Great Indian Peninsula for example, have made some attempt on those lines; but there is too much of the official element and control about their committees. I opine that such committees should be so constituted that the men will feel absolutely sure of receiving a fair and square deal. I know that at Adra on the Bengal Nagpur Railway, there is a committee consisting of employees which goes into grievances of subordinates and it is doing very good work. Why cannot something like that be done on every railway? And why cannot the Agents themselves be provided with a Complaints Committee or adequate staff so that they can deal with every case, not trivial cases, but all cases of discharge especially after 10, 15 or 20 years' service? Why cannot they be provided with a separate department for dealing with such cases? If all Railways or the Railway Board had such a department, the daily newspapers would not be reporting the very discreditable cases which they now do. For instance, we have lately witnessed the case published of Mr. Symons against the Bengal Nagpur Railway in which a High Court Judge pronounced that the railway had wrongfully dismissed Mr. Symons and he was awarded damages. Again we would not have had the stores case now pending before the law courts. I refer to the wrongful dismissal of Mr. D'Cruz of the East Indian Railway, who was dismissed in the words of Sir Charles Innes as said in 1927: "and eventually on the advice of the Solicitors all the men engaged in that matter were dismissed". Note—it was the Solicitors, not the Agent, who found these men guilty. We would not have such cases coming into public prominence if we had a proper complaints department attached to every railway. If this suggestion is not feasible, why cannot the Railway Board have a department to deal exclusively with these cases? After all the Honourable Member must

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remember that he is the employer and master of nearly a million workers, of whom about 50 to 60 thousand are upper and lower subordinates drawing from about Rs. 50 upwards. What does the Railway Board do at present with appeals they receive? The Railway Board send such appeals to the Agent; but what is the good of making a reference to the Agent who has already given his decision? Is he going to change it? He seldom, if ever, does so. The District officers concerned have already given their decision; are they going to change it? It is a case of *suppressio veri suppressio falsi*. In effect the result is that the Railway Board receives the already expressed opinions of railway officers who occupy the position of accuser and judge in the case under appeal and it is very rarely that the Agent disagrees with the opinion of his junior officer or the departmental head who has decided the case against the subordinate. No, Sir! The *izzat* of the official must be maintained. But at what a cost—what a sacrifice! The sacrifice of the future of a man who with his family are thrown out on the streets; and I say that deliberately, for once a man is dismissed or discharged from a railway, his whole life is affected, no other railway will employ him because there is a pernicious system of confidential communication between Railways which blasts the prospects of any discharged man for good and all. It is truly said, once a railwayman always a railwayman. Every man including officials is liable to commit occasional breaches of rules or be disobedient or insubordinate, and if he is discharged for such an offence, may be his first after 15 or 20 years, he becomes a railway leper for no railway will employ him and he is too old to start life afresh. In my opinion the procedure adopted by the Railway Board when grievances and appeals come before them is very inadequate. It is next to useless I submit, Sir, that, they should have a department exclusively engaged to enquire into these cases. In conclusion I would say that the railway subordinate as a rule is not a growser. He gets a good pay and certainly a good day's work is expected of him, but he wants to be protected from the insecurity of his service. Such an agency would be able to discriminate between the good worker and the slacker. Often it is the good worker who commits a *faux pas* of the kinds I have mentioned and he is punished in this summary and harsh manner when a fine or reduction would have met the case. It is on behalf of the good worker and to safeguard him from such miscarriages of justice, that I appeal to the Honourable Member to consider some means in addition to those that now exist by which employees will receive justice at the hands of the Railway Administration. After all it is very unfair and unjust that a man who has put in, say, 15 years service and more should be discharged for a small offence by an official who may have had a late night, or is in a bad temper due to a disordered liver and who when he finds a man stand up for his rights, tells him to shut up and if the man does not shut up, he is forthwith discharged for insubordination and his life and that of his family is ruined. Such cases do frequently occur and this is the reason why I ask the Honourable Member in charge of the Railway Board to consider sympathetically and seriously the proposition contained in the demand I have made, which is associated with this cut of Rs. 100.

Mr. Varahagiri Venkata Jogiah (Ganjan *cum* Vizaganatam: Non-Muhammadan Rural): On a point of information, Sir, may I speak under this head about the grievances of railway passengers, because the motion

speaks of a complaints' department or a committee of inquiry into railway grievances. I will speak about the grievances of passengers and ask for an inquiry committee or the appointment of a complaints department. Can I do that? (Mr. President not dissenting the Honourable Member proceeded.) The inconveniences and discomforts of third class railway passengers have been brought before this House. . . .

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: On a point of order, Mr. President, I think we have a very large subject to begin with in the grievances of railway employees, and if in addition I have to reply as regards the grievances of third class passengers, it seems to me the subject will become so wide that discussion will be almost impossible. I would submit that, as the Mover has made it plain in his speech that it is the grievances of the railway employees he wishes to bring to notice, anything which goes beyond that should be regarded as beyond the scope of the discussion on this motion.

Mr. President: Mr. Joshi.

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated: Labour Interests): Sir, I rise to support the motion made by my gallant friend Colonel Gidney. You will remember, Sir, that my Honourable friend Mr. Acharya had moved a Resolution in this House some years ago, which Resolution was carried, recommending to the Government of India to appoint a committee of inquiry into the conditions of life and work of railway employees. Although that Resolution was carried, the Government of India did not take any action. Not only was that Resolution carried, but since then every year during the discussion of the Railway Budget the same question is being discussed and every year the House expresses its sympathy with the railway employees by passing a motion for reducing a grant either by Rs. 100 or by Re. 1. Every year the Government are being censured for their neglect of the interests of the railway employee. Sir, it is very surprising to me that the Government of India, which regards this Legislative Assembly as the great Parliament of this country for the purposes of the Simon Commission, should show such utter disregard for the opinions and the views and the wishes of this House. I do not propose to go before the Simon Commission for giving evidence, but there may be some special department of the Government of India that may be supplying some information to that Commission and I hope, Sir, that that special department will draw the attention of the Simon Commission to this fact that year after year this House, which is regarded even by the Government as representing the people of this country, has been censuring the Government for neglecting the interests of the employees by refusing to appoint a committee of inquiry.

Mr. President: Why don't you do that?

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I do not propose myself to do it, but I hope that that officer will draw the attention of the Simon Commission to the treatment which the Government of India are meting out to the Legislative Assembly which has discussed this question on several occasions. If the Government of India refuse to inquire into this matter by a committee, they ought to give the reasons why that cannot be done. It is not that the Government of India have never appointed a committee to inquire into the grievances of their employees. There was the Lee Commission appointed to inquire into the grievances of the superior services. There was a committee appointed to inquire into the grievances of the postal employees, and the grievances of the telegraph employees were inquired

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into by a committee, and for what conceivable reason is it that the Government of India should refuse to appoint a committee to inquire into the grievances of the railway employees? They cannot say that they have no grievances. Sir, even they will admit that there are grievances. The only argument which has been given in this House is that if there is a roving committee going about, there will be discontent amongst railway employees. Sir, the mere presence or the tour of a committee is not going to create discontent where discontent does not exist; and if discontent exists, naturally the appointment of a committee will give an opportunity to the railway employees to ventilate their discontent. That is the only thing that will happen.

Sir, the railway employees, as my Honourable friend, Colonel Gidney, has pointed out, have very few opportunities of putting forward their grievances before the Railway Administration because, in the first place, the Railway Administration does not pay much attention to any representations made by the employees. Only the day before yesterday I proposed that the Railway Board should appoint an officer to look into the grievances of railway employees and generally to look after their welfare. But the Honourable Member in charge of the Department stated that my proposal was a vague one; he did not understand it. Now what is the difficulty in his understanding any proposal that there should be some machinery in his Department, an officer with a few clerks, to look into the grievances of the railway employees and to look after their welfare? I do not know whether he wanted me to state what salary that officer should be given, or whether the officer should be an Indian or an Englishman. I should certainly have preferred an Indian, but, Sir, I do not know what more information the Honourable Member wanted from me when I suggested that there should be a machinery in his Department to look after the grievances of the railway employees and to look after their welfare. I feel, Sir, that the Railway Board does not want to give much attention to the welfare of their employees. They are quite content to give attention to the welfare of their superior officers because even without the vote of this House they have granted them the Lee Commission benefits. So it is not that they do not look after the welfare of any class of employees, but, Sir, the Government of India only look after the welfare of the class of railway employees to which the members of the Railway Board belong. They know that the other people do not belong to their class. The officers belong to their class and it is their business to look after them as they represent the officers in this House and in this country; it is not their business to look after the interests of the other classes of employees.

Now, Sir, there is no machinery in the Government of India for looking after the interests of the railway employees. On some of the railways there are some joint committees to which my Honourable friend, Colonel Gidney, referred. But, Sir, if Colonel Gidney had studied the constitutions of these committees and if he had also studied the working of these committees, he would have found that they are not serving any useful purpose. In the first place, in these committees the officer's side is overwhelming. The employees' representatives in many cases are nominated by the officers themselves, and if there are any elected representatives, their number is much smaller than the number of the officers and of the nominated representatives. Not only is great care taken to see that these joint committees will not be generally in favour of the employees, but

rules are made by which the main complaints of the employees will not be looked into. My Honourable friend, Colonel Gidney, pleaded with great eloquence on the question of discharges and dismissals. But, Sir, these joint committees are prevented by rules from discussing the question of discharges and dismissals and no such question can be brought before these committees. You will thus find, Sir, that these joint committees are not of much use to the subordinate railway employees in inquiring into the redress of their grievances. Then, Sir, the employees try to get their grievances brought before the authorities through their organizations, through their unions, but we find that on most of the Railways, the

12 Noon. railway unions are not recognised. Perhaps there are some unions that are recognised. I do not say that there are no unions at all which are recognised. There are some unions which are recognised. But in the large number of cases the unions are not recognised; and when I talk of non-recognition of unions, I mean, Sir, that the Agent does not even reply to their letters. The Agent every time writes to them "Your union is not recognised" and finishes. Now, what are these poor people to do? If the union writes, no reply will be given. The joint committees will not, cannot, take up most of the grievances from which the railway men suffer. What are these people to do? Sir, the only consequence is that whenever the grievances become oppressive, the men have to take into their hand the only weapon which they possess. There are strikes in India and the one reason for these strikes is that there is no other method by which the grievances of the railway employees could be investigated and justice rendered to them. I should like the Government of India to take up seriously this question of the recognition of the unions of their employees. I can assure them that if the railway unions are recognised, if the Agents have dealings with the union about the grievances of the members of that union, the number of strikes that may take place after the recognition of a union will be much less than the strikes that take place without the recognition.

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney: Not the political unions.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I am not thinking of the political unions at all. I am thinking of the industrial unions. The Railway Board in this matter should have some definite policy and that policy should be that in their dealings with their employees they will always be willing to deal with the organisations of the employees. Then, Sir, if the Railway Board recognise the unions of the employees, I am quite sure the Railway Board will begin to appreciate and understand what their employees are suffering from. Sir, recently I had lived at a large railway centre at Kharagpur and every day I used to think of the condition of the railway workers there. The Government of India had sent an officer to make an enquiry into a particular grievance of the workers working at that place, and I also had some conversations with that officer, and I can state that if the Government of India would consult that officer as to whether an enquiry is necessary or not, I am sure that officer will recommend to them that an enquiry into the condition of the railway workers is absolutely necessary. There is a good deal that is wrong in the treatment which is being given to the railway employees. But if the Railway Board refuses to make an enquiry of any kind, if the Railway Board shut their eyes, I am quite sure that perhaps they may not see the grievances, but even the Railway Board will admit that there are sometimes occasions when they are compelled to see the grievances. Of course they then pay a very high price as they

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did in the dispute at Kharagpur. Unfortunately, Sir, the price that is paid does not come out of the pockets of the Members of the Railway Board; it comes out of the pockets of the tax-payer of India. It is only this consideration that makes the Railway Board blind to the grievances and the discontent that exist among the railway men. I do not wish to go into individual grievances of the railway employees, but that the grievances are numerous is a fact patent to all except the Railway Board. Of course the Railway Board say that they get railway employees whenever they want them and from that fact they try to prove that the conditions given to the railway employees are quite satisfactory. I hope, Sir, that the Railway Board, although they seriously bring forward this argument, are not serious about this matter at least in their own mind. If an advertisement is put in a newspaper that posts of members of the Railway Board are vacant and applications should be sent, I think the Government of India may get members for the Railway Board even for Rs. 1,000 a month.

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney: One rupee a month or honorary labour.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Now, Sir, it may appear that the statement that I made is ridiculous. But there is truth underlying that statement, that you cannot when you are determining the conditions of your employees talk of the law of supply and demand. It is wrong to say that simply because you get employees on certain conditions which are given that the conditions given are fair and just. Sir, this principle has now been accepted by all civilised countries. It is laid down in black and white in the Treaty of Versailles, which is accepted by almost all the countries of the world, that labour shall no longer be treated as an article or commodity the price of which can be determined by the law of supply and demand. If that treaty has been signed by the Government of India, is it right that any officer of the Government of India should plead that railway employees are available under certain conditions and therefore railway employees should not be given better conditions? Sir, if the law of supply and demand applies to all people, then we shall at least realise whether the superior officers are available in India for much lower salaries than they are given to-day. But the law of supply and demand is only applied to the lowest paid employees of the railways. I hope, Sir, that the Government of India will realise the injustice of talking of the law of demand and supply. They will realise, if they think a little bit, that this law of demand and supply in the case of human beings is an immoral law. Human labour is not like vegetables. A vegetable seller, if he does not get a fair price for his vegetables, will allow them to rot instead of selling them for a smaller price. But unfortunately human beings cannot allow their lives to rot if they did not get a fair price for their labour. Sir, the difference lies in the fact that these commodities have no life and therefore they may be allowed to perish, but unfortunately human beings have lives and they cannot allow themselves to perish. I think, therefore, that the Government of India will not in the year 1928 advocate this immoral principle that their employees should be given conditions on the principle of demand and supply.

Sir, my Honourable friend Colonel Gidney referred to one of the main grievances of the railway employees, namely, the insecurity of their service. The railway employees are not quite safe in their job. Sir, most of the

railway employees are the employees of Government and I do not know why the conditions as regards the security of service given to them should not be the same as are given to other classes of Government employees. It is not that it is only the superior officers who require security of service; even the lowest paid men require security of service. It is not that it is only the superior officers who will do their work better if they get security of service. It is not that the superior officers do their work well if they are experienced. Even the lowest paid railway employees, if they have security of service, will do their work with greater interest and, being experienced, will do their work better; on the whole, even the railways will gain if their employees feel that they are secure in their jobs. But unfortunately the Government of India have from the very beginning been very unsympathetic towards the railway employees. On most of the railways the Government of India make the railway employees sign a bond, one of the conditions of which is that the railway employee will consider himself to be only temporary and not permanent. He can be discharged on a month's notice. I do not know, Sir, why the subordinate railway employees alone are made to sign this bond of service and why the same rule does not apply to other employees. Then, Sir, these discharges are very frequent. My friend Colonel Gidney has already dealt with this subject. In some departments the discharges are more frequent than in others. And, Sir, my experience of Kharagpur now tells me that there are some reasons as to why the discharges are frequent. For instance, in workshops there is some price paid for the employment of a new man, and you cannot get vacancies unless some men are discharged. The discharges in many departments of the railways are frequent simply because there is a price paid for the employment of a new one.

Mr. B. Das (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadan): Please explain what you mean by the word "price"; be more explicit.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: My meaning is absolutely clear: if a man wants a job, he must pay something for it.

Mr. B. Das: For whom does he pay?

Mr. N. M. Joshi: It is not my object to go into these matters in detail. If my Honourable friends want information on this point, I would suggest that they should go to a railway centre like Kharagpur, Ajmere or any other big railway centre and they will know what happens there. I am quite sure even the Government of India may possess information, but unfortunately it is not to their interest, it is not to the interest of the class to which they belong, to disclose all these matters.

Then, Sir, there is the question of dismissal.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member should bear in mind that we are yet on Demand No. 1.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I know that, Sir. I shall finish my speech in a few minutes' time. Even a dismissal in the railway is easier than a dismissal in other departments of the Government. Now, the Government of India is not quite content with the discharge and the dismissal. There are other methods by which the life of the railway employee is made insecure. One of those methods is the periodical medical examination of the railway employees. I cannot understand why the railway employees alone should be made to undergo a periodical medical examination. Sir, it is not only

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the poor subordinate employees whose health may fail or who may become weak during the period of their service. The superior officers also may suffer from some setback in their health during the period of their service, but they are not medically examined periodically like the subordinate employees. If they were strong when they once entered the service, they are supposed to be going strong till they retire and get their pension; but in the case of the subordinate employees, although they may have been strong at the time of their employment, they may have been strong even during the middle of their service, still they must be periodically examined, with the result that if some doctor takes it into his head to certify that the man is not strong enough, he loses his job.

Now, Sir, besides the fact that this discrimination between the superior officers and the subordinate employees is unfair, there is also another injustice in this that when the Government of India discharges a man if he is found medically unfit, they never inquire whether that man became weak on account of the work that he did. There will certainly be some cases of men who have suffered from some disease or who may have become weak on account of the conditions of work they went through. For instance, some people suffer from defective eyesight, but it is quite possible that it is the work which made their eyesight defective. Some people may suffer from something else. But it is just possible that it was the nature of the work that they were doing which caused their ailment. But, Sir, the Government of India never inquire whether the man has suffered on account of the kind of work which was given to him. If he is found unfit or weak, he is simply discharged without taking into consideration the fact that the man might have suffered on account of his work.

Sir, this is the kind of safety which the railway employees enjoy under the present Railway Board. I do not wish to go into the other grievances, which are legion. The only request that I want to make to this House is that, as they have been showing their sympathy with the railway employees year after year, they will also on this occasion show their sympathy with the railway employees by carrying the motion made by my Honourable friend Colonel Gidney.

Mr. President: Mr. Acharya: I think if the debate on this cut continues in this strain, the House will not reach any other Demand for Grant.

Mr. M. K. Acharya (South Arcot *cum* Chingleput: Non-Muhammadian Rural): Sir, I can assure you that I have no such desire.

Mr. President: It would, I think, be much better if the Honourable Members select certain items of the Budget and try to concentrate their attention on them.

Mr. M. K. Acharya: I agree to your suggestion, Sir. I do not wish to make a long speech on this motion, but I simply want to support my friends Colonel Gidney and Mr. Joshi. I would, I feel, be failing in my duty to the thousands who have sent their representations to me if I did not raise my voice in their behalf on this occasion. As, however, the time of the House is precious, I do not want to waste it. It is the privilege of those Members who sit on the front benches rather than of a back-bencher like myself to take up any amount of time of the House. Sir, I strongly support the motion before the House.

Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: Sir, the grievances of the railway employees have been, to a certain extent, discussed before you, but, being the President of a Railway Union, I receive so many complaints about their grievances every day that I would be failing in my duty if I did not make a few observations on this motion. Sir, I will not repeat the points or the grievances which have already been mentioned by my friends the Honourable Colonel Gidney and the Honourable Mr. Joshi. Of course, they were the most important and the most serious grievances, namely, summary dismissal, which in the language of railway employees is generally known as "Paragraph 2." The application of this paragraph comes to a railway employee as death by heart failure, for which there is no remedy and nothing can be done. The result is that sometimes servants who have been in the service of the Railway for 15 or 20 or 22 years are summarily removed from their service without any rhyme or reason; and to add insult to injury even the right of appeal is denied to them; the power of submitting appeals rests in the very officers who passed orders of removal. It is really surprising that the power of submitting appeals is given to the authorities by whose order the man has been dismissed. Now, Sir, can it reasonably be expected that a man who has himself passed an unjust order will transmit an appeal from his order to the higher authorities? In this way not only these poor employees but their whole families, their wives and their children are ruined for ever, because a man who has served in the Railway Department, say, for 15 or 20 years, after being dismissed from the Railway Department, cannot be expected to take up work in any other department at this late stage of his life. Moreover, at an advanced age he cannot be expected to adopt the habits and work of other departments in the Government service. And as my friend, Colonel Gidney, has pointed out, on account of the confidential communications he is not re-employed in other branches of the Railway. Therefore he and his whole family, his children and his wife, are reduced to beggary and they are ruined for ever. This is a very serious thing and I think it deserves the very serious attention of the Railway Board. Of course, I will not touch on the subject of long hours of duty but this is also a very important subject. I find that there are still a large number of stations where 12 hours of duty is the general rule. Assistant station masters on the Hardwar-Dehra Dun and Chandausi-Aligarh Branch lines, line jamadars, train examiners, and shedmen at some of the most important stations, like Moradabad, Saharanpore, and Shahjahanpore, are still performing 12 hours' duty. In this connection it may also be pointed out that on side stations

Mr. Anwar-ul-Asim (Chittagong Division: Muhammadan Rural): On a point of order, Sir, have we got a quorum?

Mr. President: We have got a quorum.

Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: Before I proceed with my speech I would propose, Sir, that in the next Session a special prize should be offered by the Honourable the President to the Member who calls his attention to the want of a quorum the largest number of times.

Mr. President: Will the Honourable Member proceed?

Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: Very well, Sir, I will not take more than two minutes. What I was going to say, Sir, is that at side stations the station masters, besides performing traffic and goods duties, have to do

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so much clerical work and to fill up so many good, bad and indifferent forms, that every moment and every minute of the time which they can ill-spare is spent in doing this useless work.

Another most troublesome grievance of the railway employees is the difficulty in obtaining leave even for most urgent work. They are denied leave even to take part in the funeral and marriage ceremonies of those who are near and dear to their heart.

Mr. Anwar-ul-Azim: On a point of order, Sir. We have only 24 Members present in the House.

Mr. President: Order, order. The Honourable Member cannot ask for another count until one hour has elapsed.

Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: The Fundamental Leave Rules are an obsolete letter in the Railway Department. Cases have actually occurred in the Loco. Department at Shahjahanpore and Dehra Dun when leave was not granted to the Loco. servants for obtaining medical help for their children and wives, and even after the death of the children and wives, they were asked to produce a medical certificate before they could attend to their funeral. This treatment is not only very harsh but barbarous in its very character. The rules for obtaining medical certificates are another source of a standing grievance. Medical certificates from doctors not under the Railway Department, whatever their professional qualifications may be, are not accepted in any case. It becomes very difficult for a man falling ill and going to his home for treatment in far-off country places where no railway medical officer is available, to obtain a medical certificate.

Now, Sir, all these grievances are such as need very urgent attention on the part of the Railway Board and there can be no other remedy than that which has been suggested by my friend, Colonel Gidney, that is, the appointment of a committee. I do not think there is any reason why Government should feel shy of appointing such a committee. With these few words, Sir, I support the motion.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy (Member for Commerce and Railways): I think, Sir, my friend Colonel Gidney in proposing this motion has rather tended to confuse two things which are connected but are not quite the same. When I received the notice of his motion and read the words in which he indicated the subject which he wished to bring up for discussion, I was under the impression that he was going to concentrate exclusively on the question how the grievances of individual railway servants ought to be dealt with. It is true he did devote the greater part of his speech to this aspect of the case, but he also touched on the wider question of the grievances which affect not individuals but whole classes of railway servants, and subsequent speakers have on the whole devoted more attention to the latter point than to the former. Now, I think it is important that the two aspects of the question should be kept separate, for the procedure which might be appropriate for dealing with individual grievances might be wholly inappropriate when we are dealing with whole classes. For instance, whatever might be said about the merits or demerits of a committee of inquiry as regards grievances relating to the conditions of service of large classes of employees, a committee which might be suitable for

dealing with matters of that kind would obviously be an unsatisfactory tribunal for dealing with the greivances of particular individuals who considered that they had been unjustly treated. At the outset I want to confine what I have to say to the question of individual grievances. Colonel Gidney suggested that there ought to be a Complaints Department, or some sort of standing committee of inquiry to investigate the grievances of individual railway servants. It does not seem to me that the phraseology is very apt in either case. If we instituted a department called the Complaints Department, we should be inundated with complaints from all over the country, and in my view a committee of inquiry is not really an agency that would be suitable to determine whether or not an officer had been justly or unjustly discharged or otherwise punished. But what I think was in the Honourable Mover's mind is that, as things are to-day on the Indian Railways, the individual railway servant is exposed to the risk of unfair or unjust treatment to an extent which makes it desirable that some action should be taken. I entirely agree with him that it is most important that our railway servants should believe that the administrations and the persons responsible for the administration of the Indian Railways desire to treat them justly. What I am prepared to do is this. I am quite prepared to look into the matter myself and see what exactly our existing procedure is as regards these matters and to consider whether there are any directions in which we can do anything to improve it. But about one matter I think I had better be perfectly explicit. I have considered the question repeatedly, and I do not see my way to give the least encouragement to the idea that we can abandon the present system by which railway servants generally, not only the subordinates but the higher officers also, are liable to discharge after a given period of notice. I do think it is most important to the successful commercial working of our Railways that we should adhere to that principle, and I cannot hold out hope that any change is likely to be made in that respect. But it is quite possible that means can be devised which will at any rate give the staff greater confidence that any applications or appeals they may submit in such matters as punishment or discharge or dismissal will be fully and adequately considered.

Now, Sir, to turn to the more general grievances. This, as various speakers have pointed out, is a subject which has been very fully discussed in this House on more than one occasion and I do not know whether I am wrong, but I seemed to detect in speakers and listeners alike a certain lassitude, as if they were weary of traversing the same ground again. Therefore, I shall be as brief as I can, for I do not think that it would serve any useful purpose if I were to endeavour to discuss the matter at any great length. I was particularly interested in what my friend Mr. Joshi said as regards his wish that Government officers should bring to the notice of the Royal Commission the grievances of railway servants . .

Mr. N. M. Joshi: No, no. I did not say that. What I said was that a special department of the Government of India should bring to the notice of the Royal Commission the fact that this Government has treated with scant courtesy the opinion of this House.

Mr. M. K. Acharya: Expressed four times.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Yes, four times.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I am sorry for having misunderstood the Honourable Member. I have not the least doubt that the facts as regards that will be brought to the notice of the Royal Commission. I have no doubt myself that one of the matters which in the nature of the case they must closely inquire into is the whole relation of the Government of India to the Legislature during the past seven or eight years. But his reference to the Simon Commission, though I misunderstood it, did suggest to me that the appointment of committees or commissions of inquiry does not always command the same support in this House as it seems to do in the case of railway grievances. I merely note that in passing for it shows that it is not always easy for Government to anticipate what the attitude of the House may be when a committee or commission of inquiry is proposed.

Now, my Honourable friend Mr. Joshi evidently considered me very stupid for not having been able to understand his suggestion about a Welfare Officer. I do not think that was exactly what I said. I said that his proposal was somewhat nebulous and that the duties he thought fit to impose upon that officer were not only very numerous but exceedingly onerous. One point which struck me at the time was this, that apparently this officer, who was to be called a Welfare Officer, was to devote his time to the investigation of grievances. It struck me before in reading through the discussions in this Assembly on the same subject that there was a perpetual insistence on a negative attitude, as if what was required was purely to remove grievances under which the staff are suffering. I should have thought that in the case of a Welfare Officer, it was much more important to emphasise the positive aspect, not as to how certain objectionable features can be removed, but what positive improvements can be effected for the benefit of the railway servants. Take for example such a matter as housing. The proper way to look at it I think is to consider what the Railway Administrations ought properly to do in the matter of housing its employees, and whether we are adequately doing it, and if not, what measures ought to be taken so that it may be done better. I do not want to dwell too long on this point but I do think that perhaps our discussions on this subject have suffered from the fact that it has been brought up from a rather controversial point of view and not in the spirit of considering what positive things can be done which would be for the advantage of the railway servants of India.

I was sorry that my Honourable friend Mr. Joshi condemned the system of joint committees which, as my friend Colonel Gidney remarked, is in force on several railways and provides a means for bringing the subordinate staff and the officers together for the discussion of matters which affect the staff. I do not think, however, that he condemned the system in principle, though he considered that in several respects the system as it actually existed was imperfect, and did not provide sufficient means for carrying out its professed object. I should have been exceedingly sorry if he had condemned the system altogether, because personally I believe that it is on the lines of these joint committees that the most hopeful line of advance lies for the adjustment of harmonious relations between the Railway Administrations and their servants. I am quite sure that if you can bring people together on opposite sides of a table, whether it be a round table or not, you can nearly always do a great deal towards a mutual

understanding, and the habit of joint discussion of industrial difficulties, I personally believe, is more likely to lead to harmonious relations than almost anything else. If the system of joint committees as it exists on certain railways is imperfect at present, there is no reason why it should not be improved so that it may become of real service to the men and to the railways.

The only other point in my Honourable friend Mr. Joshi's speech to which I wish to refer is his reference to the periodical medical examination of certain subordinate employees, and here he detected with his unerring eye another instance of discrimination in favour of the superior officer and against the subordinate officer. Well, Mr. President, as far as I know such periodical medical examinations as are regularly prescribed are confined to those tests which are necessary in the public safety to protect passengers and so on, and those which are necessary in the interests of the man himself, that is, for his safety. Whether the officer is a superior officer or a subordinate officer merely depends upon the nature of his duties. It may be quite unnecessary specially to test the eyesight of the Agent of a railway but extremely necessary to test periodically the eyesight of an engine driver for the simple reason that the engine driver drives a train and the Agent does not. I do not think it is really quite fair for my Honourable friend to ignore that aspect of the case altogether. I do not think I need speak at great length on this occasion, but I should like to say in conclusion that I quite realise that though I am unable to meet the wishes very frequently expressed by this House as regards these matters, I do not by any means ignore their importance, and I am anxious to do all that can be done to improve conditions for the railway staff. I know that certain Honourable Members noticed an omission in my speech introducing the Railway Budget, and thought that there should have been a warmer acknowledgment not only of the services of the railway officers but of the staff generally. I think the actual words I used cover all ranks of railway service, but whatever words I actually used, that was my intention because I should be the very last to deny the very great debt we all of us owe to railway servants of all ranks and unquestionably to those in the subordinate ranks.

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney: After the remarks that have fallen from the Honourable Member in charge I ask the leave of the House to withdraw this motion. I hope he will carry out his promises and ask the other Railway Agents to issue a circular in the same terms as has been issued by the Agent of the East Indian Railway. I hope the Honourable Member will give that assurance.

Mr. President: Is it the pleasure of the House that the amendment should be withdrawn?

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

Leave Rules.

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney: I beg to move the motion that stands in my name, namely:

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

I have very little to say on this occasion except to assert on the floor of this House that vast differences do exist between leave rules on various Railways between Europeans, Anglo-Indians and Indians, and I am aware

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that they are well known to the Honourable Member. I feel sure the mere fact of my having moved this motion in this House will bring to the Honourable Member's notice that the matter requires speedy disposal, especially the leave rules which exist on the East Indian Railway and which form a serious grievance among its Anglo-Indian employees.

Rai Sahib Harbilas Sarda (Ajmer-Merwara: General): I support the motion moved by my Honourable friend, Colonel Gidney, and I have to say a few words only. It is with regard to the grant of leave to Indian officers and employees on the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway. There is a rule on that line that Europeans drawing Rs. 300 and over are entitled to furlough, but no Indian, whether he draws Rs. 300 or Rs. 600, is entitled to furlough, and no Indian officer or subordinate has ever been given furlough on that Railway. Indian officers drawing Rs. 500 are refused furlough even though they are required by the doctor to go on leave, but their European subordinates who draw Rs. 300 get such leave. I wish to draw the attention of the Government to this great anomaly and this racial discrimination and I hope Government will look into the matter. I do not want to say more about it on the present occasion.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Sir, I am not sure that I have not already raised with the Agent of the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway the question of their particular leave rules, I think at the instance of my Honourable friend Rai Sahib Harbilas Sarda; but if I have not done so I will look into the matter and see what the actual position is at present. On the general question of leave rules raised by my Honourable friend, Colonel Gidney, I can say that the matter is under our consideration. I had indeed hoped to have fresh leave rules out before now. But we have come up against a great many difficulties in getting a new set of leave rules which will be less complicated than the existing Fundamental Rules and more suited to the railway services. Our difficulty has chiefly been in devising a method of breaking away from the Fundamental Rules.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask one question, whether the revision of the leave rules will include the revision of the leave rules for the temporary staff in the railway workshops?

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney: In view of the reply given by the Honourable Member I ask the leave of the House to withdraw my motion.

Mr. President: Is it the pleasure of the House that leave be given to withdraw the motion?

Mr. N. M. Joshi: No.

Mr. President: The question is:

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

The motion was negatived.

Mr. President: Nos. 24, 25, 26 and 27 have, I understand, been already disposed of. No. 28, Mr. Mukhtar Singh.

Adverse Effect on Indian Industries on account of the Freight Charges levied on the different Railways.

Mr. Makhtar Singh (Meerut Division : Non-Muhammadan Rural) : I beg to move :

“That the Demand under the head ‘Railway Board’ be reduced by Re. 1.”

In this motion I beg to point out how Indian industries are suffering on account of the freight charges levied on the different Railways. I do not think there is sufficient time for me to deal with a number of articles about which I have to complain. I shall only cite a few examples to show that the Government have not taken sufficient interest in finding out what rates are suitable for different articles in order to foster Indian industries. The other day when I was speaking I said that this country has been reduced to an agricultural country. I would like to point out in this connection the part played by Railways. I shall first take the case of sugar. This is one of those commodities which has been suffering during the last three years very badly and about which Government considered an inquiry to be necessary in 1920. After that Government has not taken any action. The first point that I want to mention is that in the definition of sugar two other things are included. One is *bura* and the other is *shakkar*. The very fact that the same charges are levied on *bura* and *shakkar* clearly shows how far the Government has the interests of the cultivator at heart,—the cultivator for whom Government claims that it stands. What is *shakkar*? Possibly some friends here may not know what this commodity is. *Shakkar* is *jaggery* in the powdered form. The rate at which *shakkar* is sold is generally Rs. 5 or 6 a maund, the same rate at which *gur* is sold, while *bura* sells at about double the amount at which *shakkar* is sold. May I inquire how is it that the same rates are decided to be charged on *shakkar*, sugar and *gur*? *Shakkar* is manufactured by the poor cultivators while sugar is manufactured by big capitalists and is also a commodity imported from outside. This is why Government has taken very good care to see that the poor people should not consume a commodity which they generally like on account of its cheapness. I submit that charging the same rates on *shakkar* means nothing else but penalising the poor consumer as well as the poor producer. We know how this sugar industry has been destroyed in this country. I do not like to enter into the old history about the encouragement of the bounty-fed sugar in the country. But I submit, that even to-day, when the industry is in great danger and when the Government has considered it to be their duty to charge a very high customs duty on this commodity, the Government has not cared to increase the output of *shakkar* or to give any facilities to the poor cultivator. Then again there is another important point. There is a special rate charged from and to Rosa for sugar. May I inquire why this distinction is made? On the East Indian Railway even, any person who wants to book his sugar from Rosa is not charged the same rate as Carew and Company have to pay. I do not understand why a distinction is made in the case of a certain firm. The only answer that can be given is that in one case it happens to be an English firm and in the other case the every poor people. Is it not a fact that Shahjahanpur produces a very large amount of sugar? Why is Shahjahanpur not given the same privilege as Rosa? It might be said that Carew and Company are a very big firm and manufactures very large quantities of sugar and therefore special rates are given to them. May I inquire why the same rates are not given to other

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firms which also run up-to-date factories? Why are not the same rates given to Cawnpore where there are a number of factories manufacturing sugar? It seems clear that there is no idea of helping the sugar industry. Then again I submit that the poor people generally use *jaggery* and that the cultivation of sugar-cane still survives, not on account of the manufacture of sugar but on account of the manufacture of *jaggery*. The very fact that the same rates are charged on *jaggery* as on sugar clearly shows how far Government has helped the poor cultivator. Perhaps it may be pointed out that the Honourable Member in charge has given us some satisfaction that he is going to reduce rates on *jaggery* but I think that is quite insignificant. I know also that from certain stations there are special rates for *jaggery* but what is the difference between the rates that are charged on sugar from the same station? The difference is quite insignificant. May I point out that on sugar as well as on *jaggery*, sometime back the rates were charged first class. The first thing that the Government ought to have done was to continue the same rate on sugar and *jaggery* produced in this country while they might have put up the rates of second class on sugar which is imported from foreign countries into this country. But they have not done so. They have increased the rates both on *jaggery* and on sugar. I submit, therefore, that in the case of sugar the State Railways have done whatever they could to stifle the industry. I would leave this subject now and take the case of sugar-cane juice. I do not understand why second class is charged on sugar, while on cane juice fourth class is charged. I know that even if the rates are low nobody would like the idea of exporting sugar-cane juice and it is a commodity which is hardly exported but still it shows the attitude of the Government in this matter. Take the case of sugar-cane itself. Only recently I had to import a maund and half of sugar-cane from Poona to Meerut for seed purposes and I had to pay Rs. 15 as freight charges. That shows clearly how far even on the sugar-cane used for sowing the charges are prohibitive. Leaving this alone I come to another item. Take the case of fruits. We know, Sir, that recently the quantity of imported fruits from foreign countries has very much increased. What steps have the Railways and the Government taken to export mangoes and other fruits from one place to another? They are running a special train from Bombay to Peshawar called the Punjab Limited. Have they devised any such train for taking fresh fruits from one place to another? They could do that but in that case they would have been helping the fruit industry which they do not want to do. We have been asking, Sir, for a good many years that there ought to be arrangements for refrigerators on our Railways. If that had been done we might possibly have been able to export our mangoes and other fruits not available in other countries and India might have gained something out of that. But the Railways have never helped that industry. They have recently decreased the rates on manure and in the speech which the Honourable Member delivered in introducing the Budget he has referred to the advantages of that and other reductions to agriculturists. But if the Government are so solicitous of the agriculturist why have they not decreased the rates on sulphuric acid for the manufacture of sulphate of ammonia which is the only artificial manure used in this country to some extent? The Railways have put up the rates on sulphuric acid while on the other hand they have reduced the rates on manure and sulphate of ammonia.

Why? Because we know, Sir, that sulphate of ammonia has been introduced into this country and a foreign firm, Messrs. Brond Mond & Co., is sending out this product in large quantities and is employing propagandists in every centre of importance, and it is because they want to push that commodity that we are told that the rates of sulphate of ammonia have been decreased. I would inquire, Sir, if the rates on sulphuric acid had been reduced, whether it would not have been possible for all these collieries which have their distilling plants to manufacture sulphate of ammonia in this country? Sulphuric acid not being cheap in this country this cannot be done and so it is necessary that sulphate of ammonia manufactured in foreign countries must be used here. Then again, Sir, take the case of manure. Why are there special rates for bone meal from the ports but not within the country? If I send my bone meal from Meerut to Bombay or Karachi or Calcutta there are special rates, but if I send it to any place within the country there are no special rates. Is it in any case such a commodity which should be exported? I consider, Sir, that if we had had a national Government the first thing it would have done would be to prohibit the export of bone meal altogether because it is the most valuable manure for the agriculturist. But this Government have not done so; rather they have decided to give as many facilities as possible for the export of this commodity. Then again bone meal cannot be used as manure until it has been dissolved in sulphuric acid and turned into superphosphate. For that too sulphuric acid is a necessity but the rates on that are sufficiently high to prevent its employment for this purpose. I will take two or three more instances. Take the case of *biri* leaves. The Government has given special rates for cigarettes imported from ports to Cawnpore and other places but the *biri* leaves sent from one place to another are charged sixth class railway risk and fourth class owners risk, while the tobacco for the *biri* is sent at railway risk fourth class, as if tobacco was a cheaper article than *biri* leaves. Is that the way to help the *biri* industry? I know that it may be pointed out that there are some special rates from one station to another, but the fact remains that the rates for tobacco are much less than for *biri* leaves, and why is that distinction made? Then as regards milk, the rates for fresh milk are the same as those for condensed milk. Now if condensed milk is sold at a much higher rate than milk why is it not possible for the railways to charge a cheaper rate for fresh milk than for condensed milk? That shows that the Government do not want to help the dairy industry in this country. What they want to do is to help the foreign manufacturer to send out his product and distribute it in this country. There are a number of other cases in which a distinction is made in favour of a foreign article, but I would submit that I have given sufficient instances to establish my point. I would refer only to one more instance before bringing my remarks to a close. There are special rates for grains and pulses when they are sent to the ports. Perhaps I may be told that that is for helping the cultivator. But what I want to know is, if Government can levy very very cheap rates on grains and pulses for export purposes, why cannot more favourable rates be given for the articles consumed in this country and specially for those articles which have to compete with foreign manufactured articles? I cannot definitely say because the figures are not available and I am not an expert but I consider that the transport of grains and pulses at the cheap rates is not a paying job to the Railways. No calculations have been made about it

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and if an inquiry is made it might be found that it is so. Even if there is any gain it must be very small. But in any case it establishes the fact that the Railways can afford to transport grains and pulses at these cheap rates, and that all those articles which have to be sent from place to place within the country, which are consumed and used by the poor people and are manufactured by people with small capital, can be sent at similarly cheap rates in order to assist home industries. Infant industries ought also to be helped on the same lines. There are many articles which are manufactured and used within the country which ought to be treated in the same way to the great advantage of the country and the people. With these words I move the motion and hope the House will support me.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: Sir, I shall speak very briefly as regards this motion. I think my Honourable friend who moved it would have been well advised if, in anticipation of his motion, he had prepared the ground a little with a few judicious questions, because it is exceedingly difficult either for myself or for anyone connected with the Railway Board to reply without notice to a series of instances in which it is alleged that our railway rates operate to the disadvantage of the Indian producer and to the advantage of somebody else. I think the House will realize that with all these problems that he put before us about sugar and *gur*, cigarettes and tobacco and so on, I can hardly be expected to have a solution ready made for each and all of them. On one matter, however, that he mentioned when he complained that the Government did not prohibit the export of bone meal, I would like to point out that at the moment it is only the Railway Member who is a legitimate target and for the time being the Commerce Member is not exposed to attack. The question of export is for the Commerce Member and not for the Railway Member. I would like to say this, Sir, that we should be quite ready in the Railway Department to look into the matters to which my Honourable friend has drawn attention, and quite possibly some of them might be suitable for reference to the Railway Rates Advisory Committee. But as far as I have been able to ascertain, it does not appear that any of them has been specifically brought to the notice of the Railway Board before. I may be wrong about that, but that is the information that has been given to me at the moment. The Honourable Member inquired why we had not made special arrangements for the conveyance of fresh mangoes from Bombay to various parts of the country. That is a suggestion we should be perfectly prepared to consider, and it would be a question of the quantity of the traffic offering, and whether there was any real chance that a considerable amount of traffic might be developed. There could be no hostility on the part of the Railway Administrations or the Railway Board to a proposal of that kind, and personally I do not know of any foreign fruit that competes at all with the mango. The mango I always regard as holding something of the nature of a monopoly, in particular the mangoes coming from that part of the country which, as we all know, are greatly superior to the average mango. What I would submit, Sir, is this that my Honourable friend has failed to establish the general proposition which might justify a reduction in the grant. It seems to me that he has altogether failed to establish the proposition that we fix our freight rates in such a way that Indian industries and agriculture are adversely affected while English firms in India and foreign industries are helped. And apart from anything that the

Honourable Member said, I should like to remind the House, as Sir Charles Innes did last year, that the accusation is one which was examined by the Acworth Committee and that they found that it had not been made good. In these circumstances, I hope my Honourable friend will withdraw his motion.

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas (Indian Merchants' Chamber: Indian Commerce): Sir, I wish in the first place to congratulate the Honourable Member, Mr. Mukhtar Singh, on the very able manner in which he has put forward his views on this very difficult and complicated question. While I fully appreciate the Honourable the Railway Member's difficulty in giving replies to the various details which have been put forward by Mr. Mukhtar Singh, I cannot help feeling that the reply given to the main principle affected by this motion may be regarded as not satisfactory. Sir, the instances mentioned by Mr. Mukhtar Singh are not new ones. Similar and worse ones have been mentioned and pressed in the past by the Indian commercial community practically up till the time that they got tired and felt that it was not feasible to get relief from the Government. I feel, Sir, that this question should not be delayed any further. Even Sir George Rainy can not expect Mr. Mukhtar Singh to make out what he calls a "sound case" in the limited time which the House would like any mover of a motion in this discussion on Grants to take in putting forward his case. I think at least this is due, that the question raised by Mr. Mukhtar Singh's motion and the materials supplied by him in his speech be referred to the Central Advisory Committee where the Railway Board may put forward their explanation. It is quite possible, Sir, that my friend, Mr. Mukhtar Singh, is not accurate in some of the various impressions that he has given us, but on the main general principle that there are anomalies, and anomalies of a bad character, which really do handicap the local production and if I may say so the cheaper article which the masses consume, I venture to assert without any fear of being proved to be wrong that the Honourable the Commerce Member will find a good many such instances, and the sooner, Sir, these are removed the better. We are aware, Sir, that there is a Rates Tribunal, but the process is a long one and the tribunal can only deal with one item at a time. Surely, Sir, the Honourable the Railway Member is quite aware that those who are interested in the freight rates on either *bidis* as opposed to cigarettes or on milk as opposed to condensed milk are not the people who would be in a position to put their case forward before the Rates Tribunal, and why compel them to take this roundabout process to get relief if a *prima facie* case is made out on the basis of the figures that have been put forward by Mr. Mukhtar Singh? I feel, Sir, that it would not be right to shelve this question on the mere ground that in the opinion of the Railway Member an effective case has not been made out to-day. I think all that my friend, Mr. Mukhtar Singh, could have done was to bring this forward again. This question is of the nature of a hardy annual and is urged from year to year in one form or another, but as the Central Railway Advisory Committee does not appear to have much business to consider, I submit that this is a very fit item for the agenda for their first meeting this year. I wonder if the Railway Member would be prepared to have the Railway Board put up a memorandum replying to the grounds urged by Mr. Mukhtar Singh and to have the Central Advisory Committee at least go into it. I feel, Sir, that unless any such assurance of looking into the points raised by Mr. Mukhtar Singh is given, we will have to press this motion.

Mr. K. C. Neogy (Dacca Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, my Honourable friend, Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas, who was a member of the Acworth Committee, has not the report of his own Committee before him; otherwise he would have referred to the fact that the assumption made by the Honourable the Commerce Member that this charge had been disproved to the satisfaction of that Committee is absolutely incorrect. I happen to have a copy of the report with me.....

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas: I do not want to interrupt the Honourable Member, but I unwittingly overlooked the reference and I fully confirm what Mr. Neogy says.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I entirely sympathise with the Honourable Member in charge because he has been in his present office only for a short while, and perhaps he had not the time to read carefully the Acworth Committee's Report. May I draw his attention to paragraphs 148, 149, and onwards down to 156 of that Report. In paragraph 148 they refer to the allegations made on this particular point by Indians. In paragraph 149 they proceed to say this:

"It is an Indian grievance of long standing—it was voiced in the Legislative Assembly at Delhi in 1915 by a distinguished Indian, now a Member of the Executive Council of Bombay, Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola—that the railways fix their rates to suit their own pecuniary interests—if indeed it be not to suit the interests of European merchants—regardless of the effect of these rates on the native industries of India. And we have no doubt"

—say the Committee—

"that the charge is accepted as proved by a large proportion of Indian traders."

Then they proceed to observe as follows:

"Charges based upon motives are difficult to prove or disprove. It was not our duty to investigate specific cases in detail, nor would the time at our disposal have permitted us to do so. Unquestionably, low exceptional rates exist for traffic to and from ports, especially the great ports of Calcutta and Bombay. But exceptional rates such as these exist in every country, and are there justified on the ordinary grounds, not only of the economy of handling goods in large volume, but also of competition between railway systems serving the same distributing or consuming area."

Then the Acworth Committee discuss block rates and examine the allegations about unfair competition with waterways and at the end of that paragraph they say:

"We think this is eminently a matter to which the Communications Department, which, if our recommendation is adopted, will have charge not only of railways but of canals and ports, should direct its attention."

Now, that Communications portfolio has not come into existence and, I believe, is not going to materialise at all. Then the Committee recommend the establishment of a Rates Tribunal to go into individual grievances of this nature. My Honourable friend Mr. Mukhtar Singh of course went into a good deal of details in support of his contention, and it may be rather difficult for the Honourable Member in charge to answer all those various points in detail. But, Sir, I repeat that the allegation that was made before the Acworth Committee stands yet un rebutted. Long before the Acworth Committee came out, these grievances were voiced before the Industrial Commission, and if the Honourable Member in charge will refer

to the Monograph on Railway Rates by Mr. S. C. Ghosh; which the Railway Board itself published, he will find corroborative evidence of these charges. I submit that this is an opportune moment for undertaking a general reclassification of rates. The Honourable Member is happily in the position, during the present year, of announcing certain reductions in rates and fares. Now, when you are in a position to undertake a revision of this kind, certainly the whole policy of the fixation of your rates might with advantage be re-examined. I have not the competence to go into the technical aspects of rate-making, but, Sir, I do not think the Honourable Member would dispute the proposition that the industrial prosperity of a country depends to a very large extent upon its transport charges, upon particularly the rates policy followed by its own Railways. Whenever there is a question relating to reform of the railway administration or railway policy, we are often reminded by Honourable Members sitting opposite of the precedents that obtain in other parts of the Empire and other parts of the world. Now, Sir, I would read out to the Honourable Member in charge the rates policy pursued by the South African Railways. This is what the General Manager of the South African Railways says . . .

Mr. B. Das: South Africa is a Dominion.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: "The South Africa Act",

—he says—

"provides that in the conduct of the railway administration due regard shall be had to agricultural and industrial development within the Union, and the promotion, by means of cheap transport, of the settlement of an agricultural and industrial population in the inland portions of all provinces of the Union. Thus the guiding principle applied in determining the tariffs is not to charge more than the traffic will bear. A great volume of traffic has been created as a consequence of the adoption of low tariffs for primary products."

And then he goes on to say as follows:

"The position now is that the low-rated traffic of South African origin"—

—mind you, they have a particularly low rate for articles of South African origin—

"the low-rated traffic of South African origin has grown to such an extent that by far the greater portion of railway traffic is carried at low rates."

And then again he says:

" * * * Co-operation of the Administration in the matter of favourable tariffs has been an important factor in the increased growth of primary products."

I very much wish, Sir, that the Honourable Member in charge were in a position to make a declaration of policy like this. Sir, I have no intention of lengthening the debate, but I do hope that the Honourable Member will devote his attention to this very serious question which has been agitating the Indian mind for decades past.

Mr. President: The question is:

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

The Assembly divided :

AYES—39.

Abdul Matin Chaudhury, Maulvi.
Acharya, Mr. M. K.
Aney, Mr. M. S.
Ayyangar, Mr. K. V. Rangaswami.
Ayyangar, Mr. M. S. Sesha.
Birla, Mr. Ghanshyam Das.
Chetty, Mr. R. K. Shanmukham.
Das, Mr. B.
Dutt, Mr. Amar Nath.
Dutta, Mr. Srish Chandra.
Ghazanfar Ali Khan, Raja.
Gour, Sir Hari Singh.
Haji, Mr. Sarabhai Nemchand.
Iswar Saran, Munshi.
Iyengar, Mr. S. Srinivasa.
Jayakar, Mr. M. R.
Jogiah, Mr. Varahagiri Venkata.
Joshi, Mr. N. M.
Kelkar, Mr. N. C.
Kunzru, Pandit Hirday Nath.

Lahiri Chaudhury, Mr. Dhirendra Kanta.
Lajpat Rai, Lala.
Malaviya, Pandit Madan Mohan.
Mehta, Mr. Jamnadas M.
Moonje, Dr. B. S.
Mukhtar Singh, Mr.
Nehru, Pandit Motilal.
Neogy, Mr. K. C.
Phookun, Srijut Tarun Ram.
Purshotamdas Thakurdas, Sir.
Rao, Mr. G. Sarvotham.
Sarda, Rai Sahib Harbilas.
Sarfaraz Hussain Khan, Khan Bahadur.
Singh, Kumar Rananjaya.
Singh, Mr. Gaya Prasad.
Snha, Mr. R. P.
Tok Kyi, U.
Yakub, Maulvi Muhammad.
Zulfikar Ali Khan, Nawab Sir.

NOES—42.

Abdul Aziz, Khan Bahadur Mian.
Abdul Qaiyum, Nawab Sir Sahibzada.
Ahmad, Khan Bahadur Nasir-ud-din.
Alexander, Mr. William.
Allison, Mr. F. W.
Anwar-ul-Azim, Mr.
Ashrafuddin Ahmad, Khan Bahadur Nawabzada Sayid.
Ayangar, Mr. V. K. Aravamudha.
Bajpai, Mr. G. S.
Blackett, The Honourable Sir Basil.
Bray, Sir Denys.
Chatterji, Rai Bahadur B. M.
Coatman, Mr. J.
Cosgrave, Mr. W. A.
Couper, Mr. T.
Courtenay, Mr. R. H.
Crerar, The Honourable Mr. J.
Dalal, Sardar Sir Bomanji.
Ghuznavi, Mr. A. H.
Gidnev, Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J.
Graham, Mr. L.
Irwin, Mr. C. J.

Jowahir Singh, Sardar Bahadur Sardar.
Kabul Singh Bahadur, Captain.
Keane, Mr. M.
Lamb, Mr. W. S.
Lindsay, Sir Darcy.
Mitra, The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath.
Moore, Mr. Arthur.
Mukherjee, Mr. S. C.
Parsons, Mr. A. A. L.
Rainy, The Honourable Sir George.
Rao, Mr. V. Pandurang.
Roy, Mr. K. C.
Roy, Mr. S. N.
Sams, Mr. H. A.
Shamaldhari Lall, Mr.
Shillidy, Mr. J. A.
Sykes, Mr. E. F.
Tavlor, Mr. E. Gawan.
Willson, Sir Walter.
Yamin Khan, Mr. Muhammad.

The motion was negatived.

The Assembly then adjourned for Lunch till Twenty Minutes to Three of the Clock.

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Twenty Minutes to Three of the Clock, Mr. President in the Chair.

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

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

Sir Darcy Lindsay (Bengal: European): Sir, there appears to be no quorum in the House.

Mr. President: I shall be very glad.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I suggest, Sir, that the bell be rung? We have some important motions.

Mr. President: As there is no quorum the House stands adjourned till to-morrow morning, eleven o'clock.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday, the 28th February, 1928.
