

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES

TUESDAY, 26th FEBRUARY, 1929.

Vol. I—No. 19

OFFICIAL REPORT



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, 26th 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.

PROMOTION OF INDIAN SUBORDINATES ON THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY.

779. *Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: (a) With reference to Mr. N. M. Joshi's starred question No. 695 (c) of the 20th September, 1928, and Mr. Parsons' reply in the negative thereto, will Government be pleased to refer to page 75 of the Classified List of State Railway Officers for 1928, issued by the Railway Board, in so far as the Great Indian Peninsula Railway is concerned, and say whether they are aware that some probationary officers were confirmed in permanent vacancies in the year 1924-25, or much earlier than the period of 3 years?

(b) If the answer to (a) is in the affirmative, will Government be pleased to state why the claims of the subordinates, then acting as officers and even previous to the appointment of the probationary officers, were overlooked?

(c) Is it a fact that, out of 35 vacancies occurring in the years 1925 to 1927, only one was offered to a subordinate, and if so will Government say whether the 20 per cent. of Indian recruitment from subordinates was worked up to; if not, why not?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) and (b). These confirmations were made in the time of the late Board of Directors of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Company, who had full powers in such matters.

(c) The number of vacancies was 26 excluding the Audit Department, and not 35 as mentioned by the Honourable Member. One subordinate was promoted permanently. The 20 per cent. ratio covers promotions from the local services of the East Indian, North Western, and Eastern Bengal Railways, as well as from the subordinate establishments of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway.

SUPERSESSION BY PROBATIONERS OF SUBORDINATES ON THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY.

780. *Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: 1. Will Government be pleased to state whether it is a fact:

(a) that Mr. Parsons stated, in reply to Mr. N. M. Joshi's question No. 695 (b) in the September 1928 Session of the Assembly, that " Probationers have no prescriptive right to confirmation in permanent vacancies, and their existence in no way interferes with the rule that 20 per cent. of the vacancies open to persons of Asiatic domicile will be filled by the promotion of subordinates " ?

(b) that in the years 1925 to 1927, nine vacancies in the officers' grades occurred in the Commercial Department of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, and that four of them were filled up by confirmation of probationers in supersession of several subordinates till then acting as officers, and some of them since 1922?

2. If the answers to (a) and (b) of part 1 are in the affirmative, will Government be pleased to state why the claims of subordinates were overlooked?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (1) (a) Yes.

(b) I am afraid the Honourable Member has misunderstood the reply I gave to part (a) of Mr. Joshi's question No. 11 on the 1st February, 1928. There were 9 subordinates officiating in the superior Commercial Department on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, but this does not mean that there were 9 posts in the cadre permanently vacant. As regards the latter part of the question, only one probationer was confirmed in the Commercial Department between 1925 and 1927.

(2) Does not arise.

PROMOTION TO OFFICERS' GRADES OF SUBORDINATES ON THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY.

781. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** With reference to Mr. Parsons' reply to part (c) of Mr. N. M. Joshi's unstarred question No. 11 of the 1st February, 1928, will Government be pleased to state whether any of the subordinates referred to therein have since been promoted to officers' grades, and, if so, how many Indians and how many statutory Indians; and if no Indian was promoted, the reason for it?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Of the 5 subordinates referred to in my reply to Mr. Joshi's question, one has since been promoted, with the approval of the Public Service Commission. He is a statutory Indian. Only one Indian was recommended at the same time for promotion, and he was junior to the subordinate who was selected.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: What opportunities have the Public Service Commission of judging the comparative merits of these candidates?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: The practice, I think, is to send to the Public Service Commission the records of all the men recommended, their confidential files and so on. They are also, I believe, sent the records of all more senior men who have not been recommended for promotion, so that they can see that no senior man is being passed over without due cause.

METHOD OF FILLING APPOINTMENTS IN THE ENGINEERING, TRANSPORTATION AND COMMERCIAL DEPARTMENTS OF THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY.

782. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** 1. Will Government be pleased to state:

(a) how many permanent vacancies occurred in the years 1927 and 1928 in the Engineering, Transportation, and Commercial Departments, respectively, of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway?

(b) how they were filled up, showing the dates of the appointments, the service of the selected candidates, their period of probation, and the date of their confirmation in the permanent vacancies; also how many of them were statutory Indians, and how many Indians?

(c) how many of the vacancies referred to in (a) were filled up by direct recruitment from England and what were the conditions under which and qualifications for which such men were appointed?

2. Will Government be pleased to state the names of subordinates at present acting as officers in the Transportation, Commercial, and Engineering Departments of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, and the nature of work on which they have been working since the date of their appointments, together with the period of their officiating service?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: 1 (a) Number of vacancies for which recruitment was made in 1927-28 was:

Engineering Department 6.

Transportation Department 8.

Commercial Department 2.

(b) I am sending the Honourable Member a statement.

(c) Seven. Five officers were recruited in England by the Secretary of State, and two were Royal Engineer Officers who were appointed in India. I am sending the Honourable Member a copy of the regulations governing the conditions of recruitment in England.

(2) I am making certain inquiries from the Agent to complete the information at the disposal of Government, and will communicate with the Honourable Member on receipt of his reply.

APPOINTMENT OF SUBORDINATES TO THE OFFICERS' GRADE OF CERTAIN DEPARTMENTS IN THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY.

783. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state what is the date on which the last appointment of a subordinate was made to the officers' grade in the Engineering, Transportation and Commercial Departments of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway?

(b) Is it a fact that the Agent of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway asked the Railway Board to suspend direct recruitment until such time as he could absorb some of the deserving subordinates acting as officers in permanent vacancies?

(c) If the answer to (b) is in the affirmative, will Government state what decision was come to?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) The dates are:

Engineering Department—21st April, 1921.

Transportation (Traffic) and Commercial Departments—15th January, 1929.

(b) No.

(c) Does not arise.

RULES FOR LEAVE SALARY OF SUBORDINATES OFFICIATING IN OFFICERS' POSTS.

784. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** With reference to Mr. Parsons' reply to Mr. N. M. Joshi's starred question No. 695 (d) of the 20th September, 1928, will Government be pleased to state whether the consideration of the question of altering the rule with a view to remove the hardship, viz., "that when a subordinate goes on leave after officiating in a superior's post, his salary is regulated by the pay of his substantive post" has since been finished, and, if so, what decision has been reached in the matter; if not, when it is likely to be finally decided?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Government have decided that, when a subordinate under the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Leave Rules, who has been officiating continuously as an officer for three years or longer, proceeds on leave, his leave salary will be based on the average of the pay drawn in the officiating appointment held by him during the previous 12 months prior to proceeding on leave.

SANCTIONED CADRE FOR PROBATIONARY OFFICERS IN THE ENGINEERING AND OTHER DEPARTMENTS OF THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY.

785. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state what is the sanctioned cadre for probationary officers in the Engineering, Transportation and Commercial Departments of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway?

(b) Has the hardship caused to a subordinate acting as officer for an uninterruptedly long period, by making him draw his substantive pay in the event of his reversion, been removed? If not, when it is likely to be removed?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) There is no sanctioned cadre. Probationers are posted to railways according to requirements. The total annual requirements are based on the total cadre of all State Railways.

(b) If the Honourable Member is referring to reversion, when proceeding on leave, I would refer him to the reply given to his question No. 784. It is then, I think, that hardship occurs.

POSTS OF DEPUTY AUDITORS IN THE CHIEF AUDITOR'S OFFICE, GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY.

786. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether there are two posts of Deputy Auditors in the Chief Auditor's Office, Great Indian Peninsula Railway, whereas in other State Railway Audit Offices there is only one post of Deputy Auditor?

(b) If the answer to (a) is in affirmative, will Government state whether they consider the retention of these two posts necessary, and, if so, why?

The Honourable Sir George Schuster: With your permission, Sir, I will deal with questions Nos. 786 to 790, 795, 805, 808 and 818 to 815 together. Information is being collected and inquiries are being made, and replies will be sent to the Honourable Member in due course.

NUMBER OF POSTS IN THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF AUDITOR, GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY, DUE TO TRANSFER OF WORK TO THE CLEARING ACCOUNTS OFFICE, DELHI.

- †787. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** Will Government be pleased to state:
- (a) the total number of posts of the subordinate establishment reduced from the Chief Auditor's Office consequent on the transfer of Foreign Traffic work to the Clearing Accounts Office, Delhi? and
 - (b) the number of officers' posts reduced on that account?

NON-TRANSFER TO DELHI OF THE JUNIOR STAFF OF THE CHIEF AUDITOR'S OFFICE, GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY.

- †788. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether it is a fact that, at the joint meeting of the representatives of the Offices of the Railway Board, Accountant General, Railway Clearing House, and the Chief Auditor, Great Indian Peninsula Railway, it was decided to transfer the services of the junior staff from the Chief Auditor's Office, Great Indian Peninsula Railway, consequent on the transfer of foreign traffic work to the Clearing House, Delhi, and the staff of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Audit Office was informed accordingly?
- (b) If the answer to (a) is in the affirmative, will Government say why the services of senior men were transferred, retaining several junior men?

REPORTED TRAGEDY AT THE RAILWAY AUDIT OFFICE AT BOMBAY.

- †789. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** (a) Has the attention of the Government been drawn to the headlines "Tragedy at Railway Audit Office" appearing in the issue of the *Indian National Herald, Bombay*, dated 19th September, 1928?
- (b) What were the circumstances leading to the tragedy, and who is responsible for the same, and what steps have Government taken to prevent such incidents in future?

REDUCTION OF PAY OF CLERKS IN THE TRAFFIC AUDIT OFFICE OF THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY AT BOMBAY.

- †790. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** 1. Will Government be pleased to inquire whether it is a fact:
- (a) that in the month of September, 1928, 48 senior clerks from the Traffic Audit, Great Indian Peninsula Railway, were asked by the Deputy Auditor to vacate their posts, or accept reductions in pay, varying from Rs. 5 to Rs. 20, from the month of October, 1928, on the ground that these posts were found surplus, consequent on the transfer of foreign traffic work from that Office to the Clearing House, Delhi?
 - (b) that out of these 48, 18 clerks were actually paid reduced wages for the month of October, 1928, but subsequently restored to their former grades on representation of the matter to higher authorities by the Railway Union?

† For answer to this question, see answer to question No. 786.

2(a) If the answers to (a) and (b) of part 1 are in the affirmative, will Government state the reasons for the reduction, referred to in (a) and (b)?

(b) In view of the fact that ultimately no reduction in pay and number of the then existing staff was effected, will Government be pleased to say why unnecessary discontent among the staff was allowed to be created, and who was responsible for it?

ISSUE TO STATE RAILWAYS OF INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING METHOD OF REDUCTION OF SUBORDINATE STAFF.

791. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether the Railway Board have issued any instructions for the guidance of the State railway administrations in regard to the method of carrying out reduction in subordinate establishment whenever contemplated?

(b) If the answer to (a) is in the affirmative, will Government lay on the table a copy of the said instructions?

(c) If the answer to part (a) is in the negative, are Government prepared to ask the Railway Board to issue such instructions, laying down the general lines and method that will ensure minimum hardship to the staff, as well as the railway administrations, whenever reduction in their establishment is contemplated; if not, why not?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Government do not propose to take the action suggested by the Honourable Member, as they have no reason to believe that railway administrations do not already act in the manner indicated in the Honourable Member's question whenever reductions have to be made.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Is the Honourable Member satisfied that they do not act in a manner which is likely to cause hardship?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: So far as I am aware, they certainly act in the manner suggested that is to say, when reductions are made, if they possibly can, they find posts for men who would otherwise have to be discharged.

DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT OF CHRISTIANS AND NON-CHRISTIANS IN THE RESTRICTION OF PASSES DURING HOLIDAYS.

792. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** (a) Will Government be pleased to inquire whether it is a fact that, in anticipation of heavy traffic during the Christmas holidays, restriction for a period of one month in the issue of free passes over the railway for non-Christian employees is imposed by the Agent, Great Indian Peninsula Railway?

(b) If the answer to (a) is in the affirmative, will Government be pleased to state whether, during the Diwali holidays, any restriction in the issue of passes to non-Hindu employees is imposed by the Agent of the Railway?

(c) If the answer to (b) is in the negative, will Government say on what grounds this preferential treatment is maintained, and whether they propose to do away with the practice; if not, why not?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) Yes.

(b) No.

(c) The restriction for one month at Christmas is necessary on account of the large increase in public passenger traffic at that period. During the Diwali holidays, the increase in public traffic is not sufficient to warrant the imposition of a restriction on pass holders.

NUMBER OF GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY PUBLICATIONS PRINTED IN THE "TIMES OF INDIA" PRESS.

793. *Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Will Government be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of Great Indian Peninsula Railway publications, weekly, monthly, quarterly, half-yearly and yearly, English and vernacular, with particulars, printed in the *Times of India* Press, Bombay?
- (b) whether tenders are invited by the railway administration from principal Indian presses in Bombay for the printing of these publications; if not, why not?
- (c) whether any contract for the printing of any of these publications is entered into with the *Times of India* Press, and, if so, when, for what period, and by whom?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Government have no information. I am making inquiries from the Agent, Great Indian Peninsula Railway, and will communicate the result to the Honourable Member.

SALE BY MESSRS. WHEELER AND CO. OF GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY TIME TABLES.

794. *Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Will Government be pleased to state:

- (a) the total number of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway monthly time tables, English and vernacular, printed, and sold each month between the period of April, 1928 to September, 1928 (both inclusive)?
- (b) whether any concession for the sale of these time tables is allowed to Messrs. Wheeler and Company, and at what rate?
- (c) the original cost of those time tables and the amount realised by sale of the copies, each separately during the period?
- (d) whether the Railway has entered into any contract with Messrs. Wheeler and Company, for such sale, and, if so, when, and for what period?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I am seeing if the information can be obtained for the Honourable Member from the Great Indian Peninsula Railway.

PAY OF SUBORDINATE STAFF OF THE CHIEF AUDITOR'S OFFICE, GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY.

†795. *Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: (a) Will Government be pleased to state the present scale of pay of the subordinate staff of the Chief Auditor's Office, Great Indian Peninsula Railway, Bombay, and that of the Officers, European, Indian, and Statutory Indian?

† For answer to this question, see answer to question No. 786.

(b) Is it a fact that the present graded scale of pay of the subordinate staff of that Office is lower than that of other Great Indian Peninsula Railway Head Offices in Bombay, as well as that of the Chief Auditor's Office, Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway, Bombay?

(c) Is it a fact that the staff, through their Union, brought to the notice of the Accountant General, Railways, the inadequacy of the pay, and further requested him to revise the cadre on the time-scale system?

(d) Is it a fact that the Accountant General, Railways, informed the Union in March, 1928, that the question was under consideration?

(e) Is it a fact that their scale of pay has not yet been revised, and, if so, when do Government propose to revise it; if not, why not?

REFUSAL BY THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY TO GRANT PASSES TO THEIR EMPLOYEES DURING THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.

796. *Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the Director, Railway Clearing Accounts Office, Delhi, issued free passes to his staff over the Great Indian Peninsula Railway during the Christmas holidays, whereas the issue of passes to the Great Indian Peninsula Railway employees over the Railway was restricted by the Agent?

(b) If the answer to (a) is in the affirmative, will Government say on what authority free passes were issued by the Director?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) The Director of the Railway Clearing Accounts Office did not issue free passes to his staff over the Great Indian Peninsula Railway during the Christmas holidays.

(b) Does not arise.

RULES FOR THE ISSUE OF FREE PASSES ON STATE RAILWAYS.

797. *Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: (a) Will Government be pleased to state the number of sets of free passes given to the staff during a year by the Great Indian Peninsula, East Indian, Eastern Bengal, and North Western Railway Administrations and Clearing House, respectively?

(b) What is the standard of pay for the issue of third, intermediate and second class free passes to subordinates prescribed by each of those Railways?

(c) Is it a fact that there are different rules governing the grant of free passes to their employees over each of these State Railways?

(d) If the answer to (c) is in the affirmative, do Government propose to frame any rules in that respect for the State railway employees, so as to do away with the differential treatment; if not, why not?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: The information is being collected for the Honourable Member.

PROCEDURE FOR GRANTING PRIVILEGE TICKET ORDERS ON THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY.

798. *Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: (a) Will Government be pleased to inquire whether it is a fact that an employee of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, requiring a privilege ticket order for himself, is called upon by

the Railway to obtain two railway employees to sign the same as witnesses?

(b) If the answer to (a) is in the affirmative, will Government state the reasons for the same?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) Yes.

(b) In order to reduce the chances of fraud.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: What are the chances?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I am not necessarily prepared to accept the suggestion of an Honourable Member behind me that the chance is 10 to 1 in favour of fraud; but there is obviously an opening for fraud.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Can he indicate the character of the fraud?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: A person who is not entitled to one of these passes might put in a form claiming a pass in the name of someone who is a railway employee.

GRANT OF FREE PASSES TO EMPLOYEES OF THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY EMPLOYEES' CO-OPERATIVE CREDIT SOCIETY.

799. **Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** (a) Is it a fact that the employees of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Employees' Co-operative Credit Society are given free passes and privilege ticket orders by the Great Indian Peninsula Railway over the railway?

(b) Are the said employees considered as Government servants?

(c) If the answer to (a) is in the affirmative, what are the reasons for the same?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I am ascertaining the position from the Agent of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway.

NUMBER OF ANGLO-INDIAN LADY TYPISTS IN RAILWAY OFFICES IN BOMBAY.

800. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** Will Government be pleased to state:

(a) the number of female typists in the Offices of the Agent, Chief Transportation Superintendent, Chief Traffic Manager, Chief Engineer, Chief Auditor, and the Principal Medical and Health Officer at Victoria Terminus, Bombay, together with their nationalities, present rate of pay, and length of service?

(b) the number of male typists in the Offices referred to in (a), together with their nationality, present rate of pay, and length of service?

(c) whether it is a fact that European and Anglo-Indian (statutory Indian) lady typists are appointed on high salaries in the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Head Offices in Bombay, when Indian male typists are available on less salaries, and, if so, why?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a), (b) and (c). I am making inquiries from the Agent, and will communicate with the Honourable Member on the receipt of his reply.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Were not ten days enough, Sir? This is not a very complicated question?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: The Honourable Member's idea of what is a complicated question differs slightly from mine. There is a good deal of tabulation required. The Honourable Member apparently wants to know the nationality of every male typist in about five offices, various kinds of information about lady typists and so on. I frankly admit that on questions of this sort, which obviously raise no matter of great public interest, I do not consider it worth while wasting money by telegraphing to railway administrations.

Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty: On a point of order, Sir. Is it the duty of the President or is it the duty of a Member representing the Government to decide whether a certain question, which has been admitted by the President, raises any matter of public interest or not.

EXPENDITURE INCURRED FOR REMOVAL OF THE CHIEF TRANSPORTATION SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE TO VICTORIA TERMINUS ANNEXE.

801. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** Will Government be pleased to state:

- (a) the total expenditure incurred in the removal of the Chief Transportation Superintendent's Office to the first floor of Victoria Terminus annexo?
- (b) the grounds on which the expenditure was incurred?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) I am seeing if the figures have been separately tabulated.

(b) The removal was made on the grounds of administrative convenience and efficiency, and the expenditure incurred was therefore unavoidable.

PAYMENT OF COMMISSION ON THE SALE OF GRASS TO PERMANENT WAY INSPECTORS ON THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY.

802. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the Permanent-way Inspectors of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway are paid certain commission by the Railway Administration on the total amount of the sale of grass every year, and whether this practice exists in other State Railways?

(b) Is it a fact that the Accountant General, Railways, had, in his last Inspection Report of the Chief Auditor's Office, objected to such payment?

(c) If the answer to (a) is in the affirmative, will Government state the reasons for, and authority under which, such payment is made?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Government are obtaining the information required, and will communicate it to the Honourable Member on receipt.

EXECUTION OF SERVICE AGREEMENTS BY EMPLOYEES OF THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY.

803. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** Will Government be pleased to state:
- (a) whether an employee of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, on his confirmation, is required to execute a stamped service-agreement?
 - (b) whether such agreements are taken from the employees of other State railways?
 - (c) in which of the other Government departments such stamped agreements are taken from the staff?
 - (d) will Government lay a copy of the agreements referred to in (a) and (b) on the table?
 - (e) if the answers to (a) and (b) are in the affirmative, will Government state the reasons for taking service agreements from the employees of the State railways?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) Yes.

(b) Yes.

(c) Employees in other Government departments are generally pensionable, so that I doubt if any comparison with them is valid, or that the information for which the Honourable Member asks would be of material use to him.

(d) I am asking the Agent of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway for a copy and will send it to the Honourable Member on receipt.

(e) It is desirable, both in the interests of the employees and of the administration, to embody in a self-contained form, namely the service agreement, the conditions governing the employment of non-pensionable railway staff. This has been the system for many years, and has worked well in practice.

ADMISSION OF EMPLOYEES OF THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY TO MEMBERSHIP OF THE ANGLO-INDIAN AND DOMICILED EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION.

804. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether it is a fact that several Anglo-Indian (statutory Indian) employees of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway are members of the "Anglo-Indian and Domicile Association"?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state whether this Association is held to be non-political within the meaning of the Government Servants' Conduct Rules, and whether membership of this Association by the Great Indian Peninsula Railway employees is permissible under the rules? If not, what action do Government propose to take in the matter?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) Government understand that several Anglo-Indian employees of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway are members of the "Anglo-Indian and Domicile Association".

(b) The orders regulating the Anglo-Indian Association are that, so long as it continues to devote itself mainly to the moral and material progress of the Anglo-Indian community, a Government servant may be a member, provided he takes no part in any movement of a political nature.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: The "Anglo-Indian and Domicile Association" is not a body devoting itself exclusively to the moral and material progress of that community?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: My information is that the orders I have mentioned were passed because the Association does deal very largely with matters affecting the moral and material interests of the community and but little with politics.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: So does the Indian National Congress. Will you permit your Indian employees to join the Indian National Congress? It is for the moral and material progress of the country that we are fighting.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: If the Honourable Member wishes to put any questions about the activities of the Indian National Congress, I would suggest that he should address them to a different Department.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Why should one question be proposed to the Honourable Member and not the other similar in character? It is one association against another, and why should there be any discrimination?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I answered this question because it relates to employees of railways, and for that reason it fell to me to give a reply.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I am also confining my question to railway servants, the corresponding Indian servants. Will you allow them to become members of the Indian National Congress?

The Honourable Mr. J. Orerar: I think, Sir, I must undertake the responsibility of answering that question. The reply, I think, is that the activities of the Congress are, admittedly, primarily and predominantly political.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: With a view to the moral and material progress of this country.

The Honourable Mr. J. Orerar: No doubt.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Then what is the difference?

The Honourable Mr. J. Orerar: I think the distinction is, what are the primary and predominant activities of the particular body in question.

RECOVERY OF DEBITS FROM THE LINE TRAFFIC STAFF OF THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY.

†805. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** 1. Will Government be pleased to inquire whether it is a fact:

(a) that the line traffic staff of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway are usually debited with heavy amounts by the Audit Office?

(b) that these debits are recovered through pay-sheets every month from the staff, instead of from the merchants concerned?

2. If the answers to (a) and (b) of part 1 are in the affirmative, will Government state what steps they have taken to reduce such debits and consequent hardship to the staff; if not, why not?

PAY OF CLERICAL STAFF OF CERTAIN RAILWAY OFFICES.

806. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state the present scale of pay of the clerical staff of the Offices of the Agent, Chief Transportation Superintendent, Chief Traffic Manager, Chief Engineer, and Principal Medical and Health Officer?

(b) Is it a fact that the bulk of the staff are blocked in the grade of Rs. 80 and under?

(c) Is it a fact that some of the staff have had no promotion for the past 5 years and over?

(d) Is it a fact that the grant of promotion is not governed by any rules, and that it is dependent on the will of the officer?

(e) Is it a fact that promotions are granted by making supersessions, and, if so, what are the reasons?

(f) If the answers to (b) and (c) are in the affirmative, will Government be pleased to state whether they propose to revise the scale on the time-scale basis to relieve the hardship of the staff; if not, why not?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) The rates of pay of the clerical staff of the Office of the Agent, Great Indian Peninsula Railway, vary from a minimum of Rs. 80 to a maximum of Rs. 375, and of the clerical staff of the other offices, mentioned by the Honourable Member, from a minimum of Rs. 40 to a maximum of Rs. 375.

(b) to (f). I am asking the Agent of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway for a report, and will communicate with the Honourable Member when it is received.

NUMBER OF SLAUGHTER HOUSES MAINTAINED BY THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY.

807. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** Will Government be pleased to state:

(a) the number of slaughter-houses maintained by the Great Indian Peninsula Railway on the line, and the stations where they are located?

(b) the amounts spent thereon annually, and how they are met?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: The information is being obtained for the Honourable Member.

NUMBER OF INDIAN AND STATUTORY INDIAN SUBORDINATES ACTING AS OFFICERS IN THE CHIEF AUDITOR'S OFFICE, GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY.

†808. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state how many subordinates were acting as officers in the Chief Auditor's Office, Great Indian Peninsula Railway, during 1928, with their names, and the condition under which, and qualification for which, they were appointed, and how many were Indians, and how many statutory Indians?

(b) What is the number of subordinate qualified and unqualified staff of the Chief Auditor's Office, Great Indian Peninsula Railway, blocked in the grade of Rs. 60 and Rs. 80 respectively, their length of service, and the period of their being so blocked?

† For answer to this question, see answer to question No. 786.

(c) What was the number of posts filled during the year 1928 in the subordinate establishment, and how many of them were filled by supersession, and why?

INDEBTEDNESS OF SUBORDINATE STAFF OF THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY.

809. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state the number, with the rate of pay, of subordinates who were indebted to the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Co-operative Credit Society during the year 1928?

(b) What was the number, with the rate of pay, of subordinates to whom loan advances from their provident fund holdings, during the year 1928, were made?

(c) Are Government aware that, as a result of an inadequate scale of pay, there is general indebtedness among the staff of that office, and, if so, what steps have Government taken to relieve the hardship caused; if not, why not?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Information has been called for from the Agent, and I will communicate with the Honourable Member on its receipt.

REVISED LEAVE RULES FOR RAILWAY SUBORDINATES.

810. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the question of revised leave rules for railway subordinates has been under the consideration of the Government of India ever since 1928?

(b) Is it a fact that in March, 1927, in reply to starred question No. 868 Government stated that "they hoped the new leave rules for railway subordinates will be got out before the end of 1927"?

(c) Is it a fact that they have not yet been got out?

(d) If the answers to (a), (b) and (c) are in the affirmative, will Government state the reasons for the delay and also when they are likely to be introduced?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a), (b) and (c). Yes.

(d) As I explained in the course of last budget debates, we have found great difficulty in framing a new set of leave rules which will be less complicated than the existing Fundamental Rules and more suited to the railway services. In particular, since the Fundamental Rules deal with all conditions of service, we found it impracticable to deal with the leave rules by themselves without framing fresh rules for other conditions of service, e.g., pay, acting allowances, and so on.

LEAVE RULES FOR RAILWAY SUBORDINATES.

811. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** With reference to Government's reply to Mr. N. M. Joshi's starred question No. 700 of the 20th September, 1928, will Government be pleased to state the result of their endeavour to find out a solution in regard to the leave rules for subordinates on the Great Indian Peninsula and East Indian Railways, and what is the decision come to, if any; if not, when it is likely?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: The Honourable Member is referred to the reply given to his question No. 784. The extension of a similar concession to the East Indian Railway is under consideration.

OPENING OF A BRANCH RAILWAY CLEARING HOUSE IN BOMBAY.

812. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the Division Sheets relating to Non-Clearing House Traffic prepared by the Great Indian Peninsula section in the Clearing Accounts Office, Delhi, are submitted late every month?

(b) If the answer to (a) is in the affirmative, will Government say whether the delay is due to the length of time the stations' documents take to reach that Office, and if so, are Government prepared to consider the question of opening a branch of the Clearing House both for the Bombay, Baroda and Central India and the Great Indian Peninsula Railways at Bombay?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a) The Division Sheets referred to, for some periods, but not all, have been sent out late by the Clearing Accounts Office. The average delay has been 4 days, and is entirely due to the late submission of returns by the Wadi Bunder Station.

(b) The delay is not due to the length of time the station documents take to reach the Clearing Accounts Office, but partly due to negligence on the part of the station staff, and partly to defective procedure at the Wadi Bunder Station. Steps are being taken to ensure the punctual submission of the returns.

NON-RECOGNITION OF THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY AUDIT STAFF UNION.

†813. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** 1. Will Government be pleased to inquire whether it is a fact:

(a) that an application for recognition was submitted by the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Audit Staff Union to the Accountant General of Railways in August, 1928?

(b) that, despite repeated requests, the Union has not yet been recognised?

(c) that several unions with the same objects and constitutions as those of the Great Indian Peninsula Audit Staff Union have already been recognised by the Agent of the said Railway?

2. If the answers to (a), (b) and (c) are in the affirmative, will Government be pleased to state when they propose to accord official recognition to the Union; if not, why not?

LEAVE RESERVE OF THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF AUDITOR, GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY, BOMBAY.

†814. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether it is a fact that a leave reserve, on the basis of 8 per cent. only, has been sanctioned for the Office of the Chief Auditor, Bombay?

† For answer to this question, see answer to question No. 786.

(b) What is the basis of leave reserve for the offices under the control of the Government of India?

(c) Is it a fact that the staff of the Audit Department has complained about the inadequacy of the leave reserve?

(d) If the answers to (a) and (c) are in the affirmative, will Government be pleased to state whether they propose to increase the leave reserve of that Office with a view to enable the staff to take full benefit of the leave privileges; and, if so, when; if not, why not?

**PROMOTION OF MR. J. MATHIAS, A CLERK IN THE CHIEF AUDITOR'S OFFICE,
GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY.**

†815. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** Will Government be pleased to state whether it is a fact:

(a) that one Mr. J. Mathias, a statutory Indian, was employed as a clerk in April, 1925 in the Chief Auditor's Office, Great Indian Peninsula Railway, and, if so, on what salary?

(b) that subsequently he was promoted to the post of Audit Inspector in the year 1926?

(c) that as a result of serious complaints from the line staff and the Divisional Offices of the Great Indian Peninsula and the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railways, against him, and further on account of misconduct, he was degraded, and allowed to remain as a clerk in Traffic Audit at the end of the year 1926?

(d) that after some time, between 1927 and 1928 he was twice promoted to higher grades in supersession of several capable Indian clerks, despite his bad record?

(e) If the answer to (d) is in the affirmative, (1) will Government state the conditions under which, and special qualifications for which, he was allowed to supersede the clerks, and whether any opportunity was given to the clerks likely to be adversely affected to represent their case, and, if not, why not; (2) what steps do Government propose to take to stop such favouritism as between an Indian and statutory Indian in future; if not, why not?

**GRANT TO THEIR STAFF BY THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY OF
FREE RAILWAY PASSES TO THE SUBURBS.**

816. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway grant one residential free pass to their staff in Bombay?

(b) If the answer to (a) is in the affirmative, will Government be pleased to state whether the Agent, Great Indian Peninsula Railway grants a similar concession to the staff of that Railway with a view to encourage living in the suburbs; if not, why not?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply which I gave to Mr. Josai's starred question No. 177 on the 10th of February, 1928.

† For answer to this question, see answer to question No. 786.

AMOUNT OF MONEY ORDERS SENT FROM BURMA TO INDIA IN CERTAIN YEARS.

817. ***Mr. W. S. Lamb:** What sums have been remitted by money order from Burma to India during each of the last 3 years?

Mr. H. A. Sams: Sir, with your permission I propose to answer Nos. 817 and 818 together.

As money order issue journals are preserved for 18 months only, figures for money orders for a period of three years cannot be furnished. I have telegraphed for statistics for 18 months, and, as soon as they are received, they will be furnished to the Honourable Member.

Mr. W. S. Lamb: Will the Honourable Member undertake that when the information is received, he will place it on the table of the House, and that, when he does so, Nyaunghla is properly spelled? (Laughter.)

Mr. H. A. Sams: I will place the figures on the table, and, if the Honourable Member will tell me how to spell the word in question I shall be glad to correct it. (Laughter.)

Mr. Sarabhai Nemchand Haji: When Government are making inquiries with regard to the amounts sent from Burma to India, will they simultaneously make arrangements to find out the sums of money sent from Burma to the United Kingdom?

AMOUNT REMITTED BY MONEY ORDER FROM CERTAIN TOWNS IN UPPER BURMA IN CERTAIN YEARS.

†818. ***Mr. W. S. Lamb:** What amounts have been remitted by money order from the Post Offices at:

Yenangyoung
Myaunghla
Chauk

in Upper Burma, during each of the last 3 years?

RULES FOR THE RECRUITMENT OF ANGLO-INDIAN, INDIAN AND EUROPEAN APPRENTICES AT THE KHARAGPUR RAILWAY WORKSHOPS.

819. ***Mr. S. O. Mitra:** (a) Is there any distinction at Kharagpur Railway Workshops between Indian, Anglo-Indian, and European apprentices of "Grade A" in (i) training and (ii) allowances? If so, what is that distinction, and what is the principle of that distinction, if any, besides birth and colour?

(b) Will Government be pleased to place on the table the rules for the recruitment of (i) Indian, (ii) Anglo-Indian and European apprentices, respectively, in "Grade A" of the Kharagpur Railway Workshops?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: With your permission, Sir, I propose to reply to question Nos. 819 to 825 together.

Inquiry is being made from the Agent, Bengal Nagpur Railway, and the information will be communicated to the Honourable Member when received.

† For answer to this question, see answer to question No. 817.

NUMBER OF INDIAN, ANGLO-INDIAN AND EUROPEAN APPRENTICES AT THE
KHARAGPUR RAILWAY WORKSHOPS.

†820. ***Mr. S. C. Mitra:** Will Government please furnish a statement, showing the number of apprentices, "Grade A", at the Kharagpur Railway Workshops, (i) Indian, (ii) Anglo-Indian, and (iii) European, recruited and discharged after retaining them for a year or more, the period of their retention in each case, and those qualified, and provided for in the Bengal Nagpur Railway Workshops during the last ten years, with the character of provisions, and amount of pay in each case?

RULES FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF APPRENTICES AT THE KHARAGPUR RAIL-
WAY WORKSHOPS.

†821. ***Mr. S. C. Mitra:** (a) Is it a fact that, under the rules, the "A Grade" apprentices at the Kharagpur Railway Workshops are kept on probation for a period of six months at the outset, and after that they are confirmed? If so, have the Railway authorities kept before and are they still keeping, several such Indian apprentices beyond this stipulated period and have not yet confirmed them?

(b) If the reply to the above is in the affirmative, are the Government prepared to inquire the reasons for such irregularities?

NUMBER OF "A GRADE" APPRENTICES CONFIRMED DURING THE LAST FIVE
YEARS IN THE BENGAL NAGPUR RAILWAY WORKSHOPS.

†822. ***Mr. S. C. Mitra:** Will the Government be pleased to state how many Indian "A Grade" apprentices have been confirmed during the last five years in the Bengal Nagpur Railway Workshops at Kharagpur?

NUMBER OF INDIANS RECRUITED FROM THE KHARAGPUR RAILWAY WORK-
SHOPS AT PRESENT UNDER TRAINING IN INDIA.

†823. ***Mr. S. C. Mitra:** Is it a fact that Indian apprentices, "Grade A", are mostly recruited at the Kharagpur Railway Workshops for training in the Carriage Department? How many of such apprentices, who have been recruited during the last two years, are under training in the Carriage and Loco. Departments, respectively, and what were the dates of their recruitment, and their age at the time they were started?

PROVISION OF A HOSTEL FOR INDIAN APPRENTICES OF THE KHARAGPUR
RAILWAY WORKSHOPS.

†824. ***Mr. S. C. Mitra:** (a) Is it a fact that several Indian apprentices of the Kharagpur Railway Workshops had to leave their apprenticeship for want of boarding and lodging?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state whether there is an Apprentices Home or Hostel for the Indian "A Grade" apprentices at Kharagpur like that for Anglo-Indian and European apprentices there? If not, why not?

† For answer to this question, see answer to question No. 819.

PRACTICAL TRAINING OF INDIAN "A GRADE" APPRENTICES AT THE KHARAGPUR RAILWAY WORKSHOPS.

†825. ***Mr. S. C. Mitra:** Is it a fact that there is no Instructor at the Kharagpur Railway Workshops to instruct the Indian "A—Grade" apprentices in learning their practical shop work? Will Government please state what is the arrangement for their practical training?

MEMORIAL FROM THE STAFF OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS re SELECTION OF STAFF FOR THE SIMLA CAMP OFFICE.

826. ***Mr. S. C. Mitra:** (a) Is it a fact that the staff of the Office of the Director General of Posts and Telegraphs submitted a representation to the Director General, stating their grievances in respect of the selection of staff for the Simla Camp Office of the Director? Will Government be pleased to state what steps the Director General has taken to remedy their grievance?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state why the staff, who are selected for the Simla Office, get the Simla Allowance while in Delhi? Why is it not possible to allow some allowance to those who are left behind, by introducing consolidated pay for all as is in force in the Secretariat?

Mr. H. A. Sams: (a) Yes. The petition was to the effect that the staff required by the Director General's Camp Office in Simla for 1928 should be selected in turn. As many of the clerks had already completed their arrangements for 1928, the petition was not accepted. I may add that, for the 1929 Session, the Director General proposes to take to Simla a clerical staff comprising a few stenographers and typists.

(b) The answer to the first part is that the Simla Allowance Code permits the concession of the Simla Allowance to men belonging to the migratory portion of the Director General's Office throughout the year. The answer to the second part is that it is unnecessary to change the scales of pay for the majority of the staff of the Director General's Office, who do not go to Simla, because a few get, and still fewer will get, the Simla Allowance.

UNSYSTEMATIC RECORDING OF PAPERS IN THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS.

827. ***Mr. S. C. Mitra:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state how many times the office of the Director General of Posts and Telegraphs has been reorganised since the appointment of the Booth Committee?

(b) Is it a fact that, owing to these reorganisations, the records of the office have been in a confused condition?

(c) What sort of recording of papers is in existence in the Secretariat Department? Why cannot the same be introduced in the Director's Office?

(d) Is it a fact that owing to the absence of any arrangement for the preparation of a consolidated index system, the clerks of the Office have to grope in the dark for previous papers? If so, what steps do Government propose to take to remedy the defect?

Mr. H. A. Sams: (a) There has been only one considerable reorganisation; other so-called reorganisations were relatively minor changes in the office arrangements.

† For answer to this question, see answer to question No. 819.

(b) The reply is in the negative.

(c) The ordinary file system is followed both in the Secretariat and in the Office of the Director General, with only minor differences in procedure.

(d) Occasional difficulty occurs, but an index system already exists and is being improved.

REDUCTION OF STAFF OF THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS.

828. ***Mr. S. C. Mitra:** (a) Is it a fact that Rai Bahadur J. P. Ganguli proposed a reduction of the staff of the Office of the Director General of Posts and Telegraphs? If so, what is the present operative strength of that Office, and what should it be according to Rai Bahadur J. P. Ganguli's calculations?

(b) Is it a fact that Rai Bahadur J. P. Ganguli's recommendation is based on the time-test in force in the Post Office? If so, who asked him to apply the Post Office time-test in an administrative office like that of the Office of the Director General of Posts and Telegraphs?

(c) Are Government prepared to fix the staff of any other office in their control according to the time-test prescribed by Rai Bahadur J. P. Ganguli? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: The Honourable Member's attention is invited in this connection to the reply given yesterday to his starred question No. 750.

INDEBTEDNESS OF MR. S. C. BANERJI, A TEMPORARY ASSISTANT AUDIT OFFICER OF THE INDIAN STORES DEPARTMENT.

829. ***Mr. B. P. Naidu:** (a) Is it a fact that Mr. S. C. Banerji, a temporary Assistant Audit Officer of the Indian Stores Department, is heavily involved, and has incurred heavy debts and liabilities? Is it a fact that he has to deal with contractors who have to approach the Indian Stores Department?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state how many orders for attachment of pay from civil courts were issued against Mr. S. C. Banerji, and received in the Audit Office, during the years 1924—28?

(c) Will Government be pleased to state their policy of retaining heavily indebted men in service who have to come in contact with contractors?

The Honourable Sir George Schuster: (a) As regards the first portion, the Government are informed that this is not a fact. The reply to the second portion is that Mr. Banerji's duties include the payment of contractors' claims, by cheques sent through the post, after they have been passed by other officers of Government.

(b) The only information which Government have in regard to this is that an attachment order appears to have been received in the Audit Office either in 1925 or 1926. The matter was, however, settled privately, and nothing was deducted from Mr. Banerji's pay towards this order.

(c) I would refer the Honourable Member to rule 16 of the Government Servants' Conduct Rules.

SHORT NOTICE QUESTION AND ANSWER.

Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty: With your permission, Sir, I want to ask the following short notice question of the Honourable the Finance Member. I. Is it a fact that the increase in the Imperial Bank rate from 7 per cent. to 8 per cent. was effected solely at the instance of the Government, and that the Managing Governors of the Bank were strongly opposed to the increase?

II. Is it a fact that, with the cash balance of the Bank at about the present level, the Imperial Bank of India has been, in previous years, able to negotiate peak months of the busy season with the bank rate at only 7 per cent.?

III. Is it a fact that trade conditions are now unusually poor, and that there has not been a strong demand for finance?

IV. Is the present increase in the bank rate due to the requirements of the money market, or is it due to the need for the maintenance of the exchange?

The Honourable Sir George Schuster: I. On the 18th of February last, the Government of India intimated to the Imperial Bank that the rate of interest on loans taken by the Bank from the Government would, until further notice, be 8 per cent. As the result of this action by the Government, the Imperial Bank raised its own rate.

As regards the second part of the question, I do not think it would be proper for me to divulge at any time the nature or discussions which take place between the Government and the Managing Governors of the Bank. In the present case, I can inform the Honourable Member that the action taken by the Government was taken after very full and careful consideration, that I was convinced and still am convinced that it was the right action in the public interest, and that I accept entire responsibility for it.

II. It is a fact that, in the last four busy seasons, the Bank rate has not been above 7 per cent. In 1924 it rose as high as 9 per cent., and in each of the years 1922 and 1923, it rose to 8 per cent. The cash balance of the Imperial Bank was, in some of the seasons when the rate did not go above 7 per cent., at about the present level. The cash position of the Imperial Bank, however, is not the only material factor. It is also necessary to take into account the extent to which the Government have expanded currency under the provisions of Section 20 of the Indian Paper Currency Act; for it is by loans from the Government to the Bank under this Section that the Bank is able to maintain its cash position in the busy season. On the present occasion, although the expansion of currency, under Section 20 of the Paper Currency Act has not amounted to more than 9 crores, against a maximum limit of 12 crores, the Government has, in effect, expanded currency in other ways, namely, to the extent of one crore against sterling, one crore against *ad hoc* securities and 2.4 crores against gold imported from South Africa. The total expansion of currency, during the present busy season, has therefore been 13.4 crores, and this

must be taken into account in comparing the present position with that of previous years.

III. Government do not consider that trade conditions are now unusually poor. It is true that there are bad features, such as the poor crops in Northern India, and the depression in the Bombay cotton industry, but the statistics of foreign trade, and the increase in railway earnings show clearly that the trade of the country as a whole is expanding. The strength of the demand for finance is shown by the fact, which I have already stated, that, since the beginning of the busy season, the currency has already been expanded by about 18½ crores, and the indications are that further expansion will be necessary in the near future.

IV. It is difficult to answer this question without going to the length of a full essay on the subject of Currency and Exchange. The conditions of the money market and the maintenance of the equilibrium of exchange are closely connected. The action taken by the Government was taken in its capacity as Chief Currency Authority—a responsibility belonging in most other countries to a Central Bank. It is only natural that, in this capacity, the Government should take steps to see that money rates in India are so adjusted as to avoid a depletion of their gold and sterling reserves. The main factors in the situation, on the strength of which the Government took their decision, were as follows :

- (a) The decision of the Bank of England to raise their rate from 4½ per cent. to 5½ per cent., a course which was forced on the Bank of England by the high rates prevailing in the United States, and the consequent export of gold from England to the United States. The circumstances in which this rise in the English Bank rate took place indicated that there was likely to be a period of high money rates in the big financial centres of the world. This may be described as the immediate cause for the action by the Government of India, and it must be remembered, when comparing the present 8 per cent. rate with the maximum rate of 7 per cent. prevalent in the last two years, that the Bank of England rate, since March, 1927, had been steady at 4½ per cent. Our policy could not be unaffected by the sudden rise to 5½ per cent., for it is impossible to isolate policy in India from financial conditions in the outside world.
- (b) While this special factor operated as an immediate cause, local conditions were such as to create a predisposition for making such a cause operative. In the height of the busy season, exchange was weak, the banks were borrowing heavily instead of placing themselves in funds by selling exchange, stocks of cotton were accumulating in Bombay, and, generally speaking, the indications were that, in order to maintain the equilibrium of exchange and to ensure that Indian prices moved *pari passu* with gold prices, it was necessary to raise the level of the money rates in India. If the implication of this question is that there is anything abnormal in such action, or that it indicates an artificial control which is not exercised by the Currency Authorities in other countries, I wish to say most emphatically that any such implication is incorrect.

Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty: Is it a fact that, in the week previous to the rise in the Bank of England rate to $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., Government announced that they would accept sterling tenders at $1/6d$. instead of $1/6\frac{1}{8}$ as was previously the case, and, if so, was it in anticipation of a rise in the Bank of England rate?

The Honourable Sir George Schuster: I do not think the Honourable Member has got his dates quite correct. There were two reductions of the Government's buying rate. The first reduction was when they accepted tenders at $1/6\frac{1}{8}$, which, according to my recollection, was a fortnight before the rise in the bank rate, and in the previous week they accepted tenders at $1/6d$. That action was not taken in any knowledge or anticipation of a rise in the bank rate. The Government, in taking that action, were, as a matter of fact, actuated by a desire to meet the needs of the money market, and not to hold out for unreasonable rates of exchange.

Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty: Is it a fact that, before Government announced that the Imperial Bank of India will have to pay 8 per cent. on the emergency currency, the Bank had borrowed 4 crores of rupees at 6 per cent. and 5 crores at 7 per cent., and the Government said that the bank would have to pay 8 per cent., even on these 9 crores that had been previously borrowed, and, if so, is it the usual practice to charge the higher rate of interest on previous borrowings also?

The Honourable Sir George Schuster: As far as I know, the facts, as stated by the Honourable Member are correct, and as far as I know—I should like to verify, but I am speaking with fair certainty—the practice followed on this occasion, exactly coincided with the practice followed on previous occasions when the Government has raised its own borrowing rate.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

DELAY IN DELIVERY AT DELHI OF LETTERS FROM THE KISHANGUNJ SUB-DIVISION.

258. **Maulvi Badli-uz-Zaman:** (a) Are Government aware that postal correspondence from Kishangunj Sub-Division (District Purnea), Bihar and Orissa Province, reaches and is delivered at Delhi on the sixth day although one travelling from Kishangunj by rail reaches Delhi on the third day ordinarily?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state, after inquiry, the reasons for this unusual delay in arrival and delivery?

(c) Do Government propose to take steps to ensure timely arrival and delivery of letters here from Kishangunj in future?

Mr. H. A. Sams: Government have no information. A copy of the question and of the reply is being sent by me to the Postmaster-General, Bihar and Orissa, for report. The delay complained of will be remedied, if practicable,

INCONVENIENCE CAUSED TO PASSENGERS BY A LAVATORY OUT OF ORDER.

259. **Maulvi Badi-us-Zaman:** (a) Are Government prepared to inquire why the tub of a lavatory of a second class compartment in the 15 Delhi Express, which left Patna at 22-4 hours (at 10-4 P.M.) was in disorder, causing great inconvenience and trouble to the passengers occupying the compartment, inasmuch as water rushed into the compartment from the lavatory, which made the compartment damp and dirty, and the passengers could not avail themselves of the tub as water ran short in it?

(b) Do Government propose to instruct the railway authority concerned not to allow the recurrence of such things in future?

Mr. A. A. L. Persons: (a) Government are quite prepared to accept the Honourable Member's account of this occurrence.

(b) No. It is I am afraid, impossible to prevent an occasional accident.

THE WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION (AMENDMENT) BILL.

PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE.

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra (Member for Industries and Labour): Sir, with your permission, I present the report of the Select Committee on the Workmen's Compensation (Amendment) Bill.

THE INDIAN INCOME-TAX (AMENDMENT) BILL.

PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE.

The Honourable Sir George Schuster (Finance Member): Sir, with your permission, I present the report of the Select Committee on the Bill further to amend the Indian Income-tax Act, 1922, for certain purposes.

MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR GENERAL.

Mr. President: The President of the Assembly has received the following communication from the Governor General:

(The Message was received by the Assembly standing.)

"In pursuance of the provisions of sub-section (3) of section 67A of the Government of India Act, I hereby direct that the heads of expenditure specified in that sub-section shall be open to discussion by the Legislative Assembly when the budget is under consideration."

IRWIN,
Governor General."

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:

“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 the ‘Railway Board’.”

Rates, Freights, Amenities.

Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar (Madras ceded districts and Chittoor: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I rise to move:

“That the Demand under the head ‘Railway Board’ be reduced by Rs. 2,000 (Rates, Freights, Amenities).”

Mr. President: Has that not been disposed of?

Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar: No, Sir. Amenities still remain. (Laughter.)

Mr. President: Is that the only portion on which the Honourable Member wishes to speak?

Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar: If I may be permitted, I will say something about rates and freights.

Mr. President: That has already been discussed.

Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar: That related to 3rd class passengers.

Mr. President: But freights were also referred to.

Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar: I will say a word about policy. If that is not permitted, I will confine myself to amenities.

Mr. President: Do the latter.

Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar: I heard some remarks which were either consciously or unconsciously let slip by Pandit Nilakantha Das yesterday, and I feel a little hesitation in putting forward before this House my usual complaint, my hardy annual, as some of the Front Benchers of the European group will characterise it. I may in turn characterise the exploitation of India through the railways as a hardy annual on their part. (Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: “Hardy Dailies”.)

It is not without considerable bashfulness, nay even a sense of humiliation, that I rise to put before this House what my friend Pandit Nilakantha

[Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar.]

Das called "trivialities". Pandit Nilakantha Das thought that the policy of stores purchase ought to occupy the whole House and the question of amenities, inconveniences such as those which passengers at Howrah suffer, must all be left behind to be taken up by the *Swaraj* Government. I do not agree with him on that point, unless he tells me that he will be content if he is put in a cottage in Delhi on a daily allowance of one rupee and Government promises to purchase all stores in this country. Then I will let alone the grievances of third class passengers to await the *Swaraj* Government. No doubt, standing as my countrymen do this day on the high and justifiable pedestal of demanding independence for this country, or at the very least dominion status, it is no doubt humiliating for one who comes from this Bench to put before the two Honourable Members coming from across the *kala pani*, a distance of 6,000 miles, a request for trivialities which they have raised to the dignity of amenities, which in practice they consider an euphemism for *bakhshis* to third class passengers! Still I take this opportunity of pressing this hardy annual before those two Honourable Members seated there (pointing to the Official Benches), so that they may not let loose this last opportunity for them to gain the good-will of the railway passengers before they have to leave the status which they now possess.

Sir, often we are told that they are the trustees for us, and I have been seeing nothing but breaches of trust day after day. We are often told they are our guardians, and that pre-supposes that we are all orphans. What I consider them to be is nothing but interlopers, having the accident of handling crores of our money, despatching ninety per cent. of it back to their own country, and when we stand knocking at their door for the benefit of a few travellers, they condescend to say, "Yes, it will have our consideration."

At any rate it is my duty, as I have already said, to bring before Honourable Members what I call demands and what they call amenities for the daily passenger travelling public.

Sir, I will come back to the low level. There is a junction called Gudur, which connects the Madras-Waltair train and the Villapurem-Gudur train. (An Honourable Member: "What is that Gudur?") At any rate we have to pass through it if we go from Madras to Calcutta, and you should not be surprised at the name. At that junction there are six up-trains and five down-trains running daily and the platform is so low that every passenger has to get up and down the two steps of the footboards to get into his compartment. The mail comes there at about 21-47 and leaves at 21-50, stopping there barely 3 minutes, and at night when the station is not lighted, as you find in other bigger stations, we find that every passenger has to get up two steps in order to find whether there is accommodation in a particular compartment, and by the time he does this twice or thrice, the train is off.

Mr. K. Ahmed (Rajshahi Division: Muhammadan Rural): But why should the *Swarajists* travel by that train at all? Wouldn't they prefer bullock carts instead?

Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar: But my simple request to the railway authorities has been to raise the platform to the level of the compartments. I raised it by way of questions, (Laughter), I mean I raised questions on the 3rd February, 1927, on the floor of this House:

“(a) Are Government aware that Gudur Junction is crowded with passenger traffic for all the trains?”

(b) Are Government aware of the inconvenience felt by the passengers in getting into the trains on account of the low platform?”

(c) Have Government any idea of remodelling this station, at least to the extent of raising the platform to the level of the compartments in the trains? If so, when will this be done?”

Mr. Parsons then answered me:

“Government have no information, but the suggestion contained in the Honourable Member's question will be conveyed to the Agent, Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway.”

This was on the 3rd February, 1927, and we are now in February, 1929. I believe the Government correspondence is not carried on by bullock carts but is carried by the railway mail service. The Honourable Member must have had some information long ago, but till this day the matter has not been remedied. Yet I find there is a provision in the budget for 4 lakhs of rupees for raising platforms. I do not know whether Mr. Parsons will tell me whether this matter of raising the platform at Gudur is included in those four lakhs, or whether we will have to wait for another allotment next year.

The next matter that I wish to place before the House is in connection with similar stations like Arkonam, Jolarpet and Guntakal, all junctions. We have got a number of long platforms there and still the railway companies have constructed most harassing overbridges, and when a train reaches there, if the passengers want to catch another train, we find that they are obliged to go through the whole ordeal of getting over the overbridges and coming down three or four platforms off, when the other side of the platform, on which the train waits to receive the passengers, is all vacant. I ask why this ordinary convenience should not be attended to by the railway authorities. I am not proposing any additional expenditure, it is the heart that has to be allotted.

Next, Sir, there are some junctions where several trains wait, with opposite destinations. On the same platform you have got two trains, one going in one direction and the other going in the opposite direction. When ignorant passengers go there to catch any one of these trains, they have absolutely no guidance on these platforms. I ask the railway administration to make arrangements for giving them proper guidance. This is no doubt a very very trivial matter in this country, but in England when a porter took away a passenger from a railway train, although he was in the correct train, with the consequence that he missed his train for which he was bound, on that ground a suit was brought and the Court decreed his suit. I will give my Honourable friend a reference to that case: it is *Bailey versus the Manchester Railway Company*.

Another inconvenience that is ordinarily felt by passengers is in the matter of checking tickets and luggage. At one station, say, a passenger—a lady—with a child leaves the station after her tickets are checked and

[Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar.]

there the child is let off free without a ticket, as being under three years of age. At the next station where she alights, she is taken hold of and harassed on the ground that she did not take a ticket for her child. Well, Sir, I have never known a child growing by years within a few hours of travel. If the child was an infant below three years of age at the starting station, I do not believe that, within the few hours that it takes to reach the destination, the child may have grown to over three years so as to require a ticket for it. How can the poor woman produce the birth certificate or evidence of age at the station? I therefore say that, if at the starting station, a child is declared to be below three years by the ticket examiner and consequently not requiring a ticket, then there ought to be no further harassment to the passenger at the place of destination. The same thing applies to checking of luggage. Once my Honourable friend Mr. Sesha Ayyangar had to travel with his luggage from the Madras Central Station to the Victoria Terminus, Bombay, and he had all his luggage weighed at Madras and paid the required charges. When alighting at the Bombay Victoria Terminus, they said that the luggage ought to be reweighed. My Honourable friend produced the luggage receipt but they said: "The railway servants at the Madras Central Station are dishonest (Laughter), and consequently the luggage ought to be reweighed". Perhaps they know each other very well. We shall have no quarrel with them, but the trouble is only with the poor passenger. The railway authorities at the Central Station are a mirror to the railway authorities at the Victoria Terminus and *vice versa*, but what about the poor passenger who is put to trouble? Perhaps the luggage examiner came to know that he was an M. L. A. and so he was let off without having his luggage reweighed. But supposing he was not an M. L. A., what would become of a passenger in his position? Let us take an extreme case in favour of the railway authorities. Supposing a passenger starts with particular luggage, and on the roadside he happens to purchase some vessels or something and thereby adds to his luggage, supposing at the terminal station, he is asked to pay for the article which he purchased at the roadside station; from the starting station, is it justifiable, on the part of the railway authorities, to penalise that passenger like that? Supposing he parts with some of his luggage on the way before reaching his destination, do the railway authorities give him any reduction? In either case the rule should be the same. They should make a rule that if luggage is checked at the starting station and a proper receipt obtained therefor, then there ought to be no further trouble for passengers. This of course is another triviality.

It is a well known fact, Sir, that in the third class waiting rooms, the passengers are huddled together and they are made to lie down all the night in the dust. On a former occasion, when my Honourable friend Mr. Joshi raised this question here, I think, Sir Abdul Qaiyum asked, and probably the Honourable the Commerce Member nodded assent, whether the third class passengers use benches in their houses. Sir, our houses are small enough and they are kept clean enough not to require any benches to sleep upon. On the other hand in railway sheds where numerous passengers pass, the whole floor is dusty and may probably contain infectious germs too. Are you justified in saying that if they ask for benches in third class waiting sheds, they will get benches only if they

begin to use benches in their own houses? Sir, these are but ordinary amenities due to the third class passengers.

The latrines at the railway stations ought also to be sanitary and comfortable for third class passengers. You may call them "native men" and "native women", but sanitation and health must be equally precious to them; they must be provided with the same latrine arrangements on the same sanitary basis as you provide for "European gentlemen" and "European ladies". I do not claim that my brothers and sisters are not "men and women". They are men, others may not be; they are women, others may not be.

Sir Victor Sassoon (Bombay Millowners' Association: Indian Commerce): Then what are the others?

Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar: Yours are modified men and women; ours are men and women, pure and simple. I ask that these third class passengers should be provided with clean and sanitary arrangements at every railway station. This is also one of the things which my Honourable friend Mr. Joshi used to urge in this House.

Then, Sir, I ask that there ought to be uniformity of rates for passengers, whether they travel by mail or ordinary trains. You should not make any distinction in fares. I only want to mention a few words about this subject, because it might have been more appropriately mentioned under the head railway fares. As in the case of higher class passengers, namely, first and second class passengers, there should be uniformity of rates even in the case of third class passengers, unless you submit to the complaint of the first and second class passengers, that the third class passengers, by being allowed to travel in the mail, add to the weight of the train or inconvenience the higher class passengers. There ought to be no distinction between mail rates and ordinary rates, even in the case of third class passengers. Sometimes they are put to a lot of inconvenience on this account. It is caused in this manner. I know of cases in which tickets are taken from Renigunta to Madras. They travel in an ordinary train up to Arkonam, where they have to change to an Express. When they reach Madras, the railway authorities say that they travelled nearly half the distance in an Express train and so they collect excess fare with penalty from Arkonam station. I ask that this inconvenience should be put an end to. Besides uniformity of rates over all the railways in this country must also be a matter which must be introduced by way of reform; and that is a suggestion which the Incheape Committee also made, that is that uniformity of rates is a great convenience even for the railway companies in the matter of accounting and it will also be a great benefit to the passengers.

In the matter of Indian refreshment rooms, I am sorry to say that I have to bring to the notice of Honourable Members that, after they have been taken under the company management, the economy practised is such that the preparations are hardly sufficient for the cooks and managers in the refreshment rooms. When the trains arrive, most of the passengers are denied any refreshment in the refreshment rooms. That is also a matter which must be attended to, because under the head "amenities" in the railway administration, you have been prominently mentioning even the cost of a dozen buckets purchased for supplying drinking water as a great amenity rendered for third class passengers.

[Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar.]

I may add to it that this is more important than that, and the third class passengers ought to be provided with these things.

Now, Sir, with reference to rolling stock on railways, I put it also under the head "amenities". The rolling stocks that are used on the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway, metre gauge, I know, are so shabby, so rickety, that it is hardly comfortable for any passenger to travel from one station to another, even to the next station. If a passenger, let us say of the higher classes—first or second class—has room enough to lie down on a berth, there is no guarantee that, before he reaches the next station he will be on his berth. (Laughter). He will find himself on the floor. But in the case of third class passengers, this difficulty does not ordinarily arise because they are so huddled in these compartments, that one presses against the other and there is no room for shaking this way or that way. That is the sort of overcrowding in third class carriages. Again, Sir, all the waste carriages in other railways are all put in my section, i.e., the Villupuram-Gudur and the Pakala-Dharmavaram section. And to travel there is not very easy. The distance is about 140 miles from Pakala to Dharmavaram, and it takes about 14 hours to travel that distance. If a man sits in the railway carriage at 6 A.M., he reaches his destination of 140 miles at 19-40 or 20-40, I do not exactly remember which, but he takes about 14 hours. For 14 long hours to sit in a rickety carriage like that is not a joke, though it may be inappreciable to those who travel in saloons. But, Sir, there is one thing I have come to bargain for. If you are not able to put better carriages—I refer to those Honourable Members (Honourable Members on the Official Benches),—if you are not prepared to have better carriages and rolling stock, I would ask you to enter into a bargain with me for reducing the fares on those lines. Why should a man travelling in the Punjab Mail or the Madras-Bombay Mail pay the same rate of fare for a first class or a second class or a third class berth as the man who is huddled in these rickety carriages, with no lights and no comforts—fans are out of the question unless he brings them from his own house, and that he has never claimed. Sir, I remember a case in England—I forget exactly which—where a first class passenger found that there was no water in the closet, and he asked for a refund *pro rata* on his fare

Sir Victor Sassoon: Which England?

Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar: We have got only one England. Sir, I say it is hardly equitable that we should charge the same high rates for all the sections, and at the same time give absolutely no convenience to the third class passengers in certain sections. If you will permit me, Sir, I shall bring in the question of accidents under this, or I shall wait till Demand No. 2 is reached, where I hope I will have an opportunity. (After a pause.) If there is any objection, Sir, I shall not press it.

Sir, I put accidents as the first and foremost among amenities (Laughter)—existence or safety of life first and comforts next. Safety is the foremost amenity. I gave the other day some figures to my Honourable friend Mr. Parsons about the accidents that have been arising in this country, and I said that we are progressing. In the year 1917-18, there were 268 passengers killed; in 1927-28 there were 387 passengers killed.

Mr. President: That is progressive amenities!

Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar: Yes, Sir, progressing. My Honourable friend Mr. Parsons (Mr. Parsons was now seen leaving the Assembly Chamber) will please remain here a minute more. Mr. Parsons sent me a chart working certain percentages, to which I, in the ordinary course, was not accustomed. He tells me that in regard to the passengers killed, no doubt their number is right, but that the percentage of increase is only 44.7 and he says that passenger train traffic has increased by 79.2 per cent. His complaint evidently is that the proper ratio has not been reached in respect of passengers killed! I have always been accustomed to hear of the working of ratios, but I have never heard from any railway company yet about mortality ratios. Mr. Parsons puts into my hand this new method of calculating ratios on the railways; but I am really wondering whether the British railway administration in this country has been taking up leaf from any other country, or whether the originality of it has to be all allocated to the British Indian administration. For that purpose, I compared the figures in Great Britain. In 1922, the number of persons killed was 402, in 1926, the number of passengers killed was only 374—that is, there was a decrease. There was no working ratio there. In America, in 1890, the number of passengers killed was 286, in 1922, the number killed was only 200; and the passenger traffic there increased by 200 per cent., and the goods traffic by 347 per cent. Where is the mortality ratio adopted in America? Is this a ratio invented only for this country to reduce population? (Laughter.) I cannot understand. Sir, in Great Britain, railways run everywhere, even through congested areas; but 38,000 or 39,000 miles of railways run in this country over a very wide area. Sir, the luckiest feature about railway administration in this country is that people do not mind whether passengers or cattle are killed. I wanted to say that, for an area of 89,000 square miles in Great Britain, there is equally a good number of miles of railways running, *i.e.*, about 25,000. And there we find a decrease in accidents in congested areas.

An Honourable Member: Have you travelled there?

Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar: I have never travelled there; if you have, you may mention it to me, whether it is not so. In India, there are 1,805,000 square miles, in which are 39,000 miles of railway route, mostly through jungles, not through congested areas. If you find a station of a certain denomination on the railway line, you can take it only as a signboard for a town of that denomination somewhere three or four miles off. And yet we are told that, on account of the increase in the mileage of railway lines, we must necessarily have an increase in the ratio of the mortality also. Sir, I am unable to subscribe to that proposition. In the matter of accidents, there were 410 collisions, 4,926 derailments, 6,258 failures of engines and rolling stock, 470 failures of permanent way, 245 fires, and other causes, 10,648. Of these, certainly the very costly establishment borne on the Engineering Department has to account for nearly 7,000 accidents; and still we are told that we are maintaining experts in the railway administration, for which posts Indians are not competent.

Then, Sir, we have got 9,684 cases of trains running over cattle. At least that number of cattle must have been killed, if not more, and often the railways kill four or five animals at one stroke. Now, all these things pass away unnoticed in this country, because the people of this

[Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar.]

country, are very docile. In England, in the case of the Dublin Railway Company *versus* Slattery, a husband was run over because no whistle was given by the railway train. Three witnesses stated that no whistle was heard, and ten witnesses were put forward by the railway company to say that the whistle was heard. In spite of that, the jury there returned a verdict for payment of damages to the plaintiff and against the railway company. We do not go to Court like that.

12 Noon. There was the case of Smith *versus* the South Eastern Railway Company. In that case they did not give the proper signal and a man was crushed and his widow got considerable damages. But what is the situation in my country? I know of one case actually where, on account of the negligence of the gate-keeper at a level crossing a bullock cart passed along the railway line and was smashed by a moving train. The carter took to his heels, lest he should be taken to task for having brought about the accident, and the Railway Company made a claim for damages done to their engine. Up to this day, the ownership of the cart has not been discovered. This is your good luck, and this is the kind of situation we find in this country, which encourages accidents and casualties to men and cattle. Sir, I ask you to consider what damages you would be called upon to pay if every man in this country ventured to put forth his rights, as they do in your country. Therefore I ask, simply because these people do not know their rights, do not exercise their rights, do not even care to consult people like me. . . .

Sir Victor Sassoon: Should lawyers advertise?

Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar: I ask that you should not on that account allow these accidents to proceed without taking considerable care, in order to bring about a reduction in the number of such accidents. Your establishment of inspectors is a farce. If you cannot prevent accidents like these, I say it is absolutely unjustifiable to say that you are maintaining railway inspectors today by a statutory provision which is not compulsory but only permissive. You retain these inspectors principally for the purpose of avoiding accidents, but on the other hand what they do is they go there after the accident. At any rate, even when they go after an accident, do they make use of the knowledge they acquire thus for preventing another accident of the same kind? Absolutely not. I say, Sir, you are therefore taking an undue advantage of the docility of the people of this country and you are exercising your own methods of running your trains absolutely callous to the needs of the country.

Sir, I do not know whether, after all, any purpose will be served by my further detaining this House with my speech. (*Cries from the European Group: "Go on!"*) Absolutely nothing; unless you wish to be prevented from doing some other and possibly more important work. I will only say this. I would ask my Honourable friend Mr. Parsons to answer at least one short notice question which I gave him, without your permission. Sir, this morning. It is this. What are the dimensions of the wastepaper basket he keeps in his office, into which he pushes all these Resolutions, amendments, grievances and everything else that we bring to his notice here after he leaves his seat?

Mr. H. G. Cocks (Bombay: European): Sir, I am very sorry that the Honourable Member has decided to cut short his speech, because it was

really becoming more and more interesting as it went on. I am sure his constituents will be very much indebted to him for all the points he has raised, and I would suggest that, in due course, the speech might be printed so that they might realise what a lot of good work the Honourable Member is doing in this House to better the condition of the travelling public, and particularly those in his part of the world.

Mr. Q. Duraiswamy Aiyangar: Would you like a few copies of my speech for your constituency?

Mr. H. G. Cocks: I do not think I want the Honourable Member's speech for my constituency but my own speeches I might consider! Now I should like to support what the Honourable Member said about the question of weighing of luggage at destination. This is a very great hardship to all of us, and in the course of the past year, in the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, we have had several cases brought up, where people have been asked to weigh their luggage at destination and it has been found in excess, and then they have been charged for the full weight without any free allowance. That is the rule where a passenger has not had his luggage weighed at the starting point. The cases I have in mind are those where passengers could not have their luggage weighed at starting point. Either there were no arrangements for expeditious weighing, or the railway officials did not insist on its being weighed. I should like to see this question of weighing on arrival done away with if possible, because I think it is rather unfair. The Honourable Member gave a case where something had been bought while in transit. Well, if that is going to happen, if you are going to buy, say a piece of furniture as you come along, I quite see the necessity of weighing at destination. But the ordinary man sends his heavy luggage ahead to the station with his bearer and later brings himself three or four packages for his compartment. If, when he arrives at his destination, all his luggage is to be weighed, including those three or four packages, he suffers a lot of inconvenience. Incidentally I think that all Members of this House should be given a certificate of exemption or a larger free allowance and be allowed to produce it at the starting point and should not be subjected to the inconvenience of having their luggage weighed. After all we come up here for two months—and to Simla for one month—and one has a lot of inconveniences to put up with; and I think that M. L. A.'s might certainly be spared this atrocity of having their luggage weighed.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons (Financial Commissioner, Railways): Who is to give the certificate?

Mr. H. G. Cocks: No doubt the Railway Board can arrange to give a satisfactory certificate which will be accepted. One might go a little further and ask for free passes to Members, certainly during the session, one week before and one week after.

Well, Sir, some of the Honourable Member's points were really quite pathetic. There is the old question of low platforms. I sympathise very much with that; but obviously it is a matter which cannot be remedied at once. We are told four lakhs will be spent this year in raising platforms. I do not expect that sum will raise many platforms, and probably the Honourable Member will be able to add to the allowance next year. As regards the question of expenditure generally on third class passengers' amenities, I think it amounts to one and a half crores, of which

[Mr. H. G. Cocke.]

I crore and 80 lakhs is to be spent on new rolling-stock. In view of what has been spent during the last two or three years, I think it is generally admitted that conditions have very considerably improved in the last few years.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh (Muzaffarpur cum Champaran: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I should like to speak just a few words on the subject of amenities to the travelling public. By amenities I understand those comforts to which they are entitled, but which are denied to them. In the forefront of my complaint, I should like to put the question of the treatment which is generally meted out to third class passengers. The treatment meted out is generally very shabby and very uncivil. In this connection, I shall read out to the House, with your permission, Sir, a letter which I received only yesterday under registered cover from a gentleman whom I don't know. I shall read out the letter, Sir, as it is; and Honourable Members will understand what sort of treatment is meted out to third class passengers. It runs as follows—I will read it just as it is:

“Sir,

I most respectfully beg to lay before you the following grievances for your kind consideration and proper action

That the passengers travelling in the train have to undergo such inconvenience and trouble as words cannot describe it. The poor poor passengers who have got no money to give the cooly, ticket collector and Station-master must go to jail.

That I am Amin in Sonthal Parganas Settlement. There my brother Sitaram Pd. who is also Amin became ill. We both took leave and reached Deoghar E. I. Railway station, bought 2 tickets Nos. 1146, 1147, from Deoghar to Muzaffarpore on the 18th February at 9 A.M. and got into the train for home. We reached Mokameh Ghat B. N. W. R. station at 2 P.M. There we were going to get into steamer while a railway servant, I cannot assure, who he was, came and caught hold of my luggage and waterpot, and asked me to go and show my ticket. Accordingly I made my brother sit on the jetty and went to show ticket. There the same man came and told the Ticket Collector ‘He is a cooly; he comes from Calcutta and he is very wicked.’ The ticket collector took my ticket. I requested him very much to return my ticket, but he did not comply with my request. I went to the Station Master to complain against the Ticket Collector, but the same man again came and told the Station Master something. The Station Master inquired nothing about it but called for the whole staff and ordered them to take my luggage forcibly. They all abused me, pushed me by the neck and were ready to tie me with a rope and confine me in a room. I was quite helpless there and saw there was no escape. I again began to request them; they told me ‘Give Rs. 10 or go to jail.’ What could I do there? I gave Rs. 10 and they returned my ticket and I got into the steamer. That I could not get enough time to inform you from that very place as I was in haste and my brother was ill and the steamer was about to start. That under the circumstances I pray that you will be so kind as to take the earliest step in this matter. Further I seek your opinion about it. Whether I should go to the Court or not. I am ready to produce some four witnesses who saw the occurrence.

That seeing no man like you I have got the courage to approach you in form of application for your kind doings, and for this I as in duty bound shall ever pray:

HARI PRASAD AMIN, No. 436,

c/o Assistant Settlement Officer, Circle E,

P. O. Sarawa, Dt. Sonthal Parganas.’t

The letter is dated 21st February, 1929. I am willing to give this letter, in original, to my Honourable friend, Mr. Parsons, if he undertakes to make an inquiry and communicate the result to this House.

Now, Sir, some of the inconveniences to which the travelling public are subjected are as follows, and I shall very briefly enumerate them. One is the absence of adequate booking facilities for third class passengers at railway stations. This is a subject, Sir, which I have been constantly trying to bring to the notice of the Government and Sir Charles Innes once made my suggestion the subject of a circular which he issued to all the railway Agents. I made the suggestion that booking offices should be opened one hour before the arrival of trains at smaller stations; and at important stations the booking office should be open all the 24 hours, and notices in the vernacular to that effect should be hung in front of third class windows, so that passengers might be able to read them and understand their rights. I understand this has been done, but the booking offices are seldom open for the issue of tickets at the proper times; and so far as I have been able to ascertain, the causes are two-fold. One is that the booking clerks generally are unwilling to open them early because they are able to turn "an honest penny" if there is a rush at the booking windows

Sir Victor Sassoon: A dishonest penny!

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: I put it euphemistically. Another reason is that there are not a sufficient number of booking clerks at many of the big important stations. For instance, at Muzaffarpur, Patna Junction, Moghal Sarai, Allahabad, Cawnpore, Muttra, etc. I made inquiries and I was told that the number of booking clerks is not adequate to cope with the work entrusted to them. So I would suggest that an inquiry might be made, and the number of booking clerks might be increased at stations where they are necessary, so that the order which has been issued may not remain an order merely on paper, but should be translated into practice.

The second inconvenience to which the third class travelling public are subjected is the overcrowding of trains. Now, I quite realise, Sir, that some improvement has been effected in this direction, but there are two trains to which I should like to make a special reference. There is the 12 Down Express, Benares Cantonment to Howrah, which goes *via* Mokameh Ghat and 11 Up Express from Howrah. I have myself noticed that these trains are very much overcrowded—packed to suffocation—and hundreds of passengers for the Down train are left at Mokameh Ghat Station almost everyday. I put myself in communication with the Agent of the East Indian Railway, and my letter was forwarded to the Chief Operating Superintendent. Only the other day I received a reply from him saying that it was not possible to put on an additional train, but that he was going to increase the third class accommodation in the existing trains. That is on the East Indian Railway. On the Bengal and North Western Railway also there are main line trains between Katihar and Lucknow, and they are also very much overcrowded. Something has been done to lessen overcrowding on the other sections and I thankfully acknowledge this fact; but so far as the main line trains on the Bengal and North Western Railway are concerned, they are very much overcrowded. Here also I put myself in communication with the Agent, Bengal and North Western Railway, but for some reason or other no improvement has yet been effected. In this connection, Sir, I should like to ask specifically of the Railway Member why he does not bring into operation the provisions of the Indian Railways Act. The Indian Railways Act gives ample

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power to the Government to bring the offending railways to book if they infringe the provisions of the Railways Act. I ask this question as to why suits are not instituted for penalty against those railways which infringe the provisions of the Railways Act and put more passengers into a compartment than the number allowed. My Honourable friend Mr. Parsons replied last year that, if this rule were enforced, many passengers would be left out, but the remedy obviously is to provide more trains; and if they do not do so, it is the duty of the Railway Board and the Government to bring into operation the provisions of those sections of the Indian Railways Act to bring the railway authorities to a due sense of their responsibility..

The next point to which I wish to refer is the dirty and insanitary condition of lower class carriages, and want of water in the lavatories of third and intermediate class carriages, especially on the Bengal and North Western Railway. In this matter also I wrote to the Agent, and had a talk with him with regard to the necessity of providing water in the lavatories of third and intermediate class carriages, and he replied to me that he is going to erect overhead pipes at certain junction stations in order to fill the carriage tanks with water

Mr. President: That is very satisfactory.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: It is satisfactory, Sir, but it is only on paper yet; it will be, when the scheme has been carried through. I hope a little bit of pressure from my friends on the Railway Board will accelerate the progress of this work.

Sir Victor Sassoon: More work for the new Member!

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: Another matter is adequate supply of cool drinking water in the hot season. At small stations there is generally only one *paniwalla*, and he has to play many parts at the station. He has sometimes to ring the starting bell for the train; he has got to look after other duties; he has got to take the line clear to the engine driver, and so he has no time to look after his own work, that is, to supply water to the passengers. I suggested that a third class compartment might be utilised for the purpose of putting into it big earthen ware jars full of fresh, cool water, and at every stopping station passengers might get water from the men in charge. About 75 additional water men were provided last year, and that was in response to a suggestion which I made to the Agent of the Bengal and North Western Railway. But I regret to say that the facilities which were allowed on some trains were not extended to all the trains running over that system. I hope a more satisfactory arrangement will be made this year. The practice of conveying passengers in goods wagons on the Bengal and North Western Railway in times of *melas*, etc., has now been given up, in response to the pressure exerted here, and I am glad to note this; but I am told it still continues on some other railways. Then, Sir, waiting halls and sheds for third class passengers are very few and insufficient and they are also very dirty

Mr. President: There are 110 cuts on this Demand!

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: That is why I am availing myself of this opportunity of putting before the House some of the grievances of third class passengers.

Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar: There is not a single hole made in their pockets.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: Sir, I will refer briefly to some of the other grievances of the travelling public. There are no proper lights in trains or at the stations, and there is also a paucity of waiting rooms. Pilfering of goods is a matter which is very serious so far as the Bengal and North Western Railway is concerned. I am sorry, Sir, to have to bring in the name of the Bengal and North Western Railway so often, but I regret I have no other alternative. My place, Muzaffarpur, is noted for litchi fruits, but it is difficult for us to send these fruits outside, because, when we send litchis through railway parcels, bricks are sometimes put into the parcels, and these delicious fruits disappear. (Laughter.)

Sir Victor Sassoon: Send us some.

The Revd. J. O. Chatterjee (Nominated: Indian Christians): It is very indigestible.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Will the Honourable Member kindly send me a test case of them?

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: I shall be very glad to send you some litchis, provided you assure their safe delivery.

Then, Sir, the food that is provided to third class passengers at stations is very unwholesome. Sometimes the contract is given to people who are in some way or other connected with the Railway Administration, and no proper supervision is kept over them to see that the food supplied is healthy and wholesome.

The other grievance, which is a serious one, relates to the harassment to which the third class travelling public are put by what are called Travelling Ticket Inspectors. That is the sort of harassment to which my Honourable friend Mr. Duraiswamy Aiyangar probably referred and he was supported by my Honourable friend Mr. Cocks. These Travelling Inspectors travel in trains, and at almost every station, they harass the third class travelling public, asking them not only to show their tickets but also to have their luggage weighed and they are charged with penalty even for slight excess. These Travelling Inspectors are expected to show a certain percentage of return every day, and if they fail to do so they are sacked. I once saw a notice which was issued to some of these Travelling Inspectors on the Bengal and North Western Railway, and it was to this effect: "As you have shown a poor day's work, your pay and allowance for that day is stopped". Sir, this is a direct incitement to harass poor passengers. Now, these Inspectors are compelled to trouble the passengers in order to show a good percentage of return every day, and that sort of thing I should like to see stopped.

The other grievance is the damage to the goods that are brought to the station, by exposure or by rain. There is want of a sufficient number of spacious goods sheds on the Bengal and North Western Railway and I believe it is the same case on other railways also. The result is that goods which are brought there to be booked, or which are intended to be delivered

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over to merchants, are kept lying in the open, exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather, and they get damaged. In every case it is not possible for the consignees to resort to a law court, with the result that they are very much inconvenienced and put to loss and trouble on that account.

Then I should like to refer briefly to the pay of the poor employees . . .

Mr. President: Is that an amenity?

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: I was myself doubtful whether it came under amenities, but, Sir, the cut stands by itself. Want of good pay is certainly depriving the poor people of the ordinary amenities of life to which they are entitled. (*An Honourable Member:* "What about the third class passengers and their amenities?") Anyhow, Sir, as the subject of pay does not come within the scope of this cut, I reserve my remarks to a future occasion.

I should like, Sir, the Honourable the Railway Member to give us some definite assurance that he will adopt suitable measures to remedy some of the grievances to which I have referred.

Mr. V. V. Jogiah (Ganjam *cum* Vizagapatam: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, motion No. 76 relates to overcrowding, and I should like . . .

Mr. President: I have not called upon the Honourable Member.

Mr. V. V. Jogiah: Would you allow me to speak on that, Sir?

Mr. President: I have not called upon the Honourable Member.

Colonel J. D. Crawford (Bengal: European): Sir, I rise to add my support to what has been said on the question of luggage rates. Sir, considerable improvement has been made in the facilities for weighing luggage at stations, but I think the whole question now requires further examination.

I should like to relate to the House two of my personal experiences, showing the harassment to which individuals are put. When I was travelling to Ootacamund to attend a meeting of the Cinematograph Committee, I took a first class ticket for myself, and having decided to go by car from Mettupalayam to Ootacamund, I took a third class ticket for my bearer all the way to Ootacamund. At Mettupalayam I got out and handed over my luggage to my bearer and asked him to bring it up by train to Ootacamund, and gave him the necessary money to have it weighed and brought up from Mettupalayam to Ootacamund. I found that I was charged, or rather he was charged, the full rate for the luggage on a third class fare, all the way from Madras to Ootacamund.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: I am glad. (Laughter.)

Colonel J. D. Crawford: Again, travelling last cold weather, down from Sialkot to Calcutta, I wanted to break my journey at Lahore. I asked the Station Master at Sialkot, and he said "All right, just book your luggage to Lahore and then re-book it from Lahore to Calcutta". I did so, but at Lahore when I wanted to re-book my luggage, they said "This is the middle of your journey, and you are not entitled to your free allowance".

As regards the question of bringing up our luggage when we attend the meetings of the Legislative Assembly in Simla, to which Mr. Cocke referred, it costs me each year somewhere about Rs. 50 for excess luggage. I think Sir, the whole question of the amount of luggage which passengers in India may carry requires reconsideration. Out here one has to make long journeys and has to take adequate luggage with one, and it is a question as to whether the railway rates for luggage could not possibly be reduced or the free allowance increased.

There is one other point I would like to mention. I believe your Blue Train has been a great success. I have travelled by it myself and it is undoubtedly a very comfortable train, and whilst I agree that you must take up the question of improvement of the comforts and amenities of third class passengers, I would like to throw out a suggestion—I do not know whether the Blue Train is a paying proposition or not—you may attach a Pullman car of similar design to some of your other mail trains.

Mr. Mukhtar Singh (Meerut Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, under this head I want to bring to the notice of the Honourable the Railway Member the fact that third class passengers are very much harassed in getting their tickets in this Imperial City of Delhi, and if this is the case here, what would be the lot of passengers at other stations? I am not going to quote from any letter, Sir, as my friend Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh has done, but I would invite the attention of the Honourable the Railway Member to the different issues of the daily paper *Tej* in this connection. The first article to which I would invite his attention is dated the 20th May, 1928. The heading is *Delhi Railway Station par rishwat satani ka zor*. Therein the editor has commented in what way the third class passengers are forced to pay extra money to the third class booking clerks. The same matter was complained of in another article dated the 15th November, 1928, and the heading is "*Delhi Station par Andhernagri*". I may read only a small portion of it because it was in connection with the Kurukshetra fair.

DELHI STATION PAR ANDHER GARDI.

Jab se Kurukshetra ka melu shuru hua hai, railway station Delhi ke booking staff ne phir pahle ki tareh andher gardi macha rakhi hai aur alad elan musafiron ko tang kar ke un se ticket ki qimat se ziyada paise wasul kiye ja rahe hain. Niz ticket babwon ki dida dileri ka yeh alam hai ke jab koi unhen tokta hai to wuh saf keh dete hain ke ham kya karen. Upar wale hamse mangte hain to ham unko kahan se den. Delhi jaise railway station par rishwat satani ka hazar yun garam ho, yeh halat had darja sharamnak hai.

This was on the 15th November, 1928.

An Honourable Member: Please translate that portion.

Mr. Mukhtar Singh: It means that there are other persons in the superior staff or some superior officers who take the necessary portion out of the spoils that these people give. Then, as recently, as the 9th February, 1929, there is another article. It is a leading article—*Delhi ke Station par rishwat satani ki garam bazari*.

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Towards the end it says:

Dekhiye woh bhi is taraf tuwajje dete hain ya nahin. Delhi ki public se is martabah ham phir nauvedan karte hain ke woh riskwat satani ke wageat mai ticketon ke nambron ke hamare pas bhejden. Ham unhen Tej ke kalimon par barabar shac karte chale jawenge.

Then, on the 17th February, 1929, there is an article:

Delhi Railway Station par din dahar loot—fi ticket do anne ziyadah—Railway Hukkam kab tak khamosh rahenge?

Mr. M. Keane (United Provinces: Nominated Official): Are they all anonymous?

Mr. Mukhtar Singh: There is no question of anonymity at all. They are the leading articles comments, and notes appearing in the *Tej* newspaper, and if they are wrong, I would ask the Honourable Member to take suitable action.

Mr. M. Keane: Are they anonymous?

Mr. Mukhtar Singh: They are editorial articles notes and comments and there is no question of anonymity. There is a letter printed at page 6 in the *Tej*, dated the 17th February, 1929; that is not anonymous and the name of the man is given and the ticket number is also given. It says that 2 annas were charged from this man on tickets Nos. 150166 and 150167. This is the state of affairs in this Imperial city of Delhi. If the third class passengers are forced to give money in this way here, I am afraid what would be happening in other stations. I would ask Honourable Members here to go into the third class waiting room and see for themselves what happens and they will be perfectly satisfied that there is need for an inquiry into this matter.

Mr. D. V. Belvi (Bombay Southern Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): They must be incognito.

Mr. Mukhtar Singh: I know that there is a special rule in the coaching tariff that no person should give any money to the railway staff, but that is not enough. I can speak of Muttra from my own personal knowledge. The booking window is opened generally a few minutes before the train arrives. Naturally, at a station like Muttra there is a rush of passengers. Then, under the rules, the booking window must be closed five minutes before the train departs. You can yourself imagine what would be the lot of those passengers who want to go by that train and who have not got the tickets? Naturally they will pay anything, and this is the way in which the money is extorted. That is one point which I want to bring to the notice of the Honourable the Railway Member.

Again, there is another difficulty which I have not been able to understand. According to the coaching tariff and the goods tariff also, there is a rule that the railways are not bound to deliver any goods at a certain station by a certain hour; that is, the consignee does not know when it is likely that the goods or luggage will arrive at a particular

station. At the same time, there is another rule, rule 20 of the goods tariff, and there is a similar rule in the coaching tariff to the effect that:

"The Railway Administration does not undertake to send notice of arrival of goods to the consignee and the absence of such notice will not entitle the consignee to claim exemption from wharfage or demurrage or storage charges if goods are not removed within the free time allowed."

If a person sends his goods and he does not know when they will reach the destination, how is he to know when to take delivery of those goods? Then, after the free time allowed is over and demurrage begins to run, the Railway Administration is not responsible for the damage done to the goods—there is another rule to that effect. That means that you practically keep the consignee in ignorance as to when the article is likely to reach its destination. Though he does not know when the article will reach the destination, still he is charged demurrage. It seems to me a legalised way of extorting money from the public. Either you hold yourself responsible that a certain article will reach in time by a certain hour, or you inform the consignee of the arrival of the article, and till the expiry of that time you hold yourself responsible for the damage done to the article in your godowns.

Then, again, there is the question of food supply to the third class passengers and other passengers also. What is done at these stations? The contractors send their applications—those who want to take a contract for selling sweets or any other article at the station. Generally, these contracts are given to retired railway men who have no knowledge as to how sweets are prepared and how other things are done. They have to sub-let the whole thing to another contractor. Sometimes, it is the fifth contractor that works in the end and everybody has to be paid. The first contractor must have something for himself, the second contractor must have also something for his contract and so on. Naturally, either the stuff supplied must be very bad, or the price charged must be very high. In both cases, it is the consumer that has to pay ultimately. We know that in regard to these contracts, a lot of favouritism and a lot of underhand dealing is practised. I submit all these things must be inquired into, not in the way that it is being done to-day. If I make a complaint here, the Honourable the Railway Member will pass it on the Agent, and if I address a letter to the Agent, he will not even acknowledge the letter,—not only from the ordinary people, but even from the Members of the Assembly. A gentleman who is paid from public revenues has not even the courtesy to acknowledge the letter, not to say of investigating the matter. I consider that there is a necessity of a C. I. D. ("Central Intelligence Department") service on the railways, so that all these things may come to the notice of the Railway Member and the offenders may be brought to task. Then, Sir, there is one more handicap to which third class and intermediate class passengers are put. There are a number of mail trains which do not have any third class or intermediate class compartments. We know, Sir, as one Honourable Member in the Council of State pointed out the other day, that the first class passenger gets 14 times the place allotted to a third class passenger, and he pays about 6 times the railway fare that a third class passenger pays. In spite of that, a third class passenger is not allowed to travel by mail trains, not to say of those mail trains which are specially designed for very very high people, as the Punjab Express Limited. If a first class passenger has the right to travel by mail, and if

[Mr. Mukhtar Singh.]

he cares for his time, I consider a third class passenger has also the same claim over the railway authorities. If they consider that the charges that the third class passenger pays, should be increased, they may be increased, though I submit they have no right to increase the railway fare also on that score, unless they show that a mail train pays to the railway company much more than an ordinary passenger train pays. If the profits made by running mail trains and passenger trains are practically the same you are not entitled to an increase, but if the profit made by the mail train is higher, then certainly you may claim something from the third class passenger over and above what he pays now. Admitting that there ought to be some increase in the railway fare of a third class passenger if he wants to go by mail, increase the railway fare if you please, but certainly you have no right to debar the third class passenger from travelling in a mail train. I submit

Mr. President: Tomorrow is the last day for the Railway Budget!

Mr. Mukhtar Singh: However it is an ordeal through which the whole House will have to pass. As far as I am concerned, my most important cut regarding freight rates has, according to your recent ruling, not been allowed. So I am not afraid if more time is taken

Mr. President: You don't care so much for cuts of other Members?

Mr. Mukhtar Singh: One thing more and I have done. There is another difficulty. When luggage is booked by trains which have to be changed at junctions, what happens is that the luggage is not taken to the next train by which the passenger travels and luggage is sometimes not delivered at the passenger's destination simultaneously with his arrival, and this causes very great inconvenience. In the case of marriage parties this thing is very common. Unless the railway officers are tipped, it is impossible to get the luggage taken from one train to another in a junction. These are some of the difficulties which I have to bring to the notice of the Railway Member and I hope they will be remedied.

(Mr. V. V. Jogiah got up in his seat.)

Mr. President: Does the Honourable Member wish to move a closure?
(Laughter).

Mr. V. V. Jogiah: I only wanted to say a word. I do not wish to speak more on this point. Last year I placed before this House a list of the inconveniences from which the third class passengers have been suffering and my Honourable friend Mr. Parsons took a note of them. I do not know if he has communicated them to the railway administrations. No doubt the Government generally, always I may say, sympathises with the woes of the third class passenger, but what is it that they have been doing? They sometimes put in a paragraph in the Railway Report about the third class passenger. The only way to remedy this, I submit, is to multiply trains in order to prevent overcrowding. The only other way in which this can be remedied is to tell the House every year during budget time as to what attention

they have paid to the suggestions made in this House and what improvements they have made. With these words I support the motion before the House.

Mr. Ram Narayan Singh (Chota Nagpur Division: Non-Muhammadan): I endorse every word of all that has been said by my Honourable friends Mr. Duraiswamy Aiyangar, Mr. G. P. Singh and Chaudhari Mukhtar Singh.

Mr. President: And Mr. Jogiah! (Laughter.)

Mr. Ram Narayan Singh: Sir, I endorse what he too has said. Sir, what they have said of particular stations and railway employes they know of, is true of every station and of the majority of the railway employes everywhere. Corruption prevails everywhere and that to the cost of the poor. Mr. Cocke spoke sarcastically of the speech of my friend Mr. Duraiswamy Aiyangar. How can he know of the troubles of an Indian? He is a rich man. He travels in the first class. He is a white man. Not only that, he belongs to the ruling race. How can he know of the difficulties of a third class passenger, who is an Indian, who belongs to the subject race and who is a poor man. Sir, his attitude reminds me of a line in the *Tulsikrit Ramayan* and it runs thus:

“*Banjh ki jan prasawa kee pira.*”

and when translated into English, it means:

“How can a barren woman realise the pangs of child-birth.”

From the figures given in the budget, it is evident that the railway revenue is drawn much more from third class passengers than from passengers of other classes. As regards the comforts and conveniences, everything goes to the first and second class passengers—I mean the class in which my friend Mr. Cocke travels—but as regards third class passengers, no attention is paid as to whether they also require water, they also require air—as if the third class passengers are not human beings. There is no proper arrangement of water and light in the third class compartments. Some times, from 40 to 50 passengers are carried packed up like goods in one single compartment which can, according to rule, carry only 25 passengers or so, but there is not even one fan in this compartment. This attitude and this sort of administration of the Railway Department reminds me of a proverb, “Rat mare bardha baitha khaye surang”, which is prevalent in the mofussil which means, when translated: “Bullocks have to work hard, while the horses sit idle and enjoy”. Sir, the pity of the whole thing is that this trouble still continues during the time of the Honourable Sir George Rainy, who appears to be so polite, so good-hearted, and so generous and gentlemanly. (An Honourable Member: “Only appears”!)

Sir, as my other Honourable friends have said; this requires serious consideration. I shall warn my Honourable friends on the Treasury Benches that it is better for them and better for their safety and better for their very existence that they should look into these matters first, and then to

[Mr. Ram Narayan Singh.]

talk about the Public Safety Bill, about the Bolshevic Bill, etc., afterwards, if need be.

With these words I support the amendment.

The Rev. J. O. Chatterjee: Sir, I want to make one small suggestion on the subject of this amendment, to the Honourable Railway Member, and I hope he will see his way to look into the matter:

I have noticed in the course of the last few months that a certain number of officers have been placed at all the important stations, known as "Information or Inquiry Officers". These men appear at most of the mail trains on the platform. They are especially to be seen at tourist trains, or when other high officials are travelling. I have no reason whatever to say that they are not efficient. I believe they are very efficient, and I know tourists have spoken very highly of them, as well as people travelling by the higher classes. I am not satisfied as to why these people should give so much attention to higher class passengers only, as I do think that the third class passengers need greater consideration, because higher class passengers can always study guide books and railway time-tables. Of course I realise that these officials should naturally desire to show courtesy to these high class passengers. But what happens is that third class passengers hardly have the courage to go after these fine uniformed gentlemen, who have a badge on their arms, inscribed in the English language. Yet it is these third class passengers who greatly need information and who need to be directed. I travel a lot on the railways but have hardly ever noticed, on the railway platforms, third class passengers going up to these Inquiry Officers, or getting any benefit from their services. It may be that they do not even know of their existence, or perhaps they are frightened to go up to these officers clad as they are, and also because they are generally Europeans.

Then there is another point. All the speeches we have heard, clearly show that it is at the booking offices, the waiting halls and the entrances to railway stations where third class passengers need the greatest assistance. They are ignorant and do not even know the exact routes by which to travel or the exact fares and things of that kind. I know of people who come out in the morning knowing that there is a train that goes some time in the day. They lie under the trees or on the platforms, and when they rise up they find that the train has already gone, and then they have to wait another night. It is this class of person that needs information, and if these Information Officers are to be made useful to third class passengers, they should be found more often in the third class booking halls, at the entrances to railway stations; and some of them, at least, ought to be persons of the class who are likely to prove most helpful to these third class passengers. I am not speaking in any spirit of racial discrimination, but I think that a large section of these officers ought to be Indians, and ought to be specially told off to look after the interests of third class passengers and supply them with information. At the present time the Information Officer—one does not blame him because he wants to be considered efficient—confines his attention to high class passengers, but what these men ought to be told is that their duty is to assist third class passengers,

and a proportion of them ought to be Indians. It should also be made clear that the qualifications of such an officer should be more in the direction of social service, and men should not be recruited only from the subordinate establishment of railways. You will be able to get men from colleges who have had a certain amount of education, who have done some social work, such as boy scouts, who, through all their college and school careers, have made a study of social services. There are many graduates who would be glad to take up these posts if they were offered to them, and those who have been trained in social service should be picked out and employed.

I trust that this suggestion will be kept in mind so that assistance may be rendered to third class passengers who need it much more than the higher class passengers.

Mr. Jannadas M. Mehta: (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Sir, I have one or two cases of personal experience in connection with amenities on the various railway administrations, and I wish to state them before the House, for the information of, and action by, the Honourable Railway Member.

In Calcutta the East Indian Railway Offices have two entrances. The entrances are large enough, for ten or fifteen people can go out or in at the same time. But there seems to be a rule that, by a certain entrance, only officials shall go out and get in. The members of the public, who have any business with the railway administration, are prevented from getting out or getting in from that particular entrance. At the last meeting of the Railway Standing Finance Committee in Calcutta, after completing our work, my Honourable friend Mr. Aney and myself were going home when somebody stood across my path, some Ghurka soldier. I did not appreciate what he was doing. He said something which I did not follow, but a gentleman who was standing there at the time said to me "This Ghurka is telling you that this is not the door for you to get out by".

Mr. President: Amenities for Members?

Mr. Jannadas M. Mehta: Members of the public! And he added that I had better go out by the other door. I asked the Ghurka what he meant and he said that his orders were that this particular door was meant only for officers. I replied, "Tell your officer that I am his officer and that I pay his wages, and I propose to go out by this way." The Ghurka replied, "*Bhaut atcha*". He understood that perhaps there was something in what I said and he allowed me to pass. Perhaps, if it had been somebody else less inclined to assert his right, he might not have been allowed to pass by that door. When those East Indian Railway Offices were built and provision was made in the budget for the several lakhs we have paid for them, it was not provided that the Agent only, or his subordinates, should be allowed to pass by that entrance, and I think it is the limit of racial discrimination, arrogance and self-sufficiency that any such rule should exist. I am sure my Honourable friend Mr. Aney will bear me out that this incident took place.

There is another instance. I had to travel between Bombay and Kalka for the last session of the Legislative Assembly at Simla, and I went to

[Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta.]

the Colaba station to reserve a berth with a Member of the Bombay Legislative Council. We were told that there was no berth between Bombay and Kalka, as all the berths had been taken over. One whole

1 P.M. compartment was reserved and accommodation in other compartments was allocated to other earlier applicants, and I was given a first class berth in a carriage upto Delhi only. Of course they had sent a telegram to Delhi in advance to give me a berth in the train leaving for Kalka. Having been told that all the berths were reserved, I took it that that was so. But after I got into the train, I found at the next halt, that is the Grant Road Station, there was only one solitary occupant of that reserved first class compartment. Another gentleman travelling in the train also wondered what it was; we asked the occupant of the first class reserved compartment whether, in these days of trade depression, he was making so much money that he had reserved a compartment for himself at such great cost and he told us that he had not paid the whole cost of the reservation; and that gentleman was my Honourable friend Mr. Cocke. (Laughter).

Mr. President: It is a case of racial discrimination.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Discrimination also as regards amenities. My witness, when I went for reservation, was Mr. B. T. Desai, a Member of the Bombay Council. My witness when Mr. Cocke said that he had not paid for the whole of the reservation was Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas (Laughter). I want to know why, and at whose cost it was that the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway had given a whole reserved compartment to Mr. Cocke when he, on his own admission, had not paid for it, and why they refused, 24 hours in advance, accommodation to me when I went for reservation. Perhaps my Honourable friend Mr. Cocke is not to blame for it; he simply applied for a berth and got instead a whole compartment reserved for him. Because he was the President of the European Merchants' Chamber in Bombay, because he is a Chartered Accountant, a Member of the Legislative Assembly and because he is a European, the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway thought they might oblige him so that he, in his turn, might someday oblige the Company. I do not at all blame Mr. Cocke for this. I am sure he will explain to the House in what capacity he got this discriminating treatment and the Honourable the Railway Member will explain why I was refused accommodation, even though it existed, and when the Railway Administration had no business to discriminate in the way they did, and who is responsible for the loss of public revenue. I have got documentary and oral evidence. On the 30th or 31st August, I was told in the presence of a Member of the Legislative Council in Bombay that there was no accommodation; on the 31st August or 1st September, Mr. Cocke said that he had not paid for the reservation of a whole compartment; even on the 31st, a first class berth was not given to me when I was ready to pay for it. These things I bring to the notice of the Honourable the Member for Commerce and Railways for his information and for such action as he might take.

Mr. K. C. Neogy (Dacca Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I am not surprised at the experiences of my Honourable friends Mr. Mehta and Mr. Aney, at the Fairlie Place Office of the East Indian Railway. If I might offer a tip to my Honourable friends they should invest little money

in a pair of trousers, when they next come to Calcutta. In Calcutta, as the Honourable the Law Member would bear me out, we are very particular in these matters. My Honourable friend the Law Member would not admit me to his club if I go there in a *dhoti*.

The Honourable Sir Brojendra Mitter (Law Member): Yes, you would be admitted.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is it because the Honourable Member is no longer a member of the Club?

The Honourable Sir Brojendra Mitter: I was President for one year and I had been on the Committee for many years.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Then, I will try my chance this time. Now, Sir, it is no wonder that railways try to copy examples which are set in very exalted quarters. My Honourable friend Mr. Jamnadas Mehta had not perhaps the time to investigate the question. I myself know a little more about the matter. The real position is this. A particular gate, the main gate, of the East Indian Railway headquarters office is reserved for officers, meaning people getting a salary beyond a certain limit, and those who hold a gazetted rank. No subordinate employee of the railway, nor any member of the public in a *dhoti*, would be permitted to enter the office by that gate. In practice this rule operates as a racial discrimination because what happens is this. Subordinates who have got more or less a passably fair complexion, and who put on European clothes, are freely admitted through this gate, but an Indian officer, if he does not possess European clothes, is sometimes prevented entrance through this gate. That is the real position, and as a matter of fact, before I came to Delhi this time, I was told by some people in Calcutta that my Honourable friend Mr. Mehta had rather an unfortunate experience, and I was expected to raise this particular point by way of a separate motion. I am very glad that my Honourable friend himself has mentioned this. There is another point regarding reservation to which reference was made by him. I never make it a practice to mention any personal experience in this House, and I do not think it is quite right. But that is my personal opinion. If individual personal grievances are permitted to be discussed here, I think I can give quite a number of them.

Mr. President: Do.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I do not think my Honourable friends would thank me if I were to occupy the time of the House any further.

Honourable Members: Go on.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I will just tell one of my latest experiences. When I applied for the reservation of a first class lower berth for coming to Delhi, I was told at the office that there was no lower berth available, and that I was to rest content with an upper berth. But when I came to the station I found that as many as two first class compartments were altogether vacant, and then I inquired of the officer who was in charge at the station as to whether I could occupy one of the lower berths in either of those two compartments which were vacant. He said: "No, you have been given an upper berth only. I cannot allow you to occupy a lower berth. I cannot allow you the privilege of reservation for

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a lower berth". I said that the upper berth was given to me on the understanding that there was no lower berth available. He said that he knew nothing about it, and I should either take the upper berth which I had reserved, or do whatever I liked. Then, I said: "I think the railway authorities ought at least to be truthful. I do not expect any courtesy from you, but I expect truthfulness. When the railway authorities say that there are no lower berths available, they ought at least to inquire before they make that statement and before they give me an upper berth". Of course I could not get a reservation for a lower berth, but I shifted to a vacant compartment and I was not disturbed by anybody. When I made inquiries, I came to know that it was the practice in the East Indian Railway generally to allot upper berths to Indians, keeping as many lower berths vacant as possible, because there was no knowing whether any European might not turn up at the last moment and ask for a berth. That is the practice of the East Indian Railway and it has been consistently following this practice.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: That is quite true.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: My Honourable friend, who is quite well informed in these matters, confirms me in this statement. I do hope that the Railway Department will instruct the East Indian Railway not to discriminate between Indians and Europeans in the matter of reservation of berths.

Mr. M. B. Jayakar (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Sir, I should like to add my voice to that of my Honourable friend Mr. Duraiswamy Aiyangar with respect to one or two grievances to which he drew the attention of this House. I agree with my Honourable friend Mr. Neogy that this should not be made an occasion for narrating personal experiences. I am not therefore going to inflict on the House any narrative, however short, of what has happened to me when travelling on railways. I agree with my Honourable friend Mr. Duraiswamy Aiyangar in what he said, except that in one particular I differ from him; that is, that the grievances which he thought were particularly possible in the case of third class passengers, I beg to say, are not absent in the case of passengers who travel by higher classes. With respect to the grievances to which he drew the attention of the House, namely, children's age, I do want to invite the attention of the Honourable the Railway Member to the fact that this is a very frequent grievance indeed, especially in this country, where a number of women travel with children below three years. I do think it is necessary for the Railway Board to issue very clear instructions that, once a child has been admitted into a compartment without payment, on the footing that it is less than three years, it should not be subjected to any charge at the end of the journey (Hear, hear). I know also personally of instances where, especially in the case of poor women, the child and its mother have been unnecessarily subjected to harassment. Some times the poor woman has no money to pay the excess fare at the end of the journey.

As regards reweighment of luggage, I do not wish to say anything more; because fortunately, that affects rich passengers like Mr. Cocke, and Col. Crawford, and I have no doubt that, having regard to the position which they occupy, this grievance will receive proper consideration at the right

quarters. I do not therefore wish to say anything more on that matter and waste the time of this House.

But the problem before the railway management, Sir, is one which seems to be writ large on every department of its activities, and if I can say so without exaggeration, it is the problem of securing courtesy, attention and kindness to Indians. It is impossible in this respect to make any great distinction between the third class Indian passenger and the first class passenger who happens to be travelling in Indian dress. Fortunately, the Railway Department has many officers, especially of the Anglo-Indian community, whose training makes them unwilling to distinguish between one Indian and another. I say this is a fortunate circumstance, for the equal treatment in discourtesy makes the educated Indian more alive to the disabilities of the poorer classes. I am sure that as long as the railway company employs, in large numbers, that particular community whose training unfortunately is in environments which bring them into no contact with the better classes of Indians, the railway company must take very great care to adopt severe disciplinary action in all cases of discourtesy (Hear, hear). I know, Sir, in the absence of Col. Gidney, it will not be right for me to go into greater details in this matter. I am very sorry he is absent to-day; and if he were present here, he would have had an opportunity of explaining the causes which make his community so devoid of courtesy to Indians. I shall therefore observe the delicacy of refraining from going into this question in detail in his absence. It would be a great blessing indeed if Anglo-Indians, who are now employed on the railways, unless they have proved by personal behaviour, that they are capable of showing courtesy and kindness to poor Indians, are allotted employment in departments where they do not come into conflict with poor Indians. I am not averse to their having their share in railway employment. But what I say is if the railway companies take care to remove Anglo-Indian lads except in exceptional cases, from points of contact with poor Indians, it would be a great blessing. If railways want to employ them, let them be employed in places where they will deal with European superiors, who can keep them on their proper behaviour. One instance has been given by Mr. Jumnadas Mehta, and I can give many instances which have happened in my own observation—but I do not want to tire this House with quoting them. But I do submit for the consideration of the Railway Department that the one great problem, which they have got to attend to, and which exists practically over the entire railway system, although perhaps the East Indian Railway stands, in point of insolence and arrogance of employes, at the top, is how to secure such strict supervision as to detect and punish cases of discourtesy and inattention to poor Indians. Travelling on that Railway once in Indian dress, Mr. Jumnadas and myself were refused admission into the railway restaurant car. I want the Honourable Members of the Railway Board, and my Honourable friend Sir George Rainy, and Mr. Parsons, to note this grievance. May I say further that, in most of the railway restaurant cars to-day, Indians travelling even first class are served their courses after Europeans are attended to. I have tried the experiment of sitting at the end from which the waiters came out, thinking that I would be served on the way; and I have also tried the other experiment of sitting at the other end. But wherever one may sit, if one happens to wear Indian dress, one must wait until every Tom, Dick and Harry—for the mere circumstance that his complexion possibly contains a little less pigment than

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ours—has been properly served; and then only the Indians' turn will come. I would invite Mr. Parsons to come and see this to-day. My Honourable friend will say "How can we detect it?" Last year I gave an invitation to him, and I shall repeat it this year, extending it also to my Honourable friend Sir George Rainy and the Members of the Railway Board, some of whom I see in the box. If they will travel *incognito* they can find it out, but they must make it a special point to travel *incognito*. For, let me tell them, what they possibly know themselves, that even amongst their own subordinates, each of them has perhaps a secret number, or a secret name. If Mr. Parsons therefore wants to travel without being *incognito*, I can assure him that the moment he leaves Delhi, a secret wire will go all over the railway lines stating that Mr. Parsons known under a pet name, is travelling, so be careful; I can assure Mr. Parsons that if he travels *incognito*, then only will he discover all these things.

Then take the point which was made about thefts of fruit on the railway lines. What Indian is there to whom this has not happened? I do not wish to recount personal experiences, but I am quite sure anybody who has to send mangoes during the mango season will agree with me. Therefore the main problem is how to have strict supervision over the employees, especially those who come into close contact with poor Indians. I am aware that, so stated, the problem before Railways is only a reflection of the larger political problem in the country. To-day the remark is true, which Mr. Gokhale made years ago, speaking on a larger question, that the Indian does not, in his own country, obtain that respect, consideration and attention which are usually accorded to foreigners.

Mr. M. S. Aney (Berar Representative): Well, Sir, the instances of discrimination, as well as the want of amenities, both personal and impersonal, have been told to this House by so many Honourable Members that I do not think it is necessary for any other Member to add to the list which is by this time fairly formidable, and most of which, when the time for reply comes, we may be sure will be almost left out without being even replied to. One instance to which reference was made by my Honourable friend Mr. Jamnadas Mehta I myself can testify to, because I was with him at the time. But for his determined attitude in having access through that gate, probably I would myself have thought of bidding good-bye and gone back. If it was a gate forbidden to me, I am a man of such a mood that I would have treated it as a gate to Hell, through which officers alone should go and would have returned without any further bother about it. But he said "No," there must be no discrimination as regards a gate into a railway office built at the expense of the people." Gates are not intended only for officers but for all those who pay them as well. Well; he took that line and we had access through that gate. But that is not a solitary instance. I once had occasion to reserve a first-class passage from Bhusaval to Delhi. I was favoured with a telegram from the Superintendent, Victoria Terminus, to the effect that the passage which I wanted reserved had been reserved for me. When I got down at Bhusaval station I looked about for my seat, but could not find the compartment where my seat was reserved. I inquired of the guard, "Will you help me in finding my compartment?" but he said "I am very busy". "Then, will you tell somebody else to help me?" I said. But he would not do anything. However I eventually found my carriage, but saw that

it was occupied by a gentleman who was a European. He was sitting there. I told him "It seems to me this seat is reserved for me from Bhusaval to Delhi. Will you kindly let me have the seat?" To which he said "I don't know that. I am here and I am not going to get out."

Mr. President: Possession is nine points of the law!

Mr. M. S. Aney: It so happened that in this case it was ten points of the law and not nine as he bolted the door of the compartment from within! I would have taken my chance with nine points, but with the tenth I couldn't. I asked the guard "Will you please ask this gentleman to get out of the seat and vacate it for me?" He couldn't do anything. Then the stationmaster came to his help, and these two gentlemen quarrelled with that man. He was speaking from inside the carriage and he would not even listen to the guard or the stationmaster.

Sir Victor Sassoon: Was he a very big man?

Mr. M. S. Aney: Big or small, I could not see, because I could not enter the carriage. He was talking through the window. Then they said they would find me another seat. "What a pity! Isn't it shameful for you", I said, "that you are not in a position to control your own train and to secure to a man the seat reserved for him, and further asked them whether they would have treated any Indian forcibly occupying the seat reserved for a European passenger in the same manner with the same coolness. I refused to enter the carriage and said I would send a wire. Then it transpired that one of the railway men happened to see the box which was borne on the head of my cooly. My luggage was there. What he saw was "M. S. Aney, M.L.A." There was also one little box which happened to have on its label some other thing which reminded him that I was intimately connected with the Railway Department itself. Then that European gentleman was told by these Railway servants "You must vacate the seat, otherwise the matter will be taken up". They were afraid that I would send a telegram probably to somebody who would be in a position to deal effectively with them. In a few minutes the gentleman left the seat and I was given the accommodation which had been reserved for me. That is just one little experience. It was not a matter to be made much of; but as some gentlemen here have been giving personal instances—and I was asked by the Chair to speak—in deference to the Chair I thought I should also make my contribution to the debate. It is not a pleasant matter, that even Indian men of position, holding first-class tickets in their hands, should not be altogether immune from this sort of racial discrimination.

The story of the third class passenger need not be told. It is known to everyone and everyone can understand what it is. As regards amenities, I admit that I find generally that certain amenities are legally provided for—you issue the orders, but in carrying them out absolutely no attention is paid to them. For instance at stations where orders are given that this station should be open for 24 hours, I know from personal experience that many passengers go there and for hours together no tickets can be had by them. I have seen that at Wardha Junction station. Also at certain other stations the orders are strictly that the station window should be opened an hour before the arrival of the train. But the passengers seldom find the man there till 15 or 20 minutes before the train is due and then there is

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a large crowd collected outside the window, and people have great trouble in getting their tickets. I know that the Railway Board from their place here or at Simla cannot effectively control these things. But on the other hand if we complain on the spot nobody is willing to listen. The station master will not listen to us, the guard will not listen to us. The driver is very busy at the time the train comes in. Whom then can these people complain to? You must make such arrangements that where anyone has a complaint to make he can put it immediately and you should be in a position to take notice of the complaint independently of this channel. This channel is after all interested in suppressing complaints against itself. The person responsible for station arrangements says nothing is wrong, no rule has been broken, no passenger is inconvenienced. In that lies the way to their promotion; so you cannot expect your lower staff to do justice to the passengers. Therefore, you must think of some other arrangement; and if you are strict in promptly meting out justice to the sufferers irrespective of race, irrespective of the community to which he belongs, irrespective of anything whatever, I am sure the evil gradually will disappear. If there is the will, I am sure the Railway Board can find a way. Sir, I support this cut.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy (Member for Commerce and Railways): I should like at the outset of my speech, Mr. President, to refer to one matter raised by my Honourable friend Mr. Cocks which is really outside my jurisdiction, namely, the suggestion that there should be a larger free allowance of luggage to Members of the Legislative Assembly. That, I think, would be a matter for the House itself to settle, and it would not fall to me to place any proposals before the House. But my Honourable friend suggested that there might be some system of certificates granted by the Railway Board which would entitle Members of this House to a larger free allowance of luggage. It occurred to me Mr. President, to ask, if the certificates were to be granted by the Railway Board, always under the control of course of the Railway Member, according to what criterion we should determine what would be a reasonable free allowance for a particular Member—whether it would be in inverse ratio to the number of starred questions on the paper in his name, or in direct proportion to the number of kind remarks he had made about the Honourable Member. In the latter case, I am afraid that all the Members of this House would get very large free allowances this year!

Since this subject was discussed at one of the budget sittings last year, we have put the question how the standard of comfort of passengers can be improved before the Central Advisory Council for Railways. I have here a memorandum we placed before the Council, which includes 24 different items, and perhaps I might read through them, because it will show that almost all the subjects—not quite all but almost all the subjects that have been mentioned today—were included in this memorandum.

This is the list: overcrowding, dirty latrines in trains and at stations, the supply of drinking water, waiting sheds, high level platforms, lack of benches, confusion and overcrowding at booking office windows, the difficulty of purchasing tickets, no one available to answer inquiries and give information to third class passengers, difficulty in ascertaining train timings and correct fares, no one to guide women to trains, purchase of platform tickets, passengers not allowed sufficient time on platforms before trains

come in, short stoppage of passenger trains at stations, harassment by coolies, harassment by travelling ticket examiners, rude behaviour of ticket collectors, refreshment cars on trains, supplying suitable food for Indian passengers, bad and expensive food sold at stations by vendors, want of Hindu and Muhammadan refreshment rooms, increasing free allowance of luggage, forfeiture of free allowance of luggage in case of excess luggage, removal of beggars from station premises. That is a long list and the Central Advisory Council is working its way through it. I have read it because I want the House to realise that we are not indifferent to these questions and that we are trying to get all the advice we can from Members of this House who have personal experience and who know the best way of putting them right.

An Honourable Member: May I inquire if there is no Local Advisory Committee at Delhi?

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I will come to what my Honourable friend has said about Delhi presently. The House will of course realise that it is impossible for me to deal fully with the very wide variety of topics which have been mentioned by Honourable Members in the discussion. But there are some of them to which I should like to refer. In the first place, a question was raised by the Mover of the motion, and supported by my Honourable friends of the European Group, about re-weighment of luggage and other questions connected with luggage; and I trust the House will not think that I am putting this suggestion first for reasons of racial discrimination. As regards re-weighment I think there is a good deal in what has been urged, and I will have the matter looked into. I am not sure how far that is covered by the item that we have in the list for the Central Advisory Council, but I have very little doubt it can be brought in. As regards the other question raised in the same connection about children who are admitted without tickets at the beginning of the journey and are subsequently required to produce a ticket at the end of the journey, I was a little afraid that my Honourable friend was going to say that our journeys were so long in India and the trains were so slow that a child which was entitled to travel free at the start, was old enough to require a ticket by the end of the journey. However, I am glad that that particular accusation has not been brought against us. That is a matter that I do not recollect having heard about before and I am not quite sure at the moment whether it is a suitable question for the Central Advisory Council. However, I will consider that point, as of course I shall consider whatever has been said on other subjects in today's discussion.

One of the matters in which I should be very glad indeed if I could effect an improvement is the booking facilities at railway stations. I quite agree with what my Honourable friend, Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh said and other speakers also. The fact is that we issue rules which seem to be good rules and they are not carried out. I know that that is so; I know that, although there are notices saying that the booking office ought to be open an hour before the train starts, it is not in fact open, and there is a rush at the last moment to buy tickets, and passengers miss their trains in consequence. I am open to consider any practical means that can be suggested to put that right. I am inclined myself to think that surprise visits by railway officials might do something, but when railway officials travel by rail information is at once passed down the line, and the surprise

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visit is not in fact a surprise visit. But if actual incidents come to the notice of Members of this House when they are travelling, I think they will be doing a real public service if they draw attention to them, and if the station master will not listen to them, let them write to the Agent. It may perhaps do some good if we from here write down to the Agents and say that we consider this a very important matter, and that we want particular attention paid to complaints which they may receive from responsible quarters on the subject.

I am indebted to my friend, Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh, for mentioning two particular trains—one on the Bengal and North Western Railway and another on the East Indian Railway—in which there is usually overcrowding and that he had written to the Agents. In one case he did not get all he wanted and in the other case he got practically nothing. I am indebted to him, I say, for mentioning these cases, because the moment we have a definite case brought to notice that a particular train is usually overcrowded, then I am prepared to inquire into it at once. We shall certainly write to the administrations in these cases and find out what the reasons are, and whether the overcrowding can be stopped.

Another matter, which I am anxious to improve is the supply of cool drinking water in the hot season. That has been considered by the Central Advisory Committee, and the railway authorities are not altogether agreed whether the particular plan proposed, namely, that there should be a compartment set aside in each train for the conveyance of a water-carrier, works well or not. Some administrations think it works well, but others do not. The Bengal Nagpur Railway tried this plan and then with the concurrence of their Local Advisory Committee abandoned it. I may say that we are making experiments now to see whether in our new rolling stock we can provide a special compartment, where there would be special arrangements for keeping the water cool, because that is one of the difficulties, when you carry water in a train in the hot weather, it does not remain cool very long—it is apt to get very hot.

Another point that was mentioned—I think by my Honourable friend, Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh—was this; he wanted to know why we did not enforce the provisions of the Railway Act about overcrowding. On the part of the Bengal and North Western Railway system there might be some point in that; but over the greater part of the railways of India, if you take proceedings under that section and find the railway administration, the Government of India would really be fining itself; and since the Government of India has to find the money to provide more carriages, it seems simpler to provide more carriages straightaway rather than go through this somewhat round about procedure.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: Sue the company-managed railways.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I admit that, in the case of the Bengal and North Western Railway and other company-owned railways—not merely company-managed—they are in a more independent position and we should not be fining ourselves if we took action.

As regards what was said by my Honourable friend, Mr. Mukhtar Singh, about certain grievances at Delhi, I gather that he complains about something closely approaching extortion by the booking clerks. My attention had not been called to the articles, to which he referred, but I will

have them brought up to me now and see whether there is anything that . . .

Mr. M. R. Jayakar: May I ask my Honourable friend to say whether there is any department in the Railway Administration whose duty it is to take note of these articles and leaderettes written in newspapers and bring them to the notice of the authorities concerned?

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I do not know whether my Honourable friend is suggesting the addition of another Member to the Railway Board.

Mr. M. R. Jayakar: There is a Publicity Department which regales Honourable Members of this House occasionally with beautiful photographs and things of that character, but is it a part of his duty to take note of those public complaints in the Press and bring them to the notice of the authorities concerned?

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I think, as far as the exact arrangements in the Railway Board Office are concerned, my friend Mr. Parsons, who is more closely acquainted with the actual organisation than myself, will be able to give the Honourable Member the information he requires, but I cannot myself see that the Publicity Department is the natural department to deal with a matter of that sort. But I did not wish to imply that these particular complaints had not been brought to the notice of any one in the Railway Board. I said that they had not been brought to my notice, and what I was promising to do was that I would give them my personal attention. It may be that the matter has already been dealt with in the Railway Board Office, I do not know. Possibly I was obscure, but what I was trying to make plain was that I would give my personal attention to what my Honourable friend had said on that subject.

There was a complaint made by a number of speakers who said, that sometimes higher rates were charged for third class passengers by mail trains, as compared with the rates which were charged on ordinary trains. I cannot remember the exact details at the moment, but last year, when we reduced rates and fares on some of the State-managed railways, the third class fares by mail trains were reduced to the same level of rate as the fares charged on ordinary trains. That will make it evident that the Railway Department regard it as a desirable change, and I have no doubt that, in course of time, we shall be able to make similar reductions on some of the other railways, which have not yet adopted them. The Honourable the Mover said that the carriages on the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway were not satisfactory—he thought they were very bad indeed—and he added that, if they could not provide better carriages, at least they might charge a lower fare. On the other hand, in another part of his speech, he argued strongly in favour of uniformity in rates and fares. Now, Sir, if we introduce, into our railway economy, the system of charging, not only according to the nominal class accommodation provided, but according to its actual merits and demerits, I am afraid we should get very far indeed from uniformity. I should like to mention specially a suggestion made by my Honourable friend Mr. Chatterjee in his speech. I appreciate the fact that our guides and Information Officers, or Inquiry Officers, or whatever we may call them, are probably of greater use to high officials and tourists than they are to the third class passenger. They are likely to be so even supposing that—I have no reason to suppose they are not—these officers are anxious to do all they can for the travelling

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public. If you put a man in uniform on a station platform, the ordinary third class passenger will be inclined to hold aloof from him, for they will be afraid to approach him, and if we are to do real good with these Inquiry Officers, I am rather inclined to think that we want men imbued with a missionary spirit, so that they will not wait till they are asked for information but move freely about the third class waiting room, volunteer information, and find out who is looking unhappy and see what is the best thing to do to help him out of his difficulties. I value my Honourable friend's suggestion, though I am not yet sure how far we shall be able to adopt it in practice. But if we have something of that kind, something in the spirit of the *Seva Samiti* giving the kind of assistance that they give, if we could train up our men so that they might really help people who wanted help, then we should have done something that is really worth doing. I can assure the Honourable Member that we will consider carefully his suggestion and see whether anything on the lines he suggests is practicable. I may say this—of course Honourable Members will say that I am a high official and that naturally people go out of their way to help me when I travel, but I did not begin by being a high official—may I say that the first thing which struck me, when I came out from England to India, was how much less helpful the ordinary railway officials up and down the country were than on the British railways. On the British railways, every time I go back to England I am more and more struck by the extraordinary efficiency, kindness and quickness with which everything is handled. When I come back to India, I always wish I could devise measures in order to try to reach the same sort of standard out here.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya (Allahabad and Jhansi Divisions: Non-Muhammadian Rural): Compulsory free primary education.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I should like very much, Sir, to be able to respond to the invitation of my friend the Honourable Pandit and embark on that topic, but I fear that it would take me a very long time. What I have said on this point, Mr. President, was an attempt to convey to the House if I can, that these things interest me, and that I am anxious to do what is possible to effect an improvement as regards these matters.

I do not want to weary the House with a long speech today, and I would rather not deal, I think, with the personal experiences which have been mentioned by various Members, particularly as one of them involves apparently some difference of opinion between two Honourable Members of this House. But I may say something on what has been said about what I may call covert and concealed racial discrimination. We do not approve of it; I personally do not approve of it, and I should be very glad to do what I could to stop it, but I think that when there has been, as undoubtedly there has been in the past, a good deal of that kind of thing and we set to work to remove it, we must trust a good deal to time. The obvious things which are down in the rules and the law you can change, but those things which are the result of a long period of history, do what we will and say what we will, we cannot change them in a day. I do not mean that we are to trust to time, fold our hands and do nothing. I am quite willing to do what I can. It seems to me, Mr. President, that there is a great advantage in our annual discussion on this subject. I am quite sure that it will always be an annual discussion, because I am afraid I shall

never be able to produce such perfect amenities that the House will have nothing to say to me. The great advantage is that we are kept up to the mark; we are reminded about those things which Members of this House see as they travel about India from day to day and from week to week, and the result, I have no doubt, is that we do begin to get a move on in various things and a more rapid improvement is effected than otherwise would have been possible. I think, Sir, that closes what I have to say in reply to the very interesting discussion to which we have listened.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: May I know what the Honourable Member is going to do with regard to the letter which I read out and in which a specific charge has been made of harassment and extortion? I am prepared to hand over that letter to him.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: If the Honourable Member will hand it over I will send it down to the Agent. But I do not want to commit myself as to what exactly I shall say to the Agent when I send it on, because I should like to read it myself first.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: I have read out the whole thing to the House.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I know, Mr. President, but I do not want to give an absolute pledge that I will say to the Agent, "You must report to me". That is what I think I shall probably say, but I should like to have the paper actually before me before I can say anything.

Mr. O. Duraiswamy Aiyangar: May I inform the Honourable Member that he has ignored the point to which I attach some importance, that is, about the arranging of trains. When passengers go from one train to another train, at the same station, the two trains are not brought on either side of the platform, and thus you harass people by making them go over over-bridges and run to catch the train which has already had the second bell rung.

Mr. President: I think the Honourable Member has a right to ignore it!

The question is:

2 P.M. "That the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 2,000."

The Assembly divided:

AYES—37.

Abdul Matin Chaudhury, Maulvi.
Acharya, Mr. M. K.
Aiyangar, Mr. C. Duraiswamy.
Aney, Mr. M. S.
Ayyangar, Mr. M. S. Sessa.
Belvi, Mr. D. V.
Birla, Mr. Ghanshyam Das.
Chalmers, Mr. T. A.
Das, Mr. B.
Das, Pandit Nilakantha.
Farookhi, Mr. Abdul Latif Saheb.
Gulab Singh, Sardar.
Ismail Khan, Mr. Muhammad.
Iswar Saran, Munshi.
Jayakar, Mr. M. R.
Jogiah, Mr. V. V.
Kelkar, Mr. N. C.
Kunzru, Pandit Hirday Nath.
Malaviya, Pandit Madan Mohan.

Mehta, Mr. Jamnadas M.
Mitra, Mr. S. C.
Moonje, Dr. B. S.
Mukhtar Singh, Mr.
Naidu, Mr. B. P.
Neogy, Mr. K. C.
Purshotamdas Thakurdas, Sir.
Rang Behari Lal, Lala.
Ranga Iyer, Mr. C. S.
Rao, Mr. G. Sarvatham.
Roy, Mr. B. C.
Shafee, Maulvi Mohammad.
Siddiqi, Mr. Abdul Qadir.
Singh, Kumar Rananjaya.
Singh, Mr. Gaya Prasad.
Singh, Mr. Ram Narayan.
Sinha, Kumar Ganganand.
Srkcs, Mr. E. F.

NOES—42.

Abdul Aziz, Khan Bahadur Mian.
 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.
 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.
 French, Mr. J. C.
 Ghazanfar Ali Khan, Mr.
 Ghuznavi, Mr. A. H.
 Graham, Mr. L.
 Jowahir Singh, Sardar Bahadur Sardar.
 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.
 Roy, Mr. K. C.
 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.
 Webb, Mr. M.
 Yamin Khan, Mr. Muhammad.
 Young, Mr. G. M.

The motion was negatived.

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

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

Principle of Training of Technical and Traffic Probationers for Railway Appointments, Superior and Subordinate.

Mr. B. Das (Orissa Division : Non-Muhammadian) : Sir, I beg to move :

"That the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 1,001."

Sir, I have given notice of this motion to raise a debate on the principle of training of technical and traffic probationers, superior and subordinate for our railways: Honourable Members who took the opportunity to visit the Publicity Exhibition of the Railways, adjoining the Assembly House, —and which was a three days' wonder—saw two huge placards setting out what work was being done for the railway staff with regard to railway education. There were placards which showed that 8,482 students have been trained in certain schools, of which 6,590 passed. Some of us tried to collect a little more detailed information as to what the actual system of training was, by which Government are to give effect to their policy of Indianization. Unfortunately one could not meet any official there to get the necessary information.

Sir, I will take the older section of the Members of this House to the debates of 1926, when Sir Clement Hindley, talking of the policy of training

in the Chandausi School, assured us of the system that had been described in that leaflet which was circulated in the Publicity Exhibition, and said "there will be a scheme which shall co-ordinate the policy of Indianization for Indian recruitment and training". Sir, that very year, Government also came up before the House for sanctioning the Lee Commission concessions to the European element of the Indian railways. At that time the Honourable Sir Charles Innes told us that he would give effect to the policy of Indianization to its full limit and he mentioned that except for one or two departments they would stick to the percentage of 75 per cent. in every department. I will just read what he said :

"As regards the Traffic Department for the last two years we have filled up vacancies practically entirely by Indians. As regards the Engineering Department, we have got to provide a certain number of Royal Engineers. Isn't that so? (Sir Clement Hindley: "Yes".) But there again we shall make it our aim in that Department to recruit at once up to the proposal of the Lee Commission, that is 75 per cent. out here and 25 per cent. at home. My answer to the Honourable Member is that where facilities exist we shall at once recruit in the proportion of 75 and 25 per cent., 75 per cent. in India and 25 per cent. at home; but where we cannot recruit at present, what we shall do is to increase our training facilities as *expeditiously* as possible."

Sir, I am not going to touch the point whether Government have fulfilled this part of their obligation about the recruitment of 75 per cent., where, according to their own admission, such percentage can be easily recruited in India at once. Honourable Members who have read the report of the Railway Board on Indian Railways for 1927-28, will find that even in that, the Government have not fulfilled their promises. In some departments of the Railways, Europeans are being recruited to the extent of 50 per cent. and in some to the extent of 55 per cent. annually. But that is a different question. I will leave it there.

I want to raise here the discussion whether at present the Railway Board and the Government have the necessary means to give facilities, so that they will completely train up Indian staff so that they will have 75 per cent. Indian equipment in the near future. It seems their idea is to open Area Schools at Jamalpur, Bina, Gomoh and Lyalpur for subordinate staff with the central school at Chandausi and the Railway Staff College at Dehra Dun for superior officers. The building has not yet been built at Dehra Dun and the staff has not been engaged nor even the policy decided as to how far Indian probationers will be trained. Sir, to my mind, this attempt on the part of the Railway Board amounts to shilly-shallying with the policy of Indianisation and of fulfilling the promises and pledges given on the floor of this House. So far the railways in India have not evolved any plant spirit in their staff. They might have evolved it among the European officers of the railways—who combine themselves as an Association of Engineers and who keep to the plant spirit of British railways and British Engineers in Great Britain. They might have evolved a plant spirit and the service spirit among the Anglo-Indians who have been found, as was disclosed in yesterday's discussion, to get preference in most railway departments, in the workshops, in the engineering department and other railway services. In these departments the Anglo-Indians and Europeans might have imbibed a plant spirit, but the Railway Board has done nothing to give Indians proper training so as to create an industrial atmosphere or a service spirit in them, so that an Indian who begins as a small engineer, or a young probationer may in

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course of time aspire and rise to the Membership of the Railway Board. Yet two or three years ago Sir Clement Hindley, on the floor of this House, glibly talked that a time would come when a mistri's son, who would be trained by and by in the schools which were then going to be established, would eventually become a Member of the Railway Board. I will take for example European countries, and also America to illustrate how this plant spirit is being developed. It is no use citing an example from England; for in England there is not that plant spirit, there is no engineering atmosphere. The spirit of apprenticeship of the staff in big English works and factories is not properly developed. If you want to find out how men get the service spirit of the railway factories where they work, you must go to America, and also to some of the engineering firms and railways of Germany. In America they have been creating an industrial atmosphere, where a man enters an industry in his boyhood and rises to control the same as its head in his after years. There he is given proper training in language, then he is given technical training, and an ordinary workman gradually rises to the position of a foreman and even Works Manager, whereby he controls the whole administration, a whole workshop or a huge department of the railway. Unfortunately, owing to the system of Government that exists here, we have to recruit, for our Superior Services, from foreign countries large numbers of trained engineers who have to work for, but have no connection with the railways; nor are they trained in the spirit of the railway. As long as the present system of Government lasts, a certain number of superior service engineers, and traffic officers will have to be recruited from Britain. But the time has come when the system of training for Indian engineers, mechanical engineers, technical engineers and transportation officers should be so arranged that the apprentice who enters the workshop or the railway services at a certain period, say when he is 14 or 15 years of age, can, by and by, say when he is 26, go into the superior service and not be kept down in a subordinate capacity. In America I find most of the people that are engaged in the workshops and factories are usually foreigners—emigrants from non-English speaking countries of Europe. First of all in large factories they receive a language training and learn to speak English. I am mentioning this specifically as it may be said that the Indian apprentices may not know the English language and so cannot be given technical education in a workshop and factory where the medium of instruction will have to be partly in English; they might be kept out on that ground. I find that in American Factories—I am specially referring to Ford's Motor Factory where 14,000 hands are given a training in simple English language every year and thereafter are put into their trade schools, and afterwards are put into their apprentice classes for a period of five years. When a man completes his five years of apprenticeship, then he has the chance of becoming a foreman and controls the production of huge workshops such as we have at Lillooah and Kharagpur or even larger works than these. So far as training of Indians as apprentices in the railway workshops is concerned, Indians have had so far very little chance. There are one or two technical schools. I am particularly referring to the one at Jamalpur, that is, the technical school of the East Indian Railway, with which my own province is connected. When it was started, the Local Government of my own province undertook to contribute a certain sum of money annually, on the definite promise that Indian boys would be taken and trained

up as apprentices. But the atmosphere is so unnatural in the present technical school, that all the teachers being European railway officials, they do not want to see that technical atmosphere, that plant spirit grow among the Indian boys. So usually, at the time of recruitment, only a few Indian boys are taken, and usually most of the boys taken for training there are Anglo-Indian and European lads. These boys, when they pass out of the school, become Assistant Foremen and Foremen or Assistant Engineers in the State railways or other railways. As far as I gather, the better type of Indian boys do not get the chance to be admitted to such a school. It is a preserve for a certain class. A friend of mine was telling me, he had overheard, during the last selection for this Technical School, an Anglo-Indian boy observing that very few "nigger" boys got the chance to get in. Well, that is the atmosphere where Indian boys get no chance. You might say you are running the Railway Department as a commercial concern. But you have also to look to the other side, that is whether there is a real industrial atmosphere. The railways happen to be one of the largest industrial concerns, with a capital expenditure of over 700 crores of rupees, and if the railways work in the proper spirit of Indianisation they will train up thousands of engineers, who will supply the officers necessary for the Indianisation of railways and will also supply a large staff for the engineering industry, so that the requirements of stores for our railways, for which more than 20 crores of rupees are paid abroad every year although the same railway appliances can be produced in this country with the help of these engineers, and probably at lower cost.

But so far as things stand at present, you want your railways to produce a certain income and your policy is that the engineering spirit should not grow among Indians

Mr. President: That is not my policy. (Laughter.)

Mr. B. Das: I refer to the Government, Sir. The Government policy is such that that spirit does not grow among Indians. The Government have not yet initiated any policy by which they can deal effectively with the problem of Indianisation. Our railways are just at the initial stage of their plan for training Indian probationers and the Government are now trying to initiate a policy of apprenticeship which is more or less similar to what existed in England before the War. I say that before such a system is adopted, let the Government appoint a committee of experts who have a good knowledge of railway administration, and who have acquired the railway spirit in Europe, America or Germany; I do not particularly favour the British system of training of probationers as the English railways are so small, compared to the German and American systems of railways, that American practice is best suited to the Indian system. Owing to the support which the Indian railways are giving to the English engineering industries, the Government do not want the development of applied railway industries in India to the same extent as the American railways have developed them. I will give Honourable Members some idea as to the management and training of apprentices on the American railways. In the Pennsylvania Railroad of America, there is a sort of apprenticeship, where candidates are trained in five years in all the branches of railway administration—such as transportation, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering and other

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allied departments. In class rooms they receive lectures on technical books of a high standard embracing all branches.

Sir, there are engineering colleges in India which supply to the Government a certain number of candidates for recruitment in the Civil Engineering Department, although at the same time, I find that certain engineering colleges are not yet recognised by the Railway Board—I do not know why it is so—especially in the case of the Bihar College of Engineering in my Province. The graduates of that College have not been allowed to compete for the various appointments. The existing colleges will supply a certain number of graduates, but they are not trained in the railway atmosphere, and the railway technical schools and colleges are run in such a way that the Indian students do not get the chance to imbibe the proper spirit. A friend of mine was telling me the other day that recently, in the East Indian Railway Engineering School, they were recruiting boys, and that although there were many Indian candidates, many European candidates were worked in. If that is the spirit with which you are working, then there is no chance of your efforts at Indianizing the railway workshops becoming a success.

Sir, in America, in regard to this matter of instilling the true industrial spirit into the boys, the railways have done wonderful work. There are some industrial magnates here, and I am sure they will find things of great interest in what I am going to say. In America they take apprentices for five years, but they do not train them in the railway workshops. They have subsidiary shops where all the probationers are made to work on a slightly lower rate of daily wage, and it is surprising to find that most of these probationers earn their wages by sale of products they are engaged to manufacture. The expenses of the workshop are met almost, except charges on depreciation and interest. All these men, after they turn out of the factory, become efficient workmen and supervisors in the railway companies. The same practice is prevalent in Ford's Motor Works in the States. In their apprentice workshops they manufacture certain parts of the motor car. These parts are actually used up in the Ford Motor Works, and the apprentices get the best practical training, along with their theoretical lectures. I suggest the same thing to the Honourable the Railway Member. Wherever you start a training workshop, you can manufacture such parts of the railway appliances as you need for the huge systems of railways in India. If you teach the students how to manufacture all those parts, they can be paid out of the product of their manufacture, and you will, at the same time, be training a large number of people who may be taken on the railway workshops. Of course, to those Honourable gentlemen who do not have the factory and plant spirit, this idea may sound strange, but those who are engineering experts will readily recognise that this method would inculcate the industrial spirit in our young men. So far, Sir, I have found that the systems introduced in our railways for training young men has proved a failure because it is meant only for particular classes of Anglo-Indians or Europeans, with a few Indians sprinkled here and there. If we now allow the system of training introduced by the Railway Board in the existing railway technical schools and other area schools to proceed

in this slow and haphazard way, I am sure it will take another twenty years to expect any future Railway Member to recruit 75 per cent. Indians, if at all that 75 per cent. is ever to be reached. I would therefore suggest that the Government should appoint a committee of experts,—let them be brought from America or any other country,—who must be industrial engineers and properly fitted to advise Government as to how rapidly Indianise the Indian railways and how to give Indian probationers the proper engineering and industrial training. Sir, I shall now refer particularly to the recruitment of mechanical engineers, about which there was a question the other day. My friend Mr. Mukhtar Singh has kindly supplied me with a copy of the Railway Department regulations, according to which mechanical engineers are to be recruited in India. If these regulations are to be followed, I am afraid only one or two Indians will be recruited for every ten or twelve Europeans as happens now. The Railway Board ignore the training of Indian Engineering Colleges and want to have selected candidates trained in their own way. This will retard the right number of Indians getting in. Nor will Indians with training in Europe or Britain stand any chance to be recruited to the Railway Service of Mechanical Engineers. I therefore think that you must change your method of recruitment. It was somewhere mentioned that the Public Service Commission was appointing the electrical and mechanical engineers. The other day my friend Mr. Aney asked one or two questions about the recruitment of an electrical engineer to the Railway Service. I may add, Sir, that on most of these selection committees, the expert railway engineer who advises the Public Service Commission on technical questions happens to be prejudiced; and he does not care whether the 75 per cent. Indianisation is to be reached or not. He usually puts obstacles in the way of an Indian candidate however qualified he may be. Although many American and British-trained Indian engineers appear before the Public Service Commission, some objections or other are raised and they get disqualified. Well, if there is always that spirit of antagonism, always that spirit of trying to disqualify an Indian, then the proper plant spirit will never be worked up amongst Indians. That is the one point which has to be looked into if we are to create the proper engineering atmosphere among Indians. Sir, apart from the Indianisation that my suggestion would bring about in the railways I am deeply concerned as how best to augment manufacture of railway appliances in India and make India self-supporting. We cannot manufacture railway appliances in India unless Indians are trained in a railway atmosphere for years, and unless they are members of firms who entirely produce railway appliances. At present Government have not recognised that national obligation of theirs. They are only thinking of running the railways commercially as an instrument of transport, and as long as that spirit lasts in this country their object will be always to place orders with outside specialists, especially British firms. Hence I commend my motion to the House.

The Revd. J. O. Chatterjee: Sir, my only plea for interposing in this debate is that in the first place, I am interested in the problem of the training of these technical engineers and probationers, and, secondly that I have been a member for three years, of the Punjab Quota Committee, which selects at least in the first instance, probationers as well as recruits for the superior engineering and

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other services of the Indian State Railways. I find, Sir, in the Report of the Railway Board, Vol. I, page 58, the following words:

"Towards the close of the year arrangements were started for the selection of the first batch of special class apprentices for the Mechanical Engineering and Transportation Power Departments under the new regulations."

Now, Sir, as I have explained, I have had something to do with the selection of this first batch of special class apprentices. The scheme to which my Honourable friend Mr. B. Das just now referred is, on the face of it, an extremely attractive scheme. It provides for the selection of a certain number of mechanical special class apprentices and young lads who have passed the Intermediate Examination are selected, if they are 19 years of age and under 21, and then finally they are taken on for a course of 7 years' training, part of which is in India and the other part outside India. Then we find, at the end of the scheme, a very attractive scale of salaries. No doubt the scheme appeals very greatly to our countrymen here. It is a hungry land, and a scheme of salaries of such magnitude is most attractive and some of our very best boys are drawn to it. But what I want to gather, Sir,—probably the Honourable Mr. Parsons will tell us—as to why so little has been said about the actual method of training of these young men, as to how these young men are likely to be trained, what are the places where they will be trained, and how they are to be fitted for their work in life. That seems to remain more or less a sealed book to most people; and I have some doubts as to how many of these young men, some of whom have been the finest boys in our colleges, are ever likely to become successful mechanical engineers. My doubts were greatly increased after a conversation I had with a very high railway authority and I may add that he was not an Indian. I can assure you, Sir, that I am trying as far as I possibly can to repeat his exact words; of course I shall not mention his name. He was of opinion that there is, in the Railway Board, a strong belief that no Indian is likely to make a really good mechanical engineer. They may make other kinds of engineers, but not mechanical engineers. But still the Board had been worried a great deal by the public demand and by this House at times, and so they evolved a scheme. Well now, this railway authority believes that the scheme in some ways is a wash-out. The fact is that these young men have to be trained for seven years and that any lads who do not show themselves efficient from year to year will be sent away. The effects of such a scheme have yet to be seen. It is an open question as to how many of these young men will enter the technical service. Now I want that point to be cleared, because, if that is so, and if the training they are going to get and the circumstances under which this training is to be imparted to them are such, that very few of them will be able to survive it, then where is the good of getting them this kind of training, and then afterwards sending them out to find their place in other ranks of life, which will be all the harder for them?

Mr. K. C. Neogy: It will deceive the Assembly all right. That is all they want.

The Revd. J. C. Chatterjee: I offer no opinion; I am only trying to elicit information. Then the other point I want to know is where are these young men to be trained? Now I ask you if these young men are to be distributed among various workshops and technical training places such

as my Honourable friend Mr. B. Das has already described, and I need not say anything more about it,—if they are to be distributed one here, two there and three there, are they not likely to find themselves in most unsuitable circumstances? Are they not likely to find themselves in an atmosphere which is very different to what they have been used to, in their colleges and one which is likely to be disagreeable? I have not been able to find out whether any hostels are to be made for them. We are told that allowances will be made for them to find their board if necessary; but what are the arrangements to be made to see that these boys are not only trained in the technical side, but that they are given a thorough training and looked after properly during their course of training. Afterwards when they are sent out, I suppose they are likely to be sent out to different technical institutions in Europe, and there again I am still in the dark as to what is going to happen to them. This same authority, whom I quoted a little time ago, or rather this same high official, seemed to be extremely diffident about the methods of training. He said, suppose some of these young men did actually get trained for seven years and proved hardy enough to stand it, the result would be that, at the end of the seven years, they would not be mechanical engineers but absolutely soulless machines. Well, I think there is a great deal of apprehension of a thing like that happening, because anyone who has had to do with the training of youth knows that it is not enough to provide a purely mechanical training, particularly in workshops, for lads of 19, who are by no means mature and who have been brought up under very different circumstances, unless they are going to be really cared for, and unless some arrangements are made for them to find companions of their own sort, or be trained in batches large enough to provide them with companionship. I mean to say, unless we develop their social side and their educational side, not merely giving them a mechanical training, they are not likely, in the first place, to survive the course of training, and, in the second place, if they do survive the long and arduous course, they are not likely to make good and efficient engineers. So I do hope some information will be given now to go out to the country as to what is to be the future of these young men and what are the exact environments in which they will be trained. I have ventured to speak on this subject because I have been asked for advice by a very large number of my own students and by parents desiring to send their sons. They have all said the same thing, namely, that they have in the scheme the courses of study and the period for which probationers will have to be trained; they have the scale of salaries which they will get, but nothing is said as to where that training is to be given and how these boys are to be trained; and I do hope, Sir, that more light will be thrown on this question so that people will have exact information on this very important branch of employment and usefulness that appears to be opening up. I do not cast any doubt on the good faith of the Railway Board in this matter; I do hope that they are sincerely desirous of giving our boys a chance. But people should know as to what is exactly before the boys who go in for this training.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya: Sir, in connection with this question of the selection of candidates for employment in the Superior Revenue establishment of State railways as mechanical engineers, and electrical engineers, I wish to draw the attention of the Honourable Members of the Railway Board to the existence of the Engineering College at the Benares Hindu University. That College imparts instruction in B.Sc. in Engineering of

[Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya.]

the standard of the London University. I invite the Honourable the Railway Member and Members of the Board to examine our courses and the system under which we train these engineers. We admit students who have passed the intermediate examination in science, with mathematics, physics and chemistry of one of the Indian Universities. We admit generally only first class and second class students; students who have passed in the third division very seldom find admission. Students have to go through a four years' course regularly in the College after having passed the intermediate examination in science. At the end of the fourth year, when they have passed the final examination, they are required to undergo practical training for another year at some workshop. Training in workshops has to be gone through throughout the first four years also, alternating with lectures in classes; and at the end of the examination, after four years, the students get their degree or diploma as the case may be. As I have submitted, the standard of our examination for a degree is equal to that of the London University for the degree of B.Sc. in Engineering. Now, this Engineering College attracts students from all parts of India. I invite the Honourable the Railway Member to honour the University by a visit and to be pleased to send the best engineers to examine the institution and its courses, and the conditions under which the students are brought up. The Government of India were pleased to send three engineers at one time to visit the institution; I think that was in 1925, and I believe that the report which they submitted to the Government of India was favourable to the institution. Sir Clement Hindley also was pleased to visit the institution later on and he too was favourably impressed as he wrote to me. Sir, the Government of India give us a grant of Ra. 1½ lakh a year at present, and they have recommended to the Standing Finance Committee that the grant should be raised to three lakhs per annum. As I have said before, we attract students to the University from all parts of India—from the North-West Frontier Province, from the Punjab in large numbers, from Bengal, from Assam, from the United Provinces, from the Central Provinces, from Bombay, from Madras, from Travancore, from Mysore—and other Indian States. There is very keen competition for admission and we have to reject about 600 to 700 students every year; but we maintain a high standard, and all that I ask for is that the Honourable the Railway Member and the Railway Board will be good enough to send some competent men to report upon the system that we have adopted and upon the whole scheme of our instruction. If they find that the scheme produces mechanical engineers of the degree of qualifications they have laid down, I should expect that there will be more mechanical engineers chosen from among the students who pass from the Benares University. If our courses are deficient in any respect, we shall be very glad to receive advice as to the improvements needed. We are an all-India institution, and we shall be very glad to further co-operate with the Railway Board and the Government in training engineering students for the purpose of employment on our railways. I may also say that the University is open to students of every race and creed—to Europeans, Anglo-Indians and students of all classes and creeds. I have ventured to mention these facts in order that an inquiry may be made—I do not ask straight off that the Honourable the Railway Member should promise that he will accept more of our candidates—I do not ask for that—I only ask for an examination of the question so that full advantage may be taken of the Engineering College

of the Benares Hindu University to train mechanical as well as electrical engineers for employment in the Superior Revenue establishment of State Railways.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Sir, I am grateful to the Honourable Pandit for bringing forward the point which he has just mentioned. I know he will not expect me to give a final answer immediately because he is well aware that that is not exactly my side of the Railway Board's work. But I take it that what he wishes is that the degree or diploma, or whatever it may be, of the Benares University

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya: We confer degrees and we grant diplomas also.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: At any rate the passing of the courses in the Benares University should entitle a person to become a candidate for these more technical railway services.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya: I want the training there imparted to students of mechanical engineering to be recognised as training which you want to be imparted. I desire the question to be examined from that point of view. The B.Sc. in Engineering of our University is recognised in the case of candidates for electrical engineering and they have been selected by the Public Services Commission in certain instances.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I think I can immediately promise the Honourable Member that we will look into the question. I may say that Sir Clement Hindley, after a visit there with my Honourable friend, spoke to me in very high terms of the training at the Benares University. I am a little doubtful of the possibility of utilising the curriculum of the Benares University for the mechanical engineering department, because, under our present regulations for taking in these special class apprentices, we want them to come to us at 19 years of age; and, if I correctly gathered what Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya said, most of these boys will not have finished their training at the Benares University till well after that age. However, Sir, I will look into that point too; it merely occurred to me as a possible difficulty while the Honourable Member was speaking.

I will now turn to the very interesting remarks of my friend, Mr. Chatterjee. I think he particularly wished to know how we were going to look after these young apprentices who are going to be taken into the mechanical engineering department during their prolonged period of training. After they are selected, these apprentices are required to undergo practical and theoretical training in a railway workshop for the first three years of their apprenticeship. They receive, of course, a stipend during that period. I think that all the apprentices who are now taken in are going to the Jamalpur Workshops. I am not quite sure, but at any rate I believe that to be our present intention. If I am correct there, they will all be together, and they will, of course, be looked after by the officers in charge of the workshops in whose hands their training will be. After they have successfully passed an examination at the termination of the three years' period, they will be sent to an engineering college that will be selected by the Government of India, and I think we may take it for granted that they will be properly looked after, not only in their technical training, but in other ways, at any engineering college that may be so selected. That is

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

for the apprentices for posts of mechanical engineers. The apprentices for the Transportation, Power Department will be transferred immediately to the running department of State Railways for two years, attending from time to time courses at the college at Dehra Dun. In both cases I think that it may be assumed that the boys will be well looked after. They will be either put under the officers under whom they may subsequently serve when their apprenticeship period is over, or they will be in the College at Dehra Dun.

The Revd. J. C. Chatterjee: May I ask if the Honourable Member can give me an assurance that these boys will not be sent singly or in twos to different workshops?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I attempted to get information on that point while the Honourable Member was speaking, but I am afraid I cannot give a definite assurance, I believe, however, that that is so, that is, I understand that we shall probably send them all to the Jamalpur Workshops on the East Indian Railway, so that they will all be together. I will however have the point looked up, and send the Honourable Member information on it. And I quite see the advantage, if possible, of keeping them all together. Afterwards they go for a period of three years to the United Kingdom. There the arrangements will be made for us by the High Commissioner, and he selects the Workshops to which they are sent. The actual workshops to which they go depend, to a considerable extent, on whether, when they come out again into the services, they propose to take up mechanical engineering proper or to go into the Transportation, Power Department, that is to say, the locomotive side. I am afraid I do not know much about the arrangements made to look after these boys when they are apprenticed to these big shops in England; but by that time they will be considerably older and presumably better able to look after themselves.

My Honourable friend Mr. Das appeared to think that the Railway Board had been acting in a half-hearted manner in regard to these proposals for getting Indians into these technical services, and also, I gathered, into the traffic services. I do suggest to the House that this is not a charge which can fairly be made against the Railway Board. From the time that we accepted the proposals which were made by the Lee Commission that we should, as quickly as possible, institute methods of training so as to work up to 75 per cent. Indianization, the time of all Members of the Railway Board has been continuously occupied with working out these schemes for our training schools. I have got here the details, and I could describe to the House the details of all the various schemes which we have worked out, but I do not really think it is necessary, because they have all been published broadcast and they can be found in our Administration Reports. They can certainly be found in papers in the Library, and as the House is aware, the proportion of Indians taken into the services has been steadily rising year by year. The object we had in view was not only to secure Indian boys as recruits for the railway services but to secure that, when they were taken in as recruits, they did not compare unfavourably with the Englishmen who had come into the railways before. And I think, from our experience so far, there is reason to hope that that object is being attained.

The Honourable Member, I think, suggested that we should give training to our candidates in America and Germany rather than in India or by sending them to the United Kingdom

Mr. B. Das: I am afraid the Honourable Member has misunderstood me. What I said was that you should adopt in your Railway Institutes and workshops the same methods of training which are prevailing today in Germany and America on their systems of railways and train Indian boys to be railway engineers and foremen in a proper railway atmosphere.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I am sorry, Sir; I am afraid, I do not know myself what the American system of training is. If the Honourable Member will let me have full details of the training, I will have them examined and see whether anything of that kind had better be started in this country.

Mr. B. Das: I am surprised that you have no experience of the system of training that is prevalent on American and German railways.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: At the moment the training which we do give appears to me to be of a distinctly practical nature. Take for instance the railway engineers. We take the candidates in after selection by the Public Services Commission, and we give the young engineers immediately nine months' training in open line maintenance, survey and construction work. We also give them about three months' training in transportation work, because, throughout their professional life, they will have to deal with problems which are closely connected with transportation. Take the transportation or traffic man; we provide him, during his three years, with training of a strictly practical nature. He spends some months on guard's duties, attends lectures on locomotives and various things of that kind. He actually works for months as a guard. He then goes up to the Dehra Dun College to get more technical knowledge, and subsequently holds responsible charge as an assistant station master. He then

^{4 P.M.} has a further course at the Railway Staff College, and afterwards proceeds to carry out other duties, so that his whole time is parcelled out, doing actually those duties the performance of which in his future career he will have to supervise. I suggest to the House that that method of training is one which, on the face of it, is likely to be successful, and until we have experience to say that it has not been successful, I contend that the present method is one which we should continue to follow. Personally, my opinion is that a man learns his work best by doing it.

Mr. President: The question is:

"That the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 1,001."

The motion was negatived.

- (1) *Recruitment of staff to Railway Accounting, (2) Recruitment of the Establishment of the Railway Board through Examination under the Public Services Commission.*

(Mr. B. Das then got up to speak.)

Mr. President: How long is the Honourable Member going to take?

Mr. B. Das: A few minutes, only, Sir. I propose to combine motions 14 and 15 together so as to save the time of the House. I move, Sir:

"That the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 1,001."

and

"That the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 1,001."

[Mr. B. Das.]

Now, with regard to recruitment of staff to railway accounting, we had a discussion last Simla session, and the Honourable the Financial Commissioner for Railways, Mr. Parsons, gave us an assurance that by April he would be able to devise rules for the recruitment of superior officers into the railway accounts offices.

As regards recruitment of subordinate staff in the accounting department, he said he would devise such means so that candidates from every province could come and appear for that examination. In connection with that we had some questions the other day, and my friend Mr. Neogy tried to bring to the notice of the House that at present there is a chance of jobbery going on in the recruitment of staff for the Accounts offices and that more Anglo-Indians are getting in than necessary. If a system of examination were introduced and if people were taken on on merits, no such jobbery would happen.

With regard to recruitment from every province, I would suggest that the Railway Board should hold an examination in every province. If the examination for Accounting is held only at Calcutta and Delhi, then people from my province, Bihar and Orissa and other distant provinces, cannot come and appear, and though there are at times more candidates from one province, provinces less advanced have no chance of getting into the share of posts in the Railway services unless they are recruited by reservation of appointments to every province and that is a point to which I want again to draw the attention of the Honourable the Railway Member.

Then Mr. Parsons told us last September, that he would give 33 per cent. to different communities. I do not want it to be reserved for communities, but there should be a fair quota allotted to every province and candidates should be examined and recruited on that basis. Otherwise, if the examinations are held in Delhi, you will not be able to get candidates from all provinces, and that is the reason why now there are provinces from which no candidates are recruited to the Railway Accounts service.

As regards the next point, the Railway Board is the only Department in the Government of India which does not get its staff through the former Staff Selection Board or through the Public Services Commission. When the Government of India have established a Public Services Commission, why should not the Railway Board, which is a branch of the Central Government and situated at the headquarters of the Government of India—why should not the staff of the Railway Board the superior and the subordinate staff of the Railway Board be recruited through the Public Services Commission? Why should the Railway Board have their own departmental recruitment, their own system of jobbery, their own system of recruitment? In the case of recruitment by the Staff Selection Board, that is at present controlled by the Public Services Commission, there are certain age limits, and certain examinations. But as far as I understand the recruitment to the Railway Board establishment, there is no such examination system and it is left to the whims of one or two officers to do whatever they like. So, there is every likelihood of jobbery and undue patronage, and as we have the Public Services Commission, I would say that it is the right of the Public Services Commission to recruit every superior and subordinate

officer of the Railway Board. Of course, any remarks do not apply to those officers who are recruited by Agents. My suggestion is that all officers and subordinate and industrial staff who are recruited by the Railway Board should be recruited through the Public Services Commission.

Mr. Janmadas M. Mehta: Sir, I should like to make a few observations on the recruitment to the railway accounts service. This question was discussed at length last September session at Simla, when it was decided to have a separate railway accounts service. The magnitude of this service will be evident from the fact that annually it is going to cost between Rs. 50 to 60 lakhs, and there is a strength of 4,520 members in the subordinate staff. There was an endless number of complaints about favouritism and racial discrimination and supersession, under the old system. The Committee was unwilling to adopt the rules of recruitment proposed by the Financial Commissioner without going into them themselves and so amending them that any play of personal factor might become impossible. On that understanding the Standing Finance Committee adopted the memorandum of the Financial Commissioner, leaving the question of recruitment and the rules about recruitment to the railway accounts service to be separately discussed by the Standing Finance Committee. In the meantime it was understood that the accounts staff in the different railway administrations were to be allowed to have the right of representing their points of view as to what should be the rules of recruitment. When the Committee met in Delhi on the 29th November last, I received certain suggestions from some of the subordinate staff of the East Indian Railway as to how they would like the rules to be framed, and I suggested to the Finance Committee that it was desirable that the employees in the accounts service should be given a chance of suggesting their own recruitment rules in order that we might set a contented and efficient accounts service. In fact, that was the understanding on which we allowed this memorandum to be passed in September last. To my great surprise I was told that the Railway Board could not wait any longer, and if the railway employees wanted to send any representations, it was open to them to do so for two months, and none having been received the Railway Board could not delay the question any more. These rules were then considered, but not improved, for, instead of the play of personal factor being made impossible, the draft rules were so modified that it is more than doubtful whether the complaint about favouritism and discrimination will not grow in volume and intensity as soon as recruitment to this railway accounting service begins. At page 90 of the Proceedings of the Standing Finance Committee held on the 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th September, 1928, Volume I, No. 3, we find that one of the qualifications for those who wanted to be recruited to the railway accounting service was that, "no one who has not passed at least the matriculation or an equivalent examination, will be permitted to appear for the entrance examination." That meant that when the Department held its competitive examination for recruitment purposes, a certain minimum qualification of education would be laid down for those who stood as candidates. That at least provided a minimum education test for the candidates for entering this railway accounts service and to that extent the play of personal factor would have been ruled out. The House will, however, be astonished to know that this minimum educational test was removed, and now the rules stand without

[Mr. Jannadas M. Mehta.]

that test. This is how my Honourable friend, the Financial Commissioner, explains the removal of this test. He says that "the rules proposed to be issued for recruitment slightly differed from the rules in annexure D." (that is the rules I have read), "that there was no intention at present of restricting the number of candidates (all to the good) for the examination, nor was it proposed to lay down any minimum educational qualification." The argument in last September was that, in the absence of any minimum educational test for intending candidates, there would be a probability of discrimination in the recruitment of the staff of the accounts service, and we got the assurance that the rules would be so framed that any such discrimination would be impossible. Instead, the only safeguard against this favouritism or discrimination, namely, a minimum educational test, has been done away with and the result can only be favouritism. I fought in the Standing Finance Committee against this reactionary alteration, but Sir Frederic Gauntlett, Mr. Hayman and the Financial Commissioner all opposed my suggestion that this test should be retained. Now, the removal of the matriculation examination or another minimum educational test will simply mean that anybody can appear for the examination, whether he has any educational qualifications or not, and, as the Department themselves will conduct the so-called competitive examination—there is no Public Services Commission in charge of this examination,—the fear is that the test was removed solely for the purpose of making it possible for the Anglo-Indian candidates to stand for examination without any educational test. Sir, it is well known that the Anglo-Indian boy with his many qualifications—a very good boy—is not very prone to pass examinations. He is very capable in many respects, but has not a knack of getting through an educational test. Owing to the removal of this only safeguard 4,520 posts in the railway accounts service will be the sport of official and private pressure, and the examination will become merely a farce. It will virtually become a departmental examination without a minimum educational test. I am sorry that the Financial Commissioner did not stick to the original draft rules and he will excuse me when I say that the public will draw the only conclusion that the removal of the educational test was done away with with the object of preserving racial discrimination in the railway accounts service. There is another thing—the constant transfers—those recruited or appointed to one branch of the service are not always retained in that branch. The railway accounts officers will not be continued in the railway accounts service only. They can always look forward to rising to jobs outside the railway accounts, which means that their life-long experience of railway accounts may be lost to the railway accounts service just when it is becoming most useful. For instance these superior officers can rise even to the post of a Member of the Railway Board. Now, the Railway Board Membership has nothing to do with the railway accounts service, and yet, before the rules are even promulgated, and before the railway accounts service is even launched (it was only a few weeks ago), we have the painful experience that the head of the Department has been removed or is threatened to be removed to another service, namely, to the Railway Board, to the great loss of the railway accounts service, where his experience and knowledge and ability would have been of immense benefit to the railway accounts service. The Acworth Committee specially warned the Railway Board and the

Government of India against this practice of constant transfers. People should not be jumped from one job to another, purely for reasons of seniority and the only test should be the efficiency of the railway service as a whole. We have today a most useful officer at the head of the accounts service. Tomorrow he may be transferred to some other job simply because he is a senior. This is being done, in spite of the warning of the Acworth Committee, and in spite of the dictates of commonsense. Sir, I therefore feel there is full justification for the cut proposed by my Honourable friend Mr. B. Das.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: Sir, I do not think that many Members who have listened to the speech of Mr. Jamnadas Mehta can have gathered from what he has said that the examination for entrance into the subordinate establishment of the railway accounts service is a purely competitive examination. He talked of a departmental examination, but it is a purely competitive examination, and the people who get in through it will be those who obtain the largest number of marks in the examination, subject to the usual regulations in regard to communal representation. Now I ask how a purely competitive examination can give rise to jobbery in any form. The position is simply this. In Simla we were not sure that we could hold an open competitive examination without being flooded out with applicants to sit at that examination. But I was particularly anxious that neither I, nor any of the officers under me, should have the unpleasant task of selecting who should and who should not be allowed to sit at the examination. We therefore went into the matter after the Simla session; and we came to the conclusion that for the time being at any rate we could make arrangements so that anybody who wished to appear at the competitive examination for posts of clerks in the railway accounts service could do so. We therefore decided that it was not necessary to impose a restriction on the persons who could appear at the examination. Actually the examination will be held at five centres, Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Lahore and Delhi, and my Honourable friend Mr. Jamnadas Mehta's strictures about the possibility of collusion among the examiners seem to me to be extraordinarily wide of the mark. The second point that Mr. Jamnadas Mehta raised has really very little to do with recruitment to the railway accounts service. His objection is to persons already in that service being transferred to other posts. I presume therefore that he would raise an equal objection to the appointment as Agent of one of our most distinguished Agents at present, Sir E. Jackson, who had been all his life an accounts man. Another of the recent Agents, on the Bengal Nagpur Railway, was also an accounts man. If that is his ground, I can only say that personally I do not agree with him. I think that the possibility of promotion by merit to appointments of that kind outside the ordinary line is a great incentive to mere coming into a service, and therefore tends to attract a better class of recruit to that service than if such outside promotions were not feasible.

The Honourable the Mover wanted an assurance that our rules were now such that there is no loophole left for patronage. I am glad to assure him that that is the case. The person who suffered most when we did not have these rules was myself, because I was being continually pestered by various friends to obtain appointments for boys in whom they were

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

interested; and for the last two or three months I have been able to give an invariable reply that there is not a single post to which, under the rules, which I myself have laid down, I can conceivably appoint anybody. I am quite prepared to give my Honourable friend a copy of the rules.

I have explained that entry into the subordinate service is by open competitive examination. With regard to the superior officers, except where the new service has been formed by the transfer of men from the Indian Audit and Accounts Service, the recruitment will be carried out for us by the Public Services Commission as part of the examination which they hold for the Indian Civil Service, the Indian Audit and Accounts Service, the Military Accounts Department and the Customs Service.

Mr. B. Das: The Honourable Member has given no reply about the recruitment of the establishment of the Railway Board through the Public Services Commission.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I am sorry I forgot that point. The Railway Board mostly recruits its subordinate staff, especially in the technical branches, from men already in railway service though we occasionally take men from the Audit Department or from the Finance Department. There are a few other appointments of a purely clerical nature, which have, in the past, not been filled on any regular system. I can give the Honourable Member the assurance that these appointments will, in future, be filled, as are the appointments in other secretarial departments, through the Public Services Commission.

Mr. President: The question is that the demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 1,001.

The motion was negatived.

Mr. President: Mr. B. Das. Are you going to be very long?

Mr. B. Das: Yes, Sir, it is a very important subject.

Mr. President: The House stands adjourned till tomorrow morning at Eleven O'Clock.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Wednesday, the 27th February, 1929.