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SECOND COUNCIL OF STATE, 1926



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CONTENTS.

	PAGES.
MONDAY, 8TH FEBRUARY, 1926—	
Members Sworn	1—2
Bills passed by the Legislative Assembly—Laid on the Table ...	2
TUESDAY, 9TH FEBRUARY, 1926—	
Inauguration of the Second Council of State	3—8
WEDNESDAY, 10TH FEBRUARY, 1926—	
Member Sworn	9
Questions and Answers	10—29
Welcome to Members by the Honourable the President	29—30
Messages from His Excellency the Governor General <i>re—</i>	
(1) Panel of Chairmen	30
(2) Presentation and Discussion of the Railway Budget	30
Committee on Petitions	31
Appointment of the Honourable Mr. K. C. Roy to the Library Committee.	31
Governor General's Assent to Bills	31
Bills passed by the Legislative Assembly—Laid on the Table ...	32
Election of a Panel for the Standing Committee on Emigration ...	32
Resolution <i>re</i> Ratification of the Draft Convention of the International Labour Conference concerning Workmen's Compensation for Occupational Diseases—Adopted.	32—37
Resolution <i>re</i> Continuation of the Imposition of a Customs Duty on Lac—Adopted.	37—41
Statement of Business	41—42
MONDAY, 15TH FEBRUARY, 1926—	
Members Sworn	42
Questions and Answers	43—62
Election to the panel of the Standing Committee on Emigration ...	62
Bills passed by the Legislative Assembly—Laid on the Table ...	62
Resolution <i>re</i> the Royal Commission on Agriculture—Adopted ...	62—81
Resolution <i>re</i> Reduction of the travelling and daily allowances of the Members of the Council of State—Discussion postponed <i>sine die</i> .	81—90
Statement of Business	90
TUESDAY, 16TH FEBRUARY, 1926—	
Member Sworn	103
Messages from His Excellency the Governor General	103
Bill passed by the Legislative Assembly—Laid on the Table ...	104
Small Cause Courts (Attachment of Immoveable Property) Bill—Passed.	104—105
Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill—Passed	105
Government Trading Taxation Bill—Passed	106
Guardians and Wards (Amendment) Bill—Passed	106—107
Indian Lunacy (Amendment) Bill—Passed	107—108
WEDNESDAY, 17TH FEBRUARY, 1926—	
Questions and Answers	109—111

	PAGES.
WEDNESDAY, 17TH FEBRUARY, 1926—contd.	
Private Notice Questions and Answers	111—113
Statement regarding Negotiations with the Union Government of South Africa.	113—115
Resolution <i>re</i> Leader of the Indian Delegation to the League of Nations—Adopted.	115—132
Resolution <i>re</i> Formation of a separate Kannada Province—Negatived	132—144
THURSDAY, 18TH FEBRUARY, 1926—	
Member Sworn	145
Bills passed by the Legislative Assembly—Laid on the Table ..	145
The Railway Budget for 1926-27	145—161
Elections to the Panel for the Standing Committees on Emigration ...	162
Resolution <i>re</i> Appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the working of the Indian Constitution—Negatived.	162—215
Election of Panels for Standing Committees	215
SATURDAY, 20TH FEBRUARY, 1926—	
Questions and Answers	217—249
Nominations to the Panels for Standing Committees	220
Bills passed by the Legislative Assembly—Laid on the Table ...	220
General discussion of the Railway Budget	220—254
Statement of Business	254
MONDAY, 22ND FEBRUARY, 1926—	
Members Sworn	255
Statement laid on the Table	255—257
Indian Medical Education Bill—Introduced	258
Election of a Panel for the Central Advisory Council for Railways ...	259
TUESDAY, 23RD FEBRUARY, 1926—	
Questions and Answers	261—262
Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment) Bill—Passed	262
Indian Naturalization Bill—Passed	263—265
Steel Industry (Amendment) Bill—Passed	265—268
Insolvency (Amendment) Bill—Passed	268—269
Code of Criminal Procedure (Second Amendment) Bill—Passed ...	269—284
Madras Civil Courts (Amendment) Bill—Passed as amended ...	285—286
Resolution <i>re</i> Grant of Supplementary Assistance to the Tin-plate Industry—Adopted.	286—290
Nominations to the Panel for the Central Advisory Council for Railways.	290—291
THURSDAY, 25TH FEBRUARY, 1926—	
Questions and Answers	293—296
Legal Practitioners (Amendment) Bill—Passed as amended ...	296—297
Promissory Notes Stamp Bill—Passed	297—298
Indian Trade Unions Bill—Passed as amended	298—304
Election of a Panel for the Central Advisory Council for Railways ...	305
Nominations to the Panels for Standing Advisory Committees ...	305—306
MONDAY, 1ST MARCH, 1926—	
Questions and Answers	307—316
Result of the Election to the Central Advisory Council for Railways ...	317

MONDAY, 1ST MARCH, 1926—*contd.*

Election to the Advisory Publicity Committee of Messrs. Ramadas Pantulu and Khaparde.	317
Elections to the Panels of Departmental Standing Committees	317
General Budget for 1926-27	317-327

TUESDAY, 2ND MARCH, 1926—

Result of the Elections for the Panels of the Standing Departmental Committees.	329
Contempt of Courts Bill—Passed	330-341
Indian Medical Education Bill—Motion to circulate—Adopted	341-343
Photographic group of the Members of the Council of State	343

WEDNESDAY, 3RD MARCH, 1926—

Resolution <i>re</i> Import Duty on Artificial Ghee—Withdrawn	345-359
Indian Registration (Amendment) Bill—Passed	359

SATURDAY, 6TH MARCH, 1926—

Questions and Answers	361-373
General Discussion of the Budget (Part II)	373-422
Statement of Business	422

MONDAY, 8TH MARCH, 1926—

Questions and Answers	423-424
Resolution <i>re</i> Guarantee of Appointments on State Railways to qualified students of the Madagan Engineering College, Lahore, etc.—Negatived.	424-438
Resolution <i>re</i> Privileges and Status of Members of the Council of State—Adopted.	438-442

WEDNESDAY, 10TH MARCH, 1926—

Questions and Answers	443-450
Resolution <i>re</i> Qualifications of Assistant Commissioners of Income-tax—Withdrawn by leave of the Council.	451-458
Resolution <i>re</i> Banking Legislation—Discussion adjourned	458-466

MONDAY, 15TH MARCH, 1926—

Questions and Answers	467-471
Resolution <i>re</i> Salaries of the two Members of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council with Indian Experience—Adopted as amended.	471-488
Resolution <i>re</i> Creation of a self-governing Tamil-speaking Province—Discussion adjourned.	489-505

TUESDAY, 16TH MARCH, 1926—

Statement laid on the Table	507-543
Bills passed by the Legislative Assembly—Laid on the Table	544
Resolution <i>re</i> Reduction of the Exports of Opium—Adopted	544-547
Resolution <i>re</i> Creation of a self-governing Tamil-speaking Province—Negatived.	548-562
Statement of Business	562

WEDNESDAY, 17TH MARCH, 1926—

Questions and Answers	563
Bill passed by the Legislative Assembly—Laid on the table	564
Indian Succession (Amendment) Bill—Introduced ✓	564-565
Message of Gratitude from the Council of State to Their Excellencies the Earl and Countess of Reading—Motion adopted	565-579

FRIDAY, 19TH MARCH, 1926—

Members Sworn ...	...	...	...	...	...	581
Message from His Excellency the Governor General ...	...	...	...	...	...	581
Bills passed by the Legislative Assembly—Laid on the Table ...	...	...	...	...	...	581—582
Message from the Legislative Assembly ...	...	...	...	...	...	582
Indian Tariff (Amendment) Bill—Passed ...	...	...	...	...	...	582—583
Madras Civil Courts (Second Amendment) Bill—Passed ...	...	...	...	...	...	583—584

MONDAY, 22ND MARCH, 1926—

Members Sworn ...	...	...	...	...	...	585
Question and Answer ...	...	...	...	...	...	585
Message from H. E. the Governor General ...	...	...	...	...	...	585—586
Indian Finance Bill—Passed ...	...	...	...	...	...	586—611
Cotton Industry (Statistics) Bill—Passed ...	...	...	...	...	...	611—612
Legal Practitioners (Fees) Bill—Passed ...	...	...	...	...	...	612—613
Code of Civil Procedure (Second Amendment) Bill—Passed ...	...	...	...	...	...	613
Delhi Joint Water Board Bill—Passed ...	...	...	...	...	...	613—614
Indian Income-tax (Amendment) Bill—Passed ...	...	...	...	...	...	614—630
Indian Divorce (Amendment) Bill—Passed ✓...	...	...	...	...	...	630—632
Indian Factories (Amendment) Bill—Passed ...	...	...	...	...	...	632
Transfer of Property (Amendment) Bill—Passed ...	...	...	...	...	...	632

TUESDAY, 23RD MARCH, 1926—

Questions and Answers ...	...	...	...	...	...	635—641
Resolution <i>re</i> Emigration of Indian Unskilled Labourers to British Guiana—Adopted.	...	...	...	...	...	641—643
Indian Succession (Amendment) Bill—Passed as amended ✓...	...	...	...	...	...	643—644

THURSDAY, 25TH MARCH, 1926—

Farewell speech delivered to the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly by His Excellency the Viceroy.	645—649
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COUNCIL OF STATE

Saturday, 20th February, 1926.

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

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

ACTION TAKEN ON THE RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE COUNCIL OF STATE ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MAJORITY REPORT OF THE REFORMS INQUIRY COMMITTEE.

100. THE HONOURABLE MR. K. C. ROY: Will the Government be pleased to state what action, if any, has been taken on the Resolution passed by the Council of State on the recommendations of the majority report of the Reforms Inquiry Committee on the 11th September, 1925?

THE HONOURABLE MR. J. CRERAR: Recommendations Nos. 6 and 14 are pending before the Legislative Assembly.

Recommendations Nos. 12, 13 and 24 (c) have already been given effect to.

On other recommendations, Local Governments have been consulted and their replies have been received and are receiving due attention. In the case of certain recommendations, the Government of India have made their final proposals to the Secretary of State and his decision is awaited.

THE HONOURABLE MR. K. C. ROY: Is the Honourable the Home Secretary in a position to state whether His Majesty's Government will be able to undertake legislation on the majority report of the Reforms Committee this summer?

THE HONOURABLE MR. J. CRERAR: I regret that I am not in a position to make a statement on that point.

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ON THE RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE COUNCIL OF STATE ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MAJORITY REPORT OF THE REFORMS INQUIRY COMMITTEE.

101. THE HONOURABLE MR. K. C. ROY: Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table any correspondence that passed between them and the Secretary of State on that Resolution of the 11th September last?

THE HONOURABLE MR. J. CRERAR: Government regret they are unable to accede to the request of the Honourable Member.

**ACTION TAKEN ON THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE INDIAN LEGISLATURE
ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MAJORITY REPORT OF THE
REFORMS INQUIRY COMMITTEE.**

102. **THE HONOURABLE MR. K. C. ROY:** With reference to the speech of His Excellency the Viceroy to the Council of State on the 17th September last, when he said: "The Resolution on Reforms proposed by the Government and accepted by this Chamber will be duly considered by my Government, together with the amendment carried by the Legislative Assembly. The conclusions of the Indian Legislature must be considered as a whole," will Government be pleased to state what action, if any, has been taken to give effect to that assurance?

THE HONOURABLE MR. J. CRERAR: As the Honourable Member will have observed from the statement made by the Honourable the Home Member on Thursday, the Government of India, having carefully considered the result of the debates in both Chambers, have decided to adhere to the terms of the Resolution accepted by this Council.

INCREASE OF THE GRANT TO THE BOSE RESEARCH INSTITUTE, CALCUTTA.

103. **THE HONOURABLE MR. K. C. ROY:** Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table all correspondence, including the report of Mr. Littlehailes, relative to the increase of the grant made to the Bose Research Institute, Calcutta?

THE HONOURABLE SIR MUHAMMAD HABIBULLAH: Government are unable to accede to the request, but the attention of the Honourable Member is invited to pages 189-190 (Volume V—No. 4) of the proceedings of the meeting of the Standing Finance Committee held on the 12th January, 1926, where a summary of the correspondence will be found.

THE HONOURABLE MR. V. RAMADAS PANTULU: Is it a fact that the Government of India consider Mr. Littlehailes' deputation sufficient authority to report upon the Bose Institute which attracted the notice and secured the approbation of European scientific authorities?

THE HONOURABLE SIR MUHAMMAD HABIBULLAH: He was their educational adviser, and the Government of India considered him a sufficient authority to investigate into the matter.

**DEPUTATION OF MR. LITTLEHAILES TO INSPECT THE BOSE RESEARCH
INSTITUTE, CALCUTTA.**

104. **THE HONOURABLE MR. K. C. ROY:** Will the Government be pleased to state whether Sir J. C. Bose was consulted as to the deputation of Mr. Littlehailes to inspect the Institute and whether he agreed to it?

THE HONOURABLE SIR MUHAMMAD HABIBULLAH: The answer is in the affirmative.

THE HONOURABLE MR. K. C. ROY: Is the Honourable Member aware that a considerable amount of dissatisfaction exists because there is no official scientific body to report upon an institute of this sort, and will the Honourable Member consider the advisability of revising the old board of scientific advice?

THE HONOURABLE SIR MUHAMMAD HABIBULLAH: As regards the former part of the question, I do not think, Sir, I am aware of it. As regards the latter part, I will note the suggestion.

GRIEVANCES OF POSTMASTERS.

105. THE HONOURABLE MR. G. S. KHAPARDE: (a) With reference to No. 15-P. T., of 5th December, 1925, from the Secretary to the Government of India to the Honourable Mr. Chandradhar Barooah of Jorhat, Assam, will the Government be pleased to state whether any decision has been reached with regard to the grievances of Postmasters?

(b) If the answer to (a) be in the affirmative, will the Government be pleased to state what the decision is?

THE HONOURABLE MR. A. H. LEY: A decision has not yet been reached. The points raised by the Honourable Mr. Barooah are being examined by the Director General, who expects shortly to forward his views to the Government of India.

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR TRAINING IN THE LEATHER INDUSTRY.

106. THE HONOURABLE RAO SAHIB DR. U. RAMA RAO: Will the Government of India be pleased to state:

- (i) how many students have since the end of the war been sent to England on Government scholarships for qualifying themselves in the leather industry;
- (ii) whether one of the terms of the scholarship is that qualified students should return to India so that their expert knowledge may be utilized in this country;
- (iii) how many have since qualified themselves in that industry and what was the amount spent on each;
- (iv) whether all the qualified men in the leather industry are employed either under Government or private companies;
- (v) if not, what steps have the Government of India taken to provide such of them as are yet unemployed with suitable appointments;
- (vi) whether students are still being sent annually to England on Government scholarships for qualifying themselves in the leather industry and, if so, how many every year; and
- (vii) if it is not possible to provide all the trained men in the leather industry with suitable employment in this country, whether the Government of India will consider the desirability of putting a stop to further recruitment at Government expense?

THE HONOURABLE MR. A. H. LEY: (i) I may remind the Honourable Member that the State Technical Scholarships were provincialised with effect from 1918. The Government of India can only sanction such scholarships from central revenues where the technical education relates to a central subject or where a scholarship is granted to students residing in areas under the minor Local Governments. No scholarship for training in the leather industry has been awarded by the Government of India since the war. The remaining parts of the question do not therefore arise, so far as the Government of India are concerned.

NOMINATIONS TO THE PANELS FOR STANDING COMMITTEES.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: With reference to the motion adopted by the Council on Thursday last, I have to announce to the House that nominations to the panels for the Standing Committees to advise on subjects in the Home Department, the Department of Commerce, the Department of Education, Health and Lands, and the Department of Industries and Labour will be received by the Secretary up till 12 noon on Thursday next, and that, in the event of an election being necessary, the election will be held on Monday, the 1st March.

BILLS PASSED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY LAID ON THE TABLE.

THE SECRETARY OF THE COUNCIL: Sir, in accordance with Rule 25 of the Indian Legislative Rules, I lay on the table copies of a Bill further to amend the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908; a Bill further to amend the Legal Practitioners Act, 1879; a Bill to provide for the validation of certain promissory notes; and a Bill further to amend the Indian Registration Act, 1908, which Bills were passed by the Legislative Assembly at its meetings held on the 18th and 19th February, 1926.

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE RAILWAY BUDGET.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: The Council will now proceed to the first stage, that is the general discussion of the Budget, Part I.

THE HONOURABLE MR J. W. A. BELL (Bengal Chamber of Commerce): Sir, in submitting the Railway Budget to this House on Thursday my friend, the Honourable Sir Clement Hindley, asked for the same consideration in criticism as had been shown by the previous Council of State. I have no doubt that, when he made that request, my Honourable friend was fairly certain, both in view of the satisfactory nature of the statement which he was about to put before the House, and in view of his knowledge of the Members of this Council, that it was unlikely that there would be any criticism, unless criticism of a friendly nature. But my Honourable friend is a cautious man and he was taking no risks. He therefore arranged matters so that it was very unlikely that there would be any serious criticism at all. He handed us the Budget documents, 19 in number, on Thursday, and it was announced that the general discussion would take place to-day. On Thursday afternoon this House sat until six o'clock, although I must admit that that was a contingency which my Honourable friend may not have anticipated. But at any rate we had to sit till six o'clock, and that means that there was only left one day in which to study these nineteen volumes containing as they do masses of statistics and figures. I do not think it is possible for any one in the course of that part of one day which it is possible to devote to their study, to grasp the meaning of all these figures and all these statistics. I hope that in future Government may find it possible to allow a longer period to elapse between the time in which the Railway Budget is presented and the date on which it is discussed.

But even a cursory examination of the Budget makes it clear that the country has reason to be well satisfied with the position of the Railways and with the manner in which they are administered.

I need hardly refer to the question of the separation of the Railway finances from the general finances of the country. The advantages are so obvious that they practically require no explanation. And now that these advantages have been recognised, even by those who were very strongly opposed to any change, the general feeling seems to be one of surprise that the method now in force was not adopted at an earlier date.

It is not possible in the time at my disposal to deal with all the points raised in my Honourable friend's speech, and I shall therefore confine myself to one or two.

I note with satisfaction, not only the substantial balance of earnings over disbursements, but also that particular attention has been paid to the building up of Reserves and a Depreciation Fund. This is really one of the secrets of successful commercial management. There are many commercial concerns, both in India and at Home, which in this period of trade depression, would have ceased to exist, had it not been that, when times were better and profits were being earned, they rigorously wrote down their assets and built up substantial reserve funds.

The country will bear with pleasure of the proposed reductions in passenger fares and goods rates. These reductions will be for the benefit of the country and for the benefit of the people, and I hope that it will be possible for the Railway Board to maintain them. At the same time, I trust that the Railway Board will not allow themselves, by any pressure from any source, to be diverted from their policy of building up substantial Reserve and Depreciation Funds to carry them over when times are less favourable. Reductions in fares and rates are very important, but they are not so important as the building up of the Railways of the country on a sound and unassailable financial basis.

I was glad to hear from my Honourable friend's speech that the Railway Board were keeping before them the recommendations of the Coal Committee with regard to a further rebate on export coal, and, subject to what I have said with regard to Depreciation and Reserves, I trust that it will be possible for the Railway Board to grant this assistance to the coal industry of India which is at the present time passing through a period of acute depression. It will be money well spent, because a flourishing coal industry will be a source of great profit to the Railways.

With regard to capital expenditure, it is gratifying to notice the provision made for the remodelling of marshalling yards and the improvement of workshops. It is difficult to overestimate the importance of these two items in the building up of an efficient railway service. The provision for strengthening bridges is of greater moment than is apparent at first sight. Speed is an essential element, and one of the handicaps in this direction with which the Railways have to contend is the loss of time in crossing bridges not constructed strongly enough to carry modern trains and modern locomotives. But I welcome this announcement also, because it gives me an opportunity of addressing my Honourable friend on another subject. If he will allow me when next he is in Calcutta, I will show him a bridge,—I will not tell him the name of the bridge at the moment,—which requires not only strengthening but rebuilding. It forms one of

[Mr. J. W. A. Bell.]

the most serious traffic problems of Calcutta, and the assistance of Government in the matter is urgently required. Attempts have previously been made to enlist the sympathy of my Honourable friend in this subject, but I am sorry to say that these attempts have not been successful. But I propose to adopt the tactics of my Honourable friend Mr. Sethna and the Honourable Mr. Ramadas Pantulu and keep hammering away my Honourable friend on this subject, in the hope that some day he will yield to my importunity.

Another problem of great importance to the city to which I belong is the Calcutta electrification scheme. I trust that the report of the engineers to which my Honourable friend has referred, will be expedited as the question of providing suburban accommodation for the city workers of Calcutta is becoming a very urgent and acute one, and nothing much can be really done until some definite scheme is adopted for transportation between the city and its suburbs.

I would repeat that the country has reason to be well satisfied with the position of the Railways, and what is disclosed in the budget statement confirms the feeling which the community I represent have always had, that, in the hands of the Commerce Department and of the Railway Board, the Railways of India are carefully and wisely administered in the best interests of the country. There is, of course, in the case of State-managed Railways always the danger of interference by the Legislature with the management. There is always the danger that in the making of appointments, in entering into contract, and in other matters, efficiency will be subordinated to political considerations. I trust that this country and in particular, this Council, will not countenance any such interference for it would mean the beginning of the end of the prosperity of the Railways.

THE HONOURABLE MR. MANMOHANDAS RAMJI VORA (Bombay : Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I join my Honourable friend the previous speaker in complaining that the time given to Members to study this Budget was too short, and I hope Government will see their way to give sufficient time to Members to consider this important Budget.

With regard to the prosperous Budget that is presented to us, we find that after providing for interest on capital and other expenditure, there remains a large surplus to be divided between central revenues and building up Reserves for the Railways. I welcome the apportionment of such huge sums from the profits. But one has got to remember that when the State undertakes to work any institution on commercial lines, the question of making more profits should be only a secondary consideration. I do not say that it should be worked at a loss, but the aim should be to have reasonable balances to cope with future requirements and contingencies and cover the cost of the concern, and then, whatever surplus may be left over should go towards the reduction of rates and fares. That should be the main object to be kept in view, and I hope due attention will in future be paid to that point.

Further, Sir, I see that there is great diversity between the recommendation of the Acworth Committee with regard to the appointment of a Rates Tribunal and the recent appointment of an Advisory Committee. Instead of the object recommended by the Acworth Committee being carried into effect, we see that an announcement has been made

that there is going to be an Advisory Committee. I want to draw the attention of Honourable Members to the fact that there is a great deal of difference between an Advisory Committee and a tribunal. A tribunal possesses certain powers, whereas an Advisory Committee can only advise, and the advice may be accepted or not. The authorities may take the advice into consideration or may reject it, whereas the action of a tribunal will have a certain effect. That is the difference between the two. I hope, if it is not too late even now, that this question will be considered.

Sir, during the limited time at my disposal, I am at a loss to understand why the working cost of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway which is now managed by Government, amounts to 69 per cent., whereas in Company-run lines it is less, e.g., in the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway it is 60.4 per cent. and in the case of the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway I think it is somewhere about 62 per cent. When the State works the Railways or any other commercial institution, there is always the danger of the expenses rising, and I hope that in future due attention will be paid to keep down the expenses and prove that the Government also can successfully run its undertakings on the same lines as the companies.

With these remarks I think that, on the whole, the separation of the Railway Budget from the General Budget has done very well.

THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS (Punjab : Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I congratulate the Honourable Sir Charles Innes, Sir Clement Hindley and the other officers concerned on the sound financial position the Railway Administration has attained in recent years. After meeting the working expenses and the interest charges, the Railway Administration hopes to contribute to the general revenue of India a sum of 18.11 crores in the 3 years 1924-25 to 1926-27. In addition to this, we are told that the Railway Administration will build up a reserve of 12.53 crores during these 3 years. We now find that the Railway Administration includes in its working expenses something towards depreciation. It has now built up a Depreciation Fund out of which it can in future meet its expenditure on replacements and renewals. Even in this Depreciation Fund we are told there is now a surplus balance of 6.71 crores. All this shows that the financial position of our Indian Railways is now sufficiently strong.

The separation of the Railway Budget from the general revenue has guaranteed to the Indian Exchequer a certainty in revenues. The Secretary of State for India could therefore afford to give larger financial powers to the Railway Administration. It can now sanction works within much larger limits. I congratulate it on the grant of this larger autonomy. I welcome the attachment of a Forest Officer to the Railway Board for the purpose of advising it in the purchase of timber. The Railways ought to place their orders for stores with Indian firms to the full capacity of their output. But I would suggest in placing orders with firms in foreign countries, that tenders should be called for in rupees. If the tenders are called for in rupees, we can avoid a good deal of unnecessary expenditure due to uncertainty in exchange. It would be better if the Government prepare annually a statement showing the value of stores purchased in India and stores purchased in foreign countries. Such a statement should be presented to both Houses of the Indian Legislature along with the budget papers.

[Lala Ram Saran Das.]

I congratulate the Government on the improvements and betterments on the Railways. I would like the Government to provide quarters for their subordinate traffic staff in big towns as such staff cannot afford to pay the high rentals that now prevail. Bungalows for officers and quarters for senior subordinate staff have been provided but nothing much has so far been done for the junior subordinate staff in big towns.

I am sorry that the announcement of the Rates Tribunal has not been received well, as the Tribunal is only to advise in the matters that may be referred to it. I fully agree with what the Honourable Mr. Manmohandas Ramji has said in this connection. I hope the personnel of the Tribunal will be such as to have a majority of Indians on it and of such competent persons as are in close touch with the commerce and industry of our country.

I welcome the reductions announced in third class and higher class fares, but the public expects a further reduction in third class fares. Before the War there used to be special reduced rates of freight between certain stations where other means of transport stood in competition. Such rates were withdrawn after the War with the result that the Railway is losing the traffic in such cases. They lose revenue and the province is burdened on account of the extra traffic that is thrown on the metalled roads, which makes them to wear out abnormally.

It is a matter of pleasure to find a good start having been made in the construction of new railway lines. New railways help a great deal in the development of the country and the construction of say 1,000 miles a year as announced by the Chief Commissioner will be very much appreciated by the people being a boon to the country. His Excellency Sir Malcolm Hailey, who is very much interested in the development of the Punjab, is to be congratulated on getting a good many lines in his province sanctioned for this year.

It is gratifying to see that Government have been pleased to take favourable action on my Resolution adopted in this House last year on the reduction of coal freight and have made a reduction of 10 per cent. on the carriage of coal for long distances of 400 miles and over. I thank the Government for this but the Government should bring the rates of coal freight down to the pre-war level. When they can afford to sacrifice, about 40 lakhs of rupees in rebate in freight on coal for export, can they not sacrifice another Rs. 15 lakhs to bring the coal freights down by another 15 per cent.? More rebate is not justified on export coal yet. Reduction of railway freights on liquid fuel, petrol, mill and agricultural machinery and manure is very desirable.

I find, Sir, that Indians are very meagrely represented in the Traffic and Mechanical Departments of State Railways. In 1921 on the North-Western Railway there were 22 Indians out of 220 in the Senior Subordinate Service of the Traffic Department. In 1925 there were 27 out of 237. There has been an advance of only from 10 per cent. to 11.4 per cent. in four years. For the same period on the East Indian Railway the proportion of Indians has progressed from 17 per cent. to 35.6 per cent. In the Eastern Bengal Railway it has increased from 9.2 per cent. to 17.5 per cent. It does appear that on the North Western Railway the proportion of Indians in the senior subordinate service is the smallest. I hope that the North Western Railway administration will pay greater attention to the Indianisation of the senior Subordinate Services in the Traffic Branch. When we

take the senior Subordinate Service in the Mechanical Branch we find that on the North Western Railway there are 10 Indians out of 312, hardly 3 per cent. on the Eastern Bengal Railway there were 9 Indians out of 142, that is a little more than 6 per cent. It thus appears that in the Mechanical Branch Indians are practically nowhere. I think Government ought to pay greater attention to the Indianisation of the Railway Services, especially in the Mechanical and Traffic Branches.

There is one other complaint from which the middle class Indian passengers suffer. There are very few important stations on which there are no waiting rooms for intermediate class passengers. I would draw the attention of the Government to this grievance. On big stations I would suggest that there ought to be separate windows in the booking offices for female passengers. This class of passengers at present experience great inconvenience in purchasing tickets. Sir, there is one other point in this connection to which I wish to draw the attention of the Railway Administration. On the roadside stations the supply of water is very inadequate. Besides the pointsmen and the sweeper there is only one waterman and the duties assigned to that waterman are taking line clears to the engine driver, taking out parcels from the parcel wagons, lowering the signals for the departure and arrival of trains and a good many other duties, and the result is that on these small road-side stations the water supply is not what it ought to be. I hope that the Railway Administrations will see their way to increase the water supply in those stations by some means or other.

Another important point which I bring to the notice of Government is the increase in thefts on the railway platforms on small roadside stations. Being a business man I travel widely and hear numerous complaints from passengers who have lost their belongings on the platforms owing to insufficient lighting. At night time one single lamp with a very low candle power is burning on such stations a few minutes before the arrival of the train. At some stations people from agricultural areas come there early to catch their night trains with the result that they have to wait for hours on the platforms and there being no light their bag and baggage are sometimes stolen. And these cases are now becoming frequent and so they necessitate my drawing the attention of the railway authorities to this important matter.

It was a great pleasure to find that for the training of Indians for the senior Subordinate Service in the Traffic Branch a school was opened at Chandausi in addition to another school which existed in Bengal. If I rightly understand, 10 station masters are selected every year from the North Western Railway and sent to this school for training. So far as my information goes, 80 station masters went there and passed the examinations and some of them attained very high percentages in pass marks which were in some cases over 90 per cent. It is a pity to find that out of these successfully trained station masters who passed very high in the Chandausi School none of them has so far got any promotion. Some time ago in this House a Resolution on the increase in the number of Traffic Inspectors in the Transportation Branch of the Traffic Department was adopted with a little amendment by the Government itself. So far as my information goes (because my question on the subject could not unfortunately elicit the information sought for) on the North Western Railway the number of Traffic Inspectors on the transportation side instead of having increased has since gone down, and in case I am wrong I hope my

[Lala Ram Saran Das.]

Honourable friend, Sir Clement Hindley will correct me. So far as I understand, there is only one permanent Traffic Inspector in the Transportation Branch on the North Western Railway, and that man has been occupying that post for the last 10 or 15 years. During the last few years a few station masters and clerks from offices were promoted to the rank of Traffic Inspector, Transportation. Out of the four that were appointed two have retired, one has died and the fourth was reverted. That man has now been appointed to officiate. Is it not a pity to find that, while the instructions of the Railway Board on this matter have been carried out by all other State Railways, I mean the Eastern Bengal Railway, the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway, now the East Indian Railway, these instructions have not been carried out by the North Western Railway in this respect?

Another point to which I wish to draw the attention of the Government is the question of raised platforms. Now, as the revenues from Railways have increased we ought to have raised platforms, whether pucca or simply of earthwork, on railway stations. At present there are a large number of stations on which there is no platform and the womenfolk in particular find great difficulty in alighting from or entering into the railway carriages. In the case of women who were in the family way, there have been serious accidents due to the absence of these raised platforms. I wish to draw the serious attention of the railway authorities to this matter again.

I welcome the fact that on fast passenger trains the Railways have provided search-lights, but I hear that Engine Drivers feel some trouble with distant signals and home signals. When two trains are running on double lines, sometimes the drivers cannot very well see the distant and home signals with the result that they get confused. I hope that the Railway Administrations will soon do something in the matter in case this complaint is well-founded.

In the programme for the construction of new rolling stock I find that no provision has been made for any addition to the refreshment cars for Indian passengers. At present, Sir, on the North Western Railway there are only two Indian refreshment cars which run on that railway between Lahore and Delhi and in case one of these cars gets damaged the people have to be without it for some time. There was a case last year when one of the cars got damaged and it could not be replaced for some time and in the time tables and other circulars issued by the Railway there was no intimation given to the passengers so that they might learn that on certain days or during certain months there would be no refreshment cars running on the usual trains. I hope that Government will see their way to provide more Indian restaurant cars and also provide more Indian refreshment rooms.

Another point that I wish to bring to the notice of this House is the question of unemployment. Unemployment is certainly one of the chief causes of the unrest in the country. My proposal in this connection is that in the Mechanical Branch of the Railways, in case we can find say at least 50 posts for literate apprentices in the mechanical line—I mean the driving line—the people will feel very grateful. Now, a lot of Anglo-Indians are recruited in the 50-rupee grade every year as literate firemen. In case that is also liberally extended to Indians on a larger scale, the Railways will be able to get a better class of recruits who will subsequently prove much better Indian drivers than we have at present. In the work-

shops before the establishment of mechanical engineering colleges in various provinces the Railways used to recruit literate apprentices on certain terms. When these mechanical colleges were founded the recruitment of these literate apprentices was transferred to them. I understand that it is through them that Railways get their apprentices. There are rumours that those literate apprentices who were recruited some four years ago and who are likely to finish their courses for the fifth year term and who are likely to qualify soon will not be provided with any permanent posts. This is a matter for us to deplore. If I am wrong in this respect I hope that Sir Clement Hindley will put me right. We are thankful to Government for giving these boys the right training, but these boys have been given one certain line of training which does suit a big concern like the Railways but does not suit an ordinary factory owner. The ordinary factory owner requires an all-round mechanic. The training which has been given to these young boys is only on one machine. The person who has joined as a turner to-day will retire as a turner 30 years hence. But if these fellows who have been given training only in one line, are thrown out at the end of five years, I think their future will be spoilt. Therefore I request that all these apprentices who qualify themselves and who have been given proper training according to the railway requirements ought to be given permanent places at the end of their apprenticeship.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: I hope the Honourable Member will not take advantage of the fact that I have refrained from exercising my discretion to impose a time limit to speeches. I would remind him that only one day has been allotted and that there are probably many Honourable Members who are desirous to speak and that if every speech reaches the limit which the Honourable Member has already attained one day would not suffice, nor would two days, for the general discussion.

THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: I will soon bring my remarks to a close. One more point that I want to bring to the notice of this House is the question of the provision of automatic couplers on the broad gauge railways. This scheme, I imagine, is to cost about 20 crores of rupees, and I wish, Sir, that before this scheme is practically adopted it ought to be scrutinised by the greatest experts of the world. We have the sad experience of the Bombay Back Bay Reclamation Scheme and we do not want that another blunder should be committed for want of competent scrutiny.

One more point, Sir, and I have finished. That is the composition of the Advisory Committee of the various railways which is not quite satisfactory so far. I wish that the composition of Railway Advisory Committees should be such as they may discharge their duties most efficiently and usefully. What I mean is that commerce and industry is not sufficiently represented. The composition therefore needs revision.

THE HONOURABLE COLONEL NAWAB SIR UMAR HAYAT KHAN (Punjab: Nominated Non-Official): I congratulate the Member in charge of the Budget but there is always room for improvement. I will only offer a few suggestions as some of my suggestions have already been brought forward by previous speakers. So I would not repeat them. We all know the troubles of the third class passengers. They pay more into the railway exchequer and I think we should pay more attention to their comforts, especially when there are certain fairs. They may be minor ones about

[Sir Umar Hayat Khan.]

which the authorities do not know and inconvenience is caused. As to the intermediate class, now the Anglo-Indians and other classes claim that they ought to get service with Indians because they are Indians. So, I hope that the places which are set apart for them will in future not be so set apart because if they want service with us, they can easily sit with us also.

There is one other point which I have been thinking of bringing forward to-day. When a compartment has already four or five reserved seats one has to take the permission of the guard to allow a servant. If all these people agree to have some one to work for them and if the servant with a third class ticket could be allowed, it will be better in one way because in the third class there will be one man short. I think it would be very useful, especially if there were two passengers, say in the second or first class, and if they could both agree, they could have a man to look after their luggage at night. Then they could go to sleep. Sometimes they have got fire-arms and money, etc., as we have heard the Honourable Rai Bahadur say; and either one of them will have to sit up all night and keep a watch, or they may be allowed to have a servant. If they have three or four servants travelling with them, it would be very convenient if they could have one of them in the compartment looking after their luggage, etc. This is the suggestion I want to put before the railway authorities, that when a compartment is already reserved, they should allow the servants to travel in that compartment without having to ask the guard. The same thing should be done in the case of the first class passengers also. As to the compartments proceeding towards Bombay and Baroda, there is a doorway leading from the servants' compartment to the first class compartment. That is very convenient, and I do hope that the North Western Railway also will follow that example, and that because of the presence of the words "North Western", as in the case of the North Western Province, arrangements should not be made as if everything was pointing to the north-west in the way of general backwardness.

The Honourable Rai Bahadur has spoken fully on the subject of the Indianization of the railway services. I think if graduates were allowed more positions, a good deal of the present agitation would grow less because they would get something to do.

Finally, I want to refer to the case of my own district, Sargodha, from which one has to travel about three times the distance in order to get to any point on three sides. Of course people in the capital of a province always raise their voice about their needs, but that does not mean that others have not their needs because they do not raise their voices so much. I hope that something will be done to construct a new line from Lahore to my part of the country.

THE HONOURABLE RAO SAHIB DR. U. RAMA RAO (Madras: Non-Muhamadan): Sir, it is indeed a matter for gratification that, consequent on the separation of the Railway Finance from the General Revenues and the introduction of better and more economical methods of running the Railway Administrations, the railway property is now in a sound financial position. Although the Inchcape Committee put down the net return from the Railways to the State at 8½ crores per annum, the average net profit is

now considerably above the figure anticipated by the Committee. Apart from the efficiency of the administration, it must be admitted, that this result is also the outcome of the vigilance of the Legislative Assembly and the Standing Finance Committee on Railways and the proper check and scrutiny exercised by them over the Railway expenditure. Nevertheless, I consider that there is still larger scope for economy and retrenchment and for the prevention of leakage and wastage and the Railway Departments must set to work in this direction forthwith and not rest content with their past success.

The first thing I would urge, for the earnest consideration of the Government, is the rapid Indianization of the Railway Services. The progress of Indianization would undoubtedly contribute to economy. Some measures are said to have been taken to accelerate Indianization but they are halting and the result so far is disappointing. Indians in the Superior Engineering and Revenue Establishment in State Railways are only about 23 per cent. of the total strength. There is no reason why the more educated classes of Indians should not fill the superior positions of Engineers and Assistant Engineers and also hold superior positions in the Traffic and Locomotive Departments. There is no doubt that the present high cost of working expenses in the State Railways in India is due to the highly paid European agency at the top of the administration. In fact, the railway officers are paid a good deal more than the civilians and they enjoy even greater privileges than they. Even the Lee Commission's recommendations are made applicable to these railway officers. This costly machinery must, therefore, be replaced by a cheaper one at the earliest moment possible. One of the arguments that is usually put forward against Indianization is that it will lead to inefficiency. But efficiency is not the birthright of Europeans alone. I am not one of those who want to sacrifice efficiency at the altar of economy. I am sure efficient men will be forthcoming also from among Indians, if only you give them the necessary facilities for training and opportunities to serve. While Indians have distinguished themselves as civil engineers, electrical engineers, mechanical engineers and so on and are holding high positions under Government as such, will it be difficult for them to acquire the necessary knowledge and capacity to fill a Railway Engineer's place? After all, Railway officers are born and not made. If other nations like Japan, Germany and America have been able to train and turn out Railway officers in no way inferior to Englishmen, why should not India do likewise? In America, very great attention is paid to railway training. In the University of Illinois, for instance, an elaborate course of training in railway transportation, railway economics, and railway engineering is provided and successful students after three or four years' training are given the degree of B.A. in Railway Economics, and B.Sc. in Railway Transportation or Railway Engineering. The Railways help such Universities by providing them with lecturers from the railway staff and by recruiting men on their staff from the students trained at such Universities. Why should not the Government of India make some such arrangement as exists in America between the Indian Railways they own and the Indian Universities they control? Even a small sum from the Railway Budget spent in this way annually would help a great deal in solving the problem of Indianization more easily. The railway schools we now have give training to railway employees already in service, but for those not in railway employ but wishing to be trained for railway service, there are no facilities at all in existence in this

[Dr. U. Rama Rao.]

country. I hope the Government will consider this aspect of the question when the proposed Railway Staff College is going to be established at Dehra Dun.

Now, Sir, coming to the passenger traffic on Railways, I must say that the existing passenger fare is abnormally high. The time has arrived when we must consider the question of reducing the railway fare and providing a uniform rate for all Railways. A small beginning has no doubt been made in the matter of reduction of fare but the relief given is miserably poor and niggardly. The South Indian Railway Company, for instance, has made a very meagre reduction from $3\frac{1}{2}$ pies to $3\frac{1}{4}$ pies, i.e., $\frac{1}{4}$ pie per mile for all distances in the third class fare. The Company might as well bring the fare at least to the level of the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway rate, namely, $3\frac{1}{4}$ pies per mile for 1—100 miles and 3 pies for additional distances. In so far as the fare for first and second class is concerned, the Company has adopted the rate prevailing on the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway. There is no dearth of third class passenger traffic on the South Indian Railway. In fact, according to the Company's Budget Memorandum, third class traffic is 98.8 per cent. of the passenger traffic and brings in about 92 per cent. of the receipts. So, the lower the rate, the more the traffic, and the greater the yield. Again, Sir, in the Proceedings of the Standing Finance Committee for Railways dated 20th January 1926, Volume II, No. 6, I find it stated that there is no Intermediate class on the South Indian Railway. There is, I submit, Sir, all intermediate class provided on the Ceylon Boat mail. Quite recently, at a meeting of the Advisory Committee of the South Indian Railway, the question of reduction of the intermediate class fare was also raised. In view of the congestion of passenger traffic in the third class, an intermediate class is absolutely necessary on that Railway, so that the middle class people travelling long distances may avail themselves of it. I cannot understand why a total denial of even the existence of an intermediate class on the South Indian Railway has been made by the Government in their Proceedings. The existing rate for intermediate class is $7\frac{1}{2}$ pies per mile and when a proposal was made to reduce the fare from $7\frac{1}{2}$ pies to 6 pies per mile on mail trains and $4\frac{1}{2}$ pies on other trains, the Agent appears to have expressed the opinion that intermediate accommodation was provided only as an experimental measure and the effect of other reductions in fares, namely, 2nd class, must be seen before considering this proposal. This is what a member of the South Indian Railway Advisory Committee writes in *The Hindu* of 10th February, 1926:

"This reply reveals the attitude of the Railway administration towards providing intermediate class accommodation. It appears to me they want to make out a case that intermediate class accommodation is not popular and thus to put a stop to it. For, with $7\frac{1}{2}$ pies per mile for intermediate class in the Boat mail and 9 pies per mile for the second class in the Trivandrum Express trains, many would naturally prefer the second class in Express trains to intermediate in the Boat mail and convenient statistics will not then be wanting to show that the intermediate class is not popular."

This is really an unfair method for the Railway administration to pursue and I would like to know in the first place whether the Government are aware of the provision of intermediate class on the South Indian Railway and if they are aware, as they must be, how are they going to reconcile that statement they have made in the Railway Financial Committee's report that there is no intermediate class on the South Indian Railway?

If it was an experimental measure, why not say so? How are the Honourable Members in this Council and the public outside, who are unacquainted with Madras, to know about the experiment that is being carried on and the success or otherwise thereof, when an authoritative document like the Railway Finance Committee's Proceedings gives a totally different version, and denies the very existence of an intermediate class on that Railway?

Let me now pass on, Sir, to the Madras Suburban traffic of the South Indian Railway. This question, I must point out, is correlated with the problem of overcrowding in Madras. A close study of the analysis of passenger traffic on the South Indian Railway reveals the fact that the Suburban traffic has increased considerably during the period 1910—14. But the present prohibitive rate for season tickets has practically given a setback to the relief of congestion in Madras. It is inadvisable on the part of the Railway Company still to continue the war time rate and not attempt to reduce the fare for season tickets. A substantial reduction in the season ticket rates, a faster train service than at present exists and the provision of a better and more convenient type of rolling-stock will, I am sure, go to solve the housing problem in Madras half-way at least. This brings me on to the subject of doubling the railway lines and the Electrification of the Suburban trains. The first of the above schemes has, I notice, just been undertaken and I am glad to find that a sum of Rs. 54.50 lakhs has been provided in the Budget for Madras improvements. The Electrification Scheme, I hope, will also be pushed through simultaneously and not be made to drag along for an indefinite length of time.

In regard to the construction of new lines, I am sorry to observe that the long-projected line between Mangalore and Hassan has practically been abandoned for the time being. In reply to my interpellation on the subject the other day in this Council, the Honourable Mr. Chadwick said that its financial prospects do not justify the construction of the line at present. The above line was originally conceived for tapping the planting area on the Western frontier of Mysore and for linking up that inland province with the sea-coast and providing her with a direct communication with the sea-board. These purposes still remain to be fulfilled or in other words, Mysore still lacks an outlet for her produce in general and for her coffee in particular, nine-tenths of which always finds its way to Mangalore in spite of the defective means of transport now available. Not a little traffic now passes between the two places and a railway is bound to stimulate it contributing to the advantages of both the countries concerned. Till recently, the Assam Bengal Railway was being worked at a loss. That Railway's Budget Memorandum says:

"In 1925-26, for the first time in its history, the Assam-Bengal Railway shareholders, were under the terms of working contract entitled to surplus profits."

Why was this Railway opened then and why is this Railway maintained still, though working at a loss all along? Is it not in the interests of the European planters of Assam? My own district of South Kanara is very poor in railway communications. All railway communications end with Mangalore. The interior still remains unexplored and unserved. A line from Mangalore to Goa is sadly wanted. If one wants to go to Bombay, he must go by steamer from Mangalore or *via* Bangalore and Poona taking a very circuitous route. Steamer service, especially in rough weather and rainy season is seldom availed of. I hope the Government will see their way to give us some relief in the matter of Railways in the near future.

[Dr. U. Rama Rao.]

The comforts of the travelling public are not properly attended to in most of the Railway Administrations. So far as the upper classes are concerned all is well with them. With regard to third class passengers, it is really a monstrous and at the same time pitiable sight to see them penned in like cattle in every compartment, even to the point of choking. It is really cruel to admit more passengers than accommodation would permit. It may pertinently be asked: "Why do they rush in like that?" The answer is "When is the next train to go? Is it not after another twelve hours that the next train leaves?" The fact of the matter is that Railway Administrations are unwilling to run more trains partly from a sense of false economy and partly from want of rolling stock. Again, no arrangement has been made for supply of meals to Indian passengers in long-distance trains. There ought to be an Indian restaurant car, as there is a European restaurant car, attached to those trains. The Indian buffet will not do, as it provides only refreshments. At some junction stations, meals can be had but it is impossible for one to take his meals within the short time the train stops. Further, there appears to be no kind of sanitary check or control exercised over those places. There is no separate sanitary staff in any of the Railways. There are petty vendors of edibles, fruits, etc., in every station who are all licensed by the Company. I would like to know for what the license is issued. Is it issued merely for them to enter the railway premises and sell any stuff they like? How much is being collected from these people and how is the amount utilized? Why should not the Railway Administrations set apart this sum for the maintenance of a sanitary staff to enforce sanitary conditions on these licensed vendors. These vendors with their unclean habits, with their old foodstuffs, rotten fruit exposed for sale and subjected to the ravages of fleas and flies must really be revolting to the sanitary conscience of the passengers and must be endangering their health considerably. The waiting rooms or third class waiting sheds as they are called, are too small to accommodate all the passengers. The retiring rooms for upper class passengers at junction stations are meant only for Europeans and are available to the Indians only in their absence. There is racial discrimination even here. The Railway Administrations must first look to the comforts and conveniences of passengers before they begin to count their profits. I appeal to the Honourable Member for Railways to insist on Railway Administrations not to overlook this important duty, they owe to the passengers.

Lastly, Sir, I come to the question of the health of the railway staffs themselves. Medical relief on Railways is in my opinion very inadequate. Out of about 39 Railways, there are only about 10 Railways who have got some sort of medical establishment of their own. The superior staff of medical officers are in all about 70, which is very insufficient to administer to the needs of a vast railway population. I am glad the Government have recognized their inaction if not negligence in the matter for so long a time and are anxious to make amends. I do appreciate the sentiments expressed in the speech of the Honourable Sir Clement Hindley delivered the other day, which runs as follows:

"In the direction of improvement in health and surroundings, there is much to be done and during last year we have had a senior administrative medical officer on special duty to study the problem on the North Western Railway. The object of his investigation has been to devise a better organization for medical treatment of

the staff on that Railway and for dealing with public health problems in Railway settlements. We have his report now under consideration and I hope, in the course of next year we shall be able to bring about the desired improvement, for, we are satisfied that improvement is necessary. The officer referred to has visited practically every Railway in India and has made a careful study of the medical arrangements on each of them. His work has assisted in making it clear that a great deal has yet to be done in studying the incidence of sickness and disease amongst Railway employees and apart from the obvious obligation to give these men adequate opportunities of treatment, the subject has its commercial aspect in the loss of working time which at present preventable disease entails."

These are weighty words indeed and I trust Government will translate them into action and thus ensure the health and well-being of their employees are long.

THE HONOURABLE SIR ARTHUR FROMM (Bombay Chamber of Commerce): Sir, as a preface to a few remarks I wish to make on the Railway Budget, I congratulate the Honourable the Commerce Member, and through him the Chief Commissioner for Railways and his staff, for the very admirable way in which the Budget has been drawn up and the form in which it has been presented to this Council. In perusing the figures given in the Budget and more especially the references to them in the speeches of the Honourable the Commerce Member in another House and, in this House, of the Honourable the Chief Commissioner for Railways—to give him the full honour to which he is entitled by reason of his recent nomination to this Council an honour lately attached but not yet obliterated—I clearly recognise a certain finger in the pie. The finger is that of my old friend Mr. Sim whose appointment to the Railway Board was the Central Board of Revenues' loss but the Railway Board's gain.

The final results of the financial year 1924-25 were extremely gratifying and must have induced a pleasing glow in the stalwart frames of the Honourable the Finance Member and of our friend here the Finance Secretary.

The revised budget estimates for 1925-26 are perhaps not quite so comforting, but I sincerely congratulate the Railway Department, and all those concerned with it, in that the difference between the revised estimated balance and the estimated balance submitted to us about a year ago shows a falling away of only 35 lakhs and that, during a year of what we all know to be one of much trade depression. That the Finance Member is likely to receive from Railways only 16 lakhs less than he was led to expect he would receive should not elicit even the smallest of growls from him, knowing, as he does the extreme dull days of trade through which we have been passing for many months will affect adversely the excess balance over 3 crores of which the General Revenues receive one-third. Some of us, if not all of us, in this Council can appreciate keenly the difficult times which the Railways in India have gone through and are going through in the current financial year. While perusing the figures given on the revised estimates for the current year 1925-26, I cannot find for how many months or up to what date actual figures are forthcoming; I trust that the revised estimated earnings for those months of the year for which actual figures cannot be yet obtained are on a sufficiently conservative basis.

The budget estimates for 1926-27 are extremely interesting, and this Council is of course aware that to a large extent they must necessarily be speculative. I am an optimist by nature and I admire the optimism of the Chief Commissioner in describing the present conditions as favourable and in anticipating a favourable monsoon, and I sincerely hope his optimism will prove to be justified.

[Sir Arthur Froom.]

Turning to the Capital Budget of 1925-26, I am sorry to see that the net grant of some 23 crores for the current year is not likely to be spent but will fall short by some 8½ crores and I trust that the old bogey of programme revenue is not responsible in any way for this. To my mind it is most essential that there should be no slackening in the work of the improvement of the permanent ways, of the reconstruction and—where necessary—the strengthening of bridges, of providing up to date and economical locomotives and rolling stock, in short in the whole work of bringing our Railways up to the highest state of efficiency possible. By this means, only, can we look for further improvement in handling passenger traffic of all classes with comfort, safety and expedition and in dealing with the transport of goods rapidly and promptly in order to avoid congestion, which in past years has been a serious drawback to the trade of this country.

The electrification of the Railways in and about the large railway centres and termini is a matter of great importance; Bombay, as pointed out by the Honourable the Commerce Member and the Chief Commissioner, is showing the way and, there not only has the Harbour Branch of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway been open for some time with an electric service but one of the suburban lines of that Railway is also running trains whose motive power is electricity. We are anxious to go forward as quickly as we can with this in Bombay and I hope that other provinces will follow our example.

Not least among the pleasing features of this Budget is the reduction of passenger fares and also the proposed reduction of the long distance freight on coal. This question of a reduction in existing coal freights was debated in this House last September on a Resolution, brought forward by my friend, the Honourable Rai Bahadur Lala Ram Saran Das, which was passed without a division. And here may I digress for one moment. In his speech introducing the Railway Budget in another place the Honourable the Commerce Member expressed his thanks to the Standing Finance Committee for Railways, composed almost entirely of non-official Members of the Legislature, for the great assistance accorded by that body in framing the Budget. In fact he pointed out that the Budget was one recommended to the Legislature by a number of its elected representatives; and yet recently in this House we heard speeches to the effect that no progress was possible under the present constitution. In this House we have passed many recommendations the values of which have been acknowledged by Government and which have been acted upon. What about Agriculture to examine which a Royal Commission has been appointed, what about the Skeen Committee of which an Honourable Member, unfortunately not present is a Member. Our advice has frequently been sought by Government. And now Government has acted upon our Resolution in favour of a reduction in the long distance freight on coal, although, I would remind you, no doubt for their own very good reasons, the Resolution was not received with open arms by the Railway Department. And yet there are some who say we make no progress and can achieve nothing under the present constitution.

I listened with interest the other day to the Chief Commissioner's statement of open line works directed towards a more efficient handling of existing traffic and to meet and foster a natural expansion of traffic. I

have always held the opinion and have expressed it on more than one occasion that the solution of a congestion in passenger and goods traffic does not lie in supplying your railways with more rolling stock to the extent of choking them but in improved facilities for the rapid and effective handling and moving of the existing stock which at the same time should be brought up to date. I am glad to see that the Railway Board continues to give close attention to this important matter. I notice that a considerable sum is to be spent on the remodelling of Victoria Terminus at Bombay which I know to be necessary to meet growing traffic requirements. May I ask my friend opposite if any decision has yet been arrived at as to where the terminus of the long distance traffic of the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway, is to be located when Colaba station is closed?

Honourable Members of this House are no doubt aware that Viscount Inchcape has recently paid a brief visit to India—a holiday trip and not a business or political one as has been suggested in some quarters—and I feel sure that had he been able to extend his holidays he would have been the first to congratulate the Railway Department on the achievements attained during the three years since the hardworking Inchcape Committee made its report. It is exceedingly gratifying to learn from the Honourable the Commerce Member's speech in the other House that the results of the past three years' workings of our Railways have exceeded the figures which the Inchcape Committee suggested should be aimed at.

Sir, I do not wish to take up more than my fair share of the time allotted to Honourable Members for the discussion of the Railway Budget. At the beginning of my remarks I congratulated the Railway Board on the way in which the Railway Budget has been presented. I have however one suggestion to make, which is that this small white booklet described in the Note as the "Budget Proper" should be printed in a larger form say of the size of the pink books of the estimates. The printed figures in the white booklet are exceedingly small and bearing in mind that we have been described as a body of elderly statesmen it can be readily imagined that the sight of some of us is not as keen as that of our younger brothers and it is a difficult matter to peruse figures which almost necessitate a magnifying glass to read them.

In his speech the Honourable Sir Charles Innes said that this is the last Railway Budget which he will defend in the Legislature. This I feel sure all of us regret exceedingly. I wish he had been able to be present here this morning, but I have heard on very good authority, first-hand authority, that the regret we feel in not seeing him here is more than shared by the Honourable Member himself. He had been called away to attend some other meeting which he told me he could not possibly get out of. The Legislature will miss him keenly when he goes, but I will not say more about this now as he has not gone yet. I do not think he will find much difficulty in defending—I use the Honourable Member's own words—the Railway Budget before us. The present financial year has been and is still one of very considerable trade depression; we hope for brighter conditions in 1926-27, and under the circumstances I feel that, although there may be criticisms the Honourable the Commerce Member, the Chief Commissioner for Railways, and the whole of the Railway Department cannot be fairly attacked on their Budget generally, but on the contrary that they will receive very many congratulations on the results achieved.

THE HONOURABLE SIR BIJAY CHAND MAHTAB: MAHARAJADHIRAJA BAHADUR OF BURDWAN (Bengal: Nominated Non-Official): Sir, I shall detain this House for a very few minutes. In an academic discussion of this kind one gets an opportunity of conveying to the Government various aspects of railway administration in India. I shall however confine myself to two or three small matters which relate mainly to the province to which I belong. First of all, I should like to ask the Honourable the Chief Commissioner for Railways whether the provision to be found on page 16 of the Eastern Bengal Railway Budget for the conversion into broad gauge from Parbatipore to Siliguri means that he will complete the conversion into broad gauge from Sealdah to Siliguri by the end of the year for which the Budget has been presented.

Now I shall just bring to his notice two matters which I think call for attention. As we all know, motor traffic is very much on the increase in the mofussil and only a short while ago, in fact just before I unfortunately got ill, I had to go up from Calcutta into the interior and coming to one level crossing at night—it was only about 8 o'clock in the evening—and the level crossing near a wayside station, one was told that the orders were that after the last passenger train had passed that that particular level crossing was not to be opened. Of course I being the landlord of the whole of that area I had no difficulty in getting the man to open the crossing for me, although perhaps under the Railways Act I might have been run in. But I do think that in view of the increasing motor traffic better arrangements are necessary, and that this plea that after the last train has passed that particular level crossing is not to be opened to motor traffic until the next morning is a bit thick.

I welcome the provisions in the Railway Budget for the improvements of the marshalling yards and workshops in large railway stations; but I may remind Sir Clement Hindley when he was not an official of Government, when he was the Chief official of a railway now officialised, that in recent years the railway stations that have been constructed by the East Indian Railway have paid more attention to goods traffic than to the convenience of the passengers, and I can point out to him dozens of railway stations in Bengal proper where although there is a cover over the heads of the passengers and although the area covered is by no means small, in the monsoon it gives little, in fact no protection from rain, and I therefore wish to draw the attention of the Honourable the Chief Commissioner that in future development of the railway programme more attention should be paid to a better style of railway stations, especially on the East Indian Railway. When I recollect the old railway station with pillars that used to be at Burdwan, very like some of the railway stations upcountry, and when I compare that with the one that now exists there I must say it is a sad difference because even a big railway station like that of Burdwan gives little or no protection from rain to passengers waiting on the platform, and it is a matter to which I should like to draw the attention of the Government.

These are all the observations I have to make on the Railway Budget.

THE HONOURABLE MR. P. C. DESIKA CHARI (Burma: General): Sir, I have been reading the proceedings of the meetings of the Standing Finance Committee for Railways. We had not enough time to go thoroughly into the facts and figures which are given. Having regard to cases like mine I mean the new members who are not familiar with the facts and

figures, more time for preparation should have been given with a view to find how the facts and figures stood with reference to the Burma Railways. I casually went through the pages and strange to say I came across at pages 69 and 70 of the proceedings of the Finance Committee for Railways some figures which go to show that there is a concession for passengers travelling beyond 300 miles. But what do I actually find? That the so-called concessions were no concessions at all because neither the Southern Shan State Railway nor the Myohaung Lashio Branch extend to anything like 300 miles. One is only 85 miles and the other about 173 miles. I tried to find out whether this concession is extended to people who travel along other lines and then proceed along these hill lines, but as a matter of fact on working it out I found there were no concessions at all even in the case of persons who travel more than 300 miles. I wish to point out this fact because if one comes across figures like these which have no meaning, and statements of concessions which are really no concessions at all, one would have to go through the budget statements with a certain amount of scrutiny as regards the other figures which are laid before us. It is a misnomer to say that a concession exists as regards these two lines. The concession can never exist because they do not extend to anything like 300 miles. I wanted, before going any further, to deal with that aspect of the figures because we have not had time thoroughly to scrutinise the figures. We have to take the figures as they are without a critical study, and find out if the conclusions arrived at by the member who is responsible for the administration of the Railways have been correct. From a cursory glance at the figures I find that, when separating railway finance from general finance, the separation was effected at a time when it was expected to give a good advantage to railway finance, and in consequence a condition of things exists now which is a matter for congratulation. As it is we have got about two crores of rupees in excess of the estimated amounts available in the first three years after separation to the Reserve Fund, and in the Depreciation Fund we have got plenty and there is no need to be anxious about the Reserve Fund being drawn upon to advance money to the Depreciation Fund, at least in the near future. I wish to point out that there is a large amount available out of the Reserve Fund for one of the purposes for which that Reserve Fund is intended, that is for the purpose of the reduction of rates of fares and freights. We find also a sum of Rs. 123 lakhs and another sum of 40 lakhs set apart for the reduction of fares. All these figures put together give me an impression that the railway administration has been niggardly in making concessions for the poorest classes of people who contribute a very large share, nearly 50 per cent. to the revenues of the Railways. The first relief that ought to be given out of the amount available for such a purpose should be to the people who stand most in need of it and to the people who contribute the largest share of it. Concessions are sought to be granted only to passengers travelling beyond 300 miles, and the concession also is very small because it applies mostly to passengers travelling by mail trains. Most of the poorer class of people who travel under 50 miles, that is the average Indian, have necessarily to go by the ordinary trains and not the mail trains. Mail trains do not stop at ordinary stations. Generally the run on the mail trains from one stop to another is on the average over 50 miles. It may be a little more or a little less, but it is generally more than 50 miles, so the concession which is intended to be given to people travelling by mail trains is not really a concession for the class of people who have the first

[Mr. P. C. Desika Chari.]

preference in claiming relief, that is the mass of the Indian population who contribute the largest share of the revenue. As regards the concessions proposed to be granted to first and second class passengers, that is merely a business proposition. It is expected that it is likely to bring in revenue, not now, but in the near future to cover up any deficiencies that may arise by the grant of those concessions, so that need not be taken into account in the matter of granting relief to the ordinary third class passenger in ordinary trains. I want to make it clear that the relief, if any, is to be given in the largest measure to the masses of the population who travel by the ordinary trains. It does not matter if the mail train fare is kept as it is, but the whole of the amount set apart for the relief of third class passengers ought to go to the ordinary third class passengers because it would give relief to the largest number of people. That is as regards the fares. As regards the reduction in freight, I find some relief is sought to be given to the coal industry in the transport of coal. It is a very good thing in itself because that would, to some extent, help the pioneer industries in this country in getting the coal which is necessary for industrial and manufacturing purposes. But it is also a relief intended to be given to the rich man. I would suggest that the first consideration of the railway administration ought to be to give relief to the poorest people, and having regard to this principle, it is better if the amount set apart for this purpose is allotted for the grant of some sort of relief in the transport of rice and other food-stuffs of ordinary consumption which are wanted by the generality of people, by the mass of the population.

Then as regards the purchase of stores, I find my Honourable friend from Calcutta has been referring to the tendency on the part of the Legislature to interfere with the Railway Administration and to make it less efficient, and he warned the House against interfering with the administration on purely political considerations. I am not going into this question of the purchase of stores from the purely political standpoint. The matter has been dealt with by a Committee as early as 1919, the Stores Committee, and the recommendations of that Committee have been accepted. I only ask that it may not be made to appear by the working of the recommendations of that Committee that the Railway Administration want to make a point out of some small loopholes that may be available. It is quite possible to defend any position, but I would say that it is necessary to lead the people into confidence when the recommendations are carried into effect. I refer to this because there is a general impression that there is a tendency to prefer to go outside India or to give contracts to Europeans in preference to Indians and to purchase outside India goods which are available in India itself. In this connection I would crave the leave of this House to read a copy of a telegram which was sent to the Railway Board by the Burma Indian Chamber of Commerce as regards the tender for 229,000 jarrah wood sleepers by the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, which was published in the *Indian Trade Journal* of the 4th instant. This is what they say:

"Committee Burma Indian Chamber of Commerce strongly protest against practice of inviting tenders for foreign sleepers although teakwood and junglewood for railway sleepers available in abundance in India and Burma. The Committee consider such practice in absolute contravention of accepted policy of Government regarding purchase of stores for public services specially. As railway concerned is now under State management they respectfully urge Railway Board, to take immediate steps to undo injustice done in this instance to country's interests concerned."

I read this out not because this particular incident is very important. It is only important for this purpose that it serves to create an impression in the people that the Railway Administration tries its best to get out of the recommendations of the Committee as much as possible on some ground or other. It is necessary that there should be no room for this suspicion—well I would not call it so much suspicion as a critical attitude on the part of the population of India with regard to its administration caused by incidents like these—it is necessary that there should be no scope given for such criticism in future.

Then coming to the question of railway construction I find a statement made that there is not much scope for development in the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway. I come from the North Arcot district which is served mostly by this Railway. There we find there are large tracts of country where there is no difficulty of introducing railway communications, where people find that they have to go long distances, something like 50 or 60 miles, before they come to a railway station. The Honourable the Leader of the House who comes from the same district will bear testimony to that; and I hope this representation of mine will be taken into consideration to find out whether there is scope for development in the matter of the construction of feeder lines in the area served by the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway.

And then as regards new construction I find there is a tendency to take railway lines, so far as Burma is concerned, along regions which are more or less uninhabited. That is specially so in the case of the railway line which has been taken to the Siamese frontier. It is a thickly wooded country where there are hardly any human habitations. I do not see why after spending a good deal of money in surveying the Indo-Burma frontier, the scheme of an Indo-Burma connection has not been taken into serious consideration yet. I find in the printed speech of the Railway member some pious hope is held out that in the far distant future, I take it, there may be a chance of connecting India and Burma, and the lines, some of which are now proposed to be constructed, may lead to that consummation.

I also find that in the case of the lines served by the Assam Bengal Railway the geographical position makes the railway unremunerative. I would suggest that if that Railway is so extended and I believe it will not involve a cost which is out of all proportion to the remuneration which is expected, it may be better to take that line and make it reach the line which is being constructed by the Burma Railways, so that both the Assam-Bengal Railway and the Burma Railways in that region may be remunerative.

I hope the Railway Administration will take these things into consideration from the Indian point of view more specially as there is no Indian element at the top of the Administration. Efforts are being made from time to time to bring to the notice of the authorities that it is necessary to have some Indian as a member of the Railway Board. No doubt in the case of the Railway Board it was thought that an expert having knowledge of railway administration ought to be appointed, and as an Indian with such qualifications is not available an Indian has not been appointed. No useful purpose will be served in suggesting that the Financial Commissioner of Railways must be an Indian because it is not a practical proposition now

[Mr. P. C. Desika Chari.]

as it stands. It may be when further developments occur it will be taken into consideration because it cannot be said that for the post of Financial Commissioner an Indian with suitable qualifications is not available. In this connection I may also refer to the Rates Advisory Committee. It was thought that the absence of the Indian element from the Railway Board and the difficulty of finding an Indian for appointment to the post of Financial Commissioner would be somewhat compensated by the appointment of a Statutory tribunal which would be in a position to deal with the rates in a satisfactory manner. Now as it is we have got an Advisory Committee and I hope and trust the scope and object of that Committee will not be narrowed and that it may be possible for individuals and private organisations to bring before the Rates Tribunal questions they may want to refer to the Tribunal, and I hope it will not be the sole province of the Government or of the Railway companies to refer all matters which will have to be decided by the Rates Advisory Committee. I hope this Rates Advisory Committee, though it does not go far to satisfy the demands of the people, will at least be enabled to widen the scope of its duties and take into consideration references made to it by individuals and private organisations in matters in which it is expected to discharge its functions.

THE HONOURABLE MR. K. C. ROY (Bengal: Nominated Non-Official): Sir, when I came this morning I had no intention of taking part in this debate because the Railway Budget is an intensely financial and the subject matter of Sir Clement Hindley's speech a highly technical one. But, Sir, statements have been made in this House on which I think it is my duty to give my own views. The Honourable Mr. Bell who is absent from the House at this minute complained of the shortness of notice. I do not share his views. In fact, Sir, more than 24 hours is an adequate notice for any Member of this House. But the biggest drawback from which we suffer, Sir, is the non-representation of this House on the Railway Standing Finance Committee of which the Honourable Mr. Sim is the Chairman and the mouthpiece. He must be a bold man, Sir, if he has taken that Standing Committee into his full confidence and has given them in advance the ways and means programme of the Budget. This is not in consonance with the constitutional practice in any legislative House, not even in the British House of Commons. If he has done so he is a bold man.

Then, Sir, I come to the speech of my Honourable friend Mr. Manmohandas Ramji. Mr. Ramji is not satisfied with the Rates Advisory Committee; but, Sir, the practice of condemning an institution in advance is a bad practice. It is done mainly in the other House and not in this House. I would ask the Honourable Member to give the Advisory Committee a chance, to give my friend Sir Narasimha Sarma a chance. He is a man of great integrity, honesty of purpose and of great foresight and statesmanship.

THE HONOURABLE MR. MANMOHANDAS RAMJI VORA: I never questioned his personal qualifications.

THE HONOURABLE MR. K. C. ROY: I did not mean that for one moment either. Then, Sir, I come to the speech of my friend the Honourable Lala Ram Saran Das. Although he tired the House there was a good deal of substance in his speech. But when he wants me to believe that roadside

stations should be manned like the Delhi station I respectfully differ from him. In fact when I visit a railway station I try to compare my impressions of an English railway station. Here you find troops of men, station masters, assistant station masters, yard masters—I do not know who else—legions of them infesting all the stations. I would ask my Honourable friend to remember that in an English station all the work is done by one or two porters, one or two station masters, and a few people like that and sometimes a railway station is run by a woman. Unless we can strive for English efficiency we shall never be successful in our business concerns, and I deprecate in the strongest terms the way in which the menial staff is sought to be increased in all stations on the Indian Railways.

Then, Sir, reference has been made by my Honourable friends, Rai Bahadur Lala Ram Saran Das, Dr. Rama Rao and Mr. Chari to the question of Indianisation. This is a very old swan song of this House. It began in 1910, and it took a definite shape in 1911 when there was a heated debate between Mr. Gokhale on the one hand and Sir Trevellyn Wynne on the other; and in order to mark his displeasure Mr. Gokhale divided the House. The division was lost to him, and the minority included my friend the Maharaja of Burdwan who is now present here to-day. What has happened since then? Very little progress has been made with Indianisation. To-day we have not got a single man occupying a responsible position on the Railway Board purely on the railway side: I am not speaking of the audit or finance side at all. Then, Sir, we had the Railway Conference Association in Simla. Did we have a single Indian on it? No. I do not blame anybody for what has happened in the past. I think the country is indebted to the Honourable Sir Charles Innes and the Honourable Sir Clement Hindley for the bold measures they have taken to inaugurate a real policy of Indianisation on Railways. Let us give them a chance; let us not refer to it year after year; let us at least give the new scheme a chance for five years, and then cry for more. Sir, our views on Indianisation are well known. I was asked to answer this question by a Commission with which my Honourable friend Sir Muhammad Habibullah was associated and I said that in respect of the Indian Civil Service, the Indian Police Service and the Indian Medical Service the utmost care should be taken not to Indianise those services rapidly because they represent the security services of India; but as regards the technical services of the State, engineering and railways, there should be more rapid Indianisation; and to those views I still subscribe.

Lastly, Sir, I come to Sir Arthur Froom. I entirely endorse nearly all he has said on the general aspect of the Budget. But, Sir, I differ from him in his claims for more money, for more consideration, for more favourable terms for Bombay. In fact, Sir, when I read the Budget for the first time I thought that the Budget had been framed only to placate Bombay because Bombay somehow or other has secured a dominant voice in our Indian Legislature. Then, Sir, when my friend Mr. Bell spoke here, for the support of an unknown bridge, I wanted him to mobilise Bengal opinion not only in this House but also in the other and put full pressure on Sir Clement Hindley and Sir Charles Innes and make them feel that Bengal has yet a function to perform here and to demand her full rights. Sir, I congratulate Sir Charles Innes and Sir Clement Hindley on their able budget speeches.

THE HONOURABLE MR. V. RAMADAS PANTULU (Madras: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, both the Honourable Member for Railways and the Chief Commissioner have told us in their very lucid and optimistic speeches that the Standing Railway Finance Committee examined the figures thoroughly and that they agreed to all the Demands. Speaking for myself this agreement has merely relieved me of the necessity of examining those figures with any care, because they will no doubt come under the close scrutiny of the Assembly when the Demands for Grants are voted upon. But it does not lead to the conclusion to which my Honourable friend Sir Arthur Froom has jumped, namely, that a great deal is possible under this constitution although we wicked Swarajists and others deny it. The fact that Standing Finance Committees on Railways agreed to the Demands did not justify him in finding that our assertion was wrong. I shall not make any reference either to the Skeen Committee or to the Royal Commission on Agriculture to which he also referred, because I feel them to be irrelevant considerations so far as this question is concerned. I shall confine myself entirely to the railway policy. I may tell my Honourable friend, Sir Arthur Froom, and this House, that an examination of the figures and accepting the demands, which are regulated and controlled by a policy in which the Indians have absolutely no voice and in which the Indians are not consulted, do not mean much to my mind. Certain proposals are put by the Railway Board before the Standing Finance Committee for Railways which is asked to scrutinise the figures relating to them just as any auditor or expert clerk does, and if my friend suggests that the members of the Standing Railway Finance Committee control the policy underlying these figures, I beg emphatically to differ from this assertion.

Sir, ever since 1870 we are told that there is absolutely no political disability for an Indian to be appointed to any position in the administration of Railways either as a member of the Railway Board or as a Financial Adviser or to any superior appointments. In the discussion in another place in 1924, I found that, though no promise was made, yet hopes were held out in the speeches made by the Honourable Sir Basil Blackett and the Honourable Sir Charles Innes that the claim of Indians to a place in the higher direction and control of the Railways would be favourably considered. But after a period of three years, I find that we are where we were. And to-day I am in a position to assert that there is a large volume of feeling in this country that the railway policy of the Government of India is directed mainly in the interests of the foreign capitalist and the foreign merchant and not of Indian interests. Normally, Sir, I agree, that schemes for the expansion of the Railways and railway prosperity are a true index of the commercial and industrial development of a country, but in a country like India which is under a foreign political domination and foreign capitalistic exploitation, they have a different meaning. It is obvious to every student of economics and industries in this country that with the growing expansion of our railway system, the indigenous trade and commerce are being destroyed. I heard yesterday a very remarkable speech by one of our foremost commercial men in India, Lala Harkishan Lal from his place as President of the Indian Commercial and Industrial Congress which is now sitting in this city, in which he depicted in a very vivid manner how the industries of India have been going down day after day in spite of the so-called transport facilities afforded by our Railways. I do not wish to elaborate this point. Every one knows that our pre-rail-

way manufactures have steadily been going down, and the present railway policy is serving to facilitate the import of foreign goods and the rapid export of raw material and commercial products like jute and cotton. This has resulted in the impoverishment of the country and a steady degeneration of our indigenous industries. It is a fact which will stand examination, it will be borne out by an examination of the industrial and railway policy of the Government of India. The primary concern in a self-governing country will be the prosperity of the subject based upon the economic and industrial possibilities of Railways but in a country like India, which is governed on different lines, the test of prosperity is the figures relating to the export and import trade as an index of the prosperity of the foreign trade and not the inland trade.

Then with regard to the railway lines in India, we are told that to-day we have nearly 38,000 miles of railways in this country. But what is 38,000 miles of railway in a country like India with a population of 318 millions? In a country like England with a population of 43 millions, we have 50,000 miles of railway; in Germany with a population of 60 millions, we have 34,600 miles and in the United States of America, with a population of 118 millions we have 262,000 miles. Out of a total railway mileage of 660,000, we have only got 38,000 miles though we have one-fifth of the population of the world. These 38,000 miles of railway are so constructed as to be useful in the main either for strategic purposes or for the purpose of helping the import of foreign material into India and facilitating the export of raw material from India. I say, Sir, that the spirit of the railway policy to-day is the same as it was in 1845 when it had its humble beginnings, and 120 miles of railway were built from Calcutta to Ranegunj, 33 miles of railway from Bombay to Kalyan and 39 miles from Madras to Arkonam. The significance was that they wanted foreign ships arriving at those ports to dump India with their foreign goods and to-day, the same is the spirit, because, I find that some development schemes proposed by agencies like District Boards to improve the communications in the interior of the country are held up while lines which are strategic or which are profitable to the foreign merchants and capitalists are taken up more readily. Therefore it is no use saying that the Standing Railway Finance Committee's work is an index of the possibilities of this constitution.

Then, Sir, before I deal with the Railway Board's achievements, I shall mention one fact regarding the mentality of the Railway Board. It may be a very small matter but it shows the whole attitude that underlies the Railway Board's administration. When the Khyber Pass Railway was opened, invitations were sent out to some Anglo-Indian journals but not a single Indian journal was invited to the function. I believe my Honourable friend Sir Charles Innes had to answer a number of questions on that point in another place only a few days ago and the only explanation he had to give was that these Anglo-Indian papers had editors who came in contact with the tin gods of Simla and Delhi and therefore they had received invitations. Is that an explanation worthy of a body which is responsible for the administration of such a huge enterprise as the Indian Railways? The Indian editors do not care for the invitations of the Railway Board, for they are self-respecting men. I only instance it as a point to show the mentality of the Railway Board which is supposed to be safeguarding the interests of this country.

[Mr. V. Ramadas Pantulu.]

Then, Sir, with regard to the way in which the Railway Board is Indianising the services, I will not cover the same ground that has been covered by other Honourable Members. But I will only give you two startling figures. In the State-managed Railways there are 450 high paid officials (Europeans and Anglo-Indians) whose monthly salary is Rs. 3½ lakhs and there are 45 Indians whose monthly pay amounts to Rs. 26,000. In the Company-managed Railways we have to-day 1,088 European officials whose monthly pay is Rs. 8½ lakhs and 28 Indians with a miserable monthly pay of Rs. 12,000. There is not a single Chief Engineer, a single Superintending Engineer, a single Agent, a single Deputy Agent, a single Traffic Manager, a single Deputy Traffic Manager, a single Loco Superintendent, a single Controller of Stores, a single Bridge Engineer, a single Electric Engineer, who is an Indian and this is considered to be the correct policy pursued by the Railway Board and we are told that there is possibility of the realisation of our legitimate aspirations within the constitution itself. I do not think a further refutation is necessary. I will only allude to one more matter. In the railway workshops training is afforded to Europeans and Anglo-Indians to a very efficient degree. Foremen and other higher appointments are made available to persons trained in these workshops. But Indians are nowhere. This glaring injustice attracted the attention of the Industrial Commission. I will read a sentence from the Report of the Industrial Commission. This is what they say :

“ Railway workshops are, as we have stated, in many cases, already receiving European and Anglo-Indian apprentices to whom some degree of technical training is given with the object of enabling them to obtain posts as foremen or in special cases even higher appointments. There is, however, a noteworthy absence of provision for the middle class Indian. We consider it of great importance that the conditions of training should be such as the educated Indian youth will consider consistent with his sense of self-respect; for if this is not satisfied we shall be depriving ourselves of a most promising field of recruitment.”

If the policy is directed by Indians in the Indian interests, is it possible that the workshops which are maintained at India's cost will not have room for India's sons to be trained there? With regard to the purchase of stores, several Honourable friends have alluded to it and the report of the Stores Purchase Committee of 1920 has in the main been ignored though to some extent it has been adhered to. That is because of two things, one, there has not been sufficient relaxation of rules which regulate purchases, and secondly, because of the influence of the India Office on the purchase of stores. The Indian Industrial Commission has drawn pointed attention to the fact and said that the experience of the Great War has taught us the necessity of making India self-sufficient in industrial output even with regard to the Railways so that they may not suffer when another great war comes.

Then, Sir, with regard to freights and fares I will not go into details, but there again the policy of giving relief to long distance traffic is also calculated to favour the capitalist and the rich. A poor man on an average travels short distances. I find, on an examination of these voluminous records which were furnished to us only the day before yesterday, that in most Railways the distance travelled by the poor people varies from 35 to 50 miles. It is not uniform on all Railways, but it is from 35 to 50 miles. What is the use of telling us that relief has been given to third class passengers travelling over 300 miles when the average travelled by a poor man is between 35 and 50 miles. In the case of goods, they are trans-

ported over long distances by foreign capitalists and merchants and there is no attempt made to facilitate short distance internal transportation of goods from one place to another in the interior of the country to relieve famine conditions or to encourage indigenous production and sale. In regard to third class passengers, while both the speeches of the Honourable Sir Clement Hindley and of the Honourable Sir Charles Innes make sympathetic references to their grievance and also promise redress, I find a good deal of over-caution and it is said that there is a certain amount of risk in proceeding more quickly in allowing a temporary drop in earnings. I think the caution expressed is over-abundant in view of the fact that, after paying a contribution of one per cent. on the capital at charge, also one-fifth of the surplus and one-third of the excess after taking Rs. 3 crores to the Reserves, we find our position very sound to-day. With a Depreciation Fund of Rs. 10 crores, with a Reserve Fund of about Rs. 12 crores and in addition a contribution of Rs. 18 crores to the general revenues during the last 3 years the position is so sound that irritating caution with regard to the relief of third class passengers is unnecessary and over-abundant. I think that the Government ought to take up a bolder attitude in the matter. Therefore, I think that, viewed from any standpoint the administration has not been satisfactory and the whole thing is due to the fact that we have not got the direction and control of the railway policy in our hands and that the policy is entirely controlled and directed by others. There are many more things that I wish to say, but I do not want to take up the time of the House as many Honourable Members wish to speak. I repeat once more my statement that the entire policy is wrong and until the Railway Board is Indianised, the service is Indianised, and the policy is Indianised, there is no use of telling us, "We have got this or that facility for examining the figures" which can be done by a clerk or an auditor. I therefore hope that Government will make up their minds and revise their entire Indian railway policy so that it can best serve the interests of India.

THE HONOURABLE MAJOR NAWAB MAHOMED AKBAR KHAN (North-West Frontier: Nominated Non-Official): Sir, I warmly congratulate my Honourable friend, Sir Clement Hindley on the fact that the Budget which he had an opportunity of presenting to this House the day before yesterday is uncommonly good. The more one has the time to study it, the more one feels inclined to appreciate it. In studying the Budget one is often tempted to endeavour to find points in it, to which objections can be taken. But I venture to think that any one approaching the Railway Budget in this spirit will find very little to take exception to. There will be a difference of opinion with regard to the allocation of Capital expenditure and each Honourable Member will naturally be more impressed by the needs of his own province. Although each item under "New Constructions" appears to have been examined with care and with due and fair regard to the needs of the country generally, I do not think I would be going wide of the mark if I venture to draw the attention of this Honourable House generally, and the Honourable the Railway Member especially, towards the extension of the railway line in the Charsadda and Swabi Tahsils of Peshawar, the District, where the necessity for opening a line from Mardan is keenly felt by the inhabitants of the said localities, as it is expected to do much in the way of promoting trade and consequently peace and prosperity. In addition, it will be certainly remunerative. Apart from this I would suggest the opening of a line from Peshawar to Kohat through the Durra, and connecting it with Bannu. From Quetta to Hindubagh, the

[Nawab Mahomed Akbar Khan.]

railway line already exists. From Hindubagh to Fort Sandeman the line is under construction. There is a distance of 100 miles from Fort Sandeman to Tonk. This, if connected, will give a direct route from Quetta to Tonk and other important military stations on the frontier. Moreover, there ought to be a bridge at Mari Indus Kalabagh, as it will prove the means of an easy access into the North West Frontier Province from the Punjab. Another line connecting Kashmore and Dera Ghazi Khan should be constructed and this should be extended to Dera Ismail Khan and connected at Pessu. This project stands in need of no comment as its construction apart from the fact of promoting peace, tranquillity and civilisation, is of great importance from the strategical point of view.

The Decauville Railway between Tonk and Dera Ismail Khan should be converted into the Kalabagh Bannu railway gauge as early as possible because great trouble is experienced by the travellers in finding accommodation. There is one point that has been left out by the Honourable Lala Ram Saran Das, although he made a very exhaustive speech and I should like to bring that point forward. It is that water tank wagons should be attached to the trains passing through a cholera stricken area in order that passengers should not contract this disease by drinking infected water or some proper arrangements should be made at every station for the thorough disinfection of water to guard travellers and passengers in the trains against the danger of contracting disease. That was the point that my Honourable friend Lala Ram Saran Das told me to bring out in my speech.

There is another point, Sir, that some of the Honourable Members put questions in this House, and it is complained that the answers to those questions regarding Railways put in the Council are evaded and shelved and that when they insist on replies being given to them, they are asked to approach the Railway concerned through its Railway Advisory Committee. Well, Sir, personally I have had no occasion to make complaints myself, but of course people who are always greatly interested in the Railways do complain now and then.

As regards the expenditure of 30 crores of rupees to be incurred in the replacement of buffers and draw-bars by automatic couplers, I would like to remark that the spending of so much money on the replacement of things working quite satisfactorily is a bit hard on a poor country like India.

It is a matter of great pleasure to note from the budget estimates under discussion, that in spite of reductions in freight and fares the net receipts of the year 1926-27 are calculated to exceed the expenditure in the same year by nearly 10 crores of rupees. The reduction in the fares is quite welcomed, but I would like to bring to the notice of the Honourable Members that the restriction, namely, that it will not be given effect to in the case of Intermediate and third class passengers travelling under a distance of 50 miles will tell hardly on the majority of the passengers and especially in the North-West Frontier Province. There the majority of the people seldom chance to travel above 50 miles, and almost 80 per cent. of the population of that Province cannot afford to travel except in the third and intermediate compartments. Similarly, one cannot but see with joy the concession granted in respect of coal freight over and above the distance of 400 miles, although had it been a little more, it would have enabled us better to compete more safely in the industrial market. The freight on petroleum should also be reduced as both these commodities are not luxuries but are necessities of life.

As regards the Railway Reserves, it is a matter of great delight that they are expected to stand approximately at 10 crores of rupees, but keeping in view the objects for which these Reserves are to be used, I do not think the railway authorities will suffer them to decrease. Honourable Members of this House can have some consolation as to their increase every year from the words of the Honourable the Railway Member, who does not regard this as anything to boast about.

Before resuming my seat, I would like to say a few words with regard to the services in the Railway Department. It is a matter of thankfulness to the Government that the number of Indians in this Department is increasing every year, but on the other hand I regret to observe that they are given little chance in the Mechanical, Locomotive, Gas and Electric Departments. Would the Honourable the Chief Commissioner for Railways please see that Indians are allowed a better chance of acquiring practical training in these respects also? It would be better if an institution like that at Chandausi is opened at Lahore or Lyallpore on the North Western Railway as this is the most important and the largest line in India. The location of such an institution in the Punjab will enable the people of the North to avail themselves of the facilities intended by Government in respect of practical training in mechanical engineering.

*THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR NALININATH SETT (West Bengal: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, with some of the speakers who have already spoken, I also think that the time allowed to the Members of this House for the study of the Budget is too short. I confess, Sir, that I have not been able to go in detail into these papers. I shall therefore confine my remarks, specially with reference to the province which I have the honour to represent here, to a few points. Speaking on behalf of the inhabitants of Calcutta, I regret that no decision has yet been arrived at with regard to the bringing of the railway system within easy reach from the centre of Calcutta. Comparing Calcutta with Bombay we find that the inhabitants of Calcutta are much worse off in the matter of travelling from and to their suburban homes from the business quarters of Calcutta. While the suburban areas of Bombay are now being served by electric trains, Calcutta has no chance of having such a convenience within a year or two. I would therefore urge on the Honourable Member in charge to try to expedite matters. There is a great deadlock in connection with the expansion of the town of Calcutta northwards owing to the existence of the Chitpur marshalling yard. It would certainly be proper and expedient to remove the yard to some distance thereby setting free the vast area occupied by it for the expansion of Calcutta. In this connection I would like to draw the attention of the Honourable the Chief Commissioner to the inadequate width of the overbridges in and near Calcutta. These bridges when constructed were no doubt adequate and wide enough, but the condition of traffic over these bridges has considerably altered and these bridges have at present become quite insufficient. I hope, Sir, that in connection with the inquiry for having a central railway station in Calcutta the improvement of these overbridges will also be favourably considered. There are some important railway stations which have no overbridges, such as Simultola station on the East Indian Railway. At such an important station as Madhupur on the East Indian Railway the overbridge does not cover

*Speech not corrected by the Honourable Member.

[Rai Bahadur Nalininath Sett.]

new goods siding and people have to crawl under the wagons when a train is standing in order to reach the railway station. I think, Sir, that these defects, although very minor, ought to be remedied at once.

THE HONOURABLE SIR CLEMENT HINDLEY (Chief Commissioner: Railways): Sir, I wish first of all to thank Honourable Members of this House who have congratulated the Railway Department on the Budget for their many encouraging remarks about the work we are trying to do. There have been a few dissentient voices, but I recognise that that must always be the case in a controversial matter like our Railways. The Honourable Mr. Bell has complained that we did not give him sufficient time to read the 19 volumes of statistics and figures which necessarily accompany our Budget. I can only say that I am very sorry about it, but I am not at all certain that the Honourable Mr. Bell ever really meant to read those volumes even if we had given him longer time. The actual allotment of days for this business depends, as the Honourable Mr. Bell and others know, on the business which the Council has before it, and I cannot undertake that longer time shall be provided between the presentation and the discussion. The business must be regulated by other business in hand. At the same time I will make note of his complaint, which was voiced by others. The Honourable Mr. Bell expressed himself as being satisfied with the results of separation of finances and particularly urged the Railway Board not to submit to pressure from any source to depart from their policy of steadily building up reserves. I was glad to have that statement from the Honourable Mr. Bell, but I was rather unprepared for his next statement, namely, that he thought we should at once proceed to grant a larger rebate on export coal. I am quite aware that he said that this should be subject to his previous remarks, but the two things to my mind, Sir, are at first sight incompatible.

Then, Sir, I was asked or perhaps the Honourable Mr. Bell was trying to draw me—in a slang term perhaps he was trying to pull my leg—about the Howrah Bridge. The Honourable Mr. Bell knows perfectly well, I think, that the Howrah Bridge at the present moment is under the consideration of the Government of Bengal and it is not before us as a subject. He knows perfectly well that the future Howrah Bridge has always had my sympathy and will always continue to have it. But I am not at the moment prepared to extend very much sympathy, as I said last year, to the people of Calcutta who will not make up their minds to build the bridge and be done with it. We feel exactly as he does about the electrification of suburban railways in Calcutta and we intend to push that scheme forward as soon as we have a satisfactory report.

Sir, the Honourable Mr. Manmohandas Ramji pointed out rather an interesting series of figures with regard to the working expenses of certain railways before and after they came under State management. He pointed out that the Great Indian Peninsula Railway working ratio was at present 69 per cent. whereas Company lines like the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway and the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway were working in the neighbourhood of 60 per cent. It is always possible to use figures like these to get any particular argument. But perhaps the Honourable Mr. Manmohandas Ramji does not remember that about three years ago the Great Indian Peninsula Railway as a Company-managed railway was

working at about 90 per cent. That is to say, its working expenses were very nearly equal to its earnings. It is now working at 69 per cent. That is my answer. This matter, as the Honourable Member himself knows, was threshed out several years ago.

I cannot attempt to deal with all the subjects that the Honourable Rai Bahadur Lala Ram Saran Das dealt with in his speech because many of them, as he would admit himself, deal with matters of detail in a particular part of India and it is not possible for me at this moment nor would it be in accordance with the wishes of the Council to go into them in any detail. But I wish to mention one or two matters which he brought up. As opposed to the Honourable Mr. Bell, the Honourable Rai Bahadur asked that we should not give rebate on export coal but should reduce the long distance coal freights by another 15 per cent. Well, Sir, that is a very nice proposition for the people who live at long distances. But I want the Honourable Rai Bahadur and others to again read our papers and to see how difficult it has been to make the reduction that we have made. We have taken great risks of losing revenue by making that reduction and I want the Council to realise that we cannot go forward rapidly in this matter. As I said in my speech, we must make experiments and we must see the effect before we go further. It is doubtful indeed whether, with our present expenses, it would be a remunerative proposition, to carry coal at long distances at a lower rate than we have at present. We have to remember the increases in our working expenditure, that is to say, the increase in all our fundamental expenses as compared with a few years ago. The Honourable Rai Bahadur asked for my particular sympathy in regard to certain literate apprentices in the North Western Railway workshops who were appointed and received their training before the present arrangements with the MacLagan College were made. I have no knowledge of the rumour that these young men will not get appointments, but I do not believe that they are going to be thrown out in the streets. I have no reason to believe that if they have completed their training satisfactorily there will be any difficulty in finding places for them. As the report of the Industries Commission has been mentioned I would say that it was expressly recommended to us by the Industries Commission that railway workshops should try and train mechanics and literate Indians for mechanical work not only for Railways but for outside work, and in railway workshops like Moghulpura they do get an all-round mechanical training and therefore have something in their hands which they had not got before they went there.

I wish to contradict one statement that my Honourable friend the Rai Bahadur made that they were trained only for railway work and were of no use for outside work.

THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: I think what I said is right, because those apprentices are being trained in one particular department, either in the erecting, millwright or some other department.

THE HONOURABLE SIR CLEMENT HINDLEY: I cannot go into details now, but my impression is that the present course of training takes them through all the workshops in the railway and they get very varied experience.

I would also like to correct another impression which is unhappily prevalent that training schools like Chandausi will necessarily take men straight away from their subordinate duties into the superior services. The

[Sir Clement Hindley.]

training school at Chandausi is primarily for training the staff in their duties so as to make them more efficient in their duties and qualify them gradually for getting up in the service, but because those ten station masters to whom reference has been made have been through the school and have passed the examination, it does not follow that they can at once expect to get promotion. Our object is to take all the staff through that school and improve them in their duties so that they can gradually get promotion.

The Honourable Rai Bahadur in the last of his remarks said that we were going to spend something like 20 crores of rupees on the getting of our rolling stock for automatic couplings and he compared this with the work that is being done in Bombay on the Back Bay Reclamation scheme. There is no comparison at all between these two things, and I am sure the Honourable Member did not intend us to take his remarks seriously. In the first place this is an ordinary business matter which has to be attended to. We do not propose to spend anything like 20 crores. If we go through this work we expect to spend 5 or 6 crores spread out for a number of years. I expect very great benefit to result in the matter of reduction of expenses and in the reduction of first cost of new rolling stock and considerable benefit to the staff who have to do the work of coupling of wagons. I should like to say that this is not extravagance of any kind. It is an essential improvement which we must make in our rolling stock in order to carry the heavier traffic and it is also going to be the means of reducing the risk to workers who have to couple up wagons. With these automatic couplings there will not be such great risk to the men who have to do the coupling. I therefore deprecate the matter being considered as a sort of extravagant adventure. It is a very necessary requirement of our railways and I hope it will go forward rapidly.

THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: One word . . .

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: The Honourable Member is not entitled to another speech.

THE HONOURABLE SIR CLEMENT HINDLEY: Now, Sir, I come to the speech of Dr. Rama Rao, and perhaps I might include with that speech some remarks made by Mr. Ramadas Pantulu. Really, Sir, I cannot believe that the Honourable Mr. Ramadas Pantulu intends me to take quite seriously some of the things he said to-day. It seemed to me, that while he had been contemplating the state of India when there were only a few miles of railway running out of Calcutta and running out of Madras, he had become obsessed with things of those days, and that his mind had not moved forward from that period to this, because he did not seem to know anything about what we have been doing in the last few years on the Railways. If he had read our papers a little more carefully or had studied the subject with that earnestness which he puts into his statements I am quite certain he would not have come to the conclusions which he did. He quoted and read at considerable length a statement from the Industrial Commission's Report. He said things are very backward in regard to the training of Indians as mechanics and that even the Industrial Commission brought this to notice. When did the Industrial Commission sit? In 1915. I think it was in 1915 that that Report was written; more than 10 years ago. Does the Honourable Member intend this House to believe that the state of affairs is now as it was when it was reported on by the

Industrial Commission? Has the Honourable Member tried to find out what we have been doing to improve the training of Indians as mechanics in the workshops and the recruitment of Indians as mechanics? The Honourable Member must be completely ignorant of what has been done at Jamalpur, at Moghulpura, at Kanchrapara and half a dozen other centres where technical schools have been built and hostels have been built and where Indians are now being trained, and where, as another Honourable Member pointed out, the boys who went in for five years' training, have now come out fully trained. That is all I have to say on that subject. The Honourable Mr. Ramadas Pantulu is completely out of date in his information of what we are doing in training on our Railways.

Then, Sir, we have had several statements made by our critics here to the effect that the policy laid down for stores purchase has been completely ignored. I strongly deprecate statements of this kind because we are following out the policy laid down by the Stores Committee, which policy has been embodied in the Stores Purchase Rules. It is only necessary, if any Honourable Member wishes to ascertain the facts to see what we have been purchasing in India and what we have been purchasing abroad, as shown by the figures in our published statements, which shew that a steadily increasing amount of our stores are being purchased in India. One individual case has been mentioned, where the Agent of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway has called for tenders for certain jarra wood sleepers. Well, Sir, there are cases where the indigenous product is not altogether suitable. I reserve my judgment in this particular case; but I wish to say that there is no injustice to India in calling for tenders for materials. After all it is matter of finding out whether the material is cheaper and can be produced cheaper abroad than the indigenous article, or whether the indigenous article is cheaper.

The Honourable Mr. Ramadas Pantulu charged us with excessive caution. He said that we had given a very meagre reduction in fares and rates. He sees a very large reserve and he thinks there should be no need for caution. In the next sentence he went on to say that he regretted very much that this House did not control the Railways, and perhaps he regretted that he and his Party did not control the Railways. Now, Sir, if that is a sample of what he would do if he had control of the Railways, that he would throw all caution to the winds the moment he got a small reserve fund and reduce rates and fares wholesale for the good of the people, instead of first building up reserves, then, Sir, I hope that day may be distant. But I do not think he really meant that.

THE HONOURABLE MR. V. RAMADAS PANTULU: Over-caution, too much caution!

THE HONOURABLE SIR CLEMENT HINDLEY: Well, Sir, the amount of caution any one is entitled to use in a matter of this sort must be a matter for very careful consideration; and I gathered the Honourable Member would use considerably less caution than we should and take much greater risks. At the same time I claim that in view of the possible difficulties in the future in finding the money necessary for our heavy obligations we have gone as far as we can and as far as caution advises us to go. We have promised—the Honourable the Railway Member promised and I myself in my speech promised—that the matter was being further examined; and we do not propose to stop further examination of the subject, simply because we have been able at first examination to make some reductions.

[Sir Clement Hindley.]

I think, Sir, I must leave the various suggestions that were made for additional construction in various parts of India and not comment on them now. We shall have them on the record and refer to them in preparing future construction programmes. But I would like to suggest that some Honourable Members seem to have spoken without having had time to fully study what new lines are proposed in their particular localities.

The last suggestion made by the Honourable Member from the North-West Frontier Province was that we should have further institutions like that we have at Chandausi. He mentioned that he would like to see one at Lahore or Lyallpur. Well, Sir, I have already announced that we are setting up one at Lyallpur which will give training to railway employees in a large portion of the Punjab. We may have one further West later on, but we want this established first at Lyallpur.

I think, Sir, that I have now answered the main criticisms that have been put forward.

THE HONOURABLE SIR CHARLES INNES (Member for Commerce and Railways): Sir, I feel that I have not much excuse for addressing the Council of State this morning, but I do wish to express my regret that an important Select Committee prevented me from attending the earlier part of this debate. Sir Clement Hindley has dealt faithfully with my Honourable friend Mr. Ramadas Pantulu; but I must confess that I myself have a good deal of sympathy with the Honourable gentleman. When I heard his speech it struck me that what the Honourable Member really would have liked would have been a really bad Budget when the Honourable gentleman would have had a really good excuse for an attack upon the Government. But as it was, with the Budget as it is, the Honourable Member laboured very heavily. He had to trot out all the timeworn fallacies which I thought had been put away for ever. The Honourable Member told us that the policy of the Indian Railways was directed solely for the benefit of the foreign capitalist. He made the startling announcement that our Railways were based mainly upon our ports. He went on to say that our railway rates were so designed as to facilitate the import of foreign goods and to encourage the export of raw materials. Well, Sir, that old superstition was dealt with in 1921 by the Acworth Committee. The Acworth Committee said:

"In one respect, at least, the Indian Railways have refrained from following the accepted railway practice in other countries. It is usual in most countries to concede for export traffic through a sea-port rates which are not available to that seaport for local traffic; and *vice versa* in countries which adopt a free trade policy, to fix lower rates for the carriage inwards of goods imported through a port than for goods produced locally at the port town. This practice is not, so far as we have been able to ascertain, followed in India, Bombay receives from upcountry large quantities of raw cotton, part of which is worked up on the spot and part exported. Similarly, Bombay distributes to upcountry points large quantities of cotton cloth, part of it locally manufactured and part imported. The raw cotton rates down to Bombay port and to Bombay town are the same, and so are the manufactured cotton rates upwards. The same principle, we understand, is applied elsewhere, in the case, for instance, of the great Calcutta jute trade."

Now, Sir, I think that before the Honourable Member repeats these hoary old fallacies he really ought to make himself conversant with the literature existing on subjects of this kind. Again, Sir, he used rather an extraordinary argument. In repeating his statement that the Railways assisted

solely for the benefit of the foreign capitalist, he pointed out that in reducing third class passenger fares we had mostly reduced long distance fares; he gave that as an instance of the way in which we favoured the capitalist; but surely the Honourable Member must see that the capitalist does not use third class carriages; still less does the foreign capitalist. I think, Sir, the time is past for statements of the kind that Mr. Ramadas Pantulu just made. I have now been connected with the Indian Railways for five years. I have assisted in this House and in the other House in many debates on railway questions. Particularly in the other House, three or four years ago, statements of this kind were made; but my experience is that these statements are being made less and less; and I think it is beginning to be realised generally that the Government of India and the Railway Department have made it their aim and their sole and single-minded aim to develop the Railways to the best of their ability in the interests of India and in no other interest. I have always had from this Council full recognition of that fact, and I am glad to say that in the other House that fact is being recognised more and more; and I do suggest for the consideration of my Honourable friend that he should reconsider his position in this matter, and that before he makes statements of this kind he should, as I have said before, try to make himself acquainted with the literature which exists upon the subject.

There is just one more subject to which I wish to refer before I sit down, and that is the old and ancient question of Indianisation. Every time I speak upon the Railway Budget I speak upon this particular question. I am quite prepared to admit, Sir, that up to a few years ago Indians were not commonly employed, at any rate, in superior appointments on Indian Railways. But during the last five years there has been a considerable change in this respect. I had the figures taken out only the other day; and if we exclude those departments for which facilities of training do not now exist in India—I am referring to such departments as the Carriage and Wagon and Locomotive Departments—I find that in the last five years 65 per cent. of such vacancies have been filled by Indians, and I claim that that is a very real improvement. It is perfectly true that there are not at present very many Indians in the higher appointments in the Railway Department; but, Sir, as was said in this debate in this Council last year, it must be a question of time before we reach that result. All our higher appointments in the Railway Department are technical appointments; for them we require special knowledge and above all special experience, and you cannot measure the progress of a policy by an hour glass. It is perfectly useless every few months to get up and say "Why have you not got Indians in the higher appointments in the Railway Board?" You must give time for a policy of this kind to work out. But I do claim that we have made in the last few years a very real advance. Even in the Railway Board itself there has been a very great advance ever since last year. Last year in the Railway Board we had 22 gazetted appointments and five Indians. This year we have 17 and seven Indians. Below the Railway Board itself there are Directors and this year two out of the five directors are Indians; and I wish to make it plain that those Indians were not appointed to those particular posts because they were Indians; they were appointed because they were what we considered to be the best men for those jobs; and I claim that that is the only right principle to follow. You must get the best qualified men for higher appointments of this kind; but what I say is that if the best

[Sir Charles Innes.]

qualified man happens to be an Indian, well, nobody is more pleased than I. I think, Sir, that we can claim that in the Railway Department, whatever the Honourable Mr. Ramadas Pantulu may say, that in the last five years, we have made a very great improvement in our Railways. I believe, Sir, that there are very few countries in the world that can show such satisfactory results from their Railways as India has been able to do in the last few years. We are improving the permanent way, we are improving our arrangements for traffic every year, and if only people would trust us, if only they would recognise that we are trying to do our best for India, I am perfectly sure that Sir Clement Hindley and the men who are working with him in a very few years' time will have made the Railways in India an even better instrument of commerce than they are to-day.

STATEMENT OF BUSINESS.

THE HONOURABLE SIR MUHAMMAD HABIBULLAH (Member for Education, Health and Lands): Sir, the lists of business for Monday and Tuesday next week are already in the hands of Honourable Members and the list of business for Wednesday will reach them this evening.

On Thursday next motions will be made for the consideration and passing of the Promissory Notes (Stamp) Bill, the Legal Practitioners (Amendment) Bill and the Trade Unions Bill. The House is aware that the General Budget will be presented on Monday, March the 1st. The principal business for Tuesday, March the 2nd, will be the Contempts of Courts Bill, while Wednesday, March the 3rd, is a non-official day.

With a view to give Honourable Members an opportunity of studying the General Budget prior to its discussion on the following Saturday, it is proposed that the Council should not meet on Thursday, the 4th, and Friday, the 5th March.

The Council then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Monday, the 22nd March, 1926.
