

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES

MONDAY, 25th FEBRUARY, 1929

Vol. I—No. 18

OFFICIAL REPORT



CONTENTS.

Questions and Answers.

Unstarred Questions and Answers.

Panel for the Standing Advisory Committee for the Department of Education, Health and Lands.

Election of a Panel for the Central Advisory Council for Railways.

The Railway Budget—*contd.*

List of Demands—*contd.*

Demand No. 1—Railway Board—*contd.*

Policy of not reducing rates and fares for short distances.

Racial distinctions in subordinate establishment.

Fine Funds.

Purchase of stores.

Pilgrim traffic.

DELHI
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS
1929

Price Five Annas.

CONTENTS.

VOLUME II—25th February to 20th March, 1929.

	PAGES.
Monday, 25th February, 1929—	
Questions and Answers	1157-85
Unstarred Questions and Answers	1185-89
Panel for the Standing Advisory Committee for the Department of Education, Health and Lands	1189
Election of a Panel for the Central Advisory Council for Railways	1189
The Railway Budget— <i>contd.</i>	
List of Demands— <i>contd.</i>	
Demand No. 1—Railway Board— <i>contd.</i>	1190-1230
Policy of not reducing rates and fares for short distances	1190-98
Racial distinctions in subordinate establishment	1198-1215
Fine Funds	1215-20
Purchase of stores	1220-27
Pilgrim traffic	1227-30
Tuesday, 26th February, 1929—	
Questions and Answers	1231-50
Short Notice Question and Answer	1251-53
Unstarred Questions and Answers	1253-54
The Workmen's Compensation (Amendment) Bill—Presentation of the Report of the Select Committee	1254
The Indian Income-tax (Amendment) Bill—Presentation of the Report of the Select Committee	1254
Message from His Excellency the Governor General	1254
The Railway Budget— <i>contd.</i>	
List of Demands— <i>contd.</i>	
Demand No. 1—Railway Board— <i>contd.</i>	1255-1304
Rates, freights and amenities	1255-88
Principle of training of technical and traffic probationers for Railway appointments, superior and subordinate... ..	1288-99
(1) Recruitment of staff to Railway Accounting, (2) Recruitment of the establishment of the Railway Board through examination under the Public Service Commission	1299-1304
Wednesday, 27th February, 1929—	
Questions and Answers	1305-06
Short Notice Question and Answer	1307-12
Unstarred Questions and Answers	1312
Statement of Business	1312-13

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Monday, 25th February, 1929.

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

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

EXPULSION FROM BALUCHISTAN OF HAFIZ SAID AHMED, A RESIDENT OF JULLUNDER.

720. *Mr. Muhammad Ismail Khan: (a) Is it a fact that Hafiz Said Ahmed a resident of Jullunder has been the *Imam* and *Mutwali* of the Juma Mosque of Quetta since 1888?

(b) Is it a fact that he was a nominated member of the Quetta Municipality for over ten years, and was a guest at the Coronation Durbar, Delhi, in 1911, and represented the Muhammadan community?

(c) Is it a fact that the Hafiz owned considerable landed property and occupied a respectable position in Quetta?

(d) Is it a fact that the Baluchistan Government granted a jagir of Rs. 50 per annum for the life time of the Hafiz?

(e) Is it a fact that, on the 4th May, 1924, he was turned out of Baluchistan, escorted by a Sub-Inspector of the Criminal Intelligence Department, without giving him any chance to see his friends and relatives or of making any arrangements for his journey?

(f) Is it a fact that the Hafiz, through his son, brought all the facts regarding his deportation to the notice of the Superintendent of Police, Quetta, the Political Agent, Quetta, and the Honourable the Agent to the Governor General in Baluchistan, and asked these officers for the supply of a copy of the orders regarding his deportation?

(g) Is it a fact that no copies having been supplied, he addressed the Government of India, regarding his deportation, and asked them to direct the Baluchistan Government to supply him with copies of his deportation orders?

(h) Did the Government of India make any enquiries on this application, and if so with what result?

(i) Will Government be pleased to state the names and rank of the persons responsible for this deportation?

(j) Is it a fact that, about a month and a half after the despatch of his application to the Government of India, the Hafiz was informed, through his son, that he was not deported out of Baluchistan by the Baluchistan Government and that he could return to Quetta?

(k) Is it a fact that, having been so informed, the Hafiz, on his return, wanted to file a criminal complaint against the persons (officials and non-officials), supposed to be responsible, and that the Baluchistan Government prevailed upon the Hafiz not to file such complaint, and that the Hafiz agreed to it?

(l) What were the reasons that prompted the Baluchistan Government to prevail on the Hafiz in such a way, and why did it not take action against the public servants in the employ of Government who were responsible for the deportation of the Hafiz?

(m) Is it a fact that, in reality, it was the Baluchistan Government which was responsible for the deportation of the Hafiz, but that as soon as the Hafiz brought all these things to the surface, the Baluchistan Government shrank from the responsibility, but dared not take any action against the Government servants, and prevailed upon the Hafiz not to file a complaint in a Court against the persons concerned?

(n) If the reply to part (m) is in the negative, what action do Government propose to take, at least against the Government servants responsible for the deportation of the Hafiz in such a disgraceful way?

Sir Denys Bray: The facts are in brief these. Four or five years ago Hafiz Said Ahmed, *Imam* and *Mutwali* of the Juma Masjid in Quetta, lost the confidence of the local Moslem community. Alleging unseemly conduct over the public conversion of Hindus and the abetment of the publication in his mosque of an obscene libel on Hinduism, they pressed him to resign his office. In the end a delegation of the Managing Committee of the Anjuman Islam waited on him, and as a result he yielded to pressure and left Baluchistan. Among the delegation were several Government officers; of their action in a private capacity no official notice was taken; the legal remedy lay in the Hafiz's hands.

On his return to Quetta a few weeks later he was restored by the Anjuman to the Imamship, on his assurance that he would thenceforth conduct the duties of his office in a seemly manner. In a petition relating to another matter he stated that he had intended to take legal action against the persons responsible for his removal, but had refrained because they had apologised. There is nothing on record to show that the statement is true, or that it was Government who advised him to adopt this cautious attitude. It is, however, on record that he had been warned by Government before his return that they would not tolerate any further attempts to create communal tension in Quetta.

TRANSFER TO STATE MANAGEMENT OF THE BENGAL AND NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

721. ***Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** (a) Are Government aware that the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council passed a Resolution only the other day, in the current session, recommending that the administration of the Bengal and North Western Railway should be taken over by the State?

(b) Are Government aware that the Bihar Provincial Conference, which met in Patna in December last, also passed a Resolution to the same effect?

(c) Has the attention of the Government been drawn to the *Searchlight* of Patna, dated the 10th February, 1929, setting forth some of the grievances of the public against the Bengal and North Western Railway,

and urging the desirability of State management, when the lease expires in 1982?

(d) Do Government now propose to give one year's notice terminating the lease, and take over the management of the Bengal and North Western Railway?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply I gave to a similar question by Mr. Ram Narayan Singh on Saturday.

(b) I understand from the Honourable Member that this is so.

(c) Yes.

(d) The question will come up for consideration about a year before the date on which notice of termination is required by the contract with the Company, i.e., the 31st December, 1981.

Diwan Chaman Lall: May I ask the Honourable Member why this matter cannot come up for consideration now?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Because, Sir, we can only take over the Bengal and North Western Railway, if it is decided to do so, on the 31st December, 1982. That is the only date on which termination can be effected under the contract.

Diwan Chaman Lall: May I ask the Honourable Member whether since this is a matter of policy, why that matter of policy cannot be considered now by the Railway Board and the Government?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: It is not merely a matter of policy. Assuming that it is decided to be desirable to terminate the contract, the question will arise whether the Government of India at that time will be able to put down the very large sum of money required.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Isn't that all the greater reason why they should begin to think of it now?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Personally I consider it would be a waste of time to consider it three years ahead.

Diwan Chaman Lall: May I ask the Honourable Member is it not the policy of Government to take over under State management the railways of this country?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: As I said in reply to a supplementary question on Saturday I do not recollect any statement by Government of its policy in those terms.

Diwan Chaman Lall: May I ask the Honourable Member whether the Government of India will take into consideration the strong feeling that exists in the country on this matter?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: That, Sir, when the matter comes to be considered, will certainly be a relevant consideration.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: Has not this House laid it down that the Company-managed railways should be taken over by the State after the expiry of their leases and has not this policy been accepted by the Government?

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I think, Sir, that the authoritative declaration on the subject will be found in the Resolution passed by this House at the time of the adoption of the scheme for the separation of Railway Finance. That is on record and any Honourable Member can see it. I remember substantially what that declaration was but I should be sorry to repeat it from memory because I should probably not get it quite accurately, and as it is on record and open to inspection I think it is sufficient here to refer to it.

Mr. Ram Narayan Singh: I want to know whether the Government are at present convinced of the necessity of taking the management of the railway under Government control.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: Mr. Parsons has explained that the matter will not come up for decision for another two years and I think it would be unwise of Government to commit themselves finally to an opinion at this stage. I should like to point out however, that on the three occasions on which it has been open for Government to take over the management of a company-managed line they have actually done so. Therefore I think the House may rest assured that they are fully sensible of the advantages which may result from taking over the management of a company-managed railway. But in view of the practical considerations it is impossible for Government at this stage to say what they will do or what they will not do.

CONFERMENT OF THE RIGHT TO VOTE ON INDIANS RESIDENT IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

722. ***Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** (a) Is it a fact that there are about 1,200 Indians settled in Canada, and that they live mostly in British Columbia, on trade and commerce?

(b) Is it a fact that, throughout British Columbia, Indians do not possess the full rights of citizenship, being deprived of the right to vote?

(c) What steps have Government taken or do they propose to take to confer on Indians there equal rights of citizenship?

Mr. G. S. Bajpai: (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to my reply to Diwan Chaman Lall's question No. 104, which is published on page 68 of the Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol. I, No. I, of the 28th January, 1929.

Diwan Chaman Lall: May I ask the Honourable Member whether the Government intend taking any steps to make a representation to the British Columbia Government in regard to this matter?

Mr. G. S. Bajpai: In the reply which I gave the other day, Sir, and which I think my Honourable friend has seen, I made it clear that the Government of India must await a suitable opportunity for making such a representation; and I also, in that reply, extended to him an invitation to let me know if, as the result of his own recent visit to British Columbia, he had found out whether the atmosphere was propitious for a representation being made now about that question. If that is so, we shall be quite prepared to take action.

Diwan Chaman Lall: May I ask the Honourable Member whether he has received any report of the activities of the Empire Parliamentary Delegation in British Columbia, and whether it is not a fact that the representatives of that Government gave an assurance that they would look into the matter and that at least the question of Dominion franchise would be settled?

Mr. G. S. Bajpai: No, Sir, we have received nothing yet from the Empire Parliamentary Association; nor have the representatives of this House and the other House, who went to Canada last year, yet sent any report as far as I know. But on the question of the Dominion franchise perhaps my Honourable friend will realise that there will not be much point in making a representation to the Government of British Columbia. We did make a representation to the Government of Canada in 1923. My Honourable friend must have seen the proceedings of the Imperial Conference of that year, and the Prime Minister then gave an assurance that the question of conferring Dominion franchise on Indians in British Columbia would be considered when the general question of franchise for the Dominions was taken up in 1925 or 1926. It was then taken up by the Parliamentary Committee and they came to the conclusion that they could not then recommend the extension of the franchise in British Columbia to Indians.

Sir Darcy Lindsay: Sir, arising out of the reply just given by my Honourable friend, in which he stated he had not seen any report sent in by members of the Delegation, I would like to advise him that I did send in a brief report to the Parliamentary Association and in regard to this particular point at issue

Mr. President: Has the Honourable Member any supplementary question to ask?

Sir Darcy Lindsay: I would like to put this supplementary question, Sir: Will the Honourable Member inquire of the Honourable Mr. Natesan as to the exact position which at present exists in connection with this matter?

Mr. G. S. Bajpai: I shall certainly put myself in touch with Mr. Natesan in order to ascertain from him what the position is.

GRIEVANCES OF EMPLOYEES ON THE OUDH AND ROHILKHAND SECTION OF THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

723. ***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** (a) Will Government please state what action was taken on the several telegrams submitted by the East Indian Railway Union, Moradabad, from different stations over the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway section of the East Indian Railway, namely, Lucknow, Partabgarh, Fyzabad, Bareilly, etc., regarding the alleged step-motherly treatment meted out to the employees of the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway section and the injustice done to them by depriving them of their rights and privileges and giving undue preference to the men on the East Indian Railway section?

(b) If no action was taken, will Government please state why?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) and (b): The allegations made by the East Indian Railway Union, Moradabad, all related to matters with which the

Agent is competent to deal. The Railway Board have ascertained from the Agent that the complaints are looked into; and they are satisfied that there has been no such discrimination against the employees of the old Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway as the Honourable Member's question would suggest.

FREQUENT TRANSFERS BETWEEN MORADABAD AND LUCKNOW OF MEMBERS OF THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY UNION.

724. *Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: (a) Are Government aware that the Divisional Superintendents, Lucknow and Moradabad, transferred most of the members of the staff from one station to the other, who took an active part in the affairs of their Union?

(b) Do Government propose to take any action in the matter, with a view to restrict the transfers of the men who are office bearers of the Union at least for a period of three years from the date of election?

(c) Are Government aware that men are allowed leave and passes to attend the meetings of the welfare committees at any time they are held, but when the Union requests the grant of leave and passes to the delegates elected from amongst its members to attend the meetings and sessions of the Union, the men are not given the opportunity to avail themselves of the concessions?

(d) Are Government aware that the leave and passes granted to the members of the welfare committees are not debited to the annual allowance for leave and passes of the employees concerned, but in the case of the Union, such leave and passes are to be debited to the annual allowance for leave and passes of the employees concerned?

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

(c) and (d). Government are aware that the railway employees attending union meetings are only allowed leave and passes within the limits of the ordinary rules or practice governing the grant of leave or passes to railway employees. They are not aware what the practice on the East Indian Railway is with regard to the grant of leave and passes to attend meetings of welfare committees, and are making inquiries from the Agent of the East Indian Railway. I will let the Honourable Member know the result.

Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: Are Government sure that the answer given by Government to parts (a) and (b) of my question is correct?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I am perfectly sure, Sir.

ALLEGED IRREGULAR PROMOTION OF BABU LAXMI NARAIN, TO BE A TRAIN EXAMINER.

725. *Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to an article headed "Moradabad notes", published in the *Weekly Mazdoor* issue No. 42, dated the 15th December, 1928, making therein certain allegations against one Babu Laxmi Narain, a train examiner of Khanalampura?

(b) Is it a fact that Babu Laxmi Narain, as alleged therein, was recently employed at Khanalampura as a clerk in the Carriage and Wagon Department on Rs. 85 per mensem, but has lately been raised to the status

of a train examiner on Rs. 55 per mensem, without ever being required to undergo any test at Asansol or possessing any other mechanical qualifications so essential for the appointment of a train examiner?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) Yes, by the Honourable Member's question.

(b) Promotions of this kind rest with the local railway authorities, who can be relied on not to promote a man who cannot carry out the duties of the post to which he is appointed.

DISRESPECTFUL TREATMENT OF THE HOLY KORAN BY THE FOREMAN OF THE POWER HOUSE, EAST INDIAN RAILWAY, MORADABAD.

726. ***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** (a) Are Government aware that, in October last, Mr. Fleming, Foreman, Power House, East Indian Railway, Moradabad, kicked off the Holy Koran, which the two sons of one, Abdul Aziz, a fitter on the East Indian Railway at Moradabad, were learning outside their quarter, which is situated near the Power House?

(b) Do Government propose to take any action in the matter?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) and (b). Inquiries are being made from the Agent of the East Indian Railway, and I will let the Honourable Member know the result.

FREQUENT DISMISSAL OF EMPLOYEES IN THE MORADABAD DIVISION OF THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

727. ***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** (a) Are Government aware that the punishment of dismissal and discharge is frequently being meted out to the employees in the Moradabad division of the East Indian Railway on one pretext or another?

(b) Do Government propose to make a thorough inquiry into the matter?

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

(b) No information has reached Government, which leads them to believe that any particular inquiry is necessary. They will, however, send a copy of the Honourable Member's question to the Agent of the East Indian Railway.

REINSTATEMENT OF NAND LAL, A POINTSMAN IN THE MORADABAD DIVISION OF THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

728. ***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** (a) Are Government aware that one Nand Lal, a pointsman in the Moradabad division of the East Indian Railway, was prosecuted under section 101 of the Indian Railways Act, but was discharged by the Sessions Judge, Shahjahanpur, on appeal, and that he approached the Divisional Superintendent, Moradabad as also the Agent, East Indian Railway, Calcutta, sending copies of the judgment to both the officers, with a view that he might be reinstated, but no reply was furnished to him?

(b) Do Government propose to order his reinstatement from the date he was discharged and issue orders to take back employees acquitted honourably by the trying magistrates forthwith?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) The case has not come to the notice of Government.

(b) No. The matter is one for the local railway authorities to decide, and from the Honourable Member's question, it appears that they have been already approached.

Diwan Chaman Lall: Do I take it that, in cases of this nature, it is not for the Honourable Member to take action whenever a man has been discharged or dismissed and not reinstated?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: No, Sir; it is not a matter for the Railway Board.

Diwan Chaman Lall: Is it not a fact that the Fundamental Rules cover questions of this nature?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Not to my recollection.

Diwan Chaman Lall: If they do, under section 53 or 54, do I take it that the Honourable Member will take action?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I am not quite sure what the Honourable Member means, or if he suggests that an appeal might lie to the Railway Board under those rules. If so, the appellant can certainly appeal to us.

INDISCRIMINATE PROMOTION IN THE MORADABAD DIVISION OF EMPLOYEES OF THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

729. ***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** (a) Is it a fact that, in the Moradabad Division, Messrs. Shirt and Bond, Loco and Carriage Inspectors respectively, who happen to be men from the East Indian Railway, have been promoted as Assistant Superintendent, Transportation, and Assistant Superintendent, Power, respectively, and that the latter had no experience of the office to which he was raised?

(b) Do Government propose to restrict such indiscriminate promotions?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) Mr. Shirt, Power Inspector, officiated as Assistant Superintendent, Power, on the Asansol Division for 5 weeks in 1927 and again on the Moradabad Division for 6 months in 1928. He reverted to his permanent grade as a subordinate on the 4th November, 1928.

Mr. Bond, Rolling Stock Inspector, carried out the duties of Assistant Superintendent, Technical, on the Moradabad Division from the 20th August to the 1st October, 1928, while the permanent incumbent was on the sick list. Mr. Bond was not recorded as officiating in the superior grade during this period.

(b) Promotions of this description are made by the Agent, having regard to the particular circumstances, and Government have no reason to believe that these promotions have not been made in the best interests of the service.

ADVERSE REMARKS MADE IN SERVICE BOOKS OF RAILWAY EMPLOYEES.

730. ***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** (a) Are Government aware that the Railway employees are not informed of the adverse remarks made in their service books at the time when entries are made, in order to afford them an opportunity of explaining the matter about which the entries were made?

(b) Are Government aware that copies of such entries are not supplied to them, even if required, to meet the charges against them on account of such entries?

(c) Do Government propose that the Railway employees be informed of the adverse remarks entered in their service books, and be afforded an opportunity to answer the charges forming the subject matter of the entries?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Government are not aware of the practice followed by the various railway administrations in this matter, but will make inquiries.

CONTRACT TO SELL SWEETS AT MORADABAD AND OTHER RAILWAY STATIONS.

731. ***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state the number of stations on the Oudh and Rohilkhand section on which B. N. Kapur has been given the contract to sell Indian sweets and other articles of food?

(b) Are Government aware that B. N. Kapur, the new contractor of eatables at Moradabad and other railway stations over the Oudh and Rohilkhand section, has sublet the contract, with the result that these sub-contractors have to sell the articles at a rate higher than that Mr. Kapur would have been able to sell at?

(c) Do Government propose to stop the sublease of such contracts?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I am obtaining the information from the Agent of the East Indian Railway and will pass it on to the Honourable Member.

EMPLOYMENT OF NURSES IN ALL IMPORTANT HOSPITALS ON THE OUDH AND ROHILKHAND SECTION OF THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

732. ***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** (a) Are Government aware that, in the railway hospitals at Moradabad and other stations on the Oudh and Rohilkhand section of the East Indian Railway, no nurses are kept to attend the patients in serious cases?

(b) Do Government propose to issue orders for the employment of nurses in all the important railway hospitals on the Oudh and Rohilkhand section of the East Indian Railway?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) So far as Government are aware, this is correct.

(b) It is within the Agent's powers to appoint nurses, if he thinks it necessary. I am sending him a copy of the Honourable Member's question.

TRANSFER TO MORADABAD OF MR. P. C. LOBO, HEAD TRAIN EXAMINER, DEHRA DUN.

733. ***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** (a) Are Government aware that Mr. P. C. Lobo, head train examiner, Dehra Dun, has been transferred without any justification, to a subordinate position at Moradabad, and a far junior man has been sent to work in his place at Dehra Dun?

(b) Are Government aware that Mr. Lobo is being put to all sorts of hardships and inconveniences?

(c) Do Government propose to enquire into the circumstances that led to his transfer?

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

(c) The transfers of subordinates are matters which must necessarily be left to the local railway authorities.

RULES FOR LEAVE OF EMPLOYEES IN THE LILLOOAH WORKSHOP, EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

734. ***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** (a) Is it a fact that the Establishment Officer in the Lillooah Workshop of the East Indian Railway has recently enforced a rule, by which an employee, who is absent without a Doctor's certificate for even three days, is to be dismissed?

(b) If so, do Government propose to get this order cancelled?

(c) Is it a fact that, in the Lillooah Workshop no written order is given to a worker going on leave, but he has to content himself with the verbal orders only of his superior officers and this often leads to misunderstandings?

(d) Are Government aware that this is causing great hardship, and that many employees, due to misunderstandings, have had to lose their employment even? Do Government propose to issue distinct and clear instructions, directing the grant of written orders whenever leave is granted?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I am making inquiries on the subject from the Agent of the East Indian Railway and asking him to consider whether the instructions suggested in part (d) of the Honourable Member's question should not be issued if they are not already in force.

CANCELLATION OF THE INCREMENT OF PAY OF EMPLOYEES IN THE LILLOOAH WORKSHOPS.

735. ***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** (a) Is it a fact that, in October last, the increment of pay of the Lillooah Workshop men, after it had been entered in the paysheet, was suddenly cancelled without assigning any reason?

(b) If so, do Government propose to place on the table the reasons for such a drastic step?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: The Railway Board have received no information to this effect. They will, however, inquire from the Agent of the East Indian Railway.

GRANT OF LEAVE AND PASSES TO THE INDIAN STAFF IN THE ASANSOL DIVISION OF THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

736. ***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** (a) Are Government aware that leave and passes to the Indian staff in the Asansol division of the East Indian Railway are seldom granted in time, even on urgent and important business, whereas such privileges are always open to the Europeans and Anglo-Indians?

(b) Do Government propose to issue orders for the prompt grant of leave and passes to the Indian staff and their relief?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: On the more general question of the grant of leave on the East Indian Railway, I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply which I gave to Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan's unstarred question No. 140 on the 28th of January, 1929. The position on the Asansol Division will no doubt receive consideration in the course of the investigation which is now being made.

On the suggestion made by the Honourable Member that there is inequality of treatment between employees of different communities, I am making inquiries from the Agent of the East Indian Railway; I think it most unlikely.

GRIEVANCES OF CERTAIN EMPLOYEES AT ASANSOL, EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

737. *Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to paragraphs 1 and 2 of the letter signed "Sufferer" which appeared in the 42nd issue of the *Weekly Mazdoor*, dated the 15th December, 1928, published under the head "Troubles of Asansol staff" regarding the grant of grade promotions, restoration of reduced pay, etc.?

(b) If so, will the Government be pleased to state what steps, if any, were taken in the matter?

(c) If not, why not?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) Yes, by the Honourable Member's question.

(b) and (c). Government do not propose to take any action. The matter is within the Agent's competence.

ALLEGED IRREGULAR PROMOTION OF CERTAIN JUNIOR CLERKS ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

738. *Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to an article under the head "Asansol Notes" published in the *Weekly Mazdoor*, No. 41, dated the 10th November, 1928, on page 8, regarding the appointment of 4 junior clerks as Assistant Superintendents?

(b) Is it a fact that some of these men have not passed any examination beyond that of an ordinary ticket collector, and that they have put in only three or four years' service?

(c) Is it also a fact that they have superseded dozens of senior-most and well qualified men in the division?

(d) Will Government be pleased to state the circumstances under which they had specially to be appointed to act as Assistant Superintendents?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) Yes, by the Honourable Member's question.

(b), (c) and (d). Appointments of this nature are made by the local administration, who may be trusted to appoint the most suitable men after taking all circumstances into consideration.

PAYMENT OF PENSIONS OF MILITARY PENSIONERS OF PARGANA JOHAR THROUGH THE POST OFFICE.

739. *Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: (a) Is it a fact that the military pensioners of Pargana Johar have to go as far as Pithoragarh Treasury (Almora District), which is at a distance of not less than 40 miles, to receive their pensions?

(b) Are Government prepared to consider the question of the payment of pensions of the military pensioners of Pargana Johar through the agency of the post office?

Mr. G. M. Young: (a) Some of the pensioners draw their pensions from the Pithoragarh Treasury and some from the Almora Sub-Treasury.

(b) The existing orders allow pensioners drawing Rs. 50 and less to elect to have their pensions paid by postal money order on presenting declarations to that effect in person to the treasury officers.

PAY AND ALLOWANCES OF MAIL-RUNNERS OF PHARIJONG POST OFFICE.

740. ***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** (a) What is the monthly salary of the mail-runners of Pharijong Post Office (Tibet)?

(b) Do they receive any special allowance?

(c) Have they to perform their duties even when snow falls?

(d) Do Government propose to consider the question of granting them special allowances, considering the nature of the hard work they have to perform?

Mr. H. A. Sams: (a) Rs. 21.

(b) Yes, fuel allowance at Rs. 1-8-0, clothing at Rs. 8-11-0 and ration allowance at Rs. 15 per month in addition to their pay.

(c) Yes, unless the road is impassable by reason of a heavy fall of snow.

(d) Government do not consider that any further allowances are justified.

INADEQUATE NUMBER OF POSTMEN IN THE MANSIARI POST OFFICE, ALMORA DISTRICT.

741. ***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** (a) Is it a fact that four postmen have been serving in the Mansiari Post Office (Almora District) every year since 1924 for a period of 8 months only, after which only two postmen are left to serve in the Post Office for the remaining part of the year?

(b) Is it a fact that, the remaining two men cannot work satisfactorily throughout the town, owing to the work being heavy?

(c) Do Government propose to maintain a sufficient number of postmen at the above office throughout the whole year?

Mr. H. A. Sams: (a) The fact is not exactly as stated by the Honourable Member. Prior to 1926 the number of village postmen attached to the office was four, viz., two throughout the year, and two season appointments for four months of each year. One of the season appointments, along with the village served by its incumbent, was subsequently transferred to the Milam Post Office.

(b) Yes.

(c) Two additional village postmen have already been employed experimentally with effect from the 10th December, 1928, and their appointments will be confirmed if they prove to be justified.

PAY OF GRADUATE EMPLOYEES OF THE POST OFFICE.

742. ***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state the reasons why the concessional pay to graduates from 1st August, 1928, has been withdrawn, and when the question is to be decided finally?

(b) What will be the policy of Government towards those candidates who were approved when this question was not under consideration, but were confirmed after the question was brought in for deliberation on the old scale of pay?

(c) Do Government propose to take retrospective measures in reverting such appointments to the lowest minimum of the time scale pay?

(d) If so, in how many cases, if any, has the reversion been made?

(e) Has the Accountant General, Posts and Telegraphs, objected to the excess payments after January, 1929 and those already drawn since 1st August, 1928, when the order is held in abeyance for the time being? If so why?

(f) Is it not a fact that the action adopted by the Government in this direction is detrimental to the interests of the graduate employees in the post office?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (a) Orders cancelling the concession were issued because it was represented to Government that it was no longer necessary to offer special terms to attract graduates to the service.

(b) and (c). These orders have been held in abeyance to some extent pending further consideration of the whole question.

(d) The information is not readily available but is being collected.

(e) Yes, pending the receipt of the further orders of the Government of India. The Audit Office objection will be taken into consideration in issuing final orders.

(f) Does not arise.

Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: Are Government aware whether a graduate candidate on the meagre pay of Rs. 35 a month?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: I did not quite catch the Honourable Member's question.

Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: Will Government say if a meagre salary of Rs. 35 a month is sufficient for a graduate to live upon?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: I did not know that from the point of view of absolute cost of living there was much difference between the requirements of a graduate and a non-graduate doing the same kind of work.

Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: Are Government aware that there is a difference in the status of living of a graduate and a non-graduate?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: No, Sir; I was not aware of that.

Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: Why do Government then prefer a graduate to a non-graduate?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: That, Sir, is for other reasons.

Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar: May I know from the Honourable Member whether he will apply the same test of cost of living between himself and his clerk?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: That, Sir, is a different question altogether.

ASSISTANCE RENDERED BY THE STATE TO THE CHILDREN OF EUROPEAN AND ANGLO-INDIAN EMPLOYEES OF THE OUDH AND ROHILKHAND SECTION, EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

743. ***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** (a) Will Government be pleased to place on the table a list of schools and colleges in hill stations in which the children of European and Anglo-Indian employees of the East Indian Railway on the Oudh and Rohilkhand section are given assistance by the State in their board and tuition fee, medical attendance fee and so on?

(b) Will Government be also pleased to give the rates of assistance per child rendered to the children of European and Anglo-Indian employees reading in these schools?

(c) Do Government intend to lay down a similar scale of assistance for the Indian employees of the East Indian Railway on the Oudh and Rohilkhand section?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) and (b). Government have no list of the particular hill schools and colleges in which the children of employees of the old Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway are receiving assistance. I would, however, refer the Honourable Member to the information on the subject on pages 25, 26 and 82 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.

(c) As the Honourable Member is aware, the assistance to be given to railway employees for the education of their children has recently been discussed by the Central Advisory Council for Railways. The future policy decided upon is described in a statement which was laid on the table on 19th February, 1929.

SCALE OF PAY FOR OFFICE CLERKS ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

744. ***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** Will Government be pleased to state the reasons why the suggestion of the East Indian Railway administration, fixing a scale of pay of office clerks from Rs. 40 to 100 for the entire system, was turned down by the Railway Board?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: No such suggestion was received by the Railway Board from the East Indian Railway Administration.

ALLEGED RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN FILLING THE POST OF SUPERINTENDENT, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE, DELHI.

745. ***Mr. S. O. Mitra:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state if it is a fact that the post of Superintendent, Deputy Commissioner's Office, Delhi, is reserved for Anglo-Indians? If so, for what reasons? Are qualified Indians not available to fill the said appointment?

(b) Is it a fact that, even in leave arrangements, senior Indian clerks are debarred from officiating in place of the Superintendent and that the services of a junior Anglo-Indian clerk are obtained from outside to fill the post? If so, why is such racial discrimination observed in filling the said ministerial appointment.

The Honourable Mr. J. Orerar: The answer to both (a) and (b) is in the negative.

PAY AND ALLOWANCES OF THE STAFF OF THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE, DELHI.

746. ***Mr. S. C. Mitra:** (a) What is the scale of pay and allowances of the Superintendent, Head Clerk, 2nd Clerk, and other clerks of the Deputy Commissioner's Office, Delhi?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state if it is a fact that the clerical establishment of the Deputy Commissioner's Office, Delhi, memorialised H. E. the Viceroy more than two years ago for the revision of their inadequate scales of pay? If so, is it a fact that the said memorials are still lying in the Chief Commissioner's Office and that nothing has been done to redress the grievances of the clerks?

The Honourable Mr. J. Orerar: (a) I will send the Honourable Member a statement giving the information required.

(b) I have ascertained that a number of memorials addressed to His Excellency the Viceroy were submitted by the Deputy Commissioner to the Chief Commissioner in June 1927. In December 1927, the Chief Commissioner informed the Deputy Commissioner that, in the absence of more detailed arguments and proofs, he was not prepared to refer the case to the Government of India. No further representation has since been received by the Chief Commissioner.

SUPERSESSION OF SENIOR CLERKS IN THE OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, DELHI.

747. ***Mr. S. C. Mitra:** (a) Is it a fact that one, Mr. Mital, was appointed as a junior clerk on Rs. 45 per mensem last year, and within a few months promoted as Head Clerk in the Rs. 125—175 scale, over the head of a large number of qualified senior clerks, having 15 to 20 years service to their credit, in the Deputy Commissioner's Office, Delhi?

(b) Is it a fact that the appointment of Mr. Mital is causing great discontent amongst the clerks in the said office?

(c) If so, are Government prepared to stop such supersessions in the future?

The Honourable Mr. J. Orerar: (a) Mr. Mital, who is an M. A. with Honours, was appointed on Rs. 45—2—95 on 21st October, 1927, and was specially chosen to officiate as 2nd Clerk (not Head Clerk) an appointment which is filled by selection.

(b) Government have no information to this effect.

(c) Does not arise.

ACCEPTANCE OF "DALIS" IN THE OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER,
DELHI.

748. *Mr. S. O. Mitra: (a) Is it a fact that the practice of accepting *dalis*, etc., is prevalent in the office of the Deputy Commissioner, Delhi?

(b) Is it a fact that the Home Department of the Government of India lately issued a memorandum prohibiting the acceptance of *dalis* by Government servants? If so, will Government be pleased to state if the instructions in the said memorandum are not applicable in the Delhi Province?

The Honourable Mr. J. Crerar: (a) The answer is in the negative.

(b) Presumably the Honourable Member is referring to the Home Department notification dated the 17th March, 1925, with which was published Rule 2 of the Government Servants' Conduct Rules regulating the acceptance of presents by Government servants. These rules apply to all Government servants including those in the Delhi Province.

FILLING OF OFFICIATING VACANCIES OF SUPERINTENDENTS OF POST OFFICES.

749. *Mr. S. O. Mitra: (a) Is it a fact that there are some clerks in the office of the Director General of Posts and Telegraphs, who have passed the Postal Superintendentship Examination and that their names are attached to different postal circles for purposes of officiating appointment as Superintendent of Post Offices?

(b) Is it a fact that lately, on several occasions, these passed candidates have not been allowed to officiate when their chances came and their services were required by Heads of Circles?

(c) If so, on how many such occasions were they spared during the last six months, and on how many occasions were they not spared, with reasons for the same?

(d) Will Government be pleased to state how these officiating vacancies were eventually filled up, and by whom, that is, whether by juniors in preference to seniors?

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

(b) Yes.

(c) None were spared during the last six months. The question arose in connexion with five vacancies, which occurred only for periods of two months or less, and in none of these would it have been either economical or convenient to employ clerks from the Director-General's Office to fill them.

(d) The vacancies were filled by the next available seniors.

REDUCTION OF STAFF OF THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF POSTS
AND TELEGRAPHS RECOMMENDED BY RAI BAHADUR J. P. GANGULI.

750. *Mr. S. O. Mitra: (a) Will Government be pleased to state when Rai Bahadur J. P. Ganguli, Special Officer, submitted his report on the recent inspections of the office of the Director General of Posts and Telegraphs?

(b) Is it a fact that his report has disclosed that the office is over-staffed?

(c) If so, how many clerks have been found to be surplus in his opinion and who is responsible for maintaining this surplus staff so long?

(d) Has any reduction of clerks been effected since then? If so, how and how many have been reduced?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: The Report, which was submitted in August last, but has not been published, and whose contents therefore cannot properly be known to the Honourable Member, is under the consideration of Government, along with the Director-General's observations on the proposals.

Kumar Ganganand Sinha: May I know, Sir, when the Report is likely to be published?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: Government have not yet arrived at any decision on that point.

Kumar Ganganand Sinha: May I know, Sir, if the Report will be published at all or not?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: I cannot be a prophet, Sir.

MEMORIAL TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FROM THE CLERICAL STAFF OF THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS.

751. ***Mr. S. C. Mitra:** (a) With reference to their reply to unstarred question No. 546 in the Legislative Assembly on 24th September, 1928, will Government be pleased to state whether the memorials submitted by the clerical staff of the office of the Director General of Posts and Telegraphs, in July last have since been forwarded to the Secretary of State?

(b) If not, will the Government be pleased to state:

(i) the reason for this long delay;

(ii) how the case stands at present;

(iii) how long it will take to forward the memorials to the Secretary of State?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (a) No.

(b) (i) and (ii). The various points raised in the memorials are still under examination by the Director-General.

(iii) The Director-General hopes to submit the case to Government in the near future, when Government will dispose of the memorials as expeditiously as circumstances permit.

Diwan Chaman Lall: How long does the Honourable Member intend to take before submitting this memorial?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: I cannot say.

Diwan Chaman Lall: Is it because that the Honourable Member refuses to be a prophet in this case?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: Quite so, Sir.

Diwan Chaman Lall: Does it not reflect on the efficiency of your administration if you held up memorials of this description?

(The Honourable the President called Mr. Belvi to put his question.)

REASON FOR DISCONTINUANCE OF THE ISSUE OF POSTAGE STAMPS IN BOOK-
LETS.

752. *Mr. D. V. Belvi: (a) Will Government be pleased to state since when and why they have discontinued to issue to the public booklets containing half an anna and one anna postage stamps together and booklets containing half an anna postage stamps alone?

(b) Have Government been able to effect any saving of public money since the discontinuance? If so, how much?

(c) Will Government be pleased to state if they are aware of the inconvenience caused to the public by the discontinuance of the old practice? If so, do they propose to take any measures in the matter?

Mr. H. A. Sams: (a) The issue of half anna booklets and mixed booklets of half anna and one anna stamps was discontinued from August 1922. There was little or no public demand for them.

(b) Yes, on the manufacturing charge for the booklets. No estimate however of the saving effected is available.

(c) The answer to both parts of the question is in the negative.

EXPENDITURE ON NEW DELHI.

753. *Mr. D. V. Belvi: Will Government be pleased to state:—

(a) the total amount of money spent hitherto on the acquisition of the site of New Delhi, and the public buildings, roads, gardens and the like there?

(b) the amount of money that will probably be required hereafter to complete the whole scheme?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (a) The expenditure up to 31st March, 1929, is estimated at Rs. 18 crores 55 lakhs.

(b) Further expenditure anticipated is Rs. 1 crore 30 lakhs.

Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar: Is the Honourable Member aware, Sir, that in spite of such heavy expenditure, there is not a sufficient number of garages for motors of Honourable Members on this side?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: I am not aware of that, Sir.

Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar: May I mention for the Honourable Member's information, that one Honourable Member on this side of the House has improvised a tent for rent, and may I know if the rent will be paid by the Honourable Member on this side or on that side?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: It will certainly not be paid by the Honourable Member on this side.

DISMISSAL OF A HEAD CLERK IN THE POSTAL SERVICE.

754. *Kumar Ganganand Sinha: (a) With reference to the answer given to Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava's starred question No. 598 on 17th September, 1928, will Government be pleased to lay on the table the record of the inquiry of the Head Clerk's case?

(b) If not, how could a mere departmental inquiry give the Honourable Member and me information which we wanted? How do the Government presume that no useful purpose would be served by giving the information to the House?

(c) If the departmental inquiry papers could not be laid on the table of the House, will Government be pleased to give replies to my questions No. 712 and Nos. 715 to 721 put on 31st August, 1927?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (a), (b) and (c). Government regret that they are not prepared to supplement the reply already given by the Honourable Mr. McWatters, to starred question No. 598 on the 17th September, 1928.

Kumar Ganganand Sinha: Does not the Honourable Member know that this question was put because no answers were given to the question by Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: I know the position fully well, and I would ask the Honourable Member to read the answer given by the Honourable Mr. McWatters on the 17th September, 1928.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: Will the Honourable Member kindly read the answer if he has a copy of it at hand?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: I do not propose, Sir, to waste the time of the House.

Kumar Ganganand Sinha: May I point out to the Honourable Member, Sir, that the Honourable Mr. McWatters gave no reply whatsoever to the previous question, and it is because of that that this question has been put?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: I have read the present question and I have read the reply given by the Honourable Mr. McWatters, and I have nothing to add to the reply I have already given. The Honourable Member knows fully well that this is a very old case, a case which happened in 1923, and that it has thereafter come under the personal examination of two or three successive Members of the Executive Council.

Kumar Ganganand Sinha: Does not the Honourable Member know that this House has been kept absolutely in the dark from the very beginning about this matter?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: I do not admit that, Sir.

Kumar Ganganand Sinha: Does the Honourable Member imply that he is not prepared to disclose anything about this matter?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: As I have just said, I have nothing to add to what I have already stated, because in the opinion of Government the matter is not one of public interest.

Kumar Ganganand Sinha: Is it the Government alone who are to judge whether a certain matter is one of public interest or not?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: I have expressed the opinion of Government.

CASE OF MR. HARIHAR PRASAD SHAW.

755. ***Kumar Ganganand Sinha:** (a) Has the attention of the Government been drawn to paragraph 10 of the enclosures to the Government of India, in the Home Department, No. 50-1682, dated 18th November 1888 (page 293 of Bihar and Orissa Board's Miscellaneous Rules 1919) which deals with the removal of men from public service on mere suspicion?

(b) Was that taken into consideration while deciding the appeal of Mr. Harihar Prasad Shaw to His Excellency the Viceroy of India?

(c) If so, what charges have been proved against him and why were not those charges brought against him in a court of law?

(d) If he has been removed on mere suspicion why was the paragraph in the circular disregarded?

(e) If the paragraph has not been disregarded, what proportionate pension has been granted to him?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (a) Yes: the attention of Government was drawn to the document mentioned, which is a Resolution of the Government of Bombay, in the year 1888.

(b) It has no bearing on the case of Mr. Harihar Prasad Shaw and was accordingly not taken into consideration in dealing with it.

(c), (d) and (e). Do not arise.

NAMES OF SUPERINTENDENT OF POST OFFICES AND OTHER OFFICIALS APPOINTED ON 23RD DECEMBER, 1928, IN THE BIHAR AND ORISSA CIRCLE.

756. ***Kumar Ganganand Sinha:** With reference to the answer given to my starred question No. 166 on the 29th January, 1929, will the Government be pleased to state:—

(a) the name of the Superintendent of Post Offices appointed in the Bihar and Orissa circle on the 23rd December, 1928?

(b) the name of the probationary Superintendent confirmed in the Bihar and Orissa circle, and

(c) the name of the outsider appointed in the resultant vacancy?

Mr. H. A. Sams: (a) and (b). Sardar Harbans Singh.

(c) Mr. K. M. Mehta.

ISSUE OF THIRD CLASS RETURN TICKETS ON STATE RAILWAYS.

757. ***Mr. Siddheshwar Prasad Sinha:** Will Government be pleased to state the reasons for not issuing third class ordinary return tickets at reduced rates in the State Railways as is done for higher classes?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: The issue of third class return tickets at reduced rates is likely to lead to fraudulent travelling, which is already far too prevalent.

ISSUE OF RETURN TICKETS AT CONCESSION RATES ON RAILWAYS OTHER THAN STATE RAILWAYS.

758. ***Mr. Siddheshwar Prasad Sinha:** (a) Will Government state if all railways issue all kinds of return tickets at concession rates as are issued by State Railways?

(b) If the reply be in the negative, will Government be pleased to state the names of railways together with the kind of return tickets and the classes for which they are not allowed in private railways?

(c) Do Government propose to issue instructions to private railways to follow the example of the State Railways in respect of return tickets at concession rates?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) The answer is in the negative. The description of return tickets issued by various railways differs in order to suit the varying conditions on different railways.

(b) This information can be obtained from the time-tables and coaching guides of the various railways.

(c) No. The matter is within the competence of railway administrations, who are fully alive to the desirability of issuing tickets at concessional rates, when, by doing so, they are likely to obtain more traffic.

ANNUAL YIELD OF COTTON FROM CERTAIN AREAS FOR THE YEARS
1921 TO 1928.

759. ***Mr. Siddheshwar Prasad Sinha:** Will Government be pleased to state the annual yield of cotton for the years 1921 to 1928:

- (a) within the town and Island of Bombay,
- (b) within the radius of 100 miles from Bombay,
- (c) within each of the districts of Bombay Presidency,
- (d) within each of the other provinces?

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: All the information which Government possess is contained in the publication entitled "Estimates of Area and Yield of Principal Crops in India, 1927-28" a copy of which is in the Library.

Sir Victor Sassoon: Has cotton ever been grown within the town of Bombay, and if so, will Government kindly give us information as to where the cotton fields exist? (Laughter.)

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I carefully refrained in my answer from endorsing the suggestion in that clause of the question. (Laughter.)

NUMBER OF BALES OF COTTON GROWN IN BOMBAY PRESIDENCY CONSUMED
LOCALLY AND NUMBER EXPORTED.

760. ***Mr. Siddheshwar Prasad Sinha:** 1. How many bales out of the total stock of cotton growing in the Bombay Presidency have been consumed during the years 1921 to 1928:

- (a) by the cotton producing centres,
- (b) by the Bombay mills out of the cotton growing in the Bombay Presidency?

2. (a) How many bales of the said cotton growing in the Bombay Presidency are sent over to any and if so, which of the places in British India?

(b) How many bales of the said cotton growing in the Bombay Presidency have been shipped to any and if so, which of the foreign countries?

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: The information desired by the Honourable Member is not in the possession of Government.

QUANTITY AND INTENDED DESTINATION OF COTTON BROUGHT TO BOMBAY
FROM THE COTTON-GROWING CENTRES IN BRITISH INDIA.

761. ***Mr. Siddheshwar Prasad Sinha**: Will Government be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of bales brought to the Port of Bombay from each of the cotton growing centres of India annually during the years 1921 to 1928;
- (b) and of those how many bales were for direct shipment to any and if so, which of the foreign countries;
- (c) how many of these were for local consumption by the Bombay mills; and
- (d) how many were for shipment to any and if so, which British India territories or to any and if so, which Native States and in what numbers?

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: The information desired by the Honourable Member is not in the possession of Government.

THE BOMBAY COTTON CONTRACT ACT OF 1922.

762. ***Mr. Siddheshwar Prasad Sinha**: (a) Will Government be pleased to state with what object and for whose benefit the Bombay Cotton Contract Act, XIV of 1922, was passed by the Government of Bombay?

(b) Is it not a fact that the Bombay Cotton Contract Act, XIV of 1922, contravenes the most important provisions of the Indian Contract Act and the Government of India Act?

(c) Has the said Act or have any rules or bye-laws framed thereunder, provided any, and if so what, safeguards for the interests of the cotton growers of the Presidency, and of the cotton trade of India?

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: (a) The Honourable Member is referred to the Statement of Objects and Reasons appended to the Bombay Cotton Contracts Bill which was published in the Bombay Gazette of the 21st July, 1922, Part V.

(b) No. I would invite the attention of the Honourable Member to the Preamble of the Act.

(c) The Act provides for the regulation and control of transactions in cotton in the city of Bombay only.

Mr. Siddheshwar Prasad Sinha: Is it not a fact that the Act mentioned in clause (a) of the question was a war measure?

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I cannot imagine what war caused a war measure in 1922.

Mr. Siddheshwar Prasad Sinha: Is it not a fact that the Act was brought up for consideration and passed shortly after the Act of 1919 was repealed?

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I should like to have notice of that question, Sir.

PROVISION OF A PLATFORM AT KANKATHER RAILWAY STATION.

763. ***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub**: (a) Are Government aware that Kankather railway station on the Delhi-Moradabad line which is a station

for the landing of pilgrims to the Ganges bathing fair has got no platform, to the great inconvenience of passengers specially women and children?

(b) Do Government propose to issue immediate orders for the construction of a platform at the above station?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Government are not aware of the arrangements at this particular station, but will send a copy of the Honourable Member's question to the Agent of the East Indian Railway, in order that he may consider whether any improvement is required.

CONSTRUCTION OF A RAILWAY SIDING AT SHAHZADNAGER STATION ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

764. ***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** (a) Are Government aware that there are no sidings on the Shahzadnager railway station on the East Indian Railway which causes great inconvenience to the traders in loading their goods?

(b) Do Government propose to issue orders for the construction of sidings at the above station?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Government are not aware of the arrangements at this particular station, but have sent a copy of the Honourable Member's question to the Agent of the East Indian Railway in order that he may consider whether any improvement is required.

EARLY OPENING OF THE OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL SUPERINTENDENT, EAST INDIAN RAILWAY, MORADABAD.

765. ***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** (a) Are Government aware of the fact that at Moradabad the Office of the Divisional Superintendent, East Indian Railway opens now at 9-30 A.M. instead of at 10-30 A.M. the time which had been in force before?

(b) Will Government be pleased to give reasons for this change which is different from the timings observed in all Government offices throughout the United Provinces?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) and (b). Government have no information on the matter, but, if the position is as stated by the Honourable Member, they presume that the Divisional Superintendent has altered the hour at which his office opens to suit the requirements of the work.

SUPERIOR COMFORTS PROVIDED FOR EUROPEAN THAN FOR INDIAN PASSENGERS ON THE BOMBAY, BARODA AND CENTRAL INDIA RAILWAY, METRE GAUGE SECTION.

766. ***Mr. Mukhtar Singh:** (a) Is it a fact that on the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway, metre gauge, a distinction between Indian and European passengers is drawn and more comforts are provided for Europeans than for Indians?

(b) If the answer be in the affirmative, will Government be pleased to state the reasons why such a distinction has been drawn and maintained?

(c) If the answer be in the negative, will Government be pleased to state if on different stations on the said railway waiting rooms on the stations are separately provided for Europeans and Indians and that those for the former are better fitted, furnished and looked after than the latter?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a), (b) and (c). Government are not aware that any such distinction as suggested by the Honourable Member is made on the metre gauge system of the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway. They are asking the Agent of the Railway for an early report on the subject.

Mr. Mukhtar Singh: May I know if such waiting rooms do exist at Rewari and Mount Abu?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Government have no information on that point. That is why they have inquired from the Agent.

APPOINTMENT OF AN INDIAN MEMBER TO THE RAILWAY BOARD.

767. ***Mr. Mukhtar Singh:** (a) Is it a fact that Government are contemplating the appointment of a new Member to the Railway Board?

(b) If the answer be in the affirmative, will Government be pleased to state if an Indian will be appointed this time?

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: The Honourable Member is now aware of the position from the remarks which I made at the close of the general discussion on the Railway Budget on February the 21st.

Mr. H. G. Cocke: May I ask the Honourable Member whether the large number of questions dealing with sweetmeats, return tickets, and so on, are in part responsible for the creation of this new post in the Railway Board? (Laughter.)

Mr. K. Ahmed: That question does not arise. (Laughter.)

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I cannot trace the connection.

PUBLICATION FOR SALE OF THE DECISIONS OF THE RATES ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

768. ***Mr. Mukhtar Singh:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state if they publish the decisions of the Rates Advisory Committee for public information and they are kept for sale to the public?

(b) If the answer be in the negative, will Government be pleased to consider the advisability of doing so in future?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Orders have been issued that the Reports of the Railway Rates Advisory Committee, with the Government of India's orders thereon, should be published and made available for sale to the public.

CONSTRUCTION OF A BRIDGE AT THE CROSSING OF THE NORTH WESTERN AND EAST INDIAN RAILWAY ON THE MEERUT BAGPAT ROAD.

769. ***Mr. Mukhtar Singh:** (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to the inconvenience felt by the road traffic passengers by being held up for a long time at the crossing of the North Western Railway and the East Indian Railway on the Meerut-Bagpat Road?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state the average number of trains (passengers and goods) passing by this crossing during 24 hours?

(c) Will Government be pleased to state the time for which the traffic is held up each time a train passes by this crossing?

(d) Will Government be pleased to state by what time this inconvenience is likely to be removed by the construction of a bridge at this crossing?

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

(b) 32.

(c) and (d). I doubt whether it will be possible to ascertain the average time that traffic is held up at this crossing, but I am sending a copy of the Honourable Member's question to the Agent of the North Western Railway in order that he may consider whether any action is necessary.

Mr. Mukhtar Singh: Will the Honourable Member kindly ask the Agent to inform me of the result of his investigation?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I am not asking the Agent to investigate the matter. I do not think it is in the least likely that it will be possible to ascertain the average time traffic is held up at any particular crossing.

INCONVENIENT ARRANGEMENT OF THE MUZAFFARNAGAR RAILWAY STATION.

770. ***Mr. Mukhtar Singh:** (a) Is it a fact that the new *mandi* in Muzaffarnagar is situated very close to the Railway station and that there is no convenient way for the passengers to reach the station?

(b) Is it a fact that generally passengers have to cross the railway line while going to or coming from the new *mandi*?

(c) Will Government be pleased to state the average number of accidents (1) killed, (2) injured, which occur during a year?

(d) Will Government be pleased to state the number of accidents which occurred during the last year?

(e) Will Government be pleased to state what arrangement they are contemplating to remove this inconvenience?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Government have not at present got the information asked for, but it is being obtained from the Agent of the North Western Railway, and on receipt I will send it to the Honourable Member.

PROVISION OF ACCOMMODATION AND OTHER NECESSARIES FOR THE LABOURERS OF THE BALLY BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION WORKS.

771. ***Mr. S. O. Mukherjee:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state the number of skilled and unskilled labourers, male and female employed in the Bally Bridge Construction Works?

(b) What steps have been taken to give immediate medical aid to the injured cases in the above works? Have any temporary hospitals been opened for the purpose? If not, do Government propose to take any steps in the matter?

(c) Will Government be pleased to state what steps have been taken for the dwelling accommodation and supply of pure drinking water for the workers of the Bally Bridge Construction Works?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Inquiries have been made on the points raised by the Honourable Member, and I will let him have a reply as quickly as possible.

SUBSTITUTION OF A CONTRIBUTORY PROVIDENT FUND FOR PENSION FOR MINISTERIAL OFFICERS OF THE GOVERNMENT.

772. ***Mr. S. C. Mukherjee:** Do Government propose to substitute a Contributory Provident Fund system for the existing pension scheme for the ministerial officers under the Central Government?

The Honourable Sir George Schuster: I would refer the Honourable Member to the second paragraph of my reply to Mr. Rahimtullah's starred question No. 381 on the 4th of this month.

COURSES OF STUDY IN HIGH SCHOOLS IN SIMLA AND NEW DELHI.

773. ***Mr. S. C. Mukherjee:** (a) Do Government propose to lay on the table a statement showing the number of boys who came down from Simla on account of the move of the Government of India and sought admission in the local High Schools, New Delhi, during the last three years?

(b) Is it a fact that the courses of study differ considerably in higher classes in the Simla and New Delhi schools which causes great inconvenience to the students and expense to the parents? If so, are Government prepared to take steps to make the courses uniform in the schools at both places?

Mr. G. S. Bajpai: (a) The information asked for is being collected, and will be supplied to the Honourable Member.

(b) The courses of study in the New Delhi High School and the Government High School, Simla, are almost exactly identical in the middle classes. In the high classes, the boys reading in the New Delhi School have to appear in the examination held by the Delhi Board of Secondary Education, and have to read, in certain subjects, different text books. Government are prepared to consult the Punjab Government about the possibility of making special arrangements for such boys at the Government High School, Simla, provided that the number is sufficiently large.

QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE PILOT SERVICE.

774. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** Will Government be pleased to state which of the following contradictory information supplied by them is correct?

(a) In answer to question No. 285 put by Mr. B. Das at the meeting of the Legislative Assembly held on the 31st August, 1926, Mr. N. J. Roughton wrote to him on the 26th January, 1927 as under:

"Pilots at Madras, Chittagong, Bombay, Karachi, Aden and Rangoon must possess a Board of Trade or Colonial Certificate of Competency as *Masters of foreign-going ships.*"

(b) In reply to questions Nos. 845 and 846 put by Mr. Sarabhai N. Haji at the meeting of the Legislative Assembly held on the 5th September, 1927, Mr. N. J. Roughton wrote to him on the 26th September 1927, as under:

"At Karachi the existing rules require as a necessary qualification the possession of a Board of Trade or Colonial certificate of competency as *Mate or Master of a foreign-going ship.* It is not obligatory on candidates for appointment to the Rangoon Pilot Service to hold certificates as *Masters of foreign-going ships* nor are Masters of home-trade ships debarred from entering that service."

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: The matter is being looked into and the result will be communicated to the Honourable Member in due course.

NUMBERS OF CERTAIN OFFICERS EMPLOYED AT PORTS IN INDIA.

775. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** Will Government be pleased to state which of the statements giving particulars of the number of officers employed at the various ports in India is correct?—the one supplied to Mr. B. Das in reply to his question No. 287 by Mr. N. J. Roughton along with his letter dated 26th January, 1927, or the particulars given to Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta by the Deputy Secretary of the Commerce Department in his letter dated 29th March, 1927, in reply to his question No. 1096, since the first statement gives the total number as 280 while the second statement gives the total number as 323?

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: The difference is due to the inclusion in the statement supplied to Mr. Jamnadas Mehta of certain posts, in regard to which Mr. Das did not ask for information and which were not included in the statement supplied in answer to his question.

NUMBERS OF ANGLO-INDIANS AND INDIANS PROMOTED FROM SUBORDINATE GRADES TO OFFICERS' RANK IN THE ACCOUNTS DEPARTMENT OF THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

776. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) How many persons have been promoted to the officers' grade from the subordinate rank of the Accounts Department of the East Indian Railway? How many of them are Anglo-Indians, and how many Indians? What was the proportion of Indians to Anglo-Indians in the subordinate grades of the Accounts Department before these promotions were granted?

(b) How many of these persons have been transferred to other departments of the Railway after such promotions, and what proportion of them are Anglo-Indians?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) No permanent promotions have been made since December, 1925, pending the results of the experiment of separation of accounts from audit, but the number of Anglo-Indians and Indians in the East Indian Railway Accounts Department now officiating in the Officers' grades is 4 and 8 respectively.

Information as to the proportion of Indians to Anglo-Indians in the subordinate grades of the Accounts Department of the East Indian Railway in December 1925 will be obtained and supplied to the Honourable Member.

(b) None.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is it not a fact that the number of promotions from among the Anglo-Indians has been out of all proportion to their strength in the subordinate ranks?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: As I have not got information as to their strength in the subordinate ranks I am unable to answer the Honourable Member's question.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Has the Honourable Member discovered any special aptitude for accounting work in the Anglo-Indians?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I should not like to express a definite opinion straightaway, but I see no reason to suppose that aptitude for accounts work pertains to any particular race.

DEPUTATION TO ENGLAND TO STUDY "MECHANICAL ACCOUNTANCY" OF MEMBERS OF RAILWAY STAFFS.

777. ***Mr. K. O. Neogy:** (a) Is it a fact that some members of the Railway staff have been sent to England at Government expense to learn mechanical accountancy, and some more are proposed to be sent for the purpose?

(b) What is the period for which they are generally sent, and what is the approximate expenditure per head incurred by Government on this account?

(c) Is it a fact that one such person, who was sent to England on deputation, was made a Workshop Accounts Officer on his return after a few months? Is it a fact that his services have been dispensed with since, after giving him a month's pay in lieu of notice? What was the cause of his removal from service? Which officer was responsible for his appointment to the Railway service, and what enquiries were made by that officer about this person's previous history before appointing him? By what amount has the State been a loser on account of the expenses incurred in his training in England, and what amount, if any, has the State lost as a result of the circumstances that led to his removal from office?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) Only one was sent, and as arrangements can now be made to train others in this country, it is not proposed, at any rate for the present, to send others.

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

(c) He was appointed to officiate as Workshop Accounts Officer and worked very well for some time. His services were dispensed with under the terms of his engagement, with a month's pay in lieu of notice as latterly he became involved in debt and neglected his work.

He was appointed many years ago to the railway service by the Accountant General, Railways, who, it is presumed, made the usual inquiries before making the appointment.

The cost of his training in England was about Rs. 6,000, but it is difficult, in view of the fact that the officer did work well for some time and contributed knowledge and experience towards the introduction of new methods of workshop accounting, to assume that Government lost all that was spent in his training. The State suffered no direct loss as a result of the circumstances that led to the termination of his services.

Mr. K. O. Neogy: What did this man's training in England cost the Government?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Rs. 6,000, as I have said.

Mr. K. O. Neogy: I am sorry I did not hear the amount.

THE HAYMAN-MAHINDRA PUNCHING MACHINE.

778. ***Mr. K. O. Neogy:** (a) Is it a fact that a machine known as the "Hayman-Mahindra Punching Machine" is being largely purchased for the Railways? If so, how many of them have so far been purchased and at what cost?

(b) Is any officer connected with the Railway Department interested in the manufacture or sale of these machines?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) I understand that some of these machines are being used on the East Indian Railway. I will ascertain for the Honourable Member the number and cost.

(b) Mr. Hayman is a part patentee.

Mr. K. Ahmed: Will the Honourable Member kindly explain what is this "Hayman-Mahindra Punching Machine" and give an idea to Honourable Members of this Assembly as to what it is?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Except that it is a punching machine, I am afraid I have myself no personal knowledge about it.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

HOUSE ACCOMMODATION FOR MILITARY OFFICERS IN PESHAWAR.

252. **Mr. Muhammad Ismail Khan:** (a) With reference to the reply to Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru's starred question No. 536 on the 26th March, 1928, when the Army Secretary promised to give a full reply after he had received the report from the officer deputed to inquire into the conditions of house accommodation for military officers in Peshawar, has the report been received from that officer? Is the Army Secretary now prepared to make a full reply to that question?

(b) Is it a fact that the District Magistrate of Peshawar, ordered the forcible surrender of Bungalow No. 2, Roos Keppel Lane, Peshawar Cantonment, fourteen months after the service of notice regarding appropriation only, and without first serving the owner with a notice for possession as required by law? Under what law or rule did the District Magistrate take this action?

Mr. G. M. Young: (a) The reply promised was sent to the Honourable Member, Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru, on the 31st March 1928. I am sending a copy of it to the Honourable Member.

(b) Government are informed that the District Magistrate was called upon to enforce possession, and did so under section 12 of the Cantonments House Accommodation Act. If so, his action appears to have been perfectly legal, as a notice under section 7 had already been issued, and the Act does not require the issue of any further notice.

ELIGIBILITY OF THE MUSLIM NOMINATED MEMBER OF THE PESHAWAR CANTONMENT BOARD TO SERVE AS A MEMBER OF THE BOARD.

253. **Mr. Muhammad Ismail Khan:** (a) With reference to the reply to unstarred question No. 452 of the 20th September, 1928, will Government be pleased to state whether they are satisfied that the Muslim nominated member of the Peshawar Cantonment Board is qualified to act as a member of the Board?

(b) Did Government institute the promised inquiry into this matter, and if so, will Government be pleased to lay on the table the result of this inquiry?

Mr. G. M. Young: (a) Yes.

(b) Yes. The result of the inquiry was communicated to Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava on 1st October 1928, and was to the effect that the member in question had not been dismissed from the Cantonment Committee, and that therefore the last part of the question did not arise.

ORDERS BY THE MILITARY AUTHORITIES IN PESHAWAR EJECTING OWNERS OF BUNGALOWS FROM THEIR RESIDENCES.

254. Mr. Muhammad Ismail Khan: (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether executive orders and circulars issued by the Army Department from time to time before the passing of the present Cantonment Act are still in force?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state whether there was any special law under which Cantonment lands were given to grantees on a special contract for building bungalows in the Bombay and Bengal Presidencies? If so, was this law ever in force in the Punjab?

(c) Are Government aware that in March, 1922, His Excellency the Viceroy in reply to an address by the deputation of the All-India Cantonments Association, assured the deputationists that the rights of the owners to live in their bungalows would not be interfered with? If so, has the Army Department acted in accordance with this assurance?

(d) Is it a fact that the owners of bungalows in Peshawar Cantonment have recently been ejected from their bungalows by the orders of the military authority in contravention of the specific provisions of the House Accommodation Act?

Mr. G. M. Young: (a) Any executive orders and circulars, which are inconsistent with the provisions of the present Cantonments Act, have automatically ceased to have effect. The old rules governing the grant of land in cantonments were superseded by the Cantonment Land Administration Rules in 1925, but remain in force so far as the grants made under them are concerned.

(b) There were separate rules for each Presidency Army, prescribing the conditions on which grants of land in cantonments were to be made. Cantonments in the Punjab were included among the cantonments of the Bengal Presidency.

(c) Lord Reading assured the deputation that owners of houses in cantonments, who were then protected under section 11 (C) of the House Accommodation Act, 1902, would continue to receive such protection. There has been no departure from this assurance.

(d) So far as I am aware, no such case has occurred.

CONSTRUCTION OF QUARTERS FOR THE CLERKS OF THE MOTIHARI HEAD POST OFFICE.

255. Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: (a) With reference to my unstarred question No. 189, dated the 4th September, 1928, is it a fact that not a single set of quarters has yet been constructed for the clerks of the Motihari Head Post Office?

(b) Is it a fact that, according to the Site Selection Committee's Report, it has been proposed that the said proposed quarters be constructed by the Public Works Department?

(c) Is it a fact that, according to the Site Selection Committee's Report, the plan maps and the estimate have been prepared by the Executive Engineer, Muzaffarpore Division?

(d) Is it a fact that it has now been proposed to get them constructed departmentally?

(e) If the answers to parts (a) to (d) be in the affirmative, will Government be pleased to state the reasons therefor, and also for the delay in completing these constructions?

Mr. H. A. Sams: (a) Yes. Two sets of quarters are, however, in hand.

(b) Yes.

(c) No. The estimates for the remaining quarters are still under preparation.

(d) Yes, if it is considered more economical to get the quarters constructed by departmental agency than by the Public Works Department.

(e) The construction of quarters is usually undertaken by the Public Works Department, but it may be found to be more economical to have the work done departmentally. Government are not in possession of information as to the reasons for the lack of progress, but will inquire.

RULES FOR LEAVE, PAY, PROMOTION, ETC., OF THE STAFF OF THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY TRANSFERRED TO THE RAILWAY CLEARING ACCOUNTS OFFICE, DELHI.

256. **Mr. N. C. Kelkar:** (a) Will Government state what rules they are going to make applicable to the Great Indian Peninsula Railway staff brought from Bombay to Delhi, to serve on the establishment of the Clearing House, in respect of leave, time-scale, promotion and other prospects? Will all the members of the staff be on the same footing as those of the establishment recruited from other railways?

(b) Is it a fact that this Great Indian Peninsula Railway staff is not given the increment worked out for them by the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Administration and intimated to the Director, Railway Clearing Accounts Office, Delhi?

(c) Will the seniority of the men of the Bombay staff be counted from the date of their first appointment, or from the date of joining the Clearing Office?

(d) Is there any truth in the complaint that the men in the Clearing Office are overburdened with work for the present, and that they have to serve longer than the usual hours?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) The staff transferred from the Great Indian Peninsula Railway to the Clearing Accounts Office will be on the same footing as those transferred from other railways in all the matters referred to by the Honourable Member, except leave, in regard to which

they will continue to remain under the leave rules of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway.

(b) Yes, in respect of a small number of men only, due to a mistake having been made by the Great Indian Peninsula Railway in interpreting the orders regulating the pay to be drawn by the staff transferred to the Clearing Accounts Office.

(c) A committee has been appointed for the purpose of framing detailed rules for fixing the seniority in the different grades of the employees transferred from various railways to the Clearing Accounts Office. I have no doubt that this Committee will take the past service of employees into consideration.

(d) No, and I would invite the Honourable Member's attention to the reply given to starred questions Nos. 668 and 669 on the 19th February, 1929.

ALLEGED RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN THE PROMOTION OF ENGINE DRIVERS ON THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY.

257. **Mr. N. O. Kelkar:** (a) Have certain sections of the Railway engine-drivers on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway made any representation to the Railway Board complaining against racial discrimination in railway service?

(b) If so, will Government state whether any reply was sent to that representation?

(c) Is it a fact that on the main line of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway there is not a single engine-driver, either a Hindu or Mahomedan, who is in charge of running mail or passenger trains?

(d) If the reply be in the negative, will Government state the number of such drivers?

(e) Is it a fact that the pay of "A" class drivers is from Rs. 160 to Rs. 310, of "B" class drivers from Rs. 130 to Rs. 285, and that of "C" class drivers from Rs. 72 to Rs. 140?

(f) What are the circumstances under which a driver under "C" class may be promoted to the "B" class and a driver from the "B" class promoted to the "A" class?

(g) Have such promotions ever occurred before?

(h) Will Government state the number of drivers under these three classes in the Great Indian Peninsula Railway?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d). I am obtaining the information for the Honourable Member from the Great Indian Peninsula Railway.

(e) Yes, except that the maximum for B class drivers is Rs. 285.

(f) The rule is that drivers are eligible for promotion to a higher class as vacancies occur, provided they possess the qualifications of the class; and that exceptional men may be promoted to a higher class under the orders of the Chief Transportation Superintendent. I am not aware whether the latter part of this rule means that an exceptional C class

driver may be promoted direct to the A class, or that an exceptional driver in one of the two lower classes may be given the pay of a higher class even though there is no vacancy; but I am making inquiries. I am also inquiring what the qualifications laid down for each class are in accordance with this rule. The rule further provides that, before promotion from one grade of driver to another, there will be an examination in knowledge of the locomotive and of the rules in force.

(g) No doubt such promotions have occurred since the rules provide for them, but I am verifying this from the Agent of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway.

(h) I am obtaining the information for the Honourable Member.

PANEL FOR THE STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, HEALTH AND LANDS.

Mr. President: Honourable Members will remember that on the 20th February, 1929, I informed them that, as a result of the announcement made by me on the 11th February regarding the election of Members to the Standing Advisory Committee for the Department of Education, Health and Lands, only six nominations had been received up to 12 noon on Wednesday the 13th February, the time fixed for receiving such nominations, and that the number of candidates proposed was less than the number required. Under Regulation II (3) of the Regulations prescribed for the holding of elections by means of the single transferable vote, I accordingly extended the time for receiving nominations up to 12 noon on Thursday the 21st February. I have now to inform the Assembly that up to the time so extended no further nominations have been received, and though the Regulation empowers me to appoint an additional further period for receiving nominations, I have decided not to do so. The panel therefore, as required by the terms of the motion moved by Mr. Bajpai on the 11th February, 1929, cannot be formed.

ELECTION OF A PANEL FOR THE CENTRAL ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RAILWAYS.

Mr. President: Honourable Members will recollect that on the 21st February, 1929, the announcement declaring certain Members as having been duly elected to the Central Advisory Council for Railways was, on an objection being raised by Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas, held up pending an inquiry into the nomination paper of the Honourable Member. I have now to inform the Assembly that an inquiry has disclosed the fact that the nomination paper of Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas, which was for the Central Advisory Council for Railways, was, by a regrettable oversight on the part of the office, placed among the nomination papers for the Standing Finance Committee for Railways. The mistake has since been rectified and as the number of candidates proposed exceeds the number required, an election will be necessary. The election, as already announced, will take place on the 6th March, 1929.

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

SECOND STAGE—*contd.*

Expenditure from Revenue—contd.

DEMAND NO. 1—RAILWAY BOARD—*contd.*

Mr. President: The House will now resume further consideration of the following motion moved by Sir George Rainy :

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 12,61,000 be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1930, in respect of 'Railway Board'."

Policy of not reducing rates and fares for short distances.

Kumar Ganganand Sinha (Bhagalpur, Purnea and the Santhal Parganas: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I rise to move:

"That the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 14,000."

Before I deal with the subject, Sir, I think that the figure needs a word of explanation. The House will see that the voted budget estimate for 1929-30 for the three Members of the Railway Board is Rs. 92,000. I have deducted from that Rs. 64,000, the voted portion of the expenditure on the additional Member sought to be created. So the balance of the votable grant for the remaining two Members comes to Rs. 28,000, and I want to omit the grant for one of the Member, the Member who is in charge of fixing rates and fares. It has been made clear during the general discussion on the Railway Budget by several Honourable Members, who spoke from these Benches, that the rates and fares of the railways are at present arbitrarily fixed. It is said that, in this matter they apply the principle of how much the traffic can bear. The Government interprets the principle to mean the law of supply and demand. They do not pause to consider what is the capacity of the people to pay. That interpretation affords an indefinite scope for the personal judgment of the man who fixes the rate in an atmosphere of probability and doubt, and it is equally potential of promoting social and economic progress as of retarding it. We have known by our experience that the railway administration certainly uses it for retarding the social and economic progress of this country, and its aim seems to be solely to get an increasing return. The reduction is made not to mitigate the hardships of the travelling public or the hardships experienced by traders. It is only made with a view to bring in more money to the coffers of the railways, which they can squander away in creating highly-paid appointments. The railways, I submit, Sir, being a sort of national industry, the profit should be adequately shared by the people of the country; but what do we find? We find that the commercial principles are applied to amass crores of rupees, not to benefit the nation, the labourers or the low-paid employees so much, not to benefit the travelling public, as to create fat salaried posts and make the administration top-heavy. In fact the question of fixing rates and fares requires immediate re-examination and has to be kept under constant

watch. We have seen that, with commercialism on one side and the broad human sympathies on the other, we cannot at present determine what is exactly the just return which the railways should have for themselves and what are the proper rates and fares to fix.

The non-reduction of short distance fares and rates cannot, for the matter of that, be said to be strictly on account of commercial necessity. We do not know whether, in the existing circumstances, not reducing short distance rates is economically justifiable. Mr. S. C. Ghose, the author of 'A Monograph on Indian Railway Rates' has given us concrete examples which beautifully illustrate this point. On page 274 of the Monograph, which has been published by the Superintendent, Government Printing, India, he says:

"If the long distance traffic be for say 633 miles and the rate charged be 133 pie per maund per mile and the load be 380 maunds in a wagon, the result would be as follows, as compared with the rate of 1/3 pie up to 75 miles and 1/4th pie 75 to 125 miles on a load of 125 miles on traffic of similar wagon load."

and then he gives these illustrations:

"380 mds. \times Re. 0-7-0 per maund = Re. 166-4-0 or say 166.

Taking 70 miles as the wagon mile run per diem, 633 \div 70 equal 9 days in transit, and if 2 days are allowed for sending and receiving stations, the total time occupied would be 11 days.

Therefore 166 \div 11 give a wagon per-day return of Rs. 15.

Freight for 125 miles:—

First 75 miles \times 1/3	... 25 pies.
Next 50 miles \times 1/4 13 pies.
	38 or

Re. 0-3-2 per maund.

Rs. 0-3-2 \times 380 maunds = Rs. 75-3-0.

At the rate of 70 miles per day, 125 miles will take say 2 days for a wagon to complete the run, plus 2 days as usual for loading and unloading make 4 days.

Thus Rs 75 \div 4 = Rs. 18 12-0 per wagon per day.

"In a case like this (he says) short distance traffic is not a less paying traffic than long distance traffic from the point of view of wagon earning per day, and it is to be noted that neither block rates nor any terminals have been taken into account in arriving at the rate for 125 miles and at the same time 133 pie rate for 633 miles is also a very fair rate for this lead.

If however, the vehicle mileage attained in a day were 90 miles and the total time occupied reduced by 2 days, namely to 9 days the 'wagon per day' return on traffic for 633 miles would have been Rs. 18-7-0 or very much near the figure obtained for 125 miles lead."

I need not read the remaining portion of the paragraph. From what I have read, the example proves that by no means is it the rule that short distance traffic is always uneconomical. There may be conditions in which short distance traffic may be uneconomical, but there may again be conditions in which it is profitable. As I have explained in the beginning, the existing conditions are not such that we can take it for granted, or say authoritatively, that short distance traffic is, as a rule, uneconomical for the railways.

Now, Sir, there is another aspect in which the question of short distance rates should be considered. We know that freights have helped the trade to be concentrated in big cities and that all materials like grain, coal, etc., are carried to cities like Calcutta, Bombay, Karachi. If, however, short

[Kumar Ganganand Sinha.]

distance rates are reduced, there would naturally be a tendency for small towns to flourish with trades and industry, because the consignors would naturally say to themselves, "If I can carry my goods to nearer places at reduced rates and sell them there profitably, why should I take the trouble of taking my goods to far off places like Calcutta, and undergo several hardships." So that, from the point of view of the development of industries and trades in small towns in every part of this vast country, it is necessary that the question of a reduction in short distance rates should receive consideration, unless, of course, it is proved that non-reduction of such rates is economical and that it is necessary that this policy should be resorted to.

Then, Sir, if you look at the fares, you will find that the bulk of the people of this country are suffering the greatest possible injustice at the hands of the railway authorities from the non-reduction of short distance fares. In the Railway Administration Report for 1927-28—the latest we have got—we find that the average distance that a 3rd class passenger was carried was 35·4 miles. These are the men for whom the Honourable the Railway Member showed so much solicitude when he delivered his budget speech. These are the men who pay nine-tenths of the passenger revenue to Government, and these are the men, Sir, who have only one meal a day, in this country. From these men the railway authorities charge as much as 3·22 pies per mile as railway fares. You can very well see, Sir, that a man who earns two annas to four annas a day cannot afford to travel many miles, even by foregoing his one meal. It has been found that he cannot travel more than 10 miles, at any rate, and that being so, the argument that the fares in India are the cheapest goes to the wall. Mr. Priestley has calculated that in America, although the fare per mile is 11·8 pies, and although in India it is 3·22 pies, the average distance which a labourer in America can go for one day's earnings is 63 miles, and the average which a labourer can go in India is 10 miles. If he goes to a marriage party he has to forego one day's leave pay. If he has to go to district headquarters from his village, he has to forego one day's meal. That is the condition in which 3rd class passengers in India are at present, and the Government, instead of thinking of them and reducing the fare in a way which would go to their benefit, reduce the fares in a way which benefits only the big people. After all, the bulk of the 3rd class passengers who travel long distances are those who are servants of big people, and their fares, naturally, are paid by their masters who have a heavy purse with them. The bulk of these 3rd class passengers who have to pay from their own pockets go only short distances, say 35 miles, as this report says. Sir William Acworth of the Indian Railway Committee, speaking on railway economies, stated that very few passengers could afford to travel in this country unless fares were very low. It would be interesting to know how the Government has taken that advice to heart. I want the Government to look into this question. A time may come when the ~~bled white goose~~ may die and the golden eggs may not be forthcoming. If you have to put a burden on these people to bolster up your revenue, then share the benefits with them and don't spend their money on high-paid services.

Sir, to sum up, I submit that the non-reduction of the short-distance rates and fares is not on a sound basis. I further submit, that it is over-commercialisation and of doubtful advantage to railways; and what is more, works great hardship on the travelling public.

I hope these matters will receive the consideration of Government and that, before long, they will change their policy and reduce short-distance rates and fares.

Sir, I move.

The Revd. J. C. Chatterjee (Nominated Indian Christians): May I ask, Sir, if there is a quorum in the House?

Several Honourable Members: Oh yes; more than a quorum.

Mr. President: If the Honourable Member will himself count, he will find that there is. **Mr. Duraiswamy Aiyangar**.

Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar (Madras ceded districts and Chittoor: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I shall say only a few words. The other day I mentioned the difficulties of third class passengers in paying the present fares for these short distances. I informed the Honourable Member that persons who take tickets for more than 150 miles are very rare. In reply to that my Honourable friend, Mr. Parsons, was kind enough to send me a few figures. I take the figures for the Southern Mahratta Railway from April to September, 1928, which show 32,000 tickets sold to third class passengers for a distance of over 150 miles.

I may inform him that it was the busiest season for third class passengers, namely the marriage season and even if we take the figure for a whole year, it comes to only 12 lakhs of passengers who take third class tickets for distances over 150 miles at a stretch. We find that the total number of third class passengers for a whole year is 26 millions on the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway, out of which only 12 lakhs of people have purchased tickets for over 150 miles at a time. Surely that is not a matter on which my Honourable friend, Mr. Parsons, if he had followed his usual practice and if he were legally minded, would have given information. That information is more fatal to his own case than mine, and an advocate will never place such materials in the hands of the opposite side (Laughter).

My Honourable friend, Kumar Ganganand Sinha, has pointed out that nine-tenths of the revenue from passenger traffic are derived from third class passengers. I may add to it and say that the entire revenue from passenger traffic comes from third class passengers. I ask my Honourable friend Mr. Parsons to take some trouble and find out the figures for the running expenses of the Great Indian Peninsula Punjab Mail, which contains only first and second class passengers, with a big dining car attached to it, with several pounds of ice and different kinds of drink to be supplied for the convenience of the first and second class passengers; I ask him to compare the figures of the working expenses of the Punjab Mail with the figures of the working expenses of a train which takes all the three classes of passengers, or which takes only third class passengers. I will ask him to work out the figures and find out who is paying the expenditure for this luxury which the first and second class passengers are enjoying. You take first and second class passengers by the speediest mails, whereas the third class passengers are carried by the slowest running trains possible, so much so that sometimes the passengers are tempted to get down from the train and walk to the next station much quicker than the train. The first and second class passengers are taken from Bombay to Delhi within a period of 24 hours, all at the expense of

[Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar.]

the poor third class passengers. I therefore, ask, Sir, whether it is not necessary that the Honourable Member in charge of Railways should pay special attention to this aspect of the matter and give the much-needed relief to the third class passengers.

In the matter of freights, I have to say one or two words. The classification of freights is rather mysterious, and it is very difficult for us to understand it. We find that a maund of salt fetches to the railway company in the traffic of goods from 3 to 6 annas per mile and how heavily this affects the poor consumer, can be gathered from the fact that salt is the most essential commodity for even the poorest man in India, whereas in the matter of freights for motor cars, we find a considerable reduction. In fact, from my own personal experience, I find that the charges for haulage for my own motor car from Renigunta to Delhi were Rs. 560 last year and this year the charges I had to pay were only Rs. 424. I ask, Sir, why are freights reduced on articles of luxury, and why are the freights heavy in the case of articles of necessity for the poor people? These are facts which require consideration at the hands of my Honourable friend Mr. Parsons.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons (Financial Commissioner, Railways): My Honourable friend Mr. Duraiswamy Aiyangar complained, I think, that I have been rather too open with him and supplied him with statistics which, had I been as legally minded as he is, I should not have put into his hands to be used against me. That charge is one which I am very glad to accept, and I should always like to be equally frank and open with Members on the opposite side of the House when they require information, to whatever purpose they may choose to devote the information that I supply to them.

Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar: I only said you have not followed your usual practice.

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas (Indian Merchants Chamber: Indian Commerce): It is a compliment in any case.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I am not at all sorry that my Honourable friend, the Mover, has brought forward this motion because it does give me an opportunity of explaining, and I hope explaining away, a misconception which I think exists in the minds of certain Honourable Members opposite, due to the fact that our recent reductions, particularly of third class fares, have been for fares over long distances rather than for short distances. After I have dealt with the question of third class fares, I will deal with the question of freights, because the two questions are not quite the same. The Honourable Member complained that the reductions we have made were not made to help the travelling public, but only to fill our railway coffers. I would put it to him that that distinction does not really exist. I think that, in this matter, the interests of the public and of the railways are in practically every case identical. That is to say, railways wish to get more money into their coffers, and they therefore reduce the charge which they make to the public in order to obtain a larger number of clients and to make up, or more than make up, by the increased traffic which they get, for the loss which they incur by reducing their charges. Now, if their anticipations are correct, if they succeed in getting that extra traffic, it is, I think, proof positive that

the existing rates are bearing too heavily on the person who travels by the railways or on the consignor of goods by the railways; and to the extent to which our reductions are followed by an immediate increase of traffic, it seems to me that we are giving assistance to those people on whom our existing rates and fares bear too heavily, and the particular misunderstanding that I wish to remove is that there is any definite policy on the part of the Railway Board of not reducing rates and fares for short distances. That is not the case. The position with regard to fares, as we found it, was this, that the average distance which third class passengers were able to travel was falling off. What is the remedy for that? Obviously to reduce the fares for long distances so that people will be able to travel a longer average distance; and I can claim that our statistics so far show that our policy appears to have been successful. But it does not follow from that that, if we found it desirable, we should not reduce fares for shorter distances too; not necessarily by reducing the fare for the whole of the first 50 miles, but perhaps, as a first stage by reducing the fare for the distance between 85 and 50 miles. We should of course have to watch very carefully whether, by doing so, we should obtain in not too long a period an equivalent return in revenue. If we did not obtain an equivalent return in our revenue, it can be taken for granted that our existing scale of fares is not bearing heavily on the public, and in that event a reduction would be in effect throwing away money which could better have been utilised in other directions. I will, if I may, give a figure or two. Assuming, for instance, that we reduce the third class fares on State-managed railways by half a pie a mile for the first 50 miles, the benefit to the individual traveller would be a small benefit of about two annas per journey. The cost to us on State-managed railways would be somewhere in the neighbourhood of $1\frac{1}{2}$ crores. It is always open to question whether, if we made that reduction, we should get a sufficient increase in our traffic to recover that cost in say, a year, or two years, or even three years. If we did not recover the cost in that period, the only deduction that I can draw is that the present fares up to 50 miles do not bear heavily on the travelling public, because they are not preventing them from travelling; and in that case my argument would be that we can probably use that $1\frac{1}{2}$ crores to better advantage, possibly by a further reduction of third class fares over longer distances, possibly by devoting it to a reduction of the rate on some important commodity. That there is, however, no definite policy of not reducing rates and fares for short distances, can be gathered from what we have recently done with regard to the rates for goods. For instance, take the commodities in regard to which we made reductions last year. I have not actually, for the purposes of this motion, examined them again, but I think I am right in saying that our reductions then affected the rates on goods for all distances and not only for long distances. That is certainly true with regard to the reductions in parcels rates.

With regard to fares, though it is true that we have not recently made—except I think on the Burma Railways—any reduction in general third class fares for short distances, we have definitely taken steps that do reduce the cost of the third class fares for short distances by way of certain special rates; for example, cheap return fares near the big centres, cheap week-end fares, return concession fares for pilgrimage journeys and so on. Incidentally I may remark that I entirely agree with the Honourable Member that short distance traffic is not necessarily un-economical traffic;

[Mr. A. A. L. Parsons.]

it depends very much on the volume of the traffic. It is true, however, as a general statement, that long distance traffic pays railways best; and equally it is true that the incidence of railway freight rates falls more heavily on long distance traffic than it does on the short distance traffic. Therefore, it is the practice on our railways—as it is, I believe, on most other railways of the world—to give cheaper rates for long distance traffic than for short distance traffic. I would however accentuate this point that a policy of reducing rates for long distance traffic does not preclude us, and is not intended to preclude us, from reducing rates and fares for short distance traffic, so long as it appears to us that the traffic calls for such a reduction. But where circumstances do call for reduction, when it appears to us that the fares and rates fall more heavily on the travellers and consignors of goods over long distances than they do over short distances, it is reasonable that we should first deal with the long distance traffic problem

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Will the Honourable Member say what he proposes to do about the local and suburban traffic, i.e., whether any reduction in the third class fares is to be hoped for?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: So far as the Railway Board is concerned, I do not remember that we have considered the question. It is a matter of course which the individual railway administrations themselves should look into. As the Honourable Member is possibly aware, it is only into certain main classes of traffic that the Railway Board have to conduct an investigation. I am not aware of any proposals at the moment before the Railway Board for the reduction of fares for suburban railway traffic in Bombay or Calcutta.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Have not they received representations already?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I should not like to answer the Honourable Member off hand. I have not myself seen or received any representations lately.

Mr. Mukhtar Singh. (Meerut Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I had no mind to speak on this motion, but a question was all along troubling me. I should like to know why, from 1924 up to now, the First Class Railways have reduced the first class fare from 21·8 pies to 16·8 pies per mile, i.e., a reduction of 24 per cent.; similarly, why they have reduced the second class fare from 9·08 pies to 7·74 pies per mile, i.e., a reduction of 28 per cent.; while in the case of the intermediate class, the rate has been reduced only from 4·92 pies to 4·25 pies per mile, giving a reduction of 7·5 per cent.; and, in the case of the third class, it has been reduced from 8·45 pies to 8·22 pies per mile, giving a reduction of 6·7 per cent. only. I could not, Sir, understand this difference. Today the Honourable the Financial Commissioner has enlightened us by stating his general policy and it amounts to this, that the railways will lose more in reducing third class fares, while they will lose less if they reduce first and second class fares. This seemed to be clearly the purport of his statement, when he said that the fare on short distance traffic

had not been reduced because the amount of loss to the railways would be much greater than the loss they would incur by reducing long distance fares. From this I infer that, because the number of passengers in the first and second classes is much lower than the number of passengers in the third and intermediate classes, the railways, in order to maintain this principle, have reduced the first and second class fares by over 20 per cent., while they have reduced third and intermediate class fares by less than 10 per cent. If that is the policy, Sir, it is a very dangerous policy. It amounts to this, that if the number of passengers in the third and intermediate classes is much more than in the first and second classes, the result will be that the fares for the former will never be reduced. I may further submit that, on account of this wrong policy, the different railways have been forced by motor lorries competition in short distance traffic to charge much lower rates than they have been charging by running rail motors. Take the case of Hapur. From Meerut to Hapur, the third class fare being high, the motor lorries were practically carrying the whole passenger traffic. The railways there have now introduced railway motors which run from Meerut to Hapur and back and charge reduced fare from passengers. This means, Sir, that the railways are not going to reduce the short distance fare permanently, but when they are forced to compete with the motor lorries, they will then do so. I submit, Sir, this is a very wrong policy, and it entails much more expenditure in running railway motors than the railways would have incurred by reducing the short distance fare permanently. It will be in the interests of the railways themselves to reduce the fares for short distances as well as for long distances. The present policy is not justified, and in the near future, the railways will feel that, unless they do so, they will have much heavier competition from the motor lorries than they are having now.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy (Member for Commerce and Railways): I should like to say just a word, Sir, with regard to what has fallen from the last speaker. The reason I think why we made a reduction in first and second class fares was that, at the level to which they had been reduced, we found that we were losing revenue, because people who used to travel in the first class were travelling in the second class, and people who used to travel in the second class were travelling in the intermediate class. The rates were reduced in the hope—which on the whole has been fulfilled—that we would get more revenue out of the reduction than we were getting before. I should like to add that I quite appreciate the importance that Honourable Members opposite attach to a reduction, if possible, in third class fares for short distances and also in goods rates. Mr. Parsons has explained the kind of difficulty we have in dealing with these matters; but what has been said today will be borne in mind during the coming year when we take into consideration what possibilities there are for further reductions in rates and fares. I trust that in view of what I have said, my Honourable friend the Mover will not press this motion to a division.

Mr. Mukhtar Singh: May I enquire, Sir, from the Honourable the Railway Member whether it is not a fact that the number of passengers in the first and second classes has come down along with the reduction in the fare during these three years and if it is a fact, whether he is going to increase the rates next year?

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I will have the matter examined. Sir. My Honourable friend is always so accurate in verifying his references that I do not doubt the correctness of his statement; but I will have the matter looked into and see how the position stands.

Mr. President: The question is:

"That the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 14,000."

The Motion was negatived.

Racial Distinctions in Subordinate Establishment.

Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, the motion which stands against my name runs thus:

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

Sir, Kumar Ganganand Sinha, in his very short and sweet speech, gave reasons of a technical kind for taking the figure of Rs. 14,000 for his motion. My reasons for putting down Rs. 10,000 are not so technical, but I believe they are fairly reasonable and err on the side of moderation. Ordinarily, I should have made a calculation on the basis of the salaries of all the Members of the Railway Board, excluding of course the new Member, because he has not yet had a chance, (Hear, hear) and then said that so much should be reduced. I have, however, put it at a very moderate figure because I realise and I feel that, so far as the Honourable the Railway Member is concerned, he is animated by a desire, a genuine desire, and he has a real sympathy with the demand for the abolition of all racial discrimination and the introduction of a higher standard of life for labourers and workmen employed on the railways. Sir, he says in his remarkable speech: "Whatever difference of opinion there may sometimes be between the Government of India and members on the other side of the House as to methods, we are united in our aims." Sir, so far as aims and aspirations are concerned, I am quite willing to concede that we are wholly united; but, Sir, I am not today dealing with aims and aspirations but with actualities. Already my friend Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru has placed before this House some very startling facts about the Eastern Bengal Railway. Sir, we all remember what the Honourable Member, Mr. Parsons, said last year. In his capacity as the Financial Commissioner of Railways he said on the 25th February last year in this House:

"I wish to say here and now that the Railway Board do not countenance any such discrimination. They have definitely informed all railway administrations that discrimination of that character should be abolished."

Sir, I take this as an assurance of the Honourable the Financial Commissioner; but will he explain the memorandum of the Agent of the Eastern Bengal Railway, to which my Honourable friend Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru made pointed reference in his usually eloquent and earnest way the other day? Sir, the assurance of the Honourable Member, however earnest, so far as facts are concerned, is not carried out. What are the facts? Sir, the Agent of the Railway is not acting in his own individual capacity. There is internal evidence in the memorandum itself to show that he is acting on behalf and with the approval of the Railway Board. He says that, "care must be taken not to impose conditions of education etc., which would affect seriously the opportunities of employment on the

Indian railways which Anglo-Indians at present enjoy." This, Sir, even were it merely his personal feeling, is sufficiently objectionable. If it is his feeling in the capacity of an Agent of a particular Railway, it is most certainly unjustifiable; and when it happens to be the opinion, not only of the Agent of a Railway, but also of the Railway Board, it certainly becomes scandalous. Sir, that is what he says in the memorandum; and the memorandum clearly proves that he is the mouthpiece of the Railway Board. He was acting under "definite instructions" from the Government of India, or rather, the Railway Board was acting under the "definite instructions" of the Government of India. Sir, I should like to know why this racial discrimination should be approved by the Government of India. I know, whenever there is a debate in this House on the Railway Board, kindly expressions are given, and benevolent intentions are shown in abundance, but the policy of the Railway Board remains the same. As a matter of fact, the same policy has been repeatedly opposed by Honourable Members of this House, and repeatedly endorsed in this House, as well as in the House of Commons, in a most flagrant way. Lately, Sir, the attitude of the Treasury Benches in this matter has changed. They use soft words, but we are not concerned with soft words, because soft words cannot liquefy hard facts, and the hardest of hard facts, Sir, were placed before the House of Commons by Lord Winterton in the year 1925. There are quotations in abundance in the memorandum submitted by the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Community of India to the Simon Commission, which prove this. Sir, it is a great pity that a concession should be made to the feelings, to the agitations, of a particular community in the matter of appointment on the railways; and the memorandum to which my Honourable friend Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru referred is nothing more and nothing less than the proof of official sympathy with that agitation. Sir, I want the Honourable the Railway Member to repudiate that memorandum. If he does not repudiate that memorandum, I say the Government stand committed to a policy of racial discrimination.

Sir, let us go into the Railway Administration Reports that have been furnished to us. If you examine the facts, you find that the majority of the higher appointments among the upper subordinates, as well as among men drawing a salary of Rs. 200 or Rs. 250 and over, are Europeans and Anglo-Indians, and these Railways are supposed to be Indian railways! There are, today, Sir, among the upper subordinate ranks a large number of Anglo-Indians. The Europeans held in the year 1926-27, 8,765 upper subordinate appointments; Anglo-Indians 2,076, whereas Indians, including Mussalmans, Hindus, Parsis, depressed classes, Jains, *et hoc genus omne*, the whole lot of Indians from the Himalayas to the Cape Comorin number 2,454. Imagine, Sir, the eloquence of these statistics—Europeans 8,765, Anglo-Indians 2,076, and Indians of all classes and communities, Hindus Muhammadans and all are so few. For the purpose of racial discrimination there are only two communities, the Indo-Anglian community and the Indian community, and you find that the Indians are in an overwhelming minority, a minority which can be sufficiently overwhelmed by the majority of the Anglo-Indians and Europeans. Sir, the facts and figures relating to all subordinates drawing 250 rupees per mensem and over, or on scales rising to Rs. 250 per mensem and over, employed on Class I Railways, which are given in the Reports of the Railway Board for the year 1926-27, speak for themselves. Out of the total of 8,295, the communal percentage

[Mr. C. S. Banga-Iyer.]

works out as follows: the Anglo-Indian Community gets 44 per cent., and the European Community gets 25 per cent. The policy of the Government of India for the purpose of recruitment seems to be to consider matters from three points of view, by introducing three communities on the scene—the Anglo-Indian, the European and the Indian. Such, Sir, are the obstacles placed in the way of an Indian in this race for progress. Such is the Railway policy,—even as the political policy is to sub-divide the Indian community into Hindus, Muslims and the depressed classes. This, I submit, Sir, is racial discrimination with a vengeance. As for the number of gazetted officers of corresponding rank in Class I Railways, in what I may describe as the grade of upper subordinates the percentage in 1927 works out at 78.0 per cent. for Europeans and Anglo-Indians, whereas there are only 21.0 per cent. of Indians. There are 1,689 Europeans and Anglo-Indians and only 454 Indians. Sir, these statistics speak for themselves. I know, and I do not dispute, that the aim and intention of the Honourable the Railway Member is very good and very noble; but, Sir, we are now concerned, not with ideals, but with actualities. The Memorandum of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Community in India admits that the educational attainments of the Anglo-Indians are comparatively low and its members cannot successfully compete with the more efficient members of the other communities in competitive examinations. They plead, therefore, that the statutory natives of India should be entitled to special consideration. In this age of democracy, when the unfit must be prepared to go to the wall, all considerations based on race must cease.

Sir, I have so far dealt with matters of outstanding importance, and on these matters I have a right to expect a reply from the Railway Member whether they propose to continue this policy, and if they do, for how long? How do they explain this great swamping of the departments and establishments which I have mentioned by the Anglo-Indian and the European communities? How do they explain it, now that they are committed to a policy, not of racial discrimination but of efficiency? How do they explain this state of affairs? Sir, my late lamented friend, who was a charming Member of this House, and whom we often miss, the late Mr. Ambika Prasad Sinha, (Applause), inquired in one of the important questions he put on the floor of this House, how long this policy of racial discrimination was going to continue in the East Indian Railway; and the Honourable Member on the Treasury Benches, a very distinguished and noble-hearted gentleman, who is no longer in this House but usefully employed in his own country—I refer to Mr. Sim—said with stupendous kindness, which we all always welcome from the Treasury Benches, that the matter was under consideration. But the kindness was of a verbal kind. I want to know how and where this consideration has materialised. I want an explanation, Sir, from the Railway Member and from the Financial Commissioner of Railways, who is always so enthusiastic about everything that he takes up, to see how far his enthusiasm for the abolition of discrimination in the Railway Services has carried him. We want facts; we want realities; and I want him to explain where and how the facts and statistics which I have placed in this House are wrong. I maintain, Sir, that the facts and statistics with regard to this state of affairs on the railways are eloquent, and they conclusively establish that racial discrimination is abolished in words but observed in deeds.

Now, Sir, I come to matters of not lesser importance, but of what I may call lesser publicity. Those matters have not received sufficient publicity, because Honourable Members of this House and newspapers in this country are very fond of—and perhaps not very wrongly so, because it is so very easy to deal with matters of what I may call outstanding importance—big broad facts; but there are certain very small details which are equally important, and I propose to refer to those details. I want the Railway Member or the Financial Commissioner of Railways to answer these points. Is it, or is it not a fact that the housing accommodation given to Europeans and Anglo-Indians on the railways is different from the housing accommodation given to Indians on the railways? Is it or is it not a fact that the houses allotted to Europeans and Anglo-Indians on the railways are more comfortable, more airy, better ventilated and better situated than the houses allotted for Indians on railways? Will he explain this difference? Another fact comes to my mind and it is this: Sir, not only in the matter of housing accommodation, but also in the matter of medical attendance and medical relief, even in this, there is racial discrimination. Apart from occasional instances of nurses refusing to attend on Indian patients, is it or is it not a fact that there are two blocks, one for Europeans and Anglo-Indians and the other for Indians? Is it or is it not a fact that the senior medical officer attends on the Europeans and Anglo-Indians and the junior officers on the Indian patients? I want an answer to these questions. Sir, I want the Honourable Financial Commissioner to inquire into this matter and into other matters of this kind. Especially in the matter of medical relief, no racial discrimination ought to be observed, and I think nurses who refuse or decline, or put on an air of superiority when they have to deal with Indian patients ought to be punished and should be dismissed. (Hear, hear.) I want to know whether the Financial Commissioner of Railways has inquired into this matter. I am sure he will not deny that, now and again these matters have been pressed, alike on the floor of this House and in the newspapers on the attention of the Government. What I want is this. Is he prepared to issue definite instructions to the effect that these blocks, namely one for Europeans and Anglo-Indians and one for Indians, should be abolished forthwith, so as to do away with this discrimination? Then, Sir, I think that there should be, from time to time, an inquiry into this matter, because it is these things that really annoy the public. As a matter of fact, Sir, if only a commission of inquiry, or shall I say a small committee, was appointed, consisting of Labour Members like Mr. Giri and Mr. Joshi and two labour officials, whomsoever the Government like to choose, to go into this matter and publish a comprehensive report dealing with all aspects of the case, I think the present grievances could be remedied. I am not concerned with publicity, though I think a report of that kind cannot be treated as confidential, and publicity is the great cure for these evils. Some such Committee of a technical kind will indeed be very useful. I do not suggest a Committee to go round the country with a flourish of trumpets, but a small business like committee will be very useful to go into these matters, because such a committee will be able to inquire into actual facts; they can take evidence *in camera*, if they choose to do so. But what I am particularly concerned about is that two labour members commanding the confidence of the working classes, like Mr. Giri outside, and Mr. Joshi inside the House, and two other members whom the Government might choose, should form themselves into a committee and inquire into this matter. After all, this is not such a big affair as to take a large amount of time; but it is a matter worth inquiring into.

[Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer]

Then, Sir, there are these discriminations even in regard to such things as the **technical services**. My friend Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru dealt with this question in his speech last year, and I do not know what the Railway Board have decided since the question was raised last year. I hope the Honourable the Railway Member will be able to enlighten us on this matter. My friend Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru referred to certain facts in Jamalpur. He said that of those who received training as chargemen at Jamalpur, so far as Indians were concerned, they must be matriculates, but that rule was not applied in the case of Anglo-Indians. I do not know if it is correct, but the statement was made by my friend Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru last year. I do not know how the facts stand this year, and I should therefore be glad if the Honourable the Railway Member will enlighten us on this matter. It was also pointed out last year that an examination is held for selecting recruits, and, so far as recruitment in the 1st Division is concerned, the examination appears to be a formality, or if it is not a formality, at any rate, recruitment is not done on a wholly competitive basis. I want to know, Sir, whether it is a fact, that in the Jamalpur Technical Institute and elsewhere, recruitment is not yet made on a wholly competitive basis. We know, judging from the memorandum of the Agent of the Eastern Bengal Railway that the competitive examination has not been enforced in the case of Anglo-Indians in order to test the competency of the candidates.

Then, Sir, there are also one or two other matters to which I think attention may be drawn. I do not grudge the fact that in regard to religious ministrations certain clergymen are given passes—"Check passes are issued by the Divisional Superintendents to the Ministers of Religions to administer to the spiritual wants of the railway employes at places where the services of clergymen are not available." This is from one of the Railway Rules and Regulations. This, Sir, is followed in practice on the North Western Railway. Perhaps it is in practice on the other railways also. It is very difficult to get information on these matters in a hurry, but I want to know, Sir, why similar passes should not be issued to, say, Hindu priests and Muslim Maulanas. So far as the Government argument is concerned, they have always said that there are wayside stations where clergymen are not available, and therefore some wandering clergymen are necessary to minister to the religious needs of those people who are living at wayside stations. But, Sir, there are similar places, so far as Indians are concerned, and orthodox Hindus, as the Government are aware, have to observe the *Shradh* ceremony, and my friend Mr. M. K. Acharya who is not present here, and in his absence Mr. Duraiswamy Aiyangar, who is a great Sanskrit scholar, will supply the gap, will tell the House how many ceremonies there are for the Brahmins to perform. Is it or is it not necessary then for the Government to issue passes to the priests of Brahmins to minister to the religious needs of station masters and others who are at distant places where priests are not available for the observance of those ceremonies?

Mr. O. Duraiswamy Aiyangar: I know, Sir, of an instance in which an Indian station master was asked to postpone his mother's annual ceremony to some other day. (Laughter.)

Mr. O. S. Ranga Iyer: The Honourable Member from Chittoor has in this one little sentence, compressed matters of enormous significance, because the poor man could not perform what was dearest to him and nearest

to his heart, namely a religious duty. And, Sir, we are told that clergymen must be given passes because the Anglo-Indians should have religious ministrations. Sir, I do not mind the Government enabling a clergyman to administer to the spiritual wants of Railway employes at places where the services of a clergyman are not available. I do not ask you to take away such passes, but what I ask is, why deny such passes to ministers of religion, Hindus and Muslims alike? I want to know, Sir, whether the Honourable the Railway Member, who is a very religious man, (Hear, hear), will deal with this religious aspect of the question.

Then, Sir, the Government camouflage the reality of racial distinction in regard to one or two of their departments, or one or two grades I should call it. There seem to exist certain classes such as "A" class and "B" class. My friend Diwan Chaman Lall, who represents labour, and who knows more about these things may be able, if he chooses, to enlighten us on this matter better. Sir, in the Great Indian Peninsula Railway and elsewhere, these two classes are being retained, not on grounds of race, not on grounds of nationality, but on grounds of efficiency, the presumption being that "A" class consists of men of superior qualifications, while the "B" class consists of lesser men with inferior qualifications. Where then, the Government have been always asking, comes in the racial discrimination? Distinctions on merits and qualifications are bound to exist, but by this argument, Sir, what is abolished in words is retained in reality. If only the Railway Member will place before this House the number of employes in the respective classes of "A" and "B", he will find that the "A" class is monopolised, if not monopolised, at any rate dominated, by Europeans and Anglo-Indians, while the "B" class, which is more or less the Sudra class, or the depressed class, is really set apart for the Indians. That is a matter of very great importance so far as the Indians are concerned. Government are aware of the growth of middle class unemployment. Government are also aware how the railway employees feel in regard to this discrimination. I want Government to abolish, not the grade system, because there is a point in having an upper grade and a lower grade, but I want them to abolish this discrimination, and I want that the upper grade should be dominated by Indians. Even according to the proportion of the population, if Government are going to give appointments according to the proportion of the population of the respective communities, even then the Indians are entitled to dominate these services. On the other hand, if they will leave it to a matter of efficiency,—and that is the right thing to do—I do say that Indian efficiency is much superior to Anglo-Indian efficiency, and there is a good deal of proof to be found for that if only the Honourable the Railway Member will go through the memorandum of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European community to the Simon Commission. The argument that the Anglo-Indian community have put before the Simon Commission comes to this: this is a country of castes and why should we not have a railway caste in this caste-ridden country? (Laughter.) They want thus to impress upon the Simon Commission, as well as the Government, that their case should be governed, not on grounds of efficiency, but on account of caste. This is a matter which should seriously receive the attention of the Government as I believe it is receiving the attention of the Government to some extent, but I want that Government should, from time to time, make statements on the floor of this House as to what progress is being made in regard to the abolition of the racial discrimination. (Applause.)

Mr. V. V. Jogiah (Ganjam *cum* Vizagapatam: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I am one of those who gave notice of a motion on the lines of that which has been just now moved by My Honourable friend, Mr. Ranga Iyer. The object of that motion, so far as I was concerned, was to show that justice is denied to Indians, not only in the higher services, but also in the subordinate services. Last year it was pointed out to the House that, so far as the higher services were concerned, the proportion between the Europeans employed in those services and the Indians was very disproportionate. It was pointed out that Europeans held about 78.8 per cent. of the appointments, whereas Indians held only 21.2 per cent., and that the proportion was the same in respect to the posts in the subordinate Establishments. The Report of the Railway Board for the year 1927-28, that is, the latest Report, shows that, so far as the subordinate establishments are concerned 5,751 posts are held by Europeans and Anglo-Indians together, whereas only 2,772 appointments are held by pure Indians. This gives a proportion of about 68 to 32. It is always claimed for Government that, so far, at any rate, as the higher services are concerned, certain mysterious qualifications are required, and there are no Indians fit to hold superior posts in the railway services. We always differed from, and protested against, this view. Fortunately for us, Sir, so far, at least, as the subordinate establishments are concerned, they have not extended to them the argument of the mysterious qualifications. And yet what do we find? We find the proportion, even with regard to the subordinate services, is as bad as it is in the higher services. So that, I submit there is absolutely no justification whatever for Government to exclude Indians in such large numbers even from the subordinate services.

The racial discrimination does not exist merely in regard to the numbers appointed to the services, but also in regard to other particulars. My Honourable friend, Mr. Ranga Iyer, has referred to the medical service and also some other technical services, but there are other matters to which racial distinction extends. For instance, with regard to pay, promotion, leave rules and such other matters also, this racial distinction applies. Last year, during the budget debate, my Honourable friend, Mr. Parsons, admitted that, so far as the guards on the trains are concerned, there are two classes of guards, one, the 1st class and the other, the 2nd class. So far as the appointments of guards of the 1st class are concerned, they are the monopoly of the Europeans and Anglo-Indians, and their pay is much higher, and their allowances are far larger, than those drawn by guards of the second grade. The second grade is confined to Indians. As for promotions also, the same distinction continues. For instance, with regard to drivers and firemen, those that serve as firemen are entitled to be promoted as drivers. These firemen, in the case of Europeans, are eligible to be promoted as drivers if they serve for five years, and so far as the Indians are concerned, they are required to undergo a training of 10 to 15 years. Next, Sir, coming to leave rules, I find that there is a great distinction made. Even my Honourable friend, Lieutenant-Colonel Gidney, whose zeal and devotion for Anglo-Indians is well known, had to admit last year that, in the case of these leave rules, many distinctions are made on the various lines between Europeans and Anglo-Indians, on the one hand, and pure Indians on the other. It was pointed out also that there was no furlough available to Indians, however highly placed they might be. Indians getting a pay of Rs. 300 to 600 are not

entitled to it, whereas Europeans getting even Rs. 300 are allowed to claim furlough. In answer to these racial distinctions that were pointed out, my Honourable friend, Mr. Parsons stated that he would look into the matter and see what the actual position of the Indians was with respect to these rules. He also stated that there would be many difficulties in getting a new set of leave rules which would be less complicated than those existing. I do not know what progress has been made with respect to that matter. My Honourable friend, Mr. Ranga Iyer, has already referred to the memorandum issued by the Agent of the East Indian Railway. I do not want to repeat the arguments, but what I would say is that, though the Railway Board on the floor of this House assured us that racial discrimination would be abolished thereafter, still the Government of India is said to have issued a circular by which the assurance given by the Railway Board has been set at naught. I wish the Govern-

1 P.M.

ment of India would reconsider the circular which they have issued and remove the racial distinctions which are in vogue at present. What the Indian Railway Federation and Unions demand is equal pay and equal treatment for equal work. They do not want any community or race to claim special privileges or special rights. It is greatly to be regretted that this principle is not observed in the railway administrations of this country. At present the minority communities, such as the Europeans and Anglo-Indians, enjoy a sort of monopoly in these appointments. This sort of favouritism, I submit, must cease if really Government want no grave discontent among the railway employees. With these words I support this motion.

***Mr. T. C. Goswami** (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadian Urban): Mr. President, I do not think any apology is needed for intervening in what may be called a racial discussion, for the very good reason that the motion of the Honourable Mr. Ranga Iyer is really a protest against racial discrimination. I do not desire to repeat self-evident propositions regarding racial discrimination, and while I support the Honourable Mr. Ranga Iyer's suggestion that the whole question of racial discrimination in the railway system should be examined in response to the repeated demands in this House and outside, my object is to place before this House and before the Honourable Railway Member certain specific grievances which the employees of the Bengal Nagpur Railway have felt for some time. They are matters of detail, and my information is based partly on Government books and reports, partly on the result of visits to important railway centres like Kharagpur, and partly, of course, on hearsay, so that in case I make an inaccurate statement, the Railway Member will bear with me.

The first problem I have to submit is the problem of housing, particularly for the menial staff. I have seen housing conditions in Kharagpur. While I would not like to use the Prince of Wales' description of things that he saw in the mining areas, I certainly think they are appalling, and there is room for improvement. In particular, I would draw the Railway Member's attention to the fact that the single room tenements for the menial staff throughout the line are extremely unsatisfactory. You cannot keep your family and cook and do everything else in a single room, and almost all the menial staff are housed in single-room tenements. Secondly, I would like to invite the Honourable Railway Member's attention to the fact that there was a proposal to erect a hostel for Indian employees at Garden Reach. Land was purchased, I think,

* Speech not corrected by the Honourable Member.

[Mr. T. C. Goswami.]

in 1927, at a considerable cost. The plans were considered by Sir George Godfrey and it was decided that the rent per suite would be at the rate of Rs. 3-8-0 for employees drawing a salary of about Rs. 40. Now, these employees have been given to understand that the proposal is still under consideration, and that probably the rent will be enhanced from Rs. 3-8-0 to Rs. 7-8-0. Now, that works out to a very high incidence. For instance, European employees of railways are charged at a rate of 2·5 per cent. of capital cost—that is how it is worked out I believe—whereas this would work at the rate of 6 per cent. on capital cost. It also occurs to me to ask the Railway Member at what rate he proposes to charge the officers who are going to occupy the new quarters in Kharagpur which are to be built in the course of the year 1929-30. This is a matter of some importance to the railway employees because their salaries are very small, and if any concessions are to be made, they should rather be made in favour of those employees who draw lower salaries rather than in favour of those who are able to pay a slightly higher rate. Thirdly, I have to draw the Honourable Member's attention to the fact that there is no Indian apprentices' home, like the boarding house for Europeans and Anglo-Indians. This causes great hardship. This is unfair in another way. It prevents many suitable apprentices from coming to these railway centres.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: May I ask purely for information where the Honourable Member suggests the Home should be?

Mr. T. C. Goswami: There is a railway colony near Jharia, for instance, I think the name of the place is Bhaga.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Can you say apprentices for what particular department—mechanical or transport?

Mr. T. C. Goswami: I confess I cannot say what apprentices. This is what has been brought to my notice.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I am only asking for my information.

Mr. T. C. Goswami: You have got railway colonies like Bhaga to which I have referred where you have not got facilities for accommodation in the way of private houses. The quarters provided are absolutely insufficient, I am told—I have no personal experience.

As regards medical relief, the two previous speakers have already referred to differential treatment in regard to medical relief. I think the recent orders now in force on the Bengal Nagpur Railway have made that distinction even more pronounced—I mean the distinction between medical relief available to officers and medical relief available to the subordinate staff.

Then as regards facilities of travel, I should think the lower staff have a grievance when they find that the superior staff enjoy a considerable amount of concessions, whereas they get only a very small concession. I think their concession amounts to travelling at one-third of the ordinary fare. I think that is the present arrangement. The superior officers get free passes.

In this connection I should also urge that concessions which were habitually given to officers of unions and have now been withdrawn should be re-established. I think those concessions were available until only a short time back, and it is only by a recent order that those concessions have been abolished.

Then also as regards holiday allowances, according to the Geneva Convention. I should like to hear from the Honourable the Railway Member whether in practice—not merely in theory—there is or there is not, a differentiation between the Europeans, Anglo-Indians and Indians, because I believe Indian employees are always being told that the principle, from which the Railway Administration do not desire to deviate is the principle that a railway employee is essentially a whole-time employee. I am not going to argue on principles of jurisprudence, but the point I have to urge is that there should be no discrimination as regards pay and allowances so far as holiday allowances are concerned.

These are some of the points which I should like to submit to the Railway Member. I think it is time that discrimination on racial grounds should be abolished from our railways.

Mr. Ram Narayan Singh (Chota Nagpur Division: Non-Muhammadian): Sir, this policy of racial discrimination is apparent in every activity of the Government.

Mr. President: Confine yourself to this motion!

Mr. Ram Narayan Singh: I shall do so, Sir. There is a deep resentment throughout the country against this policy of the Government. Once what I found at Gaya was this. There was a compartment reserved for Europeans. A respectable Muhammadian gentleman entered it and the previous occupant, who was most likely an Anglo-Indian, reported the matter to the railway authorities. A large number of railway officers assembled there and compelled the gentleman to leave the compartment. I was also present there and asked the officers, "What does the word 'European' mean?" They replied, "Any man in European dress." I found a man in a *dhoty* in the same compartment and I asked why that man was not removed. They said that the man who was in European dress did not object to his being there so they had nothing to do with it and they would not therefore remove him. This sort of thing goes on every day and every where. What is this budget? When we consider the whole budget, we see that it is full of racial discriminations. It is very difficult to say whether this budget is a railway budget for 38 crores of people of India here, or whether it is a statement prepared in an easy and careless manner by a village *patwari* and contains an account of friendly distributions of the annual income of a co-parcenary among so many white brothers and cousins.

Sir, I don't know whether this motion will be carried, because our Honourable friends on the opposite Benches, with the help of their henchmen are strong enough to reject it. Even if the motion be carried, it can be restored easily by Government without any hesitation.

Sir, this sort of arrangement is ruinous also to Government themselves, and I warn the Government that, if they do not mend their ways, they themselves will be digging a grave for themselves, and I speak a word to my Honourable friend, Sir George Rainy. He speaks very sweetly, and in a very charming way. If his words indicate what is in his heart, I think he should see his way and try his level best so that racial discriminations are abolished.

With these words I support the motion.

Mr. K. C. Neogy (Dacca Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, it does not give me much pleasure to get up to speak on this motion. It is a very unpleasant subject, but, so long as there remains any vestige of racial discrimination in the railway service, this topic is bound to recur regularly at the budget time every year.

We miss very much our friend Colonel Gidney here to-day, and, in his absence, I should therefore like to place the views of the Anglo-Indian community, and then come to the points that have been referred to by the other speakers.

Sir, the Anglo-Indian community, in their different memoranda before the Simon Commission, have practically laid a charge of hypocrisy at the door of Government in dealing with this question. What they say is this. This community was brought into being, as the result of a deliberate policy adopted by the East India Company when they encouraged mixed marriages in India. I am quoting from a memorandum of theirs:

"The East India Company, by specifically encouraging and subsidising the marriages of their European employees with Indian women (*vide* letter from Court of Directors to President of Madras) were directly responsible for bringing the Anglo-Indian Community into existence."

Then they say, "Well, as you are responsible for our very physical existence you must do something for our benefit." Then they trace the policy of Government towards Anglo-Indians through the last century. They say, "We have been given employment in the railways, in the post and telegraphs, as a deliberate policy. Are we now to be ousted from the position of vantage thus secured to us, by reason of your adoption of the policy of Indianisation?" Then they say that, so far as the question of the railways is concerned, "Government are doing their best"—I am quoting from another Memorandum of theirs:

"Government are doing their best to evade answering the many questions on Anglo-Indian railway employment that are being asked daily in the Legislative Assembly, and though they realise that our community furnish more reliable, if slightly more expensive, railway workers, they do not seem to have the courage to say so to the Indian M. L. A. questioner."

I think, in making that statement, the Anglo-Indian community practically admits that Anglo-Indian labour costs more than Indian labour. They say, "We furnish the more reliable labour though slightly more expensive."

I think the point of view of the Government has all along been that they pay at equal rates for equal work. Now, this is entirely given away by this memorandum of the Anglo-Indian Association. They say: "We prove undoubtedly a little more expensive than the Indians". That practically puts our whole case in a nutshell. I should like to hear what my Honourable friend has got to say in reply to this. I do not like to associate hypocrisy with my Honourable friend Sir George Rainy, or with Mr. Parsons. But, Sir, in certain instances which have been brought to my notice, I find that, whereas in reply to questions, and in reply to our debates, they say that they have removed racial

discrimination to the best of their ability, as a matter of fact racial discrimination still continues, perhaps in a more subtle and scientific manner. The old frank, honest statements, justifying racial discrimination have disappeared no doubt. The Indians are theoretically in the enjoyment of equal rights so far as railway employment is concerned, but there are subtle ways in which this racial discrimination is still maintained. I have in my hand certain papers regarding the East Indian Railway. And I find that very recently the Government of India circularised all the railways enquiring as to whether there was any racial discrimination existing in their administration. Thereupon, the Agent of the East Indian Railway, addresses another official, repeating the inquiry whether there is any racial discrimination prevailing in such and such a place, and if so, the cases must be settled before the sitting of the Legislative Assembly begins (Laughter). They are all anxious about this annual whitewashing, and they want that everything must be put in a presentable form when the budget is before the Assembly. Now, in reply to that, that particular officer states as follows:

“There is no racial distinction in such and such a place, but Indians are rated according to merit.”

Now, Sir, if that means anything, it means that,

“the Indians are theoretically of course entitled to equal pay and equal treatment, but well, what can we do, they have not got the merit which would entitle them to such treatment.”

Then, again, Sir, if I may enter into a little more detail about particular classes of employees, for instance, the first class mechanical and electrical apprentices in the East Indian Railway, this is the rule that obtains with regard to their recruitment:

“The Agent has decided that in future those of the first class apprentices, whom it is considered desirable to engage at the end of their apprenticeship, shall be appointed as chargemen and T. T's., on the following rates of pay:

Minimum starting pay : Rs. 110.

Maximum starting pay : Rs. 150.

The actual starting pay, within the above mentioned limits, will be fixed in accordance with the ability and industry displayed by the apprentices concerned during the period of apprenticeship.”

It is very very difficult for anybody on the floor of the House to exhaust the numerous cases that I know have happened in order to substantiate the charge of racial discrimination. I do not think the House would like me to go into the names, nor indeed into very minute details of the cases, but I do urge on the Government carefully to consider the suggestion which has been made by Mr. Ranga Iyer, that a committee should be appointed to go into these questions and find out whether there is any basis for the charge that is being repeated year after year in this Assembly. I have got a very detailed statement showing as to how the Indians have been treated differentially from Anglo-Indians in the application of these rules that I have just read out to the House. If my Honourable friend desires, I can furnish him with some of the details, omitting the names.

[Mr. K. C. Neogy.]

When we bring forward a charge, we are naturally expected to substantiate it, but according to Government circulars, railway employeeca are prohibited from approaching non-official Members of the Legislature. They cannot lay their grievances before us. Whatever grievances dribble through, come therefore through published labour gazettes and trade union resolutions. Now, Sir, I find that there is an Indian labour journal, which is the official organ of the Bengal Nagpur Railway Union. I do not know whether my Honourable friends, who are in charge of the Railway Department, ever care to study those publications. I have with me at present the issues, dated October, 1928, and November, 1928, in which certain instances are given regarding racial discrimination. I have no desire to go through all these details now, but I might just mention one particular instance, and that is in regard to the appointment of guards. Now, with regard to the appointment of guards, the method of recruitment on the Bengal Nagpur Railway is this. If it is an Indian who applies, he must first of all pass the guard's examination, and then make an application for the post of a guard, and then his name is registered for future vacancies, and if he is favoured with an appointment he starts on a salary of Rs. 40.

Then, this is what the journal says :

"It is not necessary for the Anglo-Indian or the European to pass any examination in the first instance, nor are his educational and other qualifications questioned. It is enough if he is recommended by some X. Y. Z., or by the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association, of which some of the superior officials of the railway are the office bearers and patrons. He is immediately offered a salary of Rs. 90 and is allowed to learn the work for two or three months, and then make an attempt at passing the guard's examination. If he passes the examination, he gets another Rs. 10; on the whole a total salary of Rs. 100. Even if he fails, it does not matter much, as he will be given as many chances as are necessary to get through the examination."

An Honourable Member: Even exemption from examination.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: This is one specific allegation. I can give others. Take relieving special duty, and station duty allowances admissible to guards. If their salary is Rs. 110 and above, and only Anglo-Indians are practically eligible for that salary, the daily allowance at headquarters is Rs. 3 per day for 24 hours or part of 24 hours; if away from headquarters, the daily allowance is Rs. 4. The Indian scale of pay is Rs. 50 to Rs. 79 and Rs. 30 to 49. In the case of Rs. 50 to 79, the daily allowance is eight annas at the headquarters, as opposed to Rs. 3 in the case of Anglo-Indians, and away from headquarters, it is Re. 1, as opposed to Rs. 4 in the case of Anglo-Indians. Then, if he is on the Rs. 30 to Rs. 49 scale, his allowance at headquarters is 4 annas a day, and if away from headquarters, it is eight annas a day as against Rs. 3 and Rs. 4 in the case of Anglo-Indians respectively. Now, Sir, mention has already been made of the latest Government circular regarding employment of Anglo-Indians. That circular lays down that competitive examination for the recruitment to the subordinate services should not be made unduly stiff for Anglo-Indian youths and that in making future recruitments to the subordinate services, it should be seen that the present percentage of Anglo-Indians is left undisturbed as far as possible.

Now, I do not know whether my Honourable friend admits that this circular is in operation at the present time in the Railway Department.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I did not quite catch what the document is to which my Honourable friend is referring.

Mr. K. O. Neogy: The document is a Home Department circular to all the Departments of Government which the Railway Board in its turn has sent round to the various Agents.

I expect my Honourable friend to explain the exact manner in which the circular is operating in the Railway Department. Sir, I do not think it is necessary for me to enter into any more details on this point, but I do submit very respectfully that the suggestion made by my Honourable friend Mr. Ranga Iyer merits very careful consideration at the hands of the Government. It is not enough for Honourable Members to repeat their statements that there is no racial discrimination. We assert that there is, and we are prepared to prove that there is. In view of these circumstances, it is best, even in the interests of the Government themselves, that an impartial committee, the constitution of which has been suggested by my friend Mr. Ranga Iyer, be appointed immediately to inquire into the matter, confidentially if need be, and to report whether there is any racial discrimination, and if so, in what way, that should be remedied.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I should like, Mr. President, before coming to the more important matters which have been raised today to deal with certain of the minor points so far as I can do so, which have been raised by one or two of the speakers.

My friend Mr. Goswami referred to a number of questions connected with the Bengal-Nagpur Railway and indicated that the source of his information differed in various cases. Some times, he said he had got it from Government publications, sometimes by other methods and sometimes by hearsay. I do not think I am in a position, at the present moment, to reply definitely about any of these matters, some of which are hardly perhaps matters of racial discrimination. However, as soon as we get the proceedings of today's meeting, I shall be prepared to look into them and see what the position is and whether steps ought to be taken to make a change.

Then my Honourable friend Mr. Ranga Iyer referred to various cases on the East Indian Railway, where he said that racial discrimination still existed. Two of the subjects that he mentioned were housing accommodation and medical relief. Now, Sir, we have received reports from the Agent which refer, amongst others, to these two matters, and I think it is clear, that as things stand at present, there is not complete racial equality in these particular matters. I think there are differences in the quarters allotted to European and Anglo-Indian subordinates which apparently are in some cases more spacious and comfortable than those allotted to Indian subordinates. As regards medical attendance and medical assistance, it appears from the reports we have received that there are differences in the rules, as regards the kind and quality of attendance that is to be given. I do not think myself that these differences can be justified, and I may say that the Railway Board, when they received the

[Sir George Rainy.]

report of the Agent on these matters (I think on the 15th of January), issued orders on the 24th January to the following effect:

"The Board desire that the Agent should take steps to eliminate the elements of racial discrimination which remain, reference being made to the Board on any particular matter which he could not set right after his own inquiries."

Now, it may be, as my Honourable friend Mr. Neogy suggested, that the promptitude displayed by the Railway Board was due to the imminence of the meeting of the Legislative Assembly; but I would ask this House to consider whether, if such feelings are found in the minds of the Railway Board, they can be anything but salutary? I am sure, Sir, that Honourable Members would be gratified to learn that what they have said on this subject from year to year has left a direct and clear impression in the minds of the Railway Board.

As regards the question raised by my friend Mr. Ranga Iyer about the terms on which Indians, on the one hand, and Anglo-Indians on the other are admitted to the technical institute at Jamalpur, I am afraid I am not in a position to deal with the matter at present. Nor can I—and I doubt very much if the House expects me to do so—give an answer on the spur of the moment on what I think is a rather difficult and troublesome question about the concessions given to ministers of religion, and how far these ought to be extended, without distinction of class or creed, to all religions. I think perhaps it would be better if I now go on to what was said by my Honourable friend Mr. Neogy.

He quoted, Sir, some statements in memoranda submitted by the Anglo-Indian community to the Statutory Commission, whose existence I am glad to see he now recognises. (Laughter.) He hoped that I would reply to these memoranda. He is inviting me apparently to co-operate with the Commission, which surely from his point of view is not strictly consistent. But apart from that, I do not think it is a fair demand to make upon a Member of Government to assume that he has some sort of responsibility for what may have been said in memoranda submitted by a body of persons representing a particular community and entirely outside the Government. That clearly is a matter in which I have no special responsibility, and I cannot therefore deal with it.

An Honourable Member: But will the Honourable Member kindly take note of the damaging allegations made therein?

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I have noted the several points brought to my notice by my Honourable friend, and also certain points he made regarding troubles on the Bengal Nagpur Railway. I do not think there will be any difficulty in making inquiries about them; but some of them seemed to me to be of a very ordinary nature—one case particularly where he referred to the varying scales of allowances drawn by officers on various rates of pay. As far as I could judge from what he read, it did not seem to me that there was any direct racial discrimination there, because it is a commonplace in all Government schemes of pay and allowances that officers on higher rates of pay get higher rates of travelling allowance. I take it that the racial discrimination would come in only if it were a fact that the appointments on the higher scales of pay were filled by Anglo-Indians and Europeans.

An Honourable Member: That is the point.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: It does not really seem to me to come in directly, but it comes in only by the back door. However, that is a very small point. Now, Sir, the Honourable Member who opened this discussion referred to what had already been brought to notice in the general discussion on the Railway Budget, and I tried to explain then what the position was about the memorandum issued by the Agent of the Eastern Bengal Railway. I do not want to go over the same ground again in exactly the same form, but I do want to put the substance of the position once again to the Assembly. The policy of the Government in this matter has got two sides. In the first place, as I said in the Assembly last year, the members of the other Indian communities, that is communities other than the Anglo-Indian community:

"ought to have a real chance of showing their fitness and a real chance of filling the class of appointments that hitherto they have had a very small chance of filling. That is precisely the policy of Government. We do want to give a real chance, and I recognise the obligation resting on the Government and on the Railway Board to see that they get it."

That is one side of our policy. The other side is that:

"when as a matter of history members of a particular community have held a very large number of appointments of a particular class, inevitably the whole economic organisation of a community becomes involved in that fact. That is a point that the Government of India cannot possibly ignore. To take measures which would summarily involve a sudden and violent dislocation of the economic circumstances of an important community would clearly be a matter in which the Government of India ought to proceed very cautiously."

Now, Sir, I adhere to that as the expression of the Government of India's policy in this matter. As I pointed out when I spoke last, the memorandum of the Agent of the Eastern Bengal Railway does not bring out the point. In the nature of the case, any restrictions imposed in order to prevent the sudden economic dislocation of a community like the Anglo-Indian community, any particular restrictions that may be imposed cannot, in the nature of the case, be permanent. No one contemplates that in perpetuity we should try to establish what I think my Honourable friend Mr. Neogy or some other speaker referred to as a "railway caste" for the Anglo-Indian community. In the second place, the memorandum of the Agent is misleading in that it does not bring out the other side of Government policy. As I said on the last occasion, the responsibility for that does not rest with him but rests with me, because I do not think the instructions we sent down to the Agent of the Railway were sufficiently explicit on that point. I fully recognise the importance of the question with which we are now dealing and I have tried to explain quite clearly to the House what the position of the Government of India is in the matter. I do not think I need dwell at greater length on the subject, but I should like to say this, that I do not see at present how Government could agree to the proposal made by my Honourable friend Mr. Ranga Iyer that the matter should be examined by a committee. What I do propose to do is to ensure that each of the specific points which have been brought to notice today by various speakers shall be examined, in order that we may ascertain exactly what the position is and what steps ought to be taken. We have to recognise, specially on a railway like the East Indian Railway or the Great Indian Peninsula Railway which are now State-managed, that we took them over with all the inheritance of the rules which had been framed under Company management, and that

[Sir George Rainy.]

we cannot, by any sudden stroke of the pen, eliminate all the differences which have grown up under those rules. What we can do, and what we ought to do, is steadily to maintain the pressure so that, where these rules definitely admit racial discrimination in particular matters, this should be rectified and the racial discrimination eliminated. That is what we are aiming at, and I entirely agree that these annual debates on the subject in the Assembly are of great use because they keep the attention of the Railway Board and of the Railway Member concentrated on the point, so that more rapid progress is made than would otherwise be the case. I think, Sir, that terminates what I have to say on this subject today.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru (Agra Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Will the Honourable Member lay copies of the replies received from Railway Agents to the circular sent to them by Government last year on the table? I understood from Mr. Parsons some time ago that there was objection on the part of Government to laying these papers on the table before their orders had been issued; but since, in regard to company railways, Government have confessed that they have no power to compel the Agents to act in accordance with their wishes, in this case at any rate there is no argument in favour of the postponement of the publication of the replies received from them.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Sir, I have already had copies of a good many replies placed in the Library. There are a few more I think still to come in and a few on which we wish to take action before laying the papers. Eventually there will be no objection to our laying all the papers, but in certain instances I am doubtful whether it would be desirable to do so until the replies themselves have been examined by Government.

Mr. President: The question is:

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

The Assembly divided:

AYES—37.

Abdul Matin Chaudhury, Maulvi.
Aiyangar, Mr. C. Duraiswamy.
Aney, Mr. M. S.
Ayyangar, Mr. M. S. Sessa.
Belvi, Mr. D. V.
Birla, Mr. Ghanshyam Das.
Chaman Lall, Diwan.
Chetty, Mr. R. K. Shanmukham.
Das, Mr. B.
Das, Pandit Nilakantha.
Goswami, Mr. T. C.
Gulab Singh, Sardar.
Haji, Mr. Sarabhai Nemchand.
Hans Raj, Lala.
Ismail Khan, Mr. Muhammad.
Iswar Saran, Munshi.
Jayakar, Mr. M. R.
Jogish, Mr. V. V.
Kelkar, Mr. N. C.

Kunzru, Pandit Hirday Nath.
Malaviya, Pandit Madan Mohan.
Mehta, Mr. Jamnadas M.
Mitra, Mr. S. C.
Mukhtar Singh, Mr.
Murtuza Saheb Bahadur, Maulvi.
Sayyid.
Naidu, Mr. B. P.
Neogy, Mr. K. C.
Phookun, Srijut T. R.
Purshotamdas Thakurdas, Sir.
Ranga Iyer, Mr. C. S.
Roy, Mr. B. C.
Siddiqi, Mr. Abdul Qadir.
Singh, Mr. Gaya Prasad.
Singh, Mr. Ram Narayan.
Sinha, Kumar Ganganand.
Sinha, Mr. Siddheshwar Prasad.
Yakub, Maulvi Muhammad.

NOES—45.

Abdul Aziz, Khan Bahadur Mian.
 Ahmed, Mr. K.
 Alexander, Mr. William.
 Allison, Mr. F. W.
 Anwar-ul-Azim, Mr.
 Ashrafuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur
 Nawabzada Sayid.
 Bajpai, Mr. G. S.
 Bower, Mr. E. H. M.
 Chalmers, Mr. T. A.
 Chatterjee, the Revd. J. C.
 Coatman, Mr. J.
 Cocke, Mr. H. G.
 Cosgrave, Mr. W. A.
 Crawford, Colonel J. D.
 Crerar, The Honourable Mr. J.
 Dakhan, Mr. W. M. P. Ghulam Kadir
 Khan.
 Dalal, Sardar Sir Bomanji.
 French, Mr. J. C.
 Ghazanfar Ali Khan, Mr.
 Ghuznavi, Mr. A. H.
 Graham, Mr. L.
 Hussain Shah, Sayyed.

Keane, Mr. M.
 Lall, Mr. S.
 Lamb, Mr. W. S.
 Lindsay, Sir Darcy.
 Mitra, The Honourable Sir Bhupendra
 Nath.
 Moore, Mr. Arthur.
 Mukharji, Rai Bahadur A. K.
 Mukherjee, Mr. S. C.
 Parsons, Mr. A. A. L.
 Rainy, The Honourable Sir George.
 Rao, Mr. V. Panduranga.
 Row, Mr. K. Sanjiva.
 Sams, Mr. H. A.
 Sassoon, Sir Victor.
 Schuster, The Honourable Sir George.
 Shillidy, Mr. J. A.
 Simpson, Sir James.
 Singh, Rai Bahadur S. N.
 Stevenson, Mr. H. L.
 Sykes, Mr. E. F.
 Webb, Mr. M.
 Yamin Khan, Mr. Muhammad.
 Young, Mr. G. M.

The motion was negatived.

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

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

FINE FUNDS.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunru: Sir, I move:

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

Sir, harassed and wearied as my Honourable friend Sir George Rainy must feel after the discussion on the previous cut, I propose to be considerate to him and to compress what I have to say into a few gentle words. The Fine Fund, as its very name discloses, is built up from the fines imposed on railway employees. I am not concerned with the policy of imposing fines, but with the manner in which this fund should be disposed of. I do not know what is the exact amount of money in this Fund, since the last time that information with regard to the balances in the Fine Funds on the various railways was given, was in the year 1921-22. Since then, Government have discontinued publishing a statement showing the Fine Funds, together with the uses to which they are put. In the year 1921-22, which is the latest year to which I can refer, the balances in the Fine Funds on the railways which are now under State management, that is, the East Indian, Great Indian Peninsula, Eastern Bengal, North-Western and Burma Railways was about Rs. 3½ lakhs; and taking all the major railways, the total sum in the Fine Funds was about Rs. 8 lakhs. The

[Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru.]

House will thus see that the Fine Funds reached a pretty large figure in 1921-22. Complaints have been frequently made in this House with regard to the manner in which these funds are spent. It has been pointed out on more than one occasion by my Honourable friends, Mr. Joshi and Diwan Chaman Lall, that, although it was the Indian employees who contributed largely to this Fund, its proceeds were spent mainly on European and Anglo-Indian employees. This was practically admitted by Sir Charles Innes in the Railway Budget debate in 1925; but he said the attention of the Agents had been drawn to this matter and that they were only too anxious that Indian institutes and clubs and other such bodies should come into existence, so that assistance might be given to them from the Fine Funds. Complaints of this character, however, have continued to this day. My Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi, had to draw the attention of Government to this matter in February last in connection with the discussion of the Railway Budget; and again by means of a question in September last Mr. Joshi suggested that the Fine Funds should be utilised chiefly for the benefit of those employees who contributed largely to them, and that there ought to be a committee, consisting of the employees and the management, to consider the best way of managing the Funds. My Honourable friend, Mr. Parsons, gave a sympathetic reply to Mr. Joshi; but till September last he had not completed the discussion of this question with the Agents; nor was he able to say how Government proposed to make available information with regard to the balances in the Fine Funds and their disposal in future. I do not know, Sir, how the matter stands, now, but considering the long time that it has been under discussion and that it forms one aspect of the question of racial distinctions, I trust that Government are now ready with their proposals and will be able to assure the House that they are prepared in the immediate future to take those steps which they have been pressed to take these five or six years.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Sir, I think I shall be able to satisfy Mr. Kunzru's desire for information as to what we are doing in regard to the Fine Funds. I must first premise that the Railway Board desire that the practice of fining should be reduced to the lowest possible proportions. They realise that it may be necessary, in certain cases, to inflict a fine instead of a more severe punishment, and it is not therefore a good thing to abolish fining altogether. But it is their desire that fining should only be resorted to where that punishment is absolutely necessary. Now, as a result, the income of the Fine Funds from the railways is bound to drop in the future. In fact, from such figures as I have at present got it is already dropping. For example the income apart from interest on balances in 1926-27 was Rs. 7.45 lakhs, and in 1927-28, Rs. 5.84 lakhs, a drop of over Rs. 1½ lakhs. I wish to explain first that position to the House, because quite obviously, if we are going to do anything more useful than we have done in the past with these Fine Funds, some method must be found to place them in funds, particularly when the existing sources of income are being depleted by the adoption by the Railway Board of the policy I have mentioned. Last year, as Mr. Kunzru has said, Mr. Joshi made a suggestion which immediately appeared to us, that in the administration of these Fine Funds we should bring in representatives of the staff from whom the funds as a whole have mostly been collected. We discussed that suggestion with the Agents of the

various Railways, I think it was last October. We did not find that there was any antagonism of any kind to our general ideas, but I think I can best put the House in possession of the present position by reading a letter which, after that discussion, we addressed to the Agents of State-managed railways, sending copies to the Agents of the Company-managed Railways with the request that they would obtain for us the views of their Boards of Directors on the adoption of a scheme on similar lines on their own systems. Our letter ran as follows:

"The Railway Board have under consideration the replacement of the Fine Funds of State-managed Railways by Staff Benefit Funds which would absorb the assets and income of the present Fine Funds and be administered by a Committee on which the various classes of staff would be represented.

The Fine Fund in the past has formed a valuable source from which it has been possible for Agents to give assistance to the staff for the improvement of facilities for recreation and amusement, for educational purposes and the maintenance of schools, as well as assistance in cases of exceptional hardship for which no provision exists for relief under the ordinary financial rules. The infliction of fines as a punishment has come to be recognised as a practice to be discouraged. The income from this source is therefore diminishing, and will, it is hoped, continue to diminish. On the other hand, the objects which might suitably be assisted from the Fine Funds, tend to increase. Consequently, there is naturally a reluctance to incur fresh liabilities, some of which might possibly become permanently recurring liabilities, against a fund to which the contributions are uncertain. To overcome this, it is intended that the new Staff Benefit Funds should receive annually from Revenue a contribution which will ensure a stabilised annual income and so enable the funds available to be utilised to the best advantage. The Railway Board suggest tentatively that the contribution from Revenue should be Re. 1 per head of all staff (except gazetted officers) on the books of the railway on the 31st March of the previous year less the amounts realised during the previous year from other sources of income which are at present credited to the existing Fine Funds. . . ."

That is to say, we propose to make up the income of the Fine Funds to a sum equivalent to Re. 1 per head of the staff which will benefit from those funds.

Sir Victor Sassoon (Bombay Millowners' Association: Indian Commerce): How much does that come to?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: That will be about Rs. 8 lakhs, I expect. I cannot at present give an accurate estimate.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya (Allahabad and Jhansi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): What is the total amount in the Fund now?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I am afraid I have not got the figures here. When we examined the question a couple of years ago, we found that it was rather large on one or two Railways. . . .

Mr. Vidya Sagar Pandya (Madras: Indian Commerce): I would like to know how it is invested.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: May I answer one question at a time? We asked the Agents therefore to take steps to see, where the balances were large, whether they could not immediately be applied to purposes for the benefit of their staff. As regards investment of the Fund, I am afraid I cannot say; presumably the balances are invested in Government securities. To continue the letter:

"An essential feature of the new Staff Benefit Funds is that means should be provided for associating with their management the staff for whose benefit they are being created. In the draft model rules which are attached, it is suggested that this representation might be obtained by the nomination by the Agent of a Committee of management, consisting of one senior officer as Chairman and five members representing

[Mr. A. A. L. Parsons.]

various branches of the subordinate establishment. The manner in which this representation can best be obtained may, however, differ on different railways, and your recommendations as to the arrangement for the management of Staff Benefit Funds which you consider most suitable for your system are invited."

Then we go on to deal with the draft model rules, explaining that rule 8 defines the objects on which it is suggested that expenditure from the Staff Benefit Funds should be permissible. I am quite willing to read the rest of this letter, but there is nothing else of much importance in it; and I do not think I need trouble the House with all the draft rules at present. One provision lays down that the Committee, with one senior officer and 5 or 6 members of the staff for the management of the Fund, will receive the balances of the Funds at present in existence and certain other sources of income that I have mentioned. It is laid down definitely that no part of the fund should be used for the direct benefit of any gazetted officer. The objects on which the new Staff Benefit Fund will be expended are:

"(i) schools and education of the staff;"

(I shall have to say a word or two about this later on.)

"(ii) institutes and other forms of recreation and amusement for the staff;

(iii) schemes for sickness or maternity benefits, etc., for the families of the staff;

(iv) relief of distress amongst the members or ex-members of the staff or their families not provided for under the regulations in force on the railway; and

(v) any other object for the benefit of the staff which the Agent, with the approval of the Railway Board or the Board of Directors, may direct."

The other rules are mere matters of detail, and I do not think I need trouble the House with them. With regard to the first item, namely, schools and education of the staff, I want to make it clear that this is not meant in any way to affect the proposals for future assistance which railways should give for the education of the children of their employees, which, as the House knows, we have under examination. It is in no way intended to reduce the amount which we should spend directly from revenue on education. But, as Members who are on the Central Advisory Council for Railways know, a part of those proposals is that assistance should be given to individuals on a particular scale; that is, possibly half fees when a man's pay is below a certain amount, two-thirds, when his pay is below another limit, and so on. It is conceivable that hard cases may arise in which that limit would have to be applied under the rules which we are proposing for the future assistance direct from revenue, and in such cases these Staff Benefit Funds might very suitably be used to supplement that assistance.

I trust I have now given the Honourable Member and the House all the information that they require on this subject. I need only add that we intend, if and when we start the Staff Benefit Funds, to have an annual report submitted to us, and there will be no objection whatsoever to that annual report being laid before the House.

Diwan Chaman Lal (West Punjab: Non-Muhammadan): I take this opportunity of congratulating the Honourable Member for having accepted the suggestion made by my Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi, in regard to the administration of the Fine Funds. There are just one or two observations that I should like to make. I take it from the statement made by Mr. Parsons that the objects on which this Fund is in future going to be spent

are education, recreation, sickness and maternity, distress and any other laudable object that may come within the purview of the committee that administers it. Now, there is one thing that I would like the Honourable Member to remember when he does proceed with the scheme. At the present moment our chief objection has been that the major portion of the income derived from fines has been spent on recreation and education, not necessarily of the subordinate staff, but of people who belong to the higher services. It has been our demand, year after year, that the educational facilities provided out of this fund should be provided for the subordinate staff. My main object in saying this is that this Fund is usually collected from fines levied upon the subordinate staff, and if that is so, whatever money is spent out of this Fund, should be spent for the benefit of this particular class of workers. The second point I wanted to mention was this. The Honourable Member said that there will be representatives chosen to administer this Fund from among those for whose benefit this Fund is to be utilised. We know that the Fund at present is being utilised in a large measure for the benefit of the gazetted officers . . .

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: No, Sir. The present Fines Fund is used entirely for the subordinate staff.

Diwan Chaman Lall: May I ask since when this has been so?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I do not recollect any case, that has come to my knowledge since I had been connected with the Railway Board, in which fine funds have been used for the benefit of any gazetted officer, except, I think, in one instance, when temporarily they were so used for one officer and the Railway Board immediately reversed the orders.

Diwan Chaman Lall: I am very glad to hear that. My Honourable friend will bear me out, when I say that we did raise complaints on the floor of this House that a portion of this Fund had actually been used for the purposes of the Burt Institute at Lahore. Be that as it may, the point that Mr. Kunzru was wanting to make was this. As this Fund was being raised from the Indian subordinate staff, it should be used for the Indian subordinate staff. I hope the Honourable Member will realise that there was a catch in this, when he said: "The staff for whose benefit the Fund is utilised" I take it, it must be the representatives of the people from whom the fines are levied—whether they are Indians or Anglo-Indians I do not mind. If this Fine Fund is drawn from a particular class, I submit it is their right to have their representatives on this Board to administer the Fund.

The next point has already been met by Mr. Parsons, when he said that this Fund is not being utilised for the gazetted officers. I submit that, instead of saying that no part of the Fund will be used directly for the benefit of gazetted officers, the word "indirectly" may also be there. Under no circumstances should any portion of this Fund be utilised for any purpose connected with gazetted officers. I again take the opportunity of congratulating the Railway Department on having accepted the scheme put forward by Mr. Joshi, and I hope that in future the administration of this fund will be a satisfactory administration in the interests of the subordinate class, who are the persons from whom this Fund is usually collected.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: I ask for leave, Sir, to withdraw this amendment.

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

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

Purchase of Stores.

Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru: I move:

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

There are few questions which have interested this House more than the question of purchase of stores. At any rate this subject has come up every year in this House since 1927. I doubt whether any new arguments can be used to press on Government the importance of making purchases for railways through the Stores Department. The weight of the old arguments has not diminished, but I do not propose on this occasion to go through all the arguments that I used in 1927 and 1928. My Honourable friend Sir George Rainy, in replying to the debate last year, said that he adhered to the previous decision of the Government that the Indian Stores Department would be an unsuitable agency for the purchase of railway stores. Unfortunately, situated as we are, we cannot compel Government to be reasonable. All that we can do is to press our argument again and again upon them, and this time I propose to bring forward certain points in connection with the practice observed by the railways regarding the purchase of certain articles which I believe will support our contention. I know that in the year 1927-28, as the Railway Administration Report says, improved arrangements were made with regard to the purchase of stores. The position of the Controller of Stores has been raised, and in order that he might be able to purchase suitable stores, a proportion of the officers who will serve under him are to possess technical engineering qualifications. But our main grievance still remains, namely, that every railway purchases its stores separately. There are certain matters in which Government themselves have felt the need of centralising the arrangements for the purchase of certain articles needed by railways. I will first refer to the Timber Pool Committee. Government themselves have realised that it would be uneconomical to let every railway purchase its own stores. They have therefore placed this matter under the direction of the Railway Board, so that purchases might be made for all State-worked railways by a single agency. This shows that they themselves recognise the benefit, if not of effecting their purchase through the Indian Stores Department, at any rate of centralising the arrangements for making these purchases. Then again Government have recently established a Stores Standardisation Committee. They appointed an officer to consider the distribution and custody of stores on the State-worked railways and to make recommendations for modification of procedure and methods. I do not know what exactly the recommendations of this officer were, but I understand that they have been accepted in the main. Now, the advantages of standardisation are obvious, at any rate so far as economy is concerned. It will be more economical to purchase a small number of articles, in large quantities, than a large number of articles, the quantity of which, taken individually, is small. Here there are two instances in which Government have shown, by their own action, that they appreciate the advantages of centralisation. Why should not then their practice go further and why should they not make use of the Stores Purchase Department which, when originally established, was intended to supply the

needs not merely of the minor departments but also of the Railway and Army Departments? My Honourable friend, Sir George Rainy, tried to diversify his argument last year by saying that if, as desired by this House, a section for the purchase of railway stores was attached to the Indian Stores Department, it would be so large as to overshadow the rest of the Department. Now, if the Army and Railway Departments make the largest purchasers, it is obvious that those sections of the Indian Stores Department which deal with these Departments will dominate the other departments, but I do not see that this is any disadvantage at all. The Stores Purchase Department was intended, after all, to effect purchases on a large scale. Government have repeatedly asserted, in support of their present attitude, that, in view of the responsibility of every Agent for the economical administration of his railway, it is desirable that he should be left the fullest freedom in regard to the purchase of stores. It has been used on previous occasions and has been frequently replied to, but even at the cost of repetition, I think it would be desirable to reply to this argument once more.

If the railways were administered by a private agency, I am doubtful whether the procedure now adopted by Government would commend itself to the controlling agency. Whatever the responsibility of the Agents might be, I am sure that the proprietary body would not leave a free hand to the Agents in this matter, but would see that arrangements were adopted for the purchase of similar articles on all railways, which would enable these purchases to be effected most expeditiously and economically. I am sure, Sir, that, if there were five or six mills owned by a single proprietary body, the manager of each mill would not be allowed to make his purchases in such manner as he liked. We have here representatives of business interests, and I am sure that they do not allow their individual managers to proceed in the way that commends itself to them in regard to this highly important question. Here the Railway Board is in the position of the proprietary agency. It controls all the State-worked railways. Why then should it, in a measure of such enormous importance, leave freedom to individual railways. It seems to me, Sir, that it is not merely highly desirable that there should be centralised arrangements for the purchase of railway stores, but that it is absolutely necessary, both in the interests of economy and the encouragement of the use of indigenous articles that the procedure I am recommending should be adopted.

It is possible that Government, while agreeing to some central arrangement for the purchase of railway stores, might still object to making use of the Indian Stores Department. The Indian Stores Department has been in existence for a number of years. It has got a certain atmosphere and traditions. Because it charges fees to certain departments, it has to justify its existence and to show that it works in the most economical way. I submit, therefore, that, if it is the object of the Government to achieve the purposes for which the Indian Stores Department has been established, that not only should railway requirements, as far as possible, be purchased through a single agency, but that that agency should be the Indian Stores Department.

I hope my Honourable friend Sir George Rainy will not stick to his previous unreasoning attitude and contend himself by telling this House that Government are not going to make a change in their procedure. He realises, as shown by his attitude towards the previous cuts, that times are fast changing, and that Government, whatever its inner inclinations

[Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru.]

may be, must bow to the representatives of this House. I am sure he will remember that the subject has interested, not merely non-official Members on this side of the House, but also non-official European Members. During the last two years a proposal of the kind I have put forward has had their entire support and been carried by this House with their hearty concurrence.

Pandit Nilakantha Das (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadian): Sir, I trust I may be allowed to speak on this motion, as I have got a similar amendment regarding capital punishment of the Railway Board

Mr. President: Regarding capital punishment of the Railway Board? (Laughter.)

Pandit Nilakantha Das: I am sorry, Sir, capital expenditure is what I mean. It is akin to this store purchase, on which has been moved the amendment by Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru.

Mr. President: What number is your amendment?

Pandit Nilakantha Das: No. 23, Sir.

Mr. President: That is the same thing, isn't it?

Pandit Nilakantha Das: Akin, yes, practically the same.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member may speak on this amendment.

Pandit Nilakantha Das: My Honourable friend, Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru, has referred to the internal administration of the Stores Department, but as stores purchase is intimately connected with capital expenditure, I shall speak on that aspect of the question alone.

I referred, during the course of my general discussion, to this subject at some length, and there I quoted facts and figures from items of stores purchase to establish that this capital expenditure of the Railway Board practically means gradually increasing the purchase of stores in England and other countries, and gradually reducing the same or keeping it stationary in India, and as the Indian Stores Purchase Department have got to purchase various articles, such as fuel, timber, lime, sand, ballast and all that sort of thing, which count for as much as half—nay much more than half—of the fifteen crores and odd that we have spent on indigenous articles in 1927-28, the policy underlying their action therefore seems to be that our Railway Board is bent upon giving substantial encouragement to industries outside India, encouragement perhaps in quarters where it is to the interest of some people whose claims cannot be overlooked. It was probably to afford this encouragement that the 5-year Railway development programme was launched side by side with the separation of Railway from general finances.

In this connection I may quote from the Imperial Economic Conference proceedings a paragraph, which, though it was quoted in this House some three years ago, may perhaps bear a repetition.

Our Honourable friend Sir George Rainy's predecessor, who attended that Conference on behalf of India, said particularly with regard to stores purchase as well as to the new development scheme:

"Large sums have been set aside for the rehabilitation of her (India's) railways and I hope that we may be able to embark on some new construction. On railway material alone we spent last year, almost entirely in this country, more than 8½ millions sterling. Other development schemes are in contemplation, and in one way and another the Government estimate that something like 70 millions sterling will be spent on imported stores during the next five years for the railways and other development schemes. As in the past, so in the future, I have no doubt that the skill and enterprise of the British manufacturers will see to it that the vast bulk of their moneys (Indian Railway moneys) will be spent in this country."

In another place he said in the same connection:

"The Government of India were required by rule to buy their imported stores through their Stores Department in London, which was under the control of the High Commissioner for India. The High Commissioner had to accept the lowest satisfactory tender; not necessarily the cheapest, for he has been given a wide latitude for selection."

"Not necessarily the cheapest" has its own significance, and I do not know, there may be many things underlying such a latitude for selection. Later on it is said:

"The practical result has been that between 90 and 95 per cent. of the value of purchases made through the High Commissioner during the past year had been expended in England on articles produced by British manufacturers."

Sir, this explains the policy of stores purchase and this exemplifies the gradual increase of capital expenditure outside India year by year for at least the last three years, for in India it has come down from 15·48 crores in 1926-27, to 15·15 crores in 1927-28; whereas in England it has gone up during the same period from about 12 crores odd to 19 crores odd, as is clear from the Reports of the Railway Board for those two years. I quote simply from the columns of stores purchase.

When there was a difficulty in supplying work to labourers engaged in English industries, there was this beneficent plan of dividing railway finance from general finance. The scheme of separation appeared quite a nice arrangement, even to the Indian Members of this House, who always expect to derive their initiation from the experienced Benchies over there, and many of us are still perhaps enamoured of it and actually think that we have found something very wise in it. Was it not, I suspect, some scheme put forward for separating the railway purchases in England from Home charges, the entire amount of which, English purchases for railways included, would otherwise come as a single visible lump in the budget as it was. But the separation has a particular advantage. It has opened up an unnoticeable back door to introduce certain Home charges which would go unscrutinised to the benefit of the Home industry.

Then, again, my Honourable friend Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru objects that the decentralisation of purchase in the policy of stores purchase is a curse. He says it should be centralised, but where is the tendency to centralisation? Now, this capital expenditure on Railways is interdependent on the promotion of Indian industry, for really it is not a small thing. The Railway system itself ought to be a national industry,—had our Government been a national Government,—and the promotion of our indigenous Indian industry even now depends very much on this stores purchase policy regulated to that end. Industry has a very close connection with labour. It is the counterpart of the labour problem

[Pandit Nilakantha Das.]

which is cropping up every day. If you look to help labour, you must give them a reasonable share of the profits; if you think of profits, you must encourage and strengthen industry. Thus you must promote industry before you can satisfy labour. Now, there is another decentralisation attempted here to frustrate all our pious expectations. Labour is being separated from industry. Our Honourable friend Sir George Rainy, like my predecessor, Sir Charles Innes, will perhaps henceforth exclusively look to the Home industry and the purchase of the High Commissioner not in the cheapest, but in the most convenient market. I need not explain the standard of convenience here. Labour in railways is going to be likewise exclusively entrusted in the hands of a new Member on the Railway Board. That Member will be an Anglo-Indian, Indian, or European—I do not mind or care who he is. But the fact remains that if you want to represent some grievances of labour, if you want to look to labour interests in India, that question will go to that gentleman who is in charge of it. The little chance that there was of the representatives of the Indian taxpayer attempting for the promotion of Indian industry through pressure of labour demands and thus by directing capital expenditure, is all gone, and with that labour too is doomed. Thus our attention is being diverted from time to time whenever there is any little chance or occasion of our entering into the very secret preserves of the Government.

I should not make my speech very long for I have already dwelt at great length upon this self-same subject, though then I discussed only the economic aspect of it so far as our indigenous industry is concerned. Perhaps my Honourable friend Sir George Rainy had not the time nor the inclination to look into my analysis of stores purchase the other day. I hope he will look into it and investigate the matter very carefully. I also hinted there that his colleague, my Honourable friend Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra, the Member in charge of Industries, has got a good deal to do in that matter. In that connection decentralisation of industry and railways will not do. Our Honourable friend is responsible for the national industry, at least I may call it Indian industry for the present. I have not the heart to call it national, because, as you have just now heard from my Honourable friend, this Government which runs our railways is not just and reasonable. It is not responsible either. So, be it national industry or Indian industry, my Honourable friend for the Industries has certain duties to discharge there, and he must be very intimately watchfully looking into the entire policy of the stores purchase of our railways. I should also expect that henceforth this matter would be investigated thoroughly and in the Report of the Railway Board a distinct chapter should be devoted giving us a complete analysis of the purchases in India and in England, and outside with a view to explain in what way and by what means, and with what amount of sacrifice, if any, impetus and encouragement have been afforded to Indian industry and what actual progress Indian industry has made in consequence of such impetus or encouragement. At a glance one ought to know from the Railway Report, how far Indian industry is being promoted year after year under the nursing care of railway administration. In short all this information of vital economic importance in detail should be given in that Report.

Our attention is, moreover, expected to be diverted to rates and fares, amenities to passengers, or to the grievance that some railway inspectors are not attending to their duties at the Howrah station and so on. These are

all very little things after all. Such things might crop up even under a national Government, and they might be remedied from time to time in the usual way. We should not be expected to be absolutely absorbed in these things, with the result that the main object, so to say, of our railway business is left out of sight. Even all possible convenience to the taxpayer should not be purchased so dearly in this fashion. With these few words, I support the motion of my Honourable friend Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I have listened with great attention, Mr. President, to the speech of my friend the Honourable the Mover of this motion. Apparently he found me not quite reasonable last year, and I am afraid he will not find me over-reasonable this year, for I am still unconverted as to the practicability and the advisability of handing over the whole of the purchase of stores for the Indian Railways to the Indian Stores Department. It is not that the Railway Board or the Railway Department of the Government of India are in any way averse to extending the use they make of the Indian Stores Department, because we recognise that, in the case of a large range of articles, it may be the most economical policy in every way if we get our supplies through the agency of that Department. I have got here a list which contains some thirty to forty articles, about which we issued instructions recently to all the State-managed railways, that they should obtain these stores through the Indian Stores Department. It includes certain materials for clothing, portland cement, a large range of oil products, turpentine, asphalt, grease, paints and a considerable number of electric fittings. It is a long list and I will not attempt an exhaustive enumeration. That is what we have done. But to hand over to the Indian Stores Department the purchase of all the stores required by the railways in India is a totally different matter. When I argued the case last year, one of the arguments I used was that this would mean the establishment of a very large central office; and since the purchases for the railways are a great deal larger than those for all the other departments put together, I expressed an apprehension that the railways might swallow up the Indian Stores Department. I am sure that apprehension will be shared equally by Members on the other side when they realise that it might lead to a demand from the Government for the addition of another Member to the Railway Board to look after stores. (Laughter.) No doubt my Honourable friend will take that very seriously into consideration before he urges his point further.

Last year I said that complete centralisation in the purchase of stores was undesirable; and my Honourable friend Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru has pointed out that nevertheless we have recently centralised our timber purchase to some extent. He also pointed out that we had a committee which was studying the question of the standardisation of stores, and obviously when we have standardised the stores to be used, it will be much easier to centralise purchases. He was quite entitled to use these arguments on his own side, and where we differ is that while he thinks that all stores should be purchased centrally, I think that a large number of stores should be purchased locally, I am convinced of this and I doubt very much whether the time will ever come when, for such a large organisation as the Indian railways, it would be economical or desirable to purchase all the stores from one centre. Meantime, the big change that will come into force before very long is the introduction of the system of purchase by

[Sir George Rainy.]

rupee tenders. The introduction of that system will keep our hands full for some time to come, and I should imagine that, quite apart from railway demands, it will throw a very considerable burden upon the Indian Stores Department. In these circumstances, it is far better for the present—whether I am right or whether my friend the Mover is right—to move step by step. Where we see our way clearly and are satisfied that we can secure advantages for our railways by using the agency of the Indian Stores Department, let us add to the list of articles which we purchase that way. We cannot say what the end will be—it may be that it will end in what my Honourable friend desires, or it may be that I shall prove to be right, and that we cannot get complete centralization. In any case I am satisfied that it is not advisable to make any very radical change at present.

I have listened also with great interest to what my friend Pandit Nilakantha Das had to say on the subject of stores purchase. I am not sure that I gathered what exactly the figures were which he quoted as regards the purchase of stores in Great Britain.

Pandit Nilakantha Das: I quoted it from the report just published for 1927-28.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: The Railway Administration Report?

Pandit Nilakantha Das: Yes.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I am much indebted to him for letting me know that. I tried, while he was speaking, to verify the figures from the Report, but failed to do so. What I should like to say is that as long ago as 1921 or 1922, we give the High Commissioner perfectly explicit instructions—having regard purely to the interests of India—about the purchases for India in Europe, that he was to purchase where he could get the articles of the required quality the cheapest. Our instructions then were perfectly explicit, and they have not been modified, and I have no doubt the High Commissioner is guided by them. But as my Honourable friend seems to think that we have been diminishing the purchases we are making in India, I would like to give him the figures that I have before me here. The stores that were purchased in India by all railways excluding coke, lime, bricks, etc., amounted to

Rs. 18·8 crores in the year 1925-26,

Rs. 16·2 crores in the year 1926-27, and

Rs. 17·8 crores in the year 1927-28.

It will be seen that the purchases have been going up steadily from year to year, and I have no doubt that process will continue. We are very far from indifferent to this question of aiding Indian industries through the purchase of stores, and it is a matter that comes up to the notice of Members of the Government again and again throughout the year. If my Honourable friend

Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru: May I interrupt the Honourable Member? I do not quite understand the figures given by him? Did he say that indigenous articles to the value of over Rs. 17 crores were purchased during the year 1925-26?

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I did not say 'indigenous' articles; but what I said was that it was the value of stores purchased in India.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: Including imported articles?

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I imagine that that figure includes the imported stores purchased in India.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: Then the total figure should be Rs. 22 crores as given in the Railway Administration Report.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I do not think so, Sir. I gave last year in my speech the figure of Rs. 22 crores, but that included the cost of the stores "imported direct"—I am quoting from my own speech of last year. However, all that I wished to illustrate was that the extent of our purchases in India has been steadily increasing. My Honourable friend Pandit Nilakantha Das, I think, wished that we should
4 P.M. give a fuller analysis—I presume in our Administration Report—of exactly how our purchases of stores are made under various heads: imported articles purchased in India, indigenous stores, imported stores purchased in Europe and so on. Well, I will consider that.

Pandit Nilakantha Das: May I know, Sir, if imported stores purchased in India are included in indigenous articles purchased here. I could not quite follow.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: No, Sir, not in the figures that are in the Administration Report as indigenous articles. That is an unambiguous figure; but they may be included in the figures that I read out to the House just now. They are certainly not included in the figures in the Administration Report, where it is definitely said that these are indigenous articles. I am quite willing to consider the question whether it would be for the assistance of the House and the Government to give a fuller analysis than we give at present of the stores and the agency and the place where we purchase our stores. I would not like off hand to make any promise on the subject, but I am quite ready to consider the matter.

I think, Sir, that practically completes what I have to say today. I regret I am unable to meet the wishes of the Honourable the Mover, and I am afraid I must still fall under his condemnation as not altogether reasonable.

Mr. President: The question is:

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

The motion was negatived.

Pilgrim Traffic.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: Sir, I move:

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

Sir, I acknowledge with great pleasure that the method employed by the railways of dealing with pilgrim traffic have improved considerably of late. I had occasion to see for myself the arrangements made during

[Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru.]

the Hardwar *Kumbha Mela* of 1927 and the solar eclipse at Kurukshetra in 1928, and I must, in fairness to the Railway Department, bear witness to the efficiency of the arrangements made by the railways concerned on both these occasions. I wish, however, to direct the attention of the Railway Board to the fact that next year, one of the biggest religious fairs of India will be held at Allahabad, namely, the twelve-yearly *Kumbha*. Passengers will pour into Allahabad from all directions. So far as Hardwar and Kurukshetra were concerned, they were served practically by one railway line, but in Allahabad we shall have to consider the arrangements made, not merely by the East Indian Railway, but also by the Great Indian Peninsula Railway and the Bengal and North Western Railway. I have considerable experience of the arrangements made by the railways on such occasions in the past, and I cannot say that the arrangements made at Allahabad particularly by the Bengal and North Western Railway were particularly efficient during the last *Kumbha*. I should like to know whether Government will bear this point in mind from now and take early steps for the co-ordination of methods to be adopted for bringing passengers to Allahabad and evacuating them. In this connection I would ask them to consult certain social agencies which have been taking an interest in these things for the last 14 or 15 years, and I would, while on this point, particularly mention the *Seva Samiti* of Allahabad. If Government take the help of these social agencies and invite them to any conferences that might be held, I am sure they will gain in the confidence that they will inspire and perhaps also by the sound advice that these social service organisations might be able to give them.

But there is another subject of even greater importance which I wish to draw their attention to. During the last solar eclipse fair at *Kurukshetra*, while the railway arrangements were extremely efficient, I am sorry to say that the Railway Police did not treat the passengers as it ought to have treated them in the railway compound. I am aware, Sir, that all police arrangements, including those made by the Railway Police, are under the control of the Local Government, but this is not a matter in regard to which the Railway Department can divest themselves of their responsibility simply by saying that the police arrangements have to be made by the local authorities. The ill-treatment to which the passengers were subjected during the solar eclipse has reflected adversely on the railway concerned. People did blame the police for the harsh manner in which they treated passengers, but the North Western Railway also got a bad name, and wherever the pilgrims went, they complained that they had been ill-treated in the railway compound. I do think, Sir, that this is a matter of first-class importance, which the Railway Department should turn their attention to. I am sure that, if they approached the Local Government in this matter, their representations would carry far greater weight than those of non-official agencies. Even if the worst came to the worst, I can say with some confidence that they could, even on big occasions, dispense almost entirely with the aid of the police and rely on the help of the volunteers furnished by reliable non-official social agencies. Perhaps my Honourable friends representing the Railway Department will be somewhat startled to hear this, but I speak from personal experience. I know what splendid work the volunteers have been able to do during the last 10 or 12 years and to what extent even those agencies which were inclined to hold aloof from them now trust them. I can say certainly of

the East Indian Railway that no important occasion passes when they do not write to us inviting the help of our volunteers and entrusting some important work to them. However, it is not my intention to make detailed suggestions on this matter, but I do request that the two matters to which I have drawn attention should be borne in mind and that the Railway Department should, for their own sake, try and see that railway passengers are treated as human beings in railway compounds.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Sir, I am very grateful to my Honourable friend Mr. Kunzru for his acknowledgments of what railways have done to improve their arrangements at these big *melas*, which play such an important part in the life of this country. I am also grateful to him for the suggestions which he has made with regard to the forthcoming *Kumbha Mela* at Allahabad. We have not been overlooking the fact that this *mela* is going to occur. In fact, the railways have already made certain arrangements for it, and I shall certainly pass on to the East Indian Railway, and to the other railways that will be concerned, the suggestion that local social agencies should be invited to assist them—a suggestion which I think will be of great benefit to the railways, particularly if they can concert measures with the social agencies, including the *Seva Samiti*, a good time beforehand, so that every person may know exactly what part he has to play. Actually, in order to deal with these big aggregations of people at the *melas*, we have now come to an arrangement by which State Railways draw up together definite programmes of their *mela* requirements annually and they also send to the Railway Board details of their arrangements for our information, so that we can see if we have any further suggestions to make. At the moment that applies only to the State-managed railways; but my Honourable friend has pointed out that the Bengal and North Western Railway is also concerned, and I will see that they are brought in in some way, so that the arrangements on one railway may not compare unfavourably with those on the other two. Further we recently arranged—certainly on State-managed railways and I believe with some of the Company-managed railways too—that when any of these big *melas* takes place, six weeks or two months before, the Agents should discuss matters with the members of their local Advisory Committees, tell them what arrangements they are making, and hear what suggestions the Committee has to make. I expect, from the adoption of a practice of this kind, that the Agents will have their attention drawn to various details, small perhaps but nevertheless worthy of attention, which may not occur to railwaymen themselves, but which do occur to people who are themselves constant travellers. I am afraid I am unable to say much on the question of railway police; but I feel perfectly certain that the East Indian Railway authorities will get into close touch with the Provincial Government on that matter; and of course it is to the interests of the East Indian Railway authorities that travellers going to one of these pilgrim centres should not come away with any sense of grievance that they have been harshly treated. I think I may perhaps leave it at that. I think, Sir, that I have now dealt with all the points raised by my Honourable friend.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: I beg leave, Sir, to withdraw my motion.

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

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. President: I think the sense of the House is that the motion should be withdrawn, and I thought the Honourable Member himself wanted to withdraw it. If any Honourable Member wishes to divide the House on the original motion, I am prepared to put the question. (*Voices of "No, no!"*)

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

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday, the 26th February, 1929.