

*Monday,
18th March, 1912*

ABSTRACT OF THE PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

Council of the Governor General of India,

LAWS AND REGULATIONS

Vol. L

April 1911 - March 1912

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OF

THE COUNCIL OF THE GOVERNOR GENERAL OF INDIA

ASSEMBLED FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAKING

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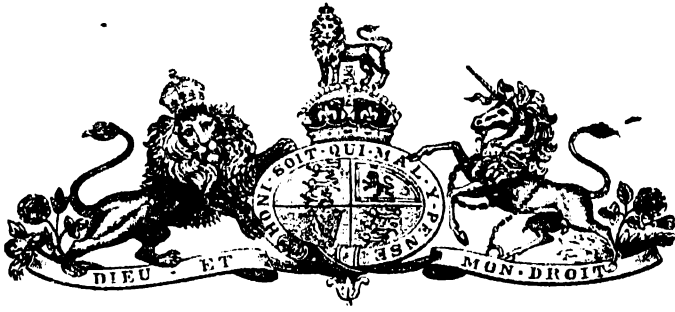


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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.
LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNCIL OF THE GOVERNOR GENERAL OF INDIA,
ASSEMBLED FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAKING LAWS AND REGULATIONS
UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE INDIAN COUNCILS ACTS,
1861 TO 1909 (24 & 25 VICT., C. 67, 55 & 56 VICT., C. 14,
AND 9 EDW. VII, C. 4).

The Council met at Government House, Calcutta, on Monday, the 18th
March 1912.

PRESENT :

His Excellency **BARON HARDINGE OF PENSHURST**, P.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O.,
G.M.S.I., G.M.I.E., Viceroy and Governor General of India, *presiding*,
and 57 Members, of whom 49 were Additional Members.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

The Hon'ble Mr. Gulam Muhammad Bhurgri asked :

“(a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to the following passage in the judgment of Sir Justice Dinshaw Davar in a trial in the last criminal sessions of the Bombay High Court in which Khwaje Mahomed Khan, Khan of Hoti Mardan, and two others were charged with the abduction of two European girls and in which the Advocate General withdrew the charge after the trial had proceeded for three days:—

‘It seems to me that the third accused (the Khan) has been subjected to a great many indignities and the procedure followed there (at Rawalpindi) seems to me to be un-understandable.’

“(b) If so, will Government be pleased to state if they propose to take any steps with regard to the officials responsible for this trial?”

The Hon'ble Sir Reginald Craddock replied :

“Government have received no official information on the subject but are making inquiries.”

The Hon'ble Sir Gangadhar Rao Chitnavis asked :

“(a) Is it a fact that there is congestion of goods on Indian railways from insufficiency of the rolling stock, notwithstanding late additions?”

[*Sir Gangadhar Rao Chitnavis*; *Mr. Clark*; *Mr.* [18TH MARCH 1912.]
Dadabhoj; *Sir Henry McMahon*; *Mr. Muhammad Shafi*; *Sir Reginald Craddock*; *Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya.*]

“(b) If so, is it a fact that in consequence of the congestion in some cases grain in course of transit has been damaged, involving severe loss upon dealers?”

“(c) What steps does Government propose to take to ensure quick transit?”

The Hon'ble Mr. Clark replied :

“As regards questions (a) and (c), I may refer the Hon'ble Member to the statement made in this Council by the President of the Railway Board on the 8th of March during the debate on the second stage of the Budget.

“As regards question (b), Government have received no information or complaints to the effect indicated.”

The Hon'ble Mr. Dadabhoj asked :

“Do Government propose to make arrangements for the maintenance at the various British Embassies of museums of Indian art products?”

The Hon'ble Sir Henry McMahon replied :

“The reply to the Hon'ble Member's question is in the negative.”

The Hon'ble Mr. Muhammad Shafi asked :

“Has the attention of the Government of India been drawn to a note in the *Comrade* of the 24th February anent the question asked in the United Provinces Legislative Council by the Hon'ble Sahibzada Aftab Ahmed Khan regarding the establishment of a colony of Berias near the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh and the reply given thereto by the Local Government? Is Government aware that the Berias are a criminal tribe and that the college at Aligarh is a residential educational institution? Does Government propose to take any action to have the colony in question removed from the place?”

The Hon'ble Sir Reginald Craddock replied :

“The Government of India have seen the article in the *Comrade* referred to by the Hon'ble Member. The Hon'ble Member apparently refers to the establishment of a colony for Haburas at Aligarh which was within the discretion of the Local Government. The Government of India are in possession of no evidence which would justify an order for the removal of the colony.”

The Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya asked :

“(a) Will the Government be pleased to state if its attention has been drawn to an article in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* of the 5th February 1912 and to another in the *Bengali* of the 10th February 1912, inviting attention to the grievance of the clerks of the office of the Deputy Accountant General, Post Office and Telegraphs (Postal Branch), Calcutta, that no final orders have been passed on the several representations made by them to the Government since 1908;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Comptroller and Auditor General, India, informed them last November that the question of their pay could not be taken up until orders had been passed on the report of the Postal Accounts Committee;

(c) whether orders have been passed on that report;

(d) and when final orders may be expected on the question of the pay of the clerks referred to above?”

[18TH MARCH 1912.] [*Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson; Mr. Sinha; Sir Reginald Craddock; Mr. Clark.*]

The Hon'ble Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson replied :

"I would refer my Hon'ble friend to the reply which I gave on the 13th March to the Hon'ble Sir Gangadhar Chitnavis."

The Hon'ble Mr. Sinha asked :

"(a) Has the attention of the Government been drawn to the proceedings of the trial of the Khan of Hoti Mardan and two co-accused in the Bombay High Court before the Hon'ble Sir Justice Dinshaw Davar and especially to the following statements made in Court by the Hon'ble the Advocate General and the presiding Judge:—

The Advocate General.—'The Khan was aged 70 and was a wealthy and influential Chief on the frontier.'

The Judge.—'No one laid any information against the Khan, but still he was arrested and charged although the young ladies made no complaint against him.'

The Advocate General.—'I have considered the case very carefully and have come to the conclusion as Advocate General to withdraw it under section 333 of the Criminal Procedure Code.'

The Judge.—'It seems to me that the third accused (the Khan) has been subjected to a great many indignities and the procedure followed there seems to me to be un-understandable. The third accused as well as the humbler two will leave the Court without a stain on their character?'

"(b) Is it a fact that the Khan was arrested on the 20th December last, under a warrant issued by the District Magistrate of Peshawar, without there being any complaint against him at the time?"

"(c) If so, will Government be pleased to state whether the said District Magistrate still continues to exercise judicial functions? If not, what is his present office?"

"(d) Do Government propose to make any inquiry into the whole matter? If not, will Government be pleased to state their reasons for the same?"

The Hon'ble Sir Reginald Craddock replied :

"I must refer the Hon'ble Member to the answer which I have just given to the question put on the same subject by the Hon'ble Mr. Ghulam Muhammad Bhurgri."

The Hon'ble Mr. Sinha :

"The answer does not cover questions (b), (c) and (d) of my question."

The Hon'ble Sir Reginald Craddock :

"There is no information before the Government yet on these subjects, and the information has been called for, and until then there can be no other answer."

LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANIES BILL.

The Hon'ble Mr. Clark : "My Lord, I will not detain Council for more than a very few moments, for I am fully conscious that Hon'ble Members will wish to get on as quickly as possible from the somewhat arid bones of commercial legislation to the more stimulating topics which await us to-day.

"Hon'ble Members will recollect that, at the last meeting of Council, the Hon'ble Mr. Subba Rao pointed out a drafting difficulty in section 34 read with section 33 of the Life Assurance Bill; and Government undertook to look into the matter. We have since considered it carefully and I have also had the benefit of talking it over with the Hon'ble Mr. Subba Rao and the Hon'ble

[*Mr. Clark ; Mr. Subba Rao ; Babu Bhupendranath Basu ; Sir Reginald Craddock ; Mr. Gokhale.*] [18TH MARCH 1912.]

Mr. Mudholkar. The Hon'ble Mr. Subba Rao pointed out that the section, as it now stands, would in effect confer the somewhat empty boon upon foreign life assurance companies, of requiring them, if admitted to the same exemptions in India as companies operating under the English Assurance Act of 1909, to submit returns in the same form as is proscribed by the English Act. The clause as it stands, therefore, would be very nearly meaningless. We have considered its amendment, which of course would be quite practicable, though rather wider changes would be required than I should like to press on Council at so late a stage of the Bill ; but further examination of the subject suggests a different course which will be more agreeable, I fancy, to my Hon'ble Friends opposite. Hon'ble Members know the reasons why Government were in favour of the section. The principle of exemption for companies in the United Kingdom having been conceded on the grounds of the efficient control of the English law, it seemed reasonable and logical to take the power of extending those privileges to companies domiciled in other countries where similar or more stringent laws were enforced. The principal case which we wished to meet was that of companies which already have to compile returns in a certain form, and which might have to compile a different set for the purposes of the Act when the former might equally well meet the essentials of our requirements, though they might not be in conformity with the letter of the Schedules. This difficulty, however, can be met, if cause is shown, under the general powers conferred by another section in the Bill which, as it happens, was added later. No doubt the point should not have been overlooked ; but these redundancies will sometimes creep in. As regards a large part of its objects, therefore, the section is really superfluous ; and Government have come to the conclusion that it can safely be dropped. I am sorry I was not able to deal with the question at once in the discussion last Wednesday, which would have given me the pleasure of accepting the Hon'ble Mr. Mudholkar's amendment ; but the difficulty indicated by the Hon'ble Mr. Subba Rao was unexpected, and the different sections of the Bill have had to be carefully compared before coming to a decision.

"Therefore, my Lord, I beg to move that clause 34 of the Bill to provide for the Regulation of Life Assurance Companies as amended by the Select Committee be omitted."

The Hon'ble Mr. Subba Rao : "My Lord, I am glad that the Hon'ble Member has seen his way to omit clause 34."

The Hon'ble Babu Bhupendranath Basu : "I congratulate the Hon'ble Member for having for once seen the error of his ways."

The motion was put and agreed to.

The Hon'ble Mr. Clark moved that the Bill, as now amended, be passed.

The motion was put and agreed to.

DELEGATION BILL.

The Hon'ble Sir Reginald Craddock : "My Lord, I beg to present the Report of the Select Committee on the Bill to provide for the delegation of executive powers and duties in certain cases. I propose to reserve any remarks that I have to make in connexion with the Bill for a future occasion."

THE EDUCATION BILL.

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale moved that the Bill to make better provision for the extension of elementary education be referred to a Select Committee consisting of the Hon'ble Mr. Syed Ali Imam, the Hon'ble Sir Harcourt Butler, the Hon'ble Mr. Mazharul Haque, the Hon'ble Nawab Saiyid Muhammad, the Hon'ble Babu Bhupendranath Basu, the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan

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Malaviya, the Hon'ble Mr. Gates, the Hon'ble Sir James Meeson, the Hon'ble Rao Bahadur R. N. Mudholkar, the Hon'ble Mr. Sharp, the Hon'ble Mr. Lyon, the Hon'ble Mr. Carr, the Hon'ble Mr. Arthur, the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Mian Muhammad Shafi and the mover.

He said :—“ My Lord, it is two years to-day to a day since this Council was invited in its very first session after the introduction of the recent reforms to consider a recommendation to the Governor General in Council that a beginning should now be made in the direction of making elementary education free and compulsory throughout the country, and that a mixed Commission of officials and non-officials should be appointed to frame definite proposals. After a lengthy debate, the motion was by leave withdrawn, but the principal suggestions formulated on the occasion were subsequently embodied in a Bill which was introduced in this Council about this time last year. A year has since elapsed, and during the interval, all sides—the Government and the public, officials and non-officials, members of all classes and creeds—have had time to examine the provisions of the Bill. I think the promoters of the measure are entitled to regard with the utmost satisfaction the reception which the Bill has met with in the country ; for, my Lord, it is no exaggeration to say that no measure of our time has received such weighty, such enthusiastic, such overwhelming public support as the Bill now before the Council. My Lord, it has been made abundantly clear in the course of the discussions that that have taken place during the year that most men of light and leading in the country—men distinguished in every walk of life, in learning, in professions, in business, in public affairs, in patriotic or philanthropic endeavour—are on the side of the Bill. The Indian National Congress, the most representative body of educated opinion in India, has strongly supported the measure, and Provincial Conferences held in the different Provinces have also done the same. The Moslem League, whose claim to speak in the name of the great community which it represents is not disputed even by officials, accorded only a fortnight ago its cordial support to the Bill ; and most of its branches throughout the country have also expressed their approval. Most of the local bodies consulted by Provincial Governments, as also the Senate of the Madras University, which was the only University Senate consulted, have expressed themselves in favour of the measure. Public meetings held in nearly every important town throughout the country have adopted resolutions in its support, and numerous special meetings of backward communities, several caste conferences and some missionary organisations have done the same. Then, my Lord, the Indian Press in the country with hardly an exception has with striking unanimity ranged itself on the side of the Bill, and what is even more significant, nearly half the Anglo-Indian Press, the *Indian Daily News* in Calcutta, the *Times of India* in Bombay, and the *Madras Mail* and the *Madras Times* in Madras, have also extended to it their valuable support. Last, my Lord, but not least, I must mention the important deputation—headed by no less a man than Lord Courtney—that waited last year on the Secretary of State and presented to him a memorial signed among others by some very distinguished men in England in support of this Bill. I venture to think that the ultimate success of a measure which has received such widespread, such influential, public support, is practically assured. The main opposition to this Bill has come from official quarters with which I will deal later. Here and there a few non-officials have also struck a note of dissent. But, my Lord, considering the far-reaching character of the issues involved in the measure, and considering also how the human mind is constituted, it is not to be wondered at that there has been this slight dissent ; the wonder rather is that there should be this vast volume of public opinion in support of the measure. The non-official critics of the Bill may roughly be divided into three classes. To the first class belong those very few men—so few indeed that they may be counted on one's fingers—who have rendered distinguished services in the past either to the country as a whole or to their own community, whose claim to be heard with respect on such questions is undisputed, and who, though not against free and compulsory education in the abstract, consider that the introduction of such a system in India at the present stage of the country's progress, even with such

safeguards as are provided in the Bill, is not desirable. My Lord, these elders, whose minds have been cast in the mould of a previous generation, have not the elasticity to advance with the advancing requirements of the country, and we have got to face their disapproval of the present Bill with reluctance and regret. In the wake of these few elders follow a number of younger men, who unquestionably accept their lead in all matters, and who therefore withhold their support from the present Bill. The second class consists of those who cannot understand either the necessity or the value of mass education, to whom the dignity of man as man is an incomprehensible idea, and who regard the poorer classes of the country as made solely to serve those who are above them. My Lord, these men hold these views, because they know no better, but their opposition to this Bill is perfectly intelligible. In the third class come those who are against this Bill because the bulk of officials are understood to be against it. They are against this Bill either because the officials have so much to give or else because they are so constituted that official favour is to them as the breath of their nostrils and an official frown is a heavy misfortune, and because they think nothing of bartering the birthright of our common humanity for something even less substantial than the proverbial mess of pottage. These, my Lord, are the three classes that are against this Bill. Taking all the non-official opponents of the Bill together, I think that their number does not exceed five per cent. at the outside of those who have expressed any opinion on the Bill.

“ My Lord, special weight necessarily attaches first to the opinions of Local Governments, and next to those of local bodies in regard to this Bill. Turning first to the local bodies, I regret that the opinions of all such bodies were not either ascertained or have not been forwarded to the Government of India. In view of the fact that, if the Bill became law, the initiative in regard to its working would have to come from local bodies, it was of the utmost importance to know what the local bodies had to say of the Bill. The Government of Madras is the only Government that has deemed it to be its duty to invite the opinions of all Municipalities and District Boards in the Province, and some of the district boards have in their turn invited the opinions of the Taluka Boards under them. The opinions thus elicited are appended to the letter of the Madras Government, and they afford overwhelming and uncontested evidence of the local bodies in Madras being strongly in favour of the Bill and being ready to avail themselves of its provisions if enacted into law. Of 61 Municipalities whose opinions have been recorded, 55 are in favour of the Bill. Of 24 District Boards, 20 are in favour. In addition, the opinions of 39 Taluka Boards have been ascertained, and they are one and all in favour of the Bill. The next Government in whose papers we find mention of a large number of local bodies in this connection is the Government of the Punjab, unfortunately educationally the most backward Province in the whole country. Here we find that 60 Municipalities are mentioned by name, and of those 32 are in favour and 28 against. In addition, the Deputy Commissioner of Umballa wrote (the local bodies in Umballa are not included among these 60): ‘The consensus of opinion appears to be strongly in favour of the principle of compulsion; the only Municipal Committee which does not favour compulsion was the Municipal Committee of Jagadhri.’ The Deputy Commissioner of Hissar wrote: ‘All the Municipalities of this District, as well as the District Board, have expressed themselves in favour of the Bill.’ The Deputy Commissioner of Ferozapore wrote: ‘I have consulted the District Board and the Municipalities in this district; they all consider the Bill fair, and are in favour of its being passed into law.’ Nineteen District Boards are mentioned in the papers, of whom 6 are in favour of compulsion and 13 against. Considering the extremely backward condition of primary education in rural Punjab, this is not surprising. Turning next to Bengal, we find mention made in the reports of local officers of about 25 Municipalities, of whom 19 are in favour and 6 against. Also there is mention of two District Boards, of whom one is in favour and one against. There is no mention of the remaining local bodies in the Bengal papers. In Eastern Bengal and Assam papers, we find 4 Municipalities mentioned, of whom 3 are in favour; also 6 District Boards, of

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whom 5 are in favour. For Burma the opinions of 16 Municipalities are given, of whom 9 are in favour. The letter of the Bombay Government mentions no local body, but the opinion of the Bombay Corporation was circulated among the members here only two days ago. However, in the report of the Commissioner of the Central Division which accompanies the letter, there is mention made of 6 Municipalities in that division, all in favour. And we know for a fact that most of the Municipalities and a great many of the District Boards in Bombay are in favour of this Bill. In the papers belonging to the United Provinces, only 2 small Municipalities are mentioned, both in favour. Here also we know from the newspapers that most of the Municipalities and a large number of the District Boards are in favour of this Bill. The Central Provinces papers mention only two local bodies—the Municipality of Nagpur and the District Board of Nagpur—of both which bodies my friend behind me is President. Both these bodies are in favour of the Bill. There are besides memoranda from five individual members of different local bodies, of whom four are in favour.

“Turning to what are known as the Presidency Municipalities, namely, Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and Rangoon, we find that Calcutta and Madras are strongly in favour of the Bill. Rangoon declines to express an opinion on the ground that it does not want to be saddled with any expenditure connected with elementary education. The Municipality of Bombay, while in favour of free and compulsory education, and while also in favour of the ultimate introduction of compulsion throughout the country, is unable to approve the special method which is advocated in the Bill, namely, that the initiative should be left to local bodies. But, my Lord, those who know the singular position which the Bombay Municipal Corporation occupies in regard to expenditure on elementary education will at once understand why that body has taken up that attitude. Under an agreement, which is now embodied in an Act of the local legislature, the Bombay Corporation has undertaken to bear the entire cost of primary education within municipal limits in Bombay on condition of being relieved of police charges, the only qualification being that if ever the Government introduces compulsory education in the country and requires the Bombay Corporation to introduce compulsion within its area, the Corporation should receive financial assistance from the Government similar to what other local bodies would receive. The plain financial interest of the Bombay Corporation therefore is not in leaving the initiative to local bodies but in the initiative coming from the Government, and it is no surprise that the Corporation of Bombay is unable to approve of a method which leaves the initiative to local bodies. Before passing from this point, I would respectfully warn the Hon'ble Member in charge of Education against leaning on the opinion of the Bombay Corporation for support, for that Corporation, in addition to being in favour of the principle of free and compulsory education, wants the cost of it to come out of Imperial funds!

“Turning next to the opinions of Local Governments, I would like first of all to present to the Council a brief analysis of the official opinions that have been sent up by the various Local Governments. Among these papers, there are altogether 234 official opinions recorded; of them 90 are in favour of the Bill. Sixty-five of the 234 officials are Indian officials, and of them 30 support the Bill, some of them being very high officials, such as High Court Judges, District Magistrates, District Judges, and so forth. Of the English officials, there are 169 opinions recorded, of which 51 are in favour—a minority no doubt, but still a very respectable minority.

“Before proceeding further, I think I had better explain what I mean by a person being in favour of the principle of the Bill so as to prevent misapprehension of the language which I am employing. My Lord, the principle of the Bill is to introduce compulsion at once in selected areas. Not all over the country, but in selected areas; not at some remote time, but at once. To make a beginning at once in selected areas, the initiative being left to local bodies—that is the fundamental idea of the Bill. All else is a matter of detail. Some of the details are important, others unimportant. The question

of a local education rate, the question whether education is to be absolutely free, or free for poor people only, the proportion of cost which the Government is to bear,—all these are important matters, but matters of detail capable of adjustment when the final settlement of the scheme takes place. Now, all those who are in favour of the fundamental part of the Bill, I claim to be in favour of the Bill for my present purpose; all those, on the other hand, who cannot assent to it, against the Bill. Now, in Madras, the opinions of no European officials are given, the only exception being that of two European High Court Judges, who are both in favour of the Bill. In Bombay, out of 19 European officials consulted, 8 are in favour, one of them being the Director of Public Instruction, and 2 being Inspectors of Schools for the Presidency proper (the 3rd Inspector, an Indian, being also in favour), 2 Commissioners of Divisions out of 3 in the Presidency proper, and 3 Collectors. In Bengal, out of 21 European officers consulted, 4 are in favour, all being District Magistrates. In Eastern Bengal and Assam, out of 21, 2 are in favour, both being District Magistrates. In the United Provinces, out of 38 officers consulted, 6 are in favour, 1 of them being a High Court Judge, 1 a Commissioner, and 4 Collectors. In the Punjab, out of 38 European officers consulted, no less than 20 are in favour of the Bill—the largest proportion of European officers in favour of the Bill thus, strangely enough, coming from the Punjab. Among these 20, there is 1 Financial Commissioner, 1 Commissioner, 9 Deputy Commissioners, 5 Divisional Judges, 3 District Judges, and 1 Sub-Divisional Officer. In the Central Provinces, only 4 official opinions are given, out of which 2 are in favour, both being Commissioners of Divisions. On the whole, my Lord, I claim that a very respectable minority of European officials is in favour of the measure. The officials who are opposed to this Bill may roughly be divided into three classes. First come a few Rip Van Winkles who appear to be sublimely unconscious as to what is going on not only in the rest of the world, but in India itself. To this class also belong a few cynics who do not understand the value of mass education, and who naively ask what good mass education has done anywhere. I was astonished to find among this class an Inspector of Schools in Madras. The very least that a kind Government can do for him is to transfer him to some more congenial Department, say the Department of Forests! To the second class belong those who see in a wide diffusion of elementary education a real danger to British rule; also those who are against mass education, because they are against all popular progress, and who imagine in their shortsightedness that every step gained by the people is one lost by them. In the third class—and I am glad to say the bulk of the official opinions recorded belong to this class—are those who accept the necessity and the importance of mass education, who accept the policy which has been repeatedly laid down by the Government of India during a period of more than 60 years, but who do not recognise the necessity of compulsion at the present moment. They think that a great part of the educational field has to be covered on a voluntary basis, that compulsion would be inexpedient, and would lead to hardship, to discontent, and to danger. Some of them object to this measure on educational or on financial grounds. The outstanding feature of the official opposition to the Bill is however the fact that every Local Government that was consulted on this Bill has gone against the measure, and that makes it necessary that we should examine the opinions of Local Governments and the objections raised by them in some detail. The only Local Government that comes very near to supporting the principle of the Bill is the Government of Madras. Not that that Government does not regard the Bill as objectionable or argue against it. What distinguishes it, however, from the other Local Governments is that it does not ignore the strength of the case in favour of the Bill, and that it does not argue as though the heavens would fall if the Bill were passed into law. After urging several objections against the Bill the Madras Government says at the close of its letter that if the Government of India were disposed to accept this Bill, it would like it to be confined for the present to municipal areas only. The answer to that is that it would be entirely in the hands of the Government of India and the Local Governments to so confine it for the present. The Government of India could lay down such a proportion of school attendance to the total school-going population as a necessary preliminary test to

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be satisfied before compulsion is introduced, that thereby only Municipalities and not District Boards could for the present come under the Bill. Moreover, if any rural area wanted to try the measure, the Local Government could withhold its sanction. This opinion of the Madras Government, again, is the opinion of three members out of four. The fourth member, the late Mr. Krishna-swami Iyar, one of the most brilliant men of our day, a man whose untimely death has made a gap in the ranks of public workers in the country, which it will take long to fill, has written a masterly minute of dissent giving his whole-hearted support to the Bill and demolishing the objections urged by his colleagues against the measure. The next Local Government that comes, in a grudging manner and in spite of itself, to a conclusion not wholly dissimilar to that of the Madras Government is the Administration of the Central Provinces. After exhausting everything that can possibly be said against the Bill, that Government says in the end that if the Government of India wanted to try the Bill, it might be tried in a few selected municipal areas only. Only it does not want a general Act of this Council for the whole country, but it would like an amendment to be undertaken of the various Provincial Municipal Acts for the purpose; and it would lay down a condition, that only those Municipalities should be allowed to introduce compulsion which are prepared to bear the whole cost of compulsion themselves! Now, my Lord, if the object we have in view can be attained by amending Provincial Local Self-government Acts, I for one have no objection whatever. All I want is that local bodies should have the power to introduce compulsion, where a certain condition of things has been reached, under the control and with the assistance of Local Governments. But I do not understand why the Central Provinces Government should lay down that condition that local bodies, wanting to introduce compulsion, should bear the entire cost themselves. I can understand a Local Government saying that it cannot finance any scheme of compulsion out of its own resources. But I cannot understand why the Central Provinces Administration should try to impose such a condition unless it be to punish those Municipalities which show special keenness for education in their areas. I am quite sure that that was not the meaning of the Local Government, and therefore I must frankly say I do not understand why this condition has been laid down. The Government of Bengal sees no objection *per se* to the principle of compulsory elementary education, only it thinks that, considering the apathy of the people at the present moment, compulsion is not suitable. Moreover, it says, that if it is called upon to introduce compulsion in the near future, it will not be able to find the money out of Provincial revenues, and that it would be forced to look to the Government of India for assistance. The Governments of Eastern Bengal and the Punjab oppose the Bill merely on general grounds, the letter of the Government of Eastern Bengal being almost perfunctory in its treatment of the subject. The letter of the United Provinces Government is a document that might have been written with some excuse 20 years ago. I cannot understand how a Provincial Government, at the beginning of the 20th century, can put forth arguments such as are contained in the letter of the acting Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces. The Government of Burma opposes the Bill on grounds the very reverse of those on which other Local Governments oppose it. Other Local Governments oppose the Bill because there is not a sufficient advance made in the field of elementary education in their Provinces; but the Government of Burma opposes the Bill because there is already a sufficiently large advance of elementary education in that Province! The last Government that I would mention in this connection is the Government of Bombay. My Lord, this Government is the strongest opponent of the Bill, and I feel bound to say—though it hurts my Provincial pride to have to say so—that the very vehemence with which this Government argues the case against the Bill is calculated to defeat its own purpose, and that the terms of impatience in which its letter is couched, while not adding to the weight to the argument, only suggests a feeling of resentment that any non-official should have ventured to encroach on a Province which it regards as an official monopoly. My Lord, it will be convenient to deal with the objections, which have been raised by the several Local Governments, all together. Before

doing so, however, I think I should state briefly again to the Council the case for the Bill, so that members should see the grounds for and against the Bill side by side before them. My Lord, the policy of the Government of India in this matter, as I have already observed, is now a fixed one. The Government of India have accepted in the most solemn and explicit manner the responsibility for mass education in this country. The Educational Despatch of 1854, the Education Commission's Report of 1882, with the Resolution of the Government of India thereon, and the Resolution of Lord Curzon's Government of 1904, all speak with one voice on this point, namely, that the education of the masses is a sacred responsibility resting upon the Government of India. When we, however, come to consider the extent of the field which has so far been covered, I feel bound to say that the progress made is distinctly disappointing. Taking the figures for 1901, the beginning of this century, and that means after 50 years of educational effort, the number of boys at school in this country was only about 32 lakhs, and the number of girls only a little over 5 lakhs. Taking only 10 per cent.—not 15 per cent. as they take in the West and as they do in official publications, even in India, taking only a modest 10 per cent.—as the proportion of the total population that should be at school, I find that in 1901 only about 27 per cent. of the boys and about $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the girls that should have been at school were at school! During the last ten years, elementary education has no doubt been pushed on with special vigour and the rate of progress has been much faster. Even so, what is the position to-day? From a statement which was published by the Education Department the other day, I find that the number of boys at school has risen during these ten years from 32 lakhs to a little under 40 lakhs, and the number of girls from 5 lakhs to a little under 7 lakhs. Taking the new census figures of our population, this gives us for boys a proportion of 31 per cent. and for girls $5\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. Taking the proportion of total school attendance to the total population of the country, we find that the percentage was only 1·6 ten years ago, and it is now no more than 1·9. My Lord, all the Local Governments have stated that we must adhere to the present voluntary basis for extending primary education, and the Bombay Government professes itself to be very well pleased with the rate at which it is moving in the matter. A small calculation will show how long it will take for every boy and every girl of school-going age to be at school at the present rate. I have stated just now that during the last ten years the number of boys at school has risen from 32 to 40 lakhs or a total increase in ten years of $7\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs, and the number of girls has risen from 5 to under 7 lakhs, or an increase of about $1\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs. This gives us an annual increase for boys of 75,000 and for girls of 17,000. Now, assuming that there is no increase of population in future—absolutely no increase of population—an obviously impossible assumption—even then at the present rate a simple arithmetical calculation will show that 115 years will be required for every boy and 665 years for every girl of school-going age to be at school! Even in Bombay, where things are slightly more advanced, it will take at least 75 years for every boy of school-going age between 6 and 10 years of age to be at school. Well might Mr. Orange, the late Director General of Education, who was in this Council two years ago, exclaim:—

'If the number of boys at school continued to increase, even at the rate of increase that has taken place in the last five years, and there was no increase in population, several generations would still elapse before all the boys of school-going age were at school.'

'And well might my late lamented friend Mr. Krishnaswamy Iyar of Madras, after a similar examination of the figures for that Presidency, observe in terms of sorrow:—'The voluntary method of persuasion must be condemned as a hopeless failure.'

'My Lord, this then is the position. The Government of India are committed to a policy of mass education, and the rate at which we have been going for the last 60 years is hopelessly slow. Even at the accelerated pace

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of the last ten years, it will take enormously long periods for every boy and every girl to be at school. Moreover, this does not take into account the natural and necessary increases of population in the country. What then is to be done? Are we going to content ourselves with experiments of our own only, experiments which can only prolong the reign of ignorance in the country? My Lord, India must profit by the example and by the experience of other civilized countries. And other civilized countries have come to only one conclusion in this matter, and that is that the State must resort to compulsion in order to secure universal education for the people. Most of the Western civilized countries have accepted this, and I have already given to the Council, when introducing this Bill, statistics showing what progress they have made under a system of compulsory education, and how India compares with them. There are also the examples nearer India, of which I have spoken—examples of the Philippines, of Ceylon and of Baroda—which are of the utmost importance, and the mere assertion that their circumstances are different from those of British India cannot dispose of them. Of course no two cases can be exactly alike. But what you must show is that their circumstances are so different that what has succeeded in their case will not succeed in ours. And till you show this, we are entitled to say that the experiment which has succeeded elsewhere should also be tried in India. I do not see what difference there is between the population of Ceylon and the population of the Southern Presidency or between the population of Baroda and the population of British Gujarat. Therefore, those who argue that these analogies will not do on the score that the circumstances are different, will have to establish the difference they speak of and not merely content themselves with the assertion that the cases are different. Moreover, I will mention to-day another instance—an instance which I was not able to mention last year because I had no definite information then on the subject—that of a most interesting experiment that has been recently tried with success in another Native State in India. It is a State in the Bombay Presidency and the experiment has been made under the very eye of the Bombay Government, not by the Chief, but by a British officer appointed by the Government as Administrator during the minority of the Chief—I refer to the State of Sangli. That State has a population of a little over 2 lakhs. Captain Burke, the Administrator, who was at the head of the State for 6 or 7 years, found that the average school-attendance was very low in the State, being only about 2 per cent. of the population. At the end of 1907, he issued orders throughout the State making elementary education both free and compulsory under certain conditions. He, however, approached the problem from another standpoint. He laid down that at least 4 per cent. of the total population, that is, twice the percentage for British India, must be at school. He ordered schools to be opened in every village with a population of 400 and above, and his orders to the village officials were that where the attendance at school exceeded 4 per cent. there was to be no compulsion, but if it was lower than four per cent. compulsion was to be applied, not only in the case of boys but also in the case of girls! The age limits for boys were laid down to be between 7 and 12 and for girls between 7 and 10, and the responsibility was thrown on the village officials to ensure at least a 4 per cent. attendance, the Education Department of the State inspecting the work with care and vigilance. And in less than three years, as a result of these orders, the number of children at school doubled itself. In 1907, only about 5,000 children in a population of little over 2 lakhs were at school; in 1910, 10,000 children were at school, the number of schools too had largely increased; but while these most gratifying results were being obtained, hardly anyone outside the State knew anything about what was going on. Those who speak of the opposition which might be encountered from the mass of the people themselves if compulsion is introduced, those who urge that there might be trouble, might well take note of the fact that in this State of Sangli compulsion was introduced not in advanced but in the most backward areas, not by the Chief, but by the British officer, and the experiment has proved so successful and has been so quietly carried out that very few outside the State have even heard of it. I therefore contend that we, in British India, might also have recourse to

compulsion with great advantage. I for one shall rejoice if the British Government of the country takes its courage into both hands and comes forward boldly to introduce compulsion throughout the country for both boys and girls—the whole field to be covered in a certain number of years. But since that cannot be, and if anyone has any doubt in the matter that doubt will be dissipated by a reference to the official opinions received on the present Bill, the only alternative is for local bodies to be empowered to take the initiative, and introduce compulsion with the sanction and under the control of the Local Government. Local bodies, however, cannot take the initiative, unless there is legislation to empower them, and that is the reason why this Bill has been introduced. Whether this object is gained by enacting a special law for the whole country or by an amendment of the old Local Self-government Acts of the different Provinces is a minor matter. The great thing is to make a beginning in introducing compulsion. Once a beginning is made, the public mind in the country will be rapidly familiarised with the idea of compulsion, and it will then not take more than 20 years at the outside to have a system of universal education in the country in full operation. As apprehensions are entertained in official and other quarters as to how compulsion will be regarded by the people, it is necessary to proceed cautiously; hence the proposal that the experiment should first be tried in selected areas only. Again, there is a fairly general opinion among those who have given any thought to the subject that for compulsion to be successfully applied in British India, there should be among the people a fair spread of elementary education, so that they may be in a position to appreciate its benefits. For that reason our proposal is that no local body should take up the question of compulsion unless at least 33 per cent. of the school-going population within its area is already at school. And in the Bill the power to lay down this proportion or any other proportion is left to the Government of India, so that if they deem it necessary they might prescribe a higher proportion. Moreover, no local body under the Bill can introduce compulsion without obtaining the previous sanction of the Local Government. To begin with, compulsion is contemplated only for boys, though power is taken to extend it, in due course, to girls; and I do hope that whenever it comes, it will be so extended to girls. The cost of the scheme is to be shared between local bodies and the Local Governments in a reasonable proportion, which, in my opinion, should be one-third for local bodies and two-thirds for Local Governments, the actual proportion, however, being laid down by the Government of India, and additional funds being placed by the Supreme Government at the disposal of Provincial Governments for meeting the Government share of the cost. The Bill proposes to exempt very poor people from the payment of fees as a matter of right, and in all cases local bodies, which are empowered to levy a special education rate, if necessary, will be at liberty to remit fees altogether. The responsibility for providing adequate school accommodation is thrown on local bodies, who will also have to arrange for a reasonable enforcement of compulsion. The curriculum must be approved by the Education Department of the Local Government, and finally, following the example of the compulsory Acts of other countries, provision is made for absence from school for reasonable excuses and penalties provided for wilful absence without reasonable excuse.

“ This, my Lord, is the Bill, and this is the case for the Bill. I will now proceed to consider the more important objections which the different Local Governments have urged against this Bill, as also those that have been urged by some non-official critics. I will dismiss with very few words the objection that a spread of mass education in British India involves danger to British rule. My Lord, I do not believe that there would be any such danger. My own belief is that it is rather the other way, that there will be danger, not from the spread of education, but from the withholding of education. But, my Lord, even if there is a possible element of danger in the spread of education, it is the clear duty of the British Government to face that danger and to go on with a faithful discharge of their responsibility. I do not think that any sane Englishman will urge that the people of this country should pay the price of perpetual

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ignorance for even such advantages as the most enthusiastic supporter of British rule may claim for it. Leaving therefore that objection aside, there are seven objections to which I would like briefly to refer. The first objection is to compulsion itself. The second objection is urged on educational grounds. The third is on the score of the cost of the scheme. The fourth is on account of alleged financial inequality and injustice in which the scheme would result. These four are official objections. Then there are three non-official objections. The first is to the levy of a special educational rate; the second to the levy of fees from parents whose income is not below Rs. 10 a month; and the third is the Muhammadan objection that the provisions of the Bill may be used to compel Moslem children to learn non-Moslem languages. I will answer these objections briefly one by one. The principal argument of those who are against compulsion is that there is plenty of room yet for work on a voluntary basis; that schools are filled as soon as they are opened, thus showing that the need of the situation is more schools and not compulsion; and that in any case till persuasion is exhausted, it is not desirable to go in for compulsion. Now, my Lord, this statement is not a complete statement of the case. It is quite true that in certain places, as soon as schools are opened, they are filled. But there is also ample official evidence to show that in many areas schools have had to be shut down because children would not come. We find a statement to this effect in the United Provinces official papers. Mr. Maynard of the Punjab, in a most thoughtful opinion recorded on the Bill, says:—‘It will very frequently be found that a perfectly genuine demand for a school on the part of a zealous minority does not guarantee an attendance after the school is provided, and it is occasionally necessary to close for this reason schools which have been opened on too sanguine a forecast.’ In Bengal and Eastern Bengal also several zamindars have complained that though they opened free schools on their estates, it was found difficult to get boys to attend them, because of the great apathy among the people. The real fact is that there are two factors, as Mr. Orange has stated in the last quinquennial report on education, that cause the smallness of school attendance. One is undoubtedly the want of schools. But the other is the apathy of parents, even where schools exist. ‘The apathy of the populace,’ says Mr. Orange, ‘towards primary education is often mentioned and does undoubtedly operate as a cause which keeps school attendance low.’ He admits this, though he himself would like to push on education for the present on a voluntary basis only. Now, the remedy for this state of things must also be two-fold. First of all local bodies must be required to provide the necessary educational facilities for children that should be at school - school-houses, teachers, etc. That is one part of compulsion. Then they must be empowered to require parents to send their children to school - that would be the second part of compulsion. Now, my Lord, this Bill advocates both sides of this two-fold compulsion. It not merely requires parents in the areas where the Bill may be introduced to send their children to school, it also throws a definite responsibility on local bodies coming under the Bill to provide the necessary school accommodation and other facilities for the education of all the children within their area. Then it is said that compulsion would cause hardship, would cause discontent, and would prove dangerous. Well, the experience of other countries and as also in our own does not justify this view; and in any case, even if there is some discontent, that has got to be faced in view of the great interests that are involved in this matter. It is argued by some that the poorer people will be exposed to the exactions of a low-paid agency if compulsion is introduced. I think the fears on this subject are absurdly exaggerated. But if the people are so weak as to succumb easily to such exactions, the only way in which they can be strengthened is by spreading education among them and by enabling them to take better care of themselves.

“Those who object to the Bill on educational grounds urge that it is undesirable to extend the kind of education that is at present given in primary schools, for it is worse than useless. Most of the teachers are not trained teachers, the school buildings are unfit for holding classes in, and therefore, until these defects are moved, until there is a sufficient supply of trained

teachers forthcoming, until ample decent school accommodation is available, the question of extension should wait. My Lord, those who raise these objections ignore what is the primary purpose of mass education. The primary purpose of mass education is to banish illiteracy from the land. The quality of education is a matter of importance that comes only after illiteracy has been banished. Now, the primary purpose being to banish illiteracy, teachers who could teach a simple curriculum of the 3 R's, and houses hired by or voluntarily placed by owners at the disposal of school authorities, must do for the present. In Japan, when they began compulsion, they held classes in the verandahs of private houses. I think what was not beneath the dignity of Japan need not be beneath the dignity of this country. Of course I do not depreciate the value and importance of trained teachers and decent school-houses; but I say that we cannot wait till all these defects are first put right before taking up the question of banishing illiteracy from the land. Let that work be resolutely taken in hand, and as we go along let us try to secure for the country better teachers and better school-houses.

“The third objection to the Bill is on the score of cost. My Lord, a lot of wild criticism has been indulged in by the opponents of the Bill on this point. Nobody denies that the cost of a compulsory scheme is bound to be large. But all sorts of fantastic estimates have been brought forward to discredit the scheme in the eyes of those who can be misled by such tactics. I think the calculation of cost is a fairly simple one. The Bill is intended to apply in the first instance to boys only, and we will therefore for the present take the cost for boys. Taking 10 per cent. of the total male population as the number of boys between the ages of 6 and 10, and taking the male population at about 125 millions, according to the latest Census, we find that the number of boys that should be at school is about 12½ millions. Of these, about 4 millions are already at school. That leaves about 8½ millions to be brought to school. Now, Mr. Orange, the Director General of Education, in a note which he prepared for the Government, took the average cost of education per boy at Rs. 5, the present average cost is less than Rs. 4; the highest is in Bombay where it is Rs. 6-8 and everywhere else it is less than Rs. 4. These figures are given in the Quinquennial Report of Mr. Orange. Mr. Orange takes Rs. 5 per head, and I am willing to take that figure. Now, Rs. 5 per head, for 8½ millions of boys amounts to about 4½ crores per year, or, say, 4½ crores per year. I propose that this cost should be divided between the Government and the local bodies in the proportion of two-thirds and one-third; that is, the Government should find 3 crores and local bodies the remaining 1½ crores. This again will be worked up to in ten years. If we have to find this money in ten years, it means a continuous increase of about 30 lakhs in our annual expenditure on primary education. Allowing another crore for pushing on education on a voluntary basis for girls, to be reached in ten years, means another 10 lakhs a year, or a continuous annual addition of 40 lakhs of rupees in all. Now, I do not think that this is too much for the Government to find. My Lord, I have given some attention to the question of our finance for some years, and I do not think that an addition of 40 lakhs every year is really beyond the power of the Government of India. Moreover, even if it be proposed that the whole of these 4 crores should be raised straight off, that all boys should be brought to school compulsorily at once, and that a crore of rupees more should be spent on the education of girls—assuming that these four crores have to be found straight off, an addition of 2 per cent. to our customs will solve the problem. Our customs-revenue is about ten crores this year with the duty standing at 5 per cent.; about 2 per cent. more will bring us the required 4 crores. Now, there is no special merit in having our customs-duty at 5 per cent., and they might as well stand at 7 per cent. without causing any serious hardship to anybody. There was a time when they stood at 10 per cent. in this country, and at the present moment they are at 8 per cent. in Egypt. I do not think therefore that there are really any very insuperable difficulties in the way of the scheme on the score of cost.

“Then, it is said that a scheme like this, a permissive scheme, which allows areas to come under compulsion one by one, is bound to result in serious financial

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injustice and inequality as regards the assistance received from Government by different local areas. Now, my Lord, I feel bound to say that this is one of the flimsiest arguments that have been urged against the scheme which we are considering. If anybody proposed as a permanent arrangement that elementary education in certain parts of the country should be on a compulsory basis and in certain others on a voluntary basis, and if the areas that were on a compulsory basis got more from Government than the areas that were on a voluntary basis, there would be some force in the contention that different areas were being differently treated. But the arrangement that I propose is clearly transitional; in the end every part of the country is to rest on a compulsory basis and would share equally in the allotment made by Government. In a transitional stage, provided the same terms are equally open to all, I do not see where the injustice or inequality comes in. If a local body feels aggrieved that some other local body gets more than itself from Government, the remedy is in its own hands. All that it has got to do is to go in for compulsion itself. Those who object to the proposed scheme on the score that it would lead to financial inequality and injustice might object at once to the principle of introducing compulsion gradually, area by area. For how are we to proceed area by area, unless those areas that introduce compulsion first get also at the same time larger assistance from the Government?

“Moreover, is there absolute equality even at present in all matters? Even now, on a voluntary basis, the Government, in many parts of the country, bears about one-third of the cost of primary education, with the result that those areas that spend more get more from the Government, and those that spend less get less. Is that equal?”

“Again, take the question of sanitary grants. Under the existing arrangements, those local bodies that go in for the construction of sanitary projects get a certain grant from the Government. Now, if the local bodies that do not take in hand such projects were to complain of injustice, because others that do are assisted by Government, their complaint would be perfectly ridiculous, and yet it is the same kind of complaint that is urged against the scheme of the Bill. I do not think that any weight need really be attached to the objection on the score of financial injustice and inequality when it is remembered that such inequality can only be a passing, transitional stage. It is said that under the Bill, advanced areas and communities would be benefited at the expenso of the less advanced. That argument is based on a complete misapprehension of the scheme. No one has ever suggested, or can possibly suggest, that any money should be taken out of existing expenditure on primary education for its extension on a compulsory basis. No one can also possibly wish to curtail future increases in the allotments to education on a voluntary basis. The expenditure for introducing compulsion is to come out of additional revenues, partly raised locally and partly raised specially by the Government of India. The Government of India's funds will have necessarily to pass through the Local Governments, since education is a Provincial charge. But that does not mean that Provincial Governments will have to curtail their present or future expenditure on a voluntary basis to finance any scheme of compulsion.

“My Lord, I have so far dealt with the four principal official objections against the Bill. I will now refer very briefly to the three non-official arguments which I have mentioned. The first argument is that while there is no objection to compulsion itself, the levy of a special education rate, where it would be necessary, would be most objectionable. Well, my Lord, I must say to that, that if we merely want compulsion, but are not prepared to make any sacrifices for the benefits that would accrue from it to the mass of our people, the sooner we give up talking about securing universal education, the better. The practice of the whole civilized world points out that a part of the burden must be borne by the local bodies. There is only one exception, as far as I am aware, and that is Ireland, where almost the entire cost of elementary education comes from the Imperial Exchequer. They have given this special treatment to Ireland because for a long time Ireland has complained of being treated with great financial injustice under the arrangement that has been in existence since the Act of Union was passed more than a century ago. If we take the

whole of the United Kingdom, we find that the local bodies there bear on the whole about a third of the total cost. It is the same in France. And in other countries, the local proportion is still larger. I cannot therefore see how anybody can reasonably urge that the whole cost of compulsion should be borne by the Central Government.

"The next objection urged in some non-official quarters is that if you make education compulsory, it must be made free and the Bill does not make it free for all. I frankly confess that the proposal embodied in the Bill on this point was intended to conciliate official opinion. My own personal view always was that, where education was made compulsory, it should also be made free. Two years ago, when I placed my Resolution on this subject before this Council, I urged that view in explicit terms. In framing the Bill, however, I was anxious to go as far as possible to conciliate official opinion, and I therefore put in the provision that no fees should be charged in the case of those whose incomes were below Rs. 10 a month, and that above that limit the matter should be left to the discretion of local bodies. Well, my Lord, I must frankly admit that I have failed in my object. Official opinion has not been conciliated; and I do not see why I should allow room for a division in our own ranks by adhering to this provision. I shall therefore be glad to go back to my original proposal in this matter that, where education is compulsory, it should also be free.

"Lastly, my Lord, a word about the Muhammadan objection. I believe I need not say that there never was any intention that the compulsory clauses of the Bill should be utilized to compel Moslem boys to learn non-Moslem languages. However, to remove all misapprehension on this point, I am perfectly willing that where 25 children speaking a particular language attend a school, provision should be made for teaching those children in that language; and further, where the number is less than that, it should be left to the community itself to say whether the children should come under the compulsory clauses of the Bill or not. I have discussed this matter with several leading Muhammadan gentlemen and I understand that this would meet their view.

"My Lord, I have now dealt with all principal objections urged against the Bill. I cannot understand why there should be all this vehement opposition in certain quarters to a measure so modest in its scope and so permissive in its character. No local body is compelled to come under this Bill, that wants to keep out of it. Any Local Government that wants to prevent compulsion being introduced in any particular area, can prevent it by withholding its sanction to its introduction. And, lastly, the supreme control of the Government of India is retained at the initial stage by the provision that it is the Government of India that should lay down the proportion of school-going children at school which must be satisfied before any local body can take up the question of compulsion. I cannot see how such a Bill can do harm in any locality. I would only invite the attention of the Council to the fact that at least a hundred Municipalities, more or less important, are willing to-day to try the experiment in their areas if this Bill is passed, and I do not see why these Municipalities should not be permitted to make the experiment. Of course the whole thing hinges on whether the Government of India are prepared to find a good part of the cost. That is, in fact, the real crux of the question, and whether the Bill is accepted or thrown out, it is perfectly clear that no large extension of elementary education is possible in the country, unless the Government of India come forward with generous financial assistance. I would therefore like to make a special appeal to the Hon'ble Member in charge of Education on this occasion. My Lord, the Hon'ble Member knows that no one has acclaimed more enthusiastically than myself the creation of the Education Department, and I am sure every one will admit ungrudgingly that during the year and a half that the Department has been in existence, it has already amply justified its existence by the large grants, recurring and non-recurring, that it has succeeded in securing both for education and sanitation in this country. We are sincerely grateful to the Government of India for these grants. And,

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my Lord, in view of the conversation with Your Excellency which was mentioned by the Finance Member the other day, I think we are justified in expecting that in succeeding years these grants will grow more and more, and not less. Well, so far I believe we are all at one with the Department, but I would like to say something more to the Hon'ble Member. My Lord, I know that the fate of my Bill is sealed. Now, there are obvious disadvantages attaching to a private Bill. Why not introduce a Government measure, after the ground has been cleared by the rejection of this Bill? Why not—I put it to the Hon'ble Member—introduce a Government measure? It is quite true that there is room for progress on a voluntary basis. Let the Local Governments who are so anxious to keep education on a voluntary basis be required to push on its spread as vigorously as possible on a voluntary basis. And let the Government of India in the Education Department take up the question of pushing it on on a compulsory basis, as its own special charge. I would like to put it to the Hon'ble Member, Is he content merely to take grants from the Finance Department and distribute them among the various Local Governments and then look on, or is he not anxious, as I think it is his duty, to take a hand in the game himself? If he is, then I suggest that there should be a division of functions such as I have described between the Provincial Governments and the Government of India. The progress of education on a voluntary basis should be left to the Provincial Governments. They do not want compulsion. They all prefer to push it on a voluntary basis. Let us then leave that work to them; let the Government of India, with its wider outlook and its larger resources, come forward, and, profiting by the example of other civilized countries, provide for the gradual introduction of compulsion in this country. Let the Government take up the question of compulsion themselves, then they will be able to provide all the safeguards that they deem necessary. Let them frame a Bill free from all the blemishes which have been discovered in mine, and let them carry it through the Council. And let them, at the same time, announce a generous policy of substantial assistance to local bodies in carrying out the provisions of the measure. Let the Government, my Lord, let this be done, and let the burden of all future extensions be shared between the Government and the local bodies in the proportion of two-thirds and one-third. I would recommend that both for voluntary and compulsory extensions—I mean Provincial Governments should bear two-thirds of the cost of all future extensions of elementary education on a voluntary basis, and the Government of India, two-thirds of the cost of compulsion. Then, my Lord, elementary education will advance in this country with truly rapid strides, and the Hon'ble Member in charge of the Education Department will, under Your Excellency, write his name large on the memory of a grateful people.

“ My Lord, I have done. No one is so simple as to imagine that a system of universal education will necessarily mean an end to all our ills, or that it will open out to us a new heaven and a new earth. Men and women will still continue to struggle with their imperfections and life will still be a scene of injustice and suffering, of selfishness and strife. Poverty will not be banished because illiteracy has been removed, and the need for patriotic or philanthropic work will not grow any the less. But with the diffusion of universal education the mass of our countrymen will have a better chance in life. With universal education there will be hope of better success for all efforts, official or non-official, for the amelioration of the people—their social progress, their moral improvement, their economic well-being. I think, my Lord, with universal education the mass of the people will be better able to take care of themselves against the exactions of unscrupulous money-lenders or against the abuses of official authority by petty men in power. My Lord, with 94 per cent. of our countrymen sunk in ignorance, how can the advantages of sanitation or thrift be properly appreciated, and how can the industrial efficiency of the worker be improved? With 94 per cent. of the people unable to read or write, how can the evil of superstition be effectively combated, and how can the general level of life in the country be raised? My Lord, His Majesty the King-Emperor, in delivering his message of hope to

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the people of this country before he left Calcutta, was pleased to say : ' And it is my wish too that the homes of my Indian subjects may be brightened and their labour sweetened by the spread of knowledge, with what follows in its train—a higher level of thought, of comfort, and of health.' No nobler words were ever uttered. May we not hope that the servants of His Majesty in this country will keep these words constantly before their minds and will so discharge the responsibility which they impose that future generations in this country will be enabled to turn to His Majesty's declaration with the same fervent and reverent gratitude with which the people of Japan recall their Emperor's famous rescript of 1872 ? My Lord, I know that my Bill will be thrown out before the day closes. I make no complaint. I shall not even feel depressed. I know too well the story of the preliminary efforts that were required even in England, before the Act of 1870 was passed, either to complain or to feel depressed. Moreover, I have always felt and have often said that we, of the present generation in India, can only hope to serve our country by our failures. The men and women who will be privileged to serve her by their successes will come later. We must be content to accept cheerfully the place that has been allotted to us in our onward march. This Bill, thrown out to-day, will come back again and again, till on the stepping-stones of its dead selves, a measure ultimately rises which will spread the light of knowledge throughout the land. It may be that this anticipation will not come true. It may be that our efforts may not conduce even indirectly to the promotion of the great cause which we all have at heart and that they may turn out after all to be nothing better than the mere ploughing of the sands of the sea-shore. But, my Lord, whatever fate awaits our labours, one thing is clear. We shall be entitled to feel that we have done our duty, and, where the call of duty is clear, it is better even to labour and fail than not to labour at all."

The Hon'ble Mr. Dadabhoj : " My Lord, I rise to oppose the motion, and Hon'ble Members will believe me I do it with the deepest regret. It is to me an unwelcome duty, a painful necessity. Even up to the last moment I cherished the hope that my difficulties would be removed, difficulties which I anticipated last year and which in the judgment of the country have appeared real and grave. I have listened to the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale's speech with the close attention, sympathy and respect which such an able speaker and disinterested worker deserves. I have a bias both for him and the great cause which he advocates. But all the same I am impressed more than ever that the scheme embodied in the Bill is ill-calculated to promote that diffusion of elementary education which we all have so much at heart. It is this conviction which underlies my opposition to-day. It is very painful, but withal unavoidable. I would be remiss in my duty to the country in general, and my Province in particular, if I did not oppose the motion.

" My Lord, I hope my attitude will not be misunderstood. There is need for caution in that my friend Mr. Gokhale, in the admirable enthusiasm he always brings to bear upon his work, is at times apt to regard as irreconcilable positions that are perfectly consistent in themselves. On the last occasion I spoke on his Bill, in his polemical ardour he charged me with inconsistency, with what justice I leave it to the Council to judge. The tax, the condemnation of which provoked his attack, has now been practically universally condemned. He has likewise such a righteous horror of ' conversion to official views ' that in the intensity of his feeling he ignores the possibility of a non-official member opposing, honestly and from conviction, a motion which has his support.

" My Lord, I have as great a faith in free and compulsory primary education to-day as when I spoke on Mr. Gokhale's Bill last year. I feel as keenly to-day as ever that if there is any country in which a sound system of universal elementary education is urgently required, it is India, with its dense mass of ignorance, its religious and social prejudices, its industrial backwardness, its want of enterprise, its helplessness. And, paradoxical as it may seem, it is because I feel the necessity that I cannot conscientiously support the Bill. Our aim now is diffusion and not concentration ; the more widespread education of the masses and not of classes ; the solution of the education problem in the country more than in towns. Anything that retards the progress of primary

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education in rural areas must be opposed to this object. Now, apart from its other defects, the Bill before us will produce this unfortunate result, as I will shew later on. The only consistent course, therefore, for one whose enthusiasm for the cause is not obscured by his admiration for Mr. Gokhale's great talents is to oppose the Bill at this stage.

"My Lord, last year I observed :

'Most people will agree with Mr. Gokhale on the fundamental question of free and compulsory education. But the method adopted by him for securing the end is doubtless open to question. The outstanding features of the Bill require careful examination and considerable modification. That is, however, no reason why the Bill should not be allowed to be introduced. The need for a system of free and compulsory primary education premised, a satisfactory settlement of the details can best be secured by the publication and circulation of the Bill for opinions after introduction. Mr. Gokhale, with his respect for public opinion, will himself, I am sure, recast the Bill as he has said to-day in Council, in the light of the criticisms in the Press and those submitted to Government by responsible persons through the usual channels.'

"The opinions on the Bill collected and circulated by Government have confirmed my views. Notwithstanding the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale's campaign during the year, sometimes at great personal sacrifice and inconvenience, for which the people are under the deepest obligations to him, the sense of the country is decidedly against the Bill. It has been attacked by people and bodies belonging to diametrically opposite schools of political thought. Its very permissive nature, which in one view constitutes its chief merit, has excited the criticism that, if passed into law, it can only be a dead letter. That appears to be the prevailing opinion. It is not confined to officials. Even Babu Surendranath Banerjea, a veteran leader who has consecrated his life to the noble cause of education, in the valuable opinion he has recorded on the Bill as Secretary to the Indian Association, a body of advanced politicians prominent among whom is my friend the Hon'ble Mr. Bhupendranath Basu, has remarked :

'The Committee are afraid that a purely permissive enactment relating to primary and free education would share the fate of the Drainage Bill relating to sanitation, and its provisions would not be generally availed of and the Act remain more or less nugatory.'

"While the contrary view is held by high officials conscious of the responsibilities of their position, and the fear is frankly expressed that the control sought to be given to the Local Government over local bodies in the matter of the introduction of the measure into particular areas will be a weak check upon local enthusiasm, and sanction may have to be accorded for political reasons. The Punjab Government observes :

'It will no doubt be said that the Bill is only permissive, and that it rests with the Local Government to extend it or not. The opinions received show what political pressure would be put on the Local Government if such an expedient were adopted.'

"Opinion is practically unanimous, again, that the compulsion provided in the Bill will be reduced to a nullity in practical working; so many conditions of exemption have been laid down. It has been rightly pointed out that no prosecution under the Act 'could be effective.'

"My remarks about the inadvisability of vesting the local bodies with discretionary powers of initiation, in that they are too much under the thumb of the District Officer, although resented at the time by the Hon'ble Mr. Quinn and the Hon'ble Mr. Madge, have received confirmation from high officials who could not be suspected of any want of sympathy with the District Officer. Mr. Montgomerie, Commissioner of the Jubbulpur Division, observes :

'The local bodies to whom it is proposed to entrust the initiative in the application of the Act have not yet acquired either the independence or the breadth of view or the businesslike habits requisite for dealing satisfactorily with a difficult problem like this; and as was freely pointed out by the non-official Indian members in the discussion on the Bill, in actual practice the initiative would remain very largely with the District Officer. Whether or not that is a desirable consummation it is not for me to argue. . . . The fact remains that the movement would in this Province be largely an official one, whereas the promoter of the Bill appears to desire that it should start rather from within than from without.'

"The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale finds in this reason for joy, in that he argues himself into the belief that it will really mean that the Government will be

accepting its own responsibility and introducing compulsion.' But the sequence is not clear. In such a situation the District Officer keeps himself in the background, and manages the show from behind the scenes. His action does not commit the Government either way.

"A number of other high officials have recorded the deliberate opinion that the local bodies are not really representative. The Collector of Sholapur and Mr. Webster, Collector of Tippera, are among them. Mr. Fischer, Commissioner of Chittagong, says :

'The District Magistrate (Mr. Webster) himself expresses a doubt whether the Municipal Commissioners and the District Boards as constituted are sufficiently representative of the masses of the people to make them good judges of the expediency of extending the Act to any particular area, and though their action would require the previous sanction of Government, he does not think that this form of local option would prove satisfactory.'

"Mr. Molony, Commissioner of Gorakhpur, and the Hon'ble the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces recommend a referendum to the electorate before application of the Act, obviously under the belief that the local bodies do not faithfully represent the people. Whether this should be so or not, is a different matter, but since that is the case we must face the fact squarely.

"My Lord, clause 8 is the most objectionable feature of the Bill. I submitted to the Hon'ble Members last year an education cess would be unpopular. The opinions recorded prove that the condemnation is almost universal. Even the Local Governments strongly condemn such an imposition. The Bengal Government characterises the suggested taxation 'as oppressive'. The Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam is 'not prepared to advocate special taxation'. The United Provinces Government

'is not convinced that the principle of granting powers to such local bodies under which they can levy rates, the proceeds of which will be earmarked for education purposes, is one which is suitable to local bodies in this Province.'

"The Punjab Government, speaking of the cess and the fines realisable under the Bill, points out :

'An educational impost of such a kind would be intolerable in the Punjab, particularly as what was recovered in fines would represent only a tithe of what would be extorted by the badly supervised bodies and persons who would have to put the provisions of the Act in force.'

"The Central Provinces Government observes :

'When, however, the question of funds is raised, there is a general consensus of opinion that they must be found by the Imperial or Provincial Government, and the provisions of the Bill which provide for local taxation either meet with disapproval or are ignored.'

"Mr. Sly, Commissioner of Berar, condemns the cess :

'Additional taxation is always unpopular and would be doubly so when combined with compulsory education.'

"The Bombay Government notices 'the extreme undesirability of enhancing taxation.' According to the Madras Government 'the levy of an adequate local rate could not fail to cause the gravest discontent in the areas to which it applied.' That Government further points out that 'in Ireland there is no education rate.' The Chief Commissioner of Coorg thinks 'it would be impossible to find these funds without levying a cess on the land-revenue which would bear very heavily on the people and would be extremely unpopular.' The Burma Government apparently is convinced that there is no room for increase in local taxation in Burma, and holds that 'the cost would not be met under present conditions by Municipalities and local areas.'

"But it is not officials only who object to the tax. Non-official gentlemen are even more emphatic in their condemnation of any increase in taxation. In the Central Provinces the general feeling is against a special impost. Mr. Khare, Chairman of the District Council of Wardha, and Mr. Deshmukh, Member of that Council, both advocates of free and compulsory education, object to the impost. At the numerous meetings that have been held in the country to support the Bill, the one prevailing sentiment has been one of strong opposition to the cess. The meeting of the residents of Barisal—a town where the people have done much to help the educational progress of the country—was typical. The president was a gentleman remarkable for his services in the

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cause of education. And the sense of the meeting was that 'it is desirable that the *Exchequer should provide funds* for the additional cost which the scheme is likely to entail.' The Municipal Corporation of Bombay, the part of the country the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale represents on this Council, object to the tax:

'They do not approve of the sections dealing with the levy of fees.'

"And further:

'The charge of primary education should be considered one of Imperial concern and Government should be prepared to deal with it out of Imperial funds, as far as possible now, and certainly when free and compulsory primary education is introduced.'

"Public opinion in this matter has been influenced by several weighty considerations. The tax has been attacked mainly on two grounds; each one of them is by itself enough to make it impracticable, inequitable and unacceptable. In the first place, it means double taxation for people who cannot claim exemption from payment of school fees for their children, and the bulk of them are not rich. In the next place, the rate must of necessity be heavy. If the Bill is to be effective, the cost to the local bodies concerned could only be met by heavy extra local taxation. To give one illustration: Amritsar is a city which will in all probability be one of the selected areas in which the Bill, if passed, will be introduced. It is an industrial centre, a big prosperous town. And there the Deputy Commissioner, Mr. Lumsden, says the local taxation will almost be quadrupled: 'In Amritsar city alone it is calculated that the rate will have to be raised by no less than 850 per cent.' The heart of the most ardent enthusiast quails in the presence of these facts. It has also been pertinently observed that if there is to be a special education cess, there is nothing to prevent in principle the imposition of special cesses for equally urgent local needs like sanitation, medical relief, improved communication, etc. Can any responsible Government be expected to sanction such heavy taxation in the teeth of universal opposition? Mr. Gokhale himself admits that taxation in India is equal in incidence to the taxation in the United Kingdom and France.

"The position therefore is this. The introduction of free and compulsory elementary education is a question of funds. A special cess is out of the question. The money must be found by Government, which means the Imperial Government. The Provincial Governments are more or less straitened for funds. The defrayal of the whole cost by the Government of India, or for the matter of that by the Provincial Government, involves general taxation. The question then arises, can this taxation be increased? Will Mr. Gokhale advocate the imposition of fresh taxes? Is the sense of the community favourable to any large increase in taxation? On this point, at any rate, there could not be any doubt. Any further increase in taxation will be extremely unpopular and will produce an amount of hardship and discontent which will be politically dangerous.

"My Lord, several reasons combine to discredit Mr. Gokhale's scheme of elementary education in view of the financial responsibility of the Government. If Government has to pay the whole cost or even a large part of it, there must be a general scheme of elementary education for both urban and rural areas. The general taxpayer cannot be made to pay taxes for the benefit of particular areas only. He has a right to claim equal treatment. If that is so, any extra allotment out of Government funds for the support of primary education in towns can only be made by diverting funds that would otherwise be spent in rural areas. This is inequitable in principle. It entails double injustice to the rural population. Funds to which they contribute are diverted from the rural areas, at their expense. Education there will be starved to that extent. There will be concentration instead of diffusion; education in the towns will be supported at the sacrifice of the villages; the classes will secure greater advantages than the masses. Mr. Drake-Brockman, Collector of Jhansi, well puts it:

'Compulsory education, if wanted at all, is wanted everywhere—probably most wanted in the places to which the Act will not be extended.'

"Even so enlightened and sympathetic an officer as Mr. A. C. Chatterji, Collector of Jalaun, points out:

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'This will naturally considerably curtail the amount available from Provincial or Imperial sources for more backward localities.' The loss of the latter will be cumulative.'

'For Government therefore to support financially a partial scheme of education in towns only is not to be thought of. Such action will defeat the very object of the Bill,—mass education,—and the cause of elementary education will receive a check which can only be disastrous. As Khan Bahadur M. M. Mulna, Chairman of the District Council of Balaghat, observes in his illuminative note on the Bill :—

'The cost of such compulsory and free education is likely to be enormous, and whichever may be the favoured areas so selected to be brought immediately under the operation of the Act (and there may be a number of centres so selected), they will immediately draw, for that limited area, large and additional sums from Provincial revenues, which would otherwise remain available for the extension and imparting of efficient primary education in the other larger areas..... Another result will therefore be that though there will be greater extension of education where it already is finding favour to a certain extent, on the other hand, owing to the diversion of funds and consequent shrinkage of resources, the rate of progress in the other areas will actually be retarded for want of funds.'

'A scheme of universal education is the only equitable and effective scheme in these circumstances, but is singularly inopportune. The cost is prohibitive. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale only the other day described the financial position of the Government in terms which I make no apology for quoting :

'Now, as regards..... the condition of the finances, I think its prosperity is a matter which is open to very serious doubt. Only the year before last, the Hon'ble Finance Minister imposed fresh taxes on the country, because, in his view of things, the revenue then raised was not sufficient for the requirements of the State. It is true that last year there was a surplus and possibly, owing to the extraordinary circumstances of the year that is about to close, there will be another surplus announced next month..... Very probably in 1913, if the opium-revenue is really extinguished, our finances will pass through a very trying time.'

'Can an appeal for incurring the enormous expenditure involved in a complete scheme of primary education be successfully made to Government in this state of its finances, unless the country be prepared to submit to very heavy additional taxation? This last contingency need not be seriously considered.

'My Lord, it must be admitted that the financial results of an effective scheme of universal elementary education for the whole of British India, as worked out now by responsible authorities, would damp the ardour of the most go-ahead educationist. Mr. S. K. Agasti, Collector of Balasore, shews that, even for a small town like Balasore with a population of 21,000, the annual charge of an adequate system of primary education, at Rs. 350 for each school, would be Rs. 21,000. For the district he puts down the annual cost at Rs. 5½ lakhs. The necessary initial outlay is not taken into consideration. The cost of supervision is also neglected. The Commissioner of the Bhagalpur Division, speaking of the Bhagalpur District, which is almost equal to the Baroda State in population though about half in area, calculates on the basis of the Baroda figures that a sum of over eight lakhs of rupees would be required annually for a popular system of compulsory and free education for the district as against the present expenditure of Rs. 1,39,114. The capital cost is again omitted. The Secretary to the Meerut District Board concludes from available statistics that, at Rs. 367 for every 100 infants, 'the aggregate expenditure would be Rs. 2,27,540 a year' for that district, exclusive of cost of buildings and equipment, against a present expenditure of Rs. 49,766. For a small district like Fyzabad the District Board requires Rs. 2½ lakhs for initial expenses and Rs. 1,25,000 every year for maintenance charges. At this rate, it can be easily imagined what an enormous expenditure is involved in introducing an efficient system of elementary education throughout British India, covering an area of 1,152,894 square miles, with 1,571 towns of 5,000 inhabitants and upwards and 602,411 villages, and a total population of 254,820,616, of whom, according to the usual percentage, over 38 millions must be children of school-going age. We have to provide for the elementary education of over 19 million children between six and ten years of age. Not to speak of initial outlay, the recurring charges alone would be, roughly speaking, nine crores of rupees a year, calculating the maintenance charges at

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Rs. 4-8 per head, which is an irreducible minimum. It has been calculated by high authorities that the annual rate of expenditure would be nearer Rs. 7-8. This expenditure of nine crores of rupees is for a system which is both compulsory and *free*, because all are agreed that education which is compulsory must be free. Liberal provision has been made in the Budget estimate of 1912-1913 for the support of education, but it is only a fraction of the actual needed to make compulsory primary education a success. And the allotment too includes expenditure for secondary and high education. There is small reason for the hope that the annual amount can be quadrupled or trebled and an adequate number of schools can be built forthwith without special taxation which is universally condemned. And until the money is forthcoming and the country is provided with sufficient school accommodation, we cannot have a comprehensive system of compulsory and free elementary education. The financial difficulty is, in existing circumstances, truly insurmountable. Mr. Gokhale puts down the cost of his scheme, limited to the big towns, at Rs. 40,00,000 a year. I do not know how far the estimate is correct. But be that as it may, the scheme will not solve the real problem of mass education; it will effect only a fringe of the vast population.

“The Calcutta University objects to Mr. Gokhale’s scheme because a diversion of funds from the support of high education is apprehended as a consequence. Sir Asutosh Mukerji and his colleagues on the Syndicate cannot be justly charged with a shortsighted opposition to elementary education. Government will have to look to the needs of both sorts of education, and the country will not favour the development of the one at the expense of the other.

“The problem has become infinitely more difficult in India by the caste prejudices of the people, and there is a consensus of opinion that high-caste boys will not join the same school as the ‘untouchables.’ We want, therefore, a very much larger number of schools than what the population would otherwise require. This means increased cost. Mr. Walker, the level-headed Commissioner of the Nagpur Division, undoubtedly is right in saying that ‘the classes will not hold out long, and one genuine benefit of the measure must be to break down caste distinctions.’ But so long as this consummation does not take place, separate schools must be maintained. In India religious and linguistic differences also necessitate the establishment of a very much larger number of schools than has been found adequate elsewhere.

“The scheme of the Bill is further criticised, and in my humble opinion with considerable truth, that a four years’ course is useless. The Hon’ble the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces opines that ‘more than half the boys who go through a primary course lapse into illiteracy.’ The danger is present in a short course. To get the best value for the money spent upon them, a full six years’ course must be provided. And wider provision must be simultaneously made for secondary and high education to enable some of the primary scholars to continue their studies.

“The question of teachers also presents exceptional difficulties in a country like India. In England the free employment of women has saved the situation. There are there 111,277 female teachers as against 31,945 male teachers.

“Attendance Committees, provided in the Bill, in the opinion of the country, appear unworkable. But this is a matter of minor importance. The great need is a plentiful supply of money. For reasons explained above we must have a comprehensive scheme which is clearly outside the scope of the Bill. A small beginning, as Mr. Gokhale says, cannot be made with due regard to the central object we have in view. And the financial position of the Government presents insurmountable difficulties. In these circumstances I cannot support Mr. Gokhale’s motion. The country has disapproved his scheme, and the question must be left where it is until a more equitable, practical and workable scheme is submitted to Government. The Bombay Corporation ‘are of

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opinion that the method embodied in the Bill is not likely to attain the object in view in a practical and satisfactory manner.' I am afraid my Hon'ble friend Mr. Gokhale has not correctly interpreted the opinion of the Bombay Corporation this morning in the Council.

"But, my Lord, we need not lose heart. Thanks to Mr. Gokhale for his unwearied efforts in the cause and to the noble initiative of Your Excellency, whose 'chief desire,' we are assured by high authority, is 'that the amelioration of sanitation and the wide and comprehensive diffusion of education should form the chief features of' your 'Viceroyalty,' an enlightened education policy has been adopted by Government. Liberal grants are being made. In the Hon'ble Sir Harcourt Butler we have likewise a sympathetic Minister who is wide awake to the interests of his department, and with the generous response to appeals for supply for the promotion of beneficial objects which has characterised Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson's term of office, we may yet look forward with lively hope for an early development of primary education such as would justify the introduction of compulsory and free elementary education at a minimum of inconvenience to the taxpayer."

The Hon'ble Sir Gangadhar Rao Chitnavis : "My Lord, I am sorry I have to oppose this motion, though the bodies of which I have the honour to be President have lent their support to the Bill, however qualified and restricted that support may be. I oppose it because after mature consideration I think it is unnecessary and unpractical. I have always been opposed to the principle of compulsion. I shall be untrue to myself as a representative of the landholders, whose interests I have the honour to represent in this Council, if I do not oppose the principle of compulsion on the ground that it is prejudicial to those interests, besides being of doubtful value to the subject of compulsion. With depopulation going on in villages by means of plague, malaria and exodus to the towns and consequent scarcity of labour, any weaning of children from the side of their parents for even such a good object as education is likely to be felt a calamity. Even the local bodies that have voted for this Bill have voted for it under so many conditions that it will be very very long before Mr. Gokhale's object will be accomplished.

"My Lord, I repeat, if I oppose the motion, I do it, not from any want of sympathy with its object or from any want of appreciation of Mr. Gokhale's motives and able exposition of its merits, but from the conviction that it is unnecessary and unpractical. The cardinal principle of the Bill is compulsory education. I disagreed with Mr. Gokhale's view last year for reasons which my friend thought were prompted by an over-great anxiety for the interests of the classes as opposed to masses. But there was more in the fear I then expressed than a superficial examination revealed. I observed further that, even to the very people for whose benefit the measure was intended, compulsory primary education would not prove a blessing. Nothing has happened since then to induce me to change my opinion. Authorities who are expected to be in touch with the feelings of the rural population and to be acquainted with the conditions of rural life have come to the same conclusion in regard to the effect of the proposed legislation upon the scholars and upon village economy. For an instance, the District Officer of Ghazipur remarks—

'The provisions of section 6 aim a blow at many industries in which parents depend on the co-operation of their children. Previous experience has shown that the injury to such industries will be more than temporary, because the educated child despises, and in most cases desires to depart from, his traditional occupation, for which in most cases he is no whit better fitted by having received an elementary education.'

"The establishment of night schools has been suggested for the protection of the interests of agriculture and other industries. But that will not remove the danger noted above. The suggestion is likewise untenable. The enervating influence of a tropical climate is ignored. A system which may work well in cold countries where nerve power can stand much greater strain is wholly unsuited in India.

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"But this is not the only objection to compulsion. The mass of opinions received by Government show clearly that there is at present throughout the country an unsatisfied demand for elementary education.

"The Burma Government is of the same opinion :

'The Burmans, who form the bulk of the population, are quite alive to the advantages of education, and display no reluctance to send their boys to the nearest monastic school.'

"Lieutenant-Colonel Strickland, Commissioner of the Mandalay Division, says :—

'The difficulty here is not to get pupils for schools but to get the necessary funds to establish suitable schools and provide capable schoolmasters. Given a useful elementary school in every village, pupils would soon be forthcoming.'

"The District Inspector of Schools of Amritsar testifies to the same popular eagerness to send boys to school :—

'Our schools at present are overfull; the demand for the opening of more schools is insistent. . . . Accommodation is everywhere cramped and unsuitable. . . . Give the people a good school under a competent and sympathetic teacher,—they are sure to send their children.'

"The Hon'ble the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces very forcibly exposes the unsuitability of the Bill :

'It is idle to talk about education being made compulsory when the number of schools is so deficient that the one-mile distance limit will exempt more than half the children of the country side. . . . Any funds that are available can be better devoted to . . . diffusion than to compulsion, which means merely the concentration of funds for the education of the few at the expense of the many.'

"My Lord, the whole question is really a question of funds. Given the money, well-attended schools can be started all over the country. There is a chronic difficulty for funds. It is useless introducing compulsion when the people are themselves anxious to send their children to school, and the backwardness of the country in the matter of education is mainly due to absence of educational facilities and not to any inherent repugnance to education. We must provide efficient schools in sufficient number in both towns and villages before we think of compelling unwilling parents to send their boys to school. According to Balfour's *Educational Systems*, in 1892 schools were accessible to practically all children in Ireland, whereas in India to-day we have, on an average, only one school in an area of eleven square miles. Sufficiency of school accommodation is now the desideratum, and that cannot be ensured until we have more money. The application of the proposed measure to municipal areas, instead of providing a satisfactory solution of the real difficulty, only accentuates it by starving education in rural areas even more than at present, and thereby aggravating the evil. As the Second Financial Commissioner of the Punjab points out—

'The system of local option proposed under this Bill is that it must tend to the encouragement of education precisely where it is already most advanced, while leaving the backward tracts *in statu quo*, thus exaggerating existing inequalities.'

"Mr. Sly, the sympathetic Commissioner of Berar, also refers to the danger :

'The effect of the Bill would be to concentrate and increase education in particular towns or areas by the use of compulsion instead of meeting the present voluntary demand which is more widespread.'

"Furthermore, it should be carefully borne in mind that compulsion at this stage may produce the very opposite result of setting the people's backs up against education. Sir Reginald Craddock, in his thoughtful opinion on the Bill, made a point of—

'the very first principle of human nature . . . to like doing what it desires, and to dislike being made to do what it dislikes.'

"There is great force in the observation. The success of compulsion in other countries, on which Mr. Gokhale has framed his scheme, has been challenged by

both official and non-official critics in so reasoned a way as to force conviction. Mr. Gokhale himself admitted last year that in Japan greater reliance was placed upon moral pressure. And that is a country which shows the largest attendance on record. In Baroda, according to the Baroda Administration Report for 1909-1910, the compulsory system 'is by no means an assured success.' The Report refers to the 'partial failure of the compulsory progress.' In that year there were 17,336 applications for exemption and 7,408 convictions for default. In the latest report, Mr. Seddon, the Dewan, says 'As regards compulsory education, the situation is dangerous. I do not feel at all easy about it. I do not know much of Sangli where they say that compulsory education has been introduced, but I will be glad if there too, after some time, we do not hear similar reports.' In this country we have bitter experience of compulsion in connection with measures for the prevention of plague. Besides, the experience of more advanced countries is an unsafe guide here in India, which is sadly deficient in school accommodation, teachers and the right sort of men to serve on Attendance Committees. It is well known that in England tuition in elementary schools is more in the hands of ladies. Several generations will pass before we have here an equally favourable condition.

"Putting aside all other objections, the cost of a satisfactory scheme of compulsory education, which must be *free*, for a vast country like India, is so enormous that it cannot be said to be within the range of practical politics. Unless Government undertakes to pay for it, even at a big place like Nagpur, we cannot introduce compulsory elementary education immediately even though the municipality has every desire to loyally carry out Mr. Gokhale's wishes. We have a total population there of 130,000 inhabitants, of whom 19,500 must be children of school-going age. Half the number, 9,750, must be children between six and ten years of age. The annual cost of providing elementary education for this number would be too great for the present resources of the municipality. This charge that body will be hopelessly unfit to bear at least for some years to come. And yet Nagpur is an industrial centre, with mills and ginning factories. Additional taxation at a heavy rate only can yield the necessary amount; but that is not feasible. The present rates, as they are, are much felt by the people. Only a week ago Mr. Gokhale himself pointed out that the proportion of total taxation, imperial and local, to the national income in the United Kingdom, France and India was approximately the same. He said;

'Now if they took the total national income in the three countries, they would find, and it was a remarkable coincidence, that in each country the total taxation burden borne by the people for central and local purposes together amounted to about 11 or 12 per cent. of the total income.'

"Any suggestion of fresh taxation in a poor country like India cannot under the circumstances be seriously entertained. There is a general feeling that the money should be found by the Government of India. Even the Collector of Satara says:—

'When once there is a general desire, the cost should be borne chiefly by the State as in England.'

"The Bombay Corporation make a similar suggestion. But can the Government do this in the present state of its finances? I shall be sincerely happy if it does; but there is small hope it will in the near future, with due regard to its other duties.

"Moreover, it is a question if, after all, so large an expenditure should be incurred, perhaps at the expense of the other legitimate duties of the local bodies. Doubts have been expressed about the utility of rudimentary knowledge among the working classes. Agricultural labour, far from improving, deteriorates in quality also from disregard to irksome details and want of application which association in early life with better classes of people, absence of manual labour during a long period and the vitiated taste for ease inseparable from school education produce in the recipient. Western experience

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shews that the educated mechanic is not necessarily the most efficient. The *Pioneer*, in its issue of 1st February last, observed :—

‘ Even at the present time, the highly-trained and educated German mechanic cannot bear comparison with a similar class of mechanic in England who has less learning but much greater skill; and in Belgium, where industries are comparatively more flourishing than in Germany, there is a high rate of illiteracy among workmen. . . . “Theoretical education,” Von Steinbeis says, “has been given such a preponderance that even in our smallest workshops the pedantic spirit of the school penetrates the air, a spirit which is absent in countries which have arrived at a higher stage of industrial development than Germany.”’

“This should set us to ponder awhile. Dr. Albert Wilson, in his *Unfinished Man*, again, makes a pointed reference to the physical deterioration of the schoolboy in England. He says :

‘ One of our greatest authorities on education writes to me thus :

“I am convinced very few realise the enormous change for the better which has come about during the last few years in our elementary schools; but from debility, deficient sleep, defective clothing and food, overwork out of school, etc., the children are unfit for any kind of disciplined intellectual work.”’

“He also says :—

‘ Under the compulsory system, the unwilling and incapable children are compelled to attend school and break under the stress.’

“My Lord, I have read somewhere that child labour is cheap in England, and there are plenty of people willing to hire it; the result is that children, even during the time they are at school, are employed for extravagant hours at infinitesimal wages. As soon as they can satisfy His Majesty’s Inspector of their capacity in the fifth standard or such higher standard as the local authority prescribes, they enter into some unskilled employment like that of the errand boy; and by the time they are 18 or 19 years of age, they, having learnt no trade, are ripe to join the ranks of the unemployed.

“My Lord, another great disadvantage we in India labour under is the absence of cheap healthy literature. The stuff that now passes through the cheap Press and is greedily devoured by people with only elementary knowledge infects their minds with unwholesome ideas of individual and communal duty. In Burma, where, of all Indian Provinces, primary education has shown the greatest progress, the evil is notorious, and the Burmese Deputy Commissioner of Kyaukpyu has remarked :

‘ One result of the spread of education in this country is that many girls and boys spend most of their time in reading the useless songs and story books which are sold broadcast all over the country, which encourage superstition and neglect their more useful objects of life.’

“The problem is thus not free from complications, and however much one may desire to encourage the spread of knowledge for its own sake among the masses, it behoves us to take proper precautions to divert the mind into healthy channels of thought, to arrest physical deterioration and to prevent the decay of individual virtue through disuse and indiscriminate study.

“Moreover, my Lord, Government is determined to spend largely on primary education, of which the Durbar grants and grants made in the Budget gave uncontrovertible proof. It is doubtful whether under these circumstances compulsion is essentially necessary. The process of evolution must be slow, steady and gradual.”

The Hon’ble Sir Vithaldas D. Thackersey : “I beg to support the motion of my Hon’ble friend Mr. Gokhale, who had called attention to the fact that the Bill had received a remarkable volume of support from the non-official community, both Hindu and Muhammadan. He has pointed out that the opposition to the measure has come almost entirely from the officials and the Local Governments. I am surprised that this should be the case, because the subject with which we are dealing is not one which affects the prestige or the powers of Government. It is acknowledged on all hands that the greatest danger to good government arises from the ignorance of the masses. I cannot help being reminded of a curious parallel when I think of the attitude of Government towards this Bill. Government have passed

laws and adopted measures to protect the raiyats against the consequences of their ignorance in their transactions with moneylenders and landlords. I need only name some of these measures on this occasion. They are all well-known and much discussed measures. On the Bombay side we have notable instance in the Dekkhan Agriculturists' Relief Act which empowers Government to release forfeited land on a limited tenure. In the Punjab we have the Land Alienation Act designed to prevent land passing out of the possession of the cultivating classes. I believe that the Courts also are authorised to go behind the letter of the contracts to which cultivators are parties in order that no undue advantage is taken of their ignorance. All these are measures necessitated by the illiteracy and consequent helplessness of the masses. But though Government have done so much to protect the illiterate masses, they are reluctant to adopt the only effective means of removing the root cause of their helplessness, namely, their illiteracy. This reminds me, as I said, of the physician who went on prescribing for the symptoms of his patient, quinine for malaria, opium for diarrhoea, and some other medicine for headache, while the root cause of the ailments, namely, residence in a malarial swamp, was totally neglected. If he had simply advised his patient to remove to a healthier locality, he might have spared himself all the trouble and the patient the suffering and the expense. Government are ready to interfere with the freedom of contract and to spend lakhs of rupees in measures to prevent other people from cheating the raiyats. But they fight shy of a very modest Bill such as that of my Hon'ble friend to make the raiyat able to take care of his own interests without extraneous assistance. Can it be denied that if our raiyats were not so hopelessly illiterate, some at least of these measures would be unnecessary? Is there any doubt that in so far as the provisions of this Bill are found capable of application to any particular locality, in that locality there is bound to be a steady diminution of illiteracy in course of time? I should like here to guard myself against a possible misunderstanding. I do not for a moment question the anxiety of the present Government to promote measures for the rapid spread of education. No one can do so after the substantial proofs which Government have given by their liberal grants and after the striking statement of the Hon'ble the Finance Member who told us of Your Excellency's heartfelt interest in education. What I respectfully urge upon this Council is this: that in every other civilized country purely voluntary measures, however liberally supported by Government, have proved ineffective in bringing about real mass education, and that it is high time we made a beginning in the direction of the compulsory principle. Of course, it is said, that the country is not ready for a Bill of this kind. My contention, on the other hand, is that you can never know whether the country is ready or not except by means of a measure of this kind. At present there is only the bare statement of the local officials against the weighty testimony of, I think I am right in saying, the majority of the elected representatives of the people in this Council. My Hon'ble friend does not ask that compulsory education should be introduced at once throughout the country. He has provided ample opportunities for Local Governments to determine whether the provisions of the Bill should be applied or not to any place, and it would be impossible to apply those provisions to any place against the wishes of local authorities. What more can the local authorities desire? Surely it cannot be seriously contended that there is not a single suitable locality in the whole Indian Empire, after a century of British rule, where the experiment can be tried. I may take this opportunity of assuring this Council that it is not through any lack of appreciation of the excellent work of Local Governments in the educational field that I make these remarks. In my own Presidency, for instance, educational questions have largely occupied the time and attention of His Excellency Sir George Clarke, and I am sure I am echoing the sentiments of the Bombay Presidency when I say that His Excellency's labours for the advancement of education of all kinds have earned for him the undying gratitude of the public. If the Bill be allowed to go before a Select Committee, any further alterations and improvements that may be suggested by or on behalf of local authorities

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can be considered. I may say from my personal experience of the co-operative movement that, at the present moment, it is the want of education that prevents the masses from taking full advantage of the beneficent measures of Government. I do not wish to detain the Council with my remarks on the advantages of the Bill, the fate of which has perhaps been already settled by the Hon'ble the Education Member. In conclusion, I will only say that it will be a great disappointment to many hundreds, not to say thousands, of intelligent, educated and responsible citizens outside this Council if this extremely cautious and moderate Bill were to be rejected by us in deference to, I admit, the strong but not very weighty oppositions of the Local Governments."

The Hon'ble Mr. Mudholkar : " My Lord, it was not with a little surprise that I listened to the speeches of my two hon'ble friends who come from the same province that I do. I say I was surprised, because I have before me the expression of opinion of bodies to which both of them belong and over which one of them presides. The Nagpur Municipality, in a resolution which was passed in July when both of them were present, stated distinctly that it approved of the principles of Mr. Gokhale's Bill, while my friend the Hon'ble Sir Gangadhar Chitnavis who has been just now speaking expressed views which, if logically carried out, would mean the stoppage of education as they imply that education is an evil and is likely to produce very deleterious effects all over the country."

The Hon'ble Sir Gangadhar Rao Chitnavis : " I did not say that. I only said with regard to my Municipality that it would not be able to introduce the provisions of the Bill immediately for want of resources."

The Hon'ble Mr. Mudholkar :—" My friend just now made remarks about the debilitating and enervating effects of education generally."

The Hon'ble Sir Gangadhar Rao Chitnavis : " I only pointed out, my Lord, what had been said about compulsory education in England. I only read those extracts."

The Hon'ble Mr. Mudholkar : " I do not suppose this explanation will at all affect the correctness of what I said. To resume my argument: the Nagpur Municipality said that elementary education should be free and compulsory as laid down in the Bill, that as regards clause 18 (2) (b) there is room for a difference of opinion as to whether any portion of the expenditure should be borne by the Local Government or not. [I may parenthetically point out that nothing has been said at all about exemption being granted to local bodies.] My friend's Committee's resolution proceeds to say that so far as the Nagpur Municipality is concerned, it hopes to see elementary education free in Nagpur within a few years without having recourse to Government for financial assistance, but if clause 18 (2) (b) becomes law then free education could be introduced here much sooner. The District Council said that the Council accepted generally the provisions of the Bill, but suggest the incorporation of certain provisions which in no way at all affect the principles of the Bill.

" Mr. Dadabhoy also said that the country has pronounced against the Bill. My Lord, if there is any measure of recent times which has received a practically universal support—call it merely a great support—so far as the people of this country are concerned, it is this measure. The Hindus, by an overwhelming majority, have accorded their support to it. The Muhammadans too, the majority of them, are entirely in favour. The National Indian Congress, as my friend the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has pointed out, has given its views in an unmistakable manner; and the All-India Moslem League has on two occasions pronounced very clearly in favour of free and compulsory education. Its latest pronouncement was made in this city only a fortnight ago. With these statements before us of these two chief representative bodies, of local bodies, of political associations, of educational associations, I do not understand how those who say that the measure has been received with disapproval in the country—how they can support their position. My Lord, it is true that there

has been some opposition, even from non-official classes, but the figures which have been given by my friend the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale and which have not been and cannot be challenged, demonstrate that the bulk of the population is entirely in favour of the measure. Most of the opposition is based on a misconception, the misconception being that it is the object of this Bill, that it is the scope of this Bill, to apply immediately the principle of compulsory education throughout the country. All the arguments which have been advanced against the Bill proceed on this assumption, that the Bill is to have general application all through at once. That is an entire misconception of the nature of the measure. The measure wants Government to proceed in a tentative manner and on a small scale. It is in recognition of the peculiar circumstances of India that this method has been adopted. We have from the Punjab Government the statement that there is, among the majority of the people of the Province, a disinclination not only against compulsory education, but against education of any kind whatsoever. My Lord, the statement comes from a high authority and I have to respectfully bow to it. On the other hand, I might mention that a paper which voices the opinion of the Muhammadan community says that it would be a great mistake to say that the Muhammadans did not accept the principles of the Bill which Mr. Gokhale has brought forward. Whatever be the opinion of the Punjab people as understood by the Punjab Government, there is no reason why the Punjab people should set the pace for other parts of the country. The fact is, here in the papers which Government have published, the clearest evidence that in various parts of the country demand has been made for education and that the demand is spreading. In one of the opinions,—a most thoughtful opinion—given by a gentleman who is not a Brahmin and who, so far as I know, has not associated himself with political movements like the Indian National Congress or the Provincial Conferences, a gentleman who also holds that the Bill is not wanted in the present circumstances of the country, is the admission of the great wave of enthusiasm which has swept over the country and of the demand for schools which is increasing more and more. We have therefore from the opponents of the Bill this testimony beyond question, that the supposed circumstances of the Punjab, where education is not at all wanted, is not typical of the circumstances in other parts of the country. That education is wanted in these parts and should be spread is recognized by Government, and Government themselves have been making provision for it. The opposition to the Bill has been very aptly described by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale as falling under certain categories which he has described. I shall not go into the matter again, but shall only deal with one or two of the objections which are brought forward. My friend the Hon'ble Mr. Dadabhoy, even while expressing his deep sympathy with the principle of free and compulsory education in the abstract, has drawn for us a lurid picture of the dissatisfaction which would be created throughout the country, of the great burden of taxation which would be thrown on the people and of other hardships that would arise, under the working of the Bill. My Lord, all these dreadful results rest evidently on the assumption, which he himself puts forward, that the thing has to be worked on no other than what he calls a comprehensive basis. It is one of the favourite devices resorted to, when a scheme of reform is introduced, by which the reform is sought to be killed. If you want to stave off any reform, say that the reform will not do any good unless it is introduced on the largest scale possible, and then the next moment dilate upon the serious consequences which would result by its general operation. The same device was adopted in regard to the suggestions of the people about the expansion of these Councils. At that time it was stated that unless power was given to all the people in all the different parts of the country to send in representatives, representative Councils could not at all be properly said to be given to the country, and for this the masses were not ready. The Government, however, recognized that an advance was necessary and that the advance must be a cautious and tentative one. The same methods and the same principles have to be followed now. It being admitted on all hands that education for the masses is necessary, that the rural tracts cannot at all aspire to make progress unless the agriculturist is thoroughly taught, and that industrial progress,

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which is a great desideratum, cannot be achieved except through mass education, and Government having accepted the principle that great advances have to be made, the question arises whether in those tracts where universal education can be introduced, the time has not come for an attempt to be made. There are figures and statistics to show that in such a backward tract, comparatively speaking, as the Central Provinces and Berar, very great advances have been made in recent times. The Commissioner of Berar states that in one town—Amraoti—51 per cent. of the school-going male population is actually under instruction, and in Akola it is 49. In the district of Balaghat in the Central Provinces, the proportion of school boys to the male population of school-going age in the whole of that district is 34.1. So here is clear evidence of the interest which is being taken by the people in the matter of education. Those are places and tracts where certainly an attempt can be safely made. The large expenditure of which so much is made would become necessary only if you at once introduce free and compulsory education into all the areas, irrespective of whether the people are willing or are sufficiently advanced or not. If however you begin cautiously, there is no reason why it should be beyond the resources of the local bodies or of the Government. In reference to this a curious argument was brought forward by my friend the Hon'ble Mr. Dadabhoy, an argument which has also been urged by others also. It is said that it would not be fair to impose any education rate. My Lord, my friend and those who have pronounced their benediction upon free and compulsory education, if they are really serious, if they are really sincere in their professions about free and compulsory education”

The Hon'ble Mr. Dadabhoy : “I am sorry, my Lord, to interrupt my Hon'ble friend. I can assure him that I am as sincere as he himself is.”

The Hon'ble Mr. Mudholkar : “I say if my Hon'ble friend and others who take his stand are serious and sincere, then they must be prepared to put their hands in their pockets. It is no use talking of free and compulsory education if one is not prepared to make any sacrifices.

“It is the duty of the Imperial Government to find money and it is equally the duty of the local bodies. It is no use asking for free and compulsory education if we do not find the money which is required for the purpose. After all, even if we take the figures as given by some of them, what is the amount which would be required to be locally raised for making this beginning? It would be at the most an imposition of just one pice in the rupee like other local cesses, and this would give us an education cess which would satisfy the purpose and meet all the requirements of the present. I understand that a proposal has gone forward from the Central Provinces Government that non-agricultural incomes also should be taxed for education as is the land of the raiyat. It is a very good suggestion, and I do not see why it should not be accepted if there is no other method of proceeding in the matter.

“My Lord, the method which has been suggested by the Bill is one in which responsibility for the adoption of compulsion is taken off the shoulders of Government and put on the shoulders of the people, that is, upon those men of the people who will turn to them and ask whether their localities are or are not sufficiently advanced to make an experiment in the matter. There are two safeguards. First of all, the local bodies are to find part of the money, and most of them, consisting as they do of elected members, will not even venture to put forward a proposal for increased taxation unless the support of the bulk of the people is assured. The second thing is that they will have to obtain the sanction of the Local Government before the experiment is made. These are safeguards which will prevent hasty and ill-considered action.

“My friend the Hon'ble Sir Vithaldas Thackersey has referred to the agricultural classes. I have a word to say about these. If any real attempts are to be made for making them more capable than at present, the first thing to do is to spread far and wide elementary education to such an extent at least as to enable every one of them to read the leaflets and pamphlets which are issued for enlightening them in matters agricultural.

[Mr. Mudholkar : Nawab Abdul Majid.] [15TH MARCH 1912.]

" My Lord, now that there is a great enthusiasm for education, should we not make attempts from now to establish this principle of universal education in localities which are fitted for this purpose ? "

The Hon'ble Nawab Abdul Majid : " My Lord, while fully sympathising with the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale and the laudable object with which the Bill has been introduced, I regret to say that I cannot support it. The circumstances of India are such, that a law like that which the Bill embraces will not be of much benefit to the people of India as a whole. When the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale had moved a Resolution on compulsory education in 1910, I was one who had opposed him then. After two years of mature consideration, I am still of opinion that, unless safeguards are provided by which Muhammadan education on the lines in which the Muhammadan boys are educated at present, is secured to them, the Bill as it stands, instead of doing good to them, will cause a great deal of harm to them. Speaking of my Province, where the Muhammadan element is not strongly represented in educational institutions, the result of passing this Bill into law will be that the death-blow will be dealt to the Urdu language. Already a Urdu-Hindi controversy is raging bitterly in the United Provinces, and attempts are made—I say determined attempts—to create a Hindi language full of Sanscrit words, which, it is said, will some day replace the Urdu altogether. Suppose, if education is made free and compulsory, is it not natural that those determined to replace Urdu by Hindi will try their best to teach Muhammadan boys a Hindi language, which is disliked by a Muhammadan. So I say that, unless it is distinctly provided that Muhammadans will have the same kind of education which is acceptable to them, I for one am of opinion that the Bill in its present form will not benefit the Muhammadans. Then, again, will these schools, where the proposed elementary education will be imparted, give any religious education or not. The Bill does not say anything about the religious education, and so I understand it has no concern with the religious education. The consequence then will be that a Muhammadan boy will have to give up his religious education, and be compelled to attend a recognized school under the Bill. To a Muhammadan the first ideal is, to be a true Muhammadan, and this can be attained only if a boy in his early ages is given a good, proper religious education. A Muhammadan boy is generally taught first *Koran Shareef*, and some Urdu religious works. All this will be lost to him in a recognized school. But it may be said that these will be secular schools only, and the Muhammadan boys can be excused on religious grounds. Let us look to the result of this argument: It will be this, that those who do not care for religion so much, will get a State secular education at the expense of those who will not attend the recognized schools. Taxes will have to be paid by all, but only one community will gain the advantage. A Muhammadan boy then should either give up his religious education to attend these recognized schools, or if he does not attend them then he must give up the advantages of those schools. If the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale had provided in his Bill that adequate provision will be made for sectarian education, then probably many Muhammadans will have given him their unqualified support. The machinery in the shape of a school attendance Committee provided in the Bill to watch the working of the Act (if passed into law) is also one which is full of danger. The first question arises about the constitution of these Committees. How will they be constituted? What will be the number of Muhammadans on such a Committee? Will they be in a minority? If they will be in a minority, the opinion of the majority must prevail, and the minority and their interest must suffer. I submit these are the difficulties which must be faced and solved before the Bill is passed into law. Free and compulsory education in a country of homogenous race and religion may be of some good to the country; but in a country like India, which embraces diverse races and creeds, I venture to submit is an experiment which is full of danger and difficulties. Leaving the sectarian question aside, will a compulsory education be liked by the masses of the people? Will they not resent the Act, and its application to them? Will they not lay blame on the Government and say that the law has been promulgated to deprive them of their children, and of the benefits of their services? My Lord, those who know the Indian life can well picture

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the commotion which will arise in the country if compulsion is resorted to, and the boys are hunted and captured to be marched to schools. Compulsion will be a source of great discontent among the people. The mass of the people will throw the whole responsibility upon the Government of the country. Some will say that this is a step to convert them; some will say that Sircar is going to deprive them of their bread; some will say that they are going to be prevented from learning their traditional and hereditary occupation. Of course, I know that there are great many men of my own community who favour compulsion. But who are they? They are people who have never freely mixed with the common people, they do not know their feelings, and I venture to say are not in a position to give their opinion on the probable effect which will be produced on the mass of the people if compulsion is resorted to. I fully endorse the opinion of the United Provinces Muslim League when it says that 'The prevailing opinion appeared to be that the propagation of the scheme was not so important as to ignore the embarrassment of the Government and the resentment of the public.' Government will be held responsible for all. In a country like India, where masses are swayed by rumours, I beg to submit that it is highly dangerous to introduce any element of compulsion in any measure which may have the effect of influencing the masses in their daily life. India is a country highly conservative in all its traditions and callings. To interfere with these by compulsory legislation will be highly detrimental. My Lord, educational policy in this country should be one of persuasion and not of compulsion. The most prudent step will be to spread education by multiplying schools all over the country with the resources which may be ready at hand. Popularise education first, and then compel those who are refractory to learn. In a country where nearly ninety-four per cent. of the people are illiterate, it will be nothing short of producing a revolution to compel with one sweeping order the people of a locality to give up their daily avocations and attend the schools. Whether the people be living in towns or in villages, my humble opinion is that compulsion will be disliked by all. My Lord, I am entirely against the introduction of compulsion in India. If there are sufficient funds forthcoming elementary education may be made free. But while supporting the policy of the education being made free, I again submit that even then the Muhammadan interests must be safeguarded. I say even then, their cherished Urdu language must be preserved to them and that their religious teachings imparted in their Makhtabs to their boys must be secured to them.

"My Lord, the next question is the question of funds. It will not be denied that if education is made free and compulsory, a much wider educational machinery will have to be created. Teachers by thousands will have to be appointed, hundreds of school buildings will have to be erected, and other necessities like books, maps, etc., will have to be provided for. In order to meet these expenses, a very large amount of money must be found somewhere. The present revenue of India will surely be insufficient to meet these demands. But money will have to be found, and the only source available will be taxation. An educational tax will have to be levied. But the question is, who will pay it? Assuming, for the sake of argument, that Government makes up its mind to raise these millions which education will demand by taxation, which class of people will you tax? Certainly not zamindars and the tenants. Land is already heavily taxed. Tenants are living from hand to mouth. A single failure of crops lands us in famine and starvation. Already in many places zamindars and tenants pay a school tax. Speaking of my own Benares Division, we already pay a school tax in the shape of madarsana. Zamindars and tenants will raise a howl all over India, and object with as much force as lies in them to pay such a tax. A tenant who will lose the services of his boy, who will see that his boy instead of being a good husbandman is going to be an idle clerk (for after education agriculture is sure to be given up), will certainly not appreciate the sympathies underlying this Bill and will never willingly pay an education tax. I say, therefore, my Lord, that if land is taxed with education tax, zamindars and tenants will never like to pay it. If compelled to pay such a tax, it will be

an additional wound inflicted on them. It will be a source of grave discontent among the landed classes. Now remain those who cannot be classed among the landed classes. These, I submit, will be the people who are likely to be benefited, if benefited at all by free and compulsory education. I venture to submit, therefore, that these people should be called to contribute largely towards the education tax. I mean, if large demands for funds for education come into existence, then these people ought to pay the tax. But the demand will be so large that any tax levied, and the amount realised from it, will never be able to meet the demand. I never forget that the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale wants free and compulsory education to be introduced gradually. But the ultimate object is the introduction of such an education universally throughout the whole of India—and any opinion which is to be formed must be formed with reference to such an ultimate object. Before we agree to this vast educational project we must consider and weigh all the consequences beforehand.

“My Lord, the last subject that I wish to bring to the notice of this Council is the labour question, which is sure to come into existence if education is made compulsory, and it is sure to have serious effect on the landed classes in this country. When the mass of the people are educated, the agriculturists, labourers and artizan classes will at once commence to dislike their present condition. They will consider themselves to have risen to a higher level. Many will give up their hereditary trade and profession, and will either go in for services or some other profession higher than the one they had been pursuing hitherto. The Government of India and the landed classes will then be put to face a dangerous labour problem. Socialistic ideas, which are absent from our country, are bound to come into existence. The people who are in affluent circumstances will be looked upon with envious eyes. Their wealth will be considered to be illegal gains which will be considered to be fit to be divided among all. Wages will go up, and discontent will increase. Every sort of agitation which always follows in the train of discontent will spring up. Instead of controlling town agitation, Government will have to devote its energies to control agitation in villages—a much wider area and most difficult to control. I need not enlarge further. I submit that the labour problem is one which should not be forgotten when we are considering this Bill. In conclusion, I beg to submit, that let it not be understood from my remarks that in principle I am against compulsory education altogether. The idea as an abstract principle is a good one, but the country is not ripe for it. My Lord, I submit that just as a cultivator prepares and enriches a soil before he sows in it, in like manner let us first prepare the ground for the introduction of such an advanced scheme. Let us first make India one homogeneous country. Let us sink our differences first. When we are in such a state that all Indians have one aspiration and one desire, and one community has no desire to steal a march on the other, then is the proper time for the introduction of such a measure. I agree entirely with the opinion of His Honour Sir Leslie Porter, the late Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces, when His Honour says ‘That the introduction of the principle of compulsion which underlies the whole Act is an impossible principle to apply to the people of these parts. Such introduction is not only impracticable, it is fraught with serious danger. The people of this Province view with an apprehension which may easily tend to develop into sullen resentment, and in many places into violent opposition, any attempt to force or to alter the actions of their daily lives. This feature is especially noticeable in the agricultural tracts which form the majority, but it is sufficiently marked in the towns. Before a measure which compels a man to send his child to school irrespective of his own wishes can be considered to have any prospect of success, it will be necessary to create a desire in the majority of parents that their children should obtain some form of elementary education. When that desire has become fairly universal, compulsion may be adopted as a statesmanlike measure to bring laggards and malcontents within the fold. But until the mass of public opinion is in favour of primary education, compulsion will retard instead of accelerate the progress that is sought.’ I endorse the view expressed here unreservedly. This view is expressed here after due consideration of the circumstances existing in the country. It is not a mere imaginative or a sentimental view. It is no

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use that I should quote any more opinions. What I say is, that anybody who will approach the question with an unbiassed mind and with full consciousness of his responsibilities cannot help arriving at the conclusion that the Bill is premature and that the country is not ripe for it. My Lord, I oppose the Bill in its present shape."

The Hon'ble Maharajadhiraja Bahadur of Burdwan: "My Lord, when I came into the Council chamber to-day, I thought of opposing this Bill on larger grounds than I intend to oppose now. The reason of this change of view on my part is that some of the arguments that have been put forward against the Bill have not convinced me. It is true that I do not think that in India at the present moment we can have compulsory education on the lines that Mr. Gokhale wishes to have; but, on the other hand, there cannot be the slightest doubt that we cannot keep the masses ignorant for ever, and as the Government have already taken up the question of mass education, it is necessary for the Government itself to consider what steps it ought to take besides making grants to Local Governments for the dissemination of mass education. The three principal reasons offered in opposition to this measure are that the time has not come for compulsion, that the want of funds will be a standing difficulty, and that thirdly fresh taxation will be resented, and I must say that I am myself against this fresh taxation. I do not say that a day may not come to India when we, however so much we may dislike this fresh taxation, may have to give in; but at present that occasion has not arisen. Moreover, what I say is, that there is still enough ground for voluntary primary education. I know, for instance, that in Bengal many guru training schools were started, and many schools in rural areas started, which had to be closed for want of interest and want of students as well as teachers. Of course, here Mr. Gokhale will probably say that we will be able to get over this difficulty by compulsion. What I say is, that when there is this apathy at present among the masses towards compulsion we are rather liable to bring antipathy against the Government instead of in any way meeting or realising the objects that Mr. Gokhale has in view. I am sorry that I have had to speak against the Bill. Had I not known the attitude of the Government regarding the throwing out of the Bill at this stage, I would personally have supported the motion that the Bill be considered in Select Committee, but knowing that, and having expressed my own views, I am sorry I have to withhold my support to the Bill; but in withholding this support I should like to assure Mr. Gokhale that although for certain reasons I am opposed to certain of the principles embodied in the Bill, I congratulate him on his patriotism in bringing forward this Bill, and I am sure that a Primary Education Bill in some form or other is destined to be passed in India before very long."

The Hon'ble Raja of Kurupam: "My Lord, I beg to support the motion. In doing so, however, I do not desire to be understood as saying that the Government should immediately proceed to pass a general Act legalising compulsory education in the country. It seems to me that the present conditions of the country are hardly favourable for the successful introduction of compulsion. The difficulties of language, religion and caste, the inability of the masses from their extreme poverty and ignorance to appreciate and avail themselves of the opportunities for their elevation afforded by the proposed measure, the dissatisfaction and confusion which are very likely to be caused by the sudden withdrawal of the children of the poorer classes from their ordinary occupations, and the inevitable prosecutions and fines incidental to the enforcement of the compulsory attendance of such children at schools, the financial responsibilities involved in the adoption of the measure, render, in my opinion, the enforcement of the system for some time to come unwise and its success extremely doubtful. Moreover, though there has been almost universal acceptance of the principle of the Bill throughout the country, there has not been anything like such unanimity; on the contrary, there has been great divergence of opinion about the methods proposed in the Bill to attain the object in view. The provisions contained in the Bill in this behalf empower every Municipality

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or Local Board, with the previous sanction of the Local Government, to introduce compulsory and partially free education in its area and to levy a special education tax for that purpose, and power is given to the Governor General in Council to fix the proportions in which the cost is to be divided between Municipality, Board and Government. Now, the levy of fees, while making education compulsory and the special education tax have met with very strong opposition in many quarters. There is again the fear expressed by very competent authorities that the initiative, which is left in the hands of the District and Local Boards, will work unsatisfactorily and unequally in practice. In these circumstances, it is my humble conviction that persuasion rather than compulsion is for some time to come the most proper method of diffusing education among the masses. It is necessary, I think, that education should become popular, and should be made entirely free, before it is made compulsory, among the masses. The analogy afforded by the working of the compulsory system in Western countries is no safe guide for us in this country whose conditions are so widely different. Rather, we may with profit watch the working of the system in Baroda, where it has been in vogue for several years, and from my knowledge of the state of things there, I am unable to persuade myself that the system in that Province has been found to be attended with anything like the success that was expected of it.

"But when all is said against the immediate introduction of compulsory education in this country, it is impossible to withhold one's sympathy with the aim of the Bill. There can be no doubt whatever that the great need of the country at present is the rapid diffusion of good, sound primary education among the lower classes, the adoption by the Government of a definite policy by which the number of schools may be increased from year to year, with a view to pave the way for the introduction at some future time of compulsion throughout the country. The education of the poor and ignorant is, I need hardly urge before Your Excellency, one of the most imperative duties, as it is the most sacred privilege, of the Government. The principle of free and compulsory Primary Education, though, as I believe, there are vast difficulties in the way of its being carried out in practice at present in India, is the ideal which the Government should put forth every effort to realise slowly but steadily. If the attainment of this ideal in the near future in this country is imperative, then the Government will gain and not lose by allowing the Bill to go on to a Select Committee, as a thorough examination by a Committee of the methods embodied in the Bill will be greatly helpful to the Government in carrying out the very sympathetic policy in regard to popular education to which they have properly committed themselves, even within the very short period of Your Excellency's Viceroyalty."

The Hon'ble Mr. Madge : "My Lord, it is as a warm supporter of primary education for a considerable number of years that I venture to say that the Hon'ble mover has not taken the wisest and most practical course in order to secure his own object. In fact, in my humble opinion, he has put the cart before the horse. Before trying to show this, my Lord, I should like to say that I shall avoid imputing motives either to the opponents or to the supporters of this Bill. But, if it is quite conceivable that a class of persons is intimidated by official frowns and encouraged by official smiles, it is also not inconceivable that there is a larger class of persons who secure a kind of artificial popularity by always acting against the Government. I say this in no offensive terms. I think it is natural for progressive people to look upon Governments as conservative, and they feel that they are bound to oppose them in order to get anything. That view may not be a wise one, but I make the remark to show that although there are some who oppose the Government on principle, there need be nothing objectionable in doing so. I wish, my Lord, to say that the arguments that have been brought forward, as I have already hinted, seem to me to put the cart before the horse. What is it that we want most in this country? We want, in the first place, teachers. Suppose every local institution in this country were to get permission to sanction, and sanctioned, what the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale wants, who would teach the persons that he wants taught? One of the first needs of this country

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is a normal college and a normal school, not only for training the higher class of teachers, but also for training the very lowest class of teachers. In the next place, we want schools built in places where they ought to be built. Now, as to the selection of these sites, a great deal of importance has been attached to what has been called the volume of evidence in favour of this Bill. There are questions, my Lord, in which it is not always the wisest course to count heads. Stress has been laid upon official opposition to this Bill. What does that mean? It means that persons who have a strong sense of their responsibility for the prosperity of the country have reasons of their own for not approving of what has been suggested here. I am not particularly an advocate for the official classes, but I try to see what they are trying to do, and I cannot for the life of me understand why a true measure should not be taken of a large unanimous official opposition to any measure. The officials of this country are trying to do their very best for the people, and if they do not approve of what the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has proposed I cannot imagine all their reasons, but I can imagine some of them. One of them has already been dwelt upon to a certain extent, by some previous speakers; and it is this, that the children of the poorer classes help a great deal either in the management of homes while the parents are out or in field labour when the parents are at home. I do not think too much attention can be given to this argument; it is a most important one. Charles Lamb tells us that the children of the poor are adults from their infancy, and the children of the poor in this country are adults from an earlier age than the poor of almost any other country. If I did not know that the Hon'ble Member and some of his supporters are men who probably understand the country better than myself, I should be surprised at the way in which they look at matters from what I call the standpoint of large cities. It seems to me that any one walking through the villages of this country will soon enough see what the younger members of families are doing. When the Factory Bill was being considered, strong objections were raised to the employment of children after they had been so many hours a day at work. What will be said of the compulsory employment of these children in absolute cramming after they have rendered their proper share of work for domestic purposes? I think these points ought to be taken into consideration, and if the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale had shown how these difficulties were to have been overcome, possibly I should have thought more favourably of his Bill. Then, my Lord, as to the provision of schools, I believe, at least I hope, that the new Education Department will take up that question almost immediately. I am well aware that the despatch of 1854 attaches the greatest importance to primary education; but those who now wish the Government to lavish sums upon primary education also call upon the Government to lavish money upon secondary education. I have been trying to pick up among my papers and I regret I am not able to find it; but I quote from memory a Resolution of the Government of India during the Home Secretaryship of Sir Alexander Mackenzie in which he pointed out that the Local Governments were not giving its due share to primary education and were giving too much money to secondary education. This is the point which I hope the New Education Department will take up. We have heard a great deal of people being called upon to pay for the education they receive, and I think, my Lord, that it is ample time that the better classes of this country ought to be called upon to pay a great deal more for the high education they receive than they have ever done in the past. Not only would this encourage a kind of manliness among them, but it is good for them to feel—to be taught to feel—that they are paying their way through the world, and not receiving what is in some quarters called charitable contributions for their education. I do not wish to bring in very much about European education, but I do hope that when the schemes of the Government are set before the public something will be said and done to show that a larger proportion of money is given towards European education than has been in the past. I refer to this matter in a strictly relevant way, because I have compared for some years past the proportion of money given to each European scholar and that given to each Indian, and it will be seen how very much smaller the one is than the other. I merely mention this fact as a reason why

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all classes of people in this country should be dealt with fairly and called upon to pay for their education."

The Hon'ble Malik Umar Hyat Khan: "My Lord, I came with a prepared speech, but as I find that all the arguments I intended to bring forward have been advanced by different members, I do not think I will read that speech but will merely say what is now uppermost in my mind. Of course I was opposed to this Bill from the outset and my Hon'ble friend and I had a long talk when we were in the garden in Government House, and we decided that I at any rate should not speak at the introduction of the Bill. When I returned home, my Lord, I found that all my people were against me. They did not know, that if I did not oppose the Bill at the outset, that I would be able to do anything afterwards: I however explained to them that I had reserved my opinion and that when I returned to Calcutta I would speak on the subject. I thought, when this Bill was circulated, many people would express their opinion either in favour or against it; but I have now discovered, my Lord, I mean, that when these Bills are circulated for opinion, there is one class who being able to read can discuss their provisions and will always agree. But there are 98 per cent. others who cannot discuss it, and they do nothing as they cannot express their opinions against it. Well, I stand up here for them and say that they are all against it. Supposing we know how to speak and write, we would not have allowed them to write everything like what they have done. Perhaps in all these opinions that have come here to this Council it would never be found in the papers who were against and who were on the side if we would have sent ours also. Then again, my Lord, now that Your Lordship very kindly said that you are doing your best to help education, so also the Hon'ble Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson said, as well as the Hon'ble Member in charge of the Education Department, that everything is being done, and if one is going 16 annas why should one ask for him to go 20 annas? Well, I hope, my Lord, now that my Hon'ble friend knows that Government is doing its best in that direction, I think that the best way is now to withdraw the motion. I do not know whether he will do it. Then again, my Lord, there are certain difficulties. Now, supposing compulsion is forced upon the people who are unwilling from the bottom of their heart, it will be hard for them. It is not always only that they do not like to educate their children, but sometimes they cannot do it. As there are certain such circumstances, I wish my Hon'ble friend went with me to the mufassal to see them; there are all sorts of difficulties to be got over in the mufassal. The things are all right in big places like Calcutta. There are lots of clerks who go in the day and do work and get so much money; then they come home to feed their children and bring money for their family. That is not the case with the agriculturists. Everyone of us has got to work. Little boys take the cattle out, the wife is cooking, the man is ploughing; thus every one has to do something. If a boy was sent to the school, the father of the boy would have many troubles. He would have to send this boy, and perhaps the boy would fall into the hands of some agitator, and perhaps the boy would come back spoilt, also the boy would have to be sent and money would have to be sent as they would have to provide him with food, at the same time the work which the boy had been doing would have to be carried on by other men. In these days many people are going out of India and labour has become very dear and sometimes it is not possible to get men. Then how is the work of the agriculturist to be carried out? That is practically impossible. Then again, my Lord, there are boys who if they really can go to school, and the fathers know that perhaps certain boys can be sent to school, *i.e.*, if they can afford it, they always would send them. It is only in those cases when they cannot afford to send the boys that they are not sent to school. But all those who can be sent in these days do go; and I think in about ten years more perhaps every boy who can be sent by parents will go. Of course it will not be a very good thing in certain ways, because what I have found, my Lord, I have got a sort of free school, and I think my Hon'ble friend will say this against me—he will say at the same point why you have a free school. Well I have found, my Lord—my experience is—that every boy who once

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passes his primary education, that is, up to primary standard, will never work as a cultivator. I have never seen it, and of course, as I have said, education is a power, and certain classes in India in my opinion are depressed. I do not know what to say, but I mean that they read only with the wrong object. When they have received the education they will only use it in their own way ; I mean they will always disabuse it. That is my opinion and of course I must express it. In my opinion really I think that the Bill is rather before the time. My Hon'ble friend always says that we always say that it is before the time, and how are we going to get over that argument ? At any rate let us wait a little bit more."

The Hon'ble Sir Harcourt Butler: "My Lord, I think it will be convenient if at this stage of the debate I indicate the position of Government. If any reply is required later on on any point, my Hon'ble friend Mr. Sharp will give it on behalf of the Education Department. I say at once, my Lord, that I am really sorry to find myself in opposition to the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale and those who support this motion. We are all really working for the same object. I should rejoice no less than they to see a condition of things in India in which elementary vernacular education could be free and compulsory. The Government of India are deeply concerned to bring about such a condition of things. We are convinced of the necessity of breaking down illiteracy in the country. Every mile of railroad opened displays at once the need for more elementary education and throws into sharper relief the drawbacks of popular illiteracy. For more than fifty years from the time of the despatch of 1854 to the Resolution of Lord Curzon's Government in 1904, and since then, the British Government of India has preached persistently the need for diffusion of vernacular elementary education. And we have not confined our interest to words only. In 1902 we gave a recurring grant of 40 lakhs a year for general education, including primary education. We followed that up in 1905 with a sum of 35½ lakhs a year as a recurring grant for primary education alone. In the distribution of the allotments of non-recurring grants last year, a very considerable sum was set apart for primary education, and the greater part of the 50 lakhs recurring grant which was announced by command of His Imperial Majesty at Delhi has already been devoted to the same object. We must all feel, we all do feel, the splendid services which the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has rendered to the cause that we have at heart. He has created an enthusiasm for elementary education in classes which have hitherto been indifferent to its diffusion. We welcome his support in this matter, although we cannot agree with him as to the measures to be adopted. And I can only say that I rather regret that he is unable to give to the officials who disagree with him the same credit that they give to him.

"I now turn to the Bill. My Lord, it is in itself a modest and unassuming measure. It is full of safeguards—so full of safeguards that it seems to many likely to remain a dead-letter. That may be. We cannot assume that it will be. If we pass this measure, we must mean it to be a real effective measure, not a sham. If we accept the principle of the Bill as practical, we must be prepared to put it into force and we must finance it whether we pay two-thirds of the cost or some other proportion. We are practical legislators here, and I ask the Council, is not the position this—either we must mean business and see the thing through, or we must drop the Bill ? Now, as practical legislators the first thing we must ask ourselves is—what is the demand for the Bill ? I pointed out last year that no local body had ever asked for such a Bill ; on the contrary, for the last twenty years or so Local Governments have been pressing local bodies, particularly municipal bodies, for their neglect of primary education. The only local body that had really seriously in the past considered this matter was the Corporation of Bombay, and the Corporation of Bombay had decided definitely against the principle of compulsion. My Hon'ble friend has no doubt converted a large number of local bodies to his views. I congratulate him upon the result. I will deal with that later. My point now is that the genesis of this Bill was not a spontaneous demand by the people who

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were likely to be affected by it, but a vague desire for progress based upon a statistical comparison of India with other countries. I said last year, and I say to-day, that I am not greatly impressed by transmarine analogies. My Hon'ble friend says that I must show how the circumstances differ in India and in other countries before I reject those analogies. I will gladly do so.

"India, with its numerous and varying types of men, its 1,400 castes and sects, its multiform creeds and languages, its many scripts—there are twenty different scripts in common use in India—and above all, with its early marriage and its seclusion of women—India, I say, cannot usefully be compared with countries where none of these obstacles exist, where there are none of these great lines of cleavage, where there are no untouchable castes. I will deal with the cases which were taken up by the Hon'ble Member. He has held up the examples of England, Japan, the Philippines, Ceylon, Baroda and the Sangli State. In England the compulsory provision of schools preceded by six or ten years the introduction of compulsory attendance, and by twenty-one years the introduction of free education. If we are to follow the example of England, we ought at once to introduce a measure making it compulsory to provide schools throughout the country. We know we cannot do so because we cannot afford to pay for them. Then there is another great difficulty pointed out by my Hon'ble friend Mr. Dadabhoj, that in England the great mass of the teaching staff of the elementary schools are women. There are some 111,000 women in England to some 35,000 male teachers in elementary schools. Again, there is this great difference that in England the majority of people had for many years been gradually working up to the idea of compulsion in some form or other. Apart, then, from any question of relative industrial development in the two countries, I think there is no analogy between the case of England and the case of India. I now come to Japan. Well, in Japan there is a very great enthusiasm for education, and there has been this enthusiasm for more than a century. No less than 62 per cent. of the cost of education in Japan is found from local taxation, and the principle of compulsion is neither required nor is it really enforced. In Japan education is so advanced and respected that the average salary of the teacher in an elementary school is about ₹50 instead of about ₹8 or ₹9 a month in India. In Japan you have a vast majority of the population in favour of education which in India as yet you have not. I do not think there is much to be gained from Japan.

"Now, as to the Philippines, there is no compulsory education at present and the Philippines Government seem to be in some difficulties over their educational system. I take the report of the Director of Education in the Philippines for the year ending 30th of June last. I would ask the Council to listen to this passage :

'It has been recommended for some years that legislation be enacted which, under certain conditions and restrictions, would make school attendance compulsory. The purpose of such desired legislation is not to increase the number of pupils who enrol in the public schools, for that number is already greater than can be properly taken care of with the facilities at hand, but rather to insure regularity of attendance once the pupils have enrolled. As stated above, attendance can be made compulsory only under limitations, but it is believed to be feasible to frame a law which will have the desired effect and will not involve the administration in difficulties.'

"I will read another passage from the same report :

'There is not one town in the Philippine Islands at the present time which has made adequate provision for the housing of its schools. But if funds are to be reserved for school-house construction, salaries must be reduced, schools must be closed and teachers diminished, or revenue must be secured from a new source for the prosecution of school work.'

"My Lord, I say that the lesson to be drawn from the Philippines is a lesson of caution.

"I now turn to Ceylon. My Hon'ble friend says the population of Ceylon is homogeneous with the population of Southern Madras. I am afraid I am

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not personally acquainted with the population of Southern Madras, but I know that 60 per cent. of the population of Ceylon are Buddhist and they are not shackled by the difficulties of caste as are the people of Southern Madras. I may also point out that they had the principle of permissive compulsion, the phrase which has been used in connection with this Bill, enjoined under the Ordinances of 1889 and 1906, and that it was a complete failure and had to be converted into unqualified compulsion. Again, Ceylon differs very much from India in having a very strong village government. I do not think that there is much to be learnt from Ceylon.

"I now come to Baroda. Baroda, as I said last year, is on a different footing and the population is not greatly different from that of the surrounding districts except that it is more heavily taxed. My Hon'ble friend challenged the Government last year. 'The population of Baroda,' he said, is drawn from the same classes as that of the adjoining British territories, and every day that passes sees the subjects of the Gackwar out-distancing more and more British subjects in the surrounding districts.' And he ended up the debate by saying: 'Are you content to lag behind Baroda?' Most emphatically we are not content to lag behind Baroda. I do not wish to say a word in disparagement of the experiment of Baroda. It was a bold experiment to make with the machinery at the disposal of the State and we all wish it success. But what are the facts? We have recently had a census taken, and that census disclosed some remarkable figures. The percentage of literary among the males in Baroda after 5 years' compulsory and free education is 17.5. In the adjacent British district of Broach, where education is neither free nor compulsory, the percentage is 27.4. In the adjacent British district of Surat, it is 24.7. In the case of females the percentage of literary in Baroda was 2; in Broach it was 2.6; and in Surat it was 3.4. Where is the lagging behind Baroda? Where is the out-distancing British districts? It is far behind them resorting to compulsory and free education in order to make up leeway. I admit that in Baroda the enrolment of boys of school-going age is 8.5 per cent. as compared with 6.9 per cent. in Broach. But the attendance in Baroda is only two-thirds of the enrolment, while on the average in British India it is over three-fourths of the enrolment. In the case of Broach, I have not separate figures, but I am convinced that it is much higher than the average of British India owing to the advanced condition of education in Broach. I have little doubt that school attendance in Broach is higher than what it is in the State of Baroda. Before leaving this subject I would like to quote a passage from the Report of the Chief Minister, but I would also like to direct the attention of the Council to the fact that the fines for non-attendance in Baroda amount to about 60,000 rupees a year. This figure indicates a very considerable measure of popular hostility, and I may say in passing that it gives an incidence per head of the population which is double the incidence of the fees charged in elementary schools in India per head of the population. I now quote to the Council the Administration Report of the Baroda State:

'Upon the Baroda compulsory education system, curious eyes have been turned from every direction. The truth is that while it is by no means an assured success, it is a praiseworthy attempt with an excellent chance of final success if money is freely spent and vigilance ceaselessly exercised. If these two last conditions are not satisfied, the attempt will be a failure. This remark is perhaps justified by the apparent absence of marked progress during the last year. There are a thousand more girls at school this year, but the number of boys has decreased. There can be no doubt that half the girls who ought to go to school under the law do not do so, and that a good many boys manage to escape.'

"A later report has reached me this morning. I have not had the time to study it, but I gather that fresh efforts are being made though I can find no comments on the experiment of compulsory and free education. The matter is still in an experimental stage. I hope, my Lord, that we shall hear no more of lagging behind Baroda.

"I now come to the Sangli State, to which the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale made a reference this morning. He told us that a zealous Political Officer had introduced a form of compulsory education into the State. I had not heard it, but I have in the interval with the assistance of Mr. Sharp been able to get

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the figures for that State. The population is only 226,000, and in 1908, when the principle of compulsion was introduced, there were 127 schools and 7,560 pupils."

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale : " May I make a correction ? Those figures are *after* compulsory education was introduced. You must take the figures for 1907."

The Hon'ble Sir Harcourt Butler : " I accept the correction. These were the figures for the first year after compulsion was introduced. By 1910 they had risen to 181 schools and 11,642 pupils. After that we come to a halt ; in 1911, the figures were 185 schools and 11,458 pupils, a slight decrease in the attendance. I admit that these figures suggest that this has been a successful experiment, but it is not more than an experiment on a very small scale in a Native State, and the result is that less than 5 per cent. of the population are at school, whereas in Broach the percentage is 6.9 per cent."

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale : " Is that the figure for the whole of the Broach District ? I am surprised."

The Hon'ble Sir Harcourt Butler : " Yes, for the whole district. I can find still less encouragement in the opinions which have been received and circulated to members of this Council. All the Local Governments are in favour of the extension of primary education and every one of them without exception is singularly unanimous and emphatic in the disapproval of this Bill. They assert that there is no general demand for compulsion, that the cost of compulsion would be prohibitive and most unfair in its incidence, that there is no machinery to enforce compulsion, that the school attendance committees would be ineffectual, that the creation of any machinery specially for the purpose would lead to general hostility, and that, instead of promoting elementary education, the introduction of compulsion would throw it back and hamper its progress. And they support this with a wealth of argument that to a dispassionate reader must appear conclusive, with such a power of conviction that my Hon'ble friend does not really attempt to answer them, but contents himself with shovelling them away into the various circles of his inferno. His wrath is greatest against the Government of Bombay, and that is the Government of Sir George Clarke, a man who done more than any other man, Indian or European, in Bombay for the cause of education. I am sure that this Council was glad to hear the tribute which Sir Vithaldas Thackersey paid to Sir George Clarke for his splendid work in education in Bombay. There seems to be an irreconcilable difference between my point of view and my Hon'ble friend, because the impression left on my mind after a perusal of the various opinions on the Bill was, that the weight of non-official opinion is also against the Bill. The majority of non-official opinions are, I admit, in favour of it, but the weight of authority is against the Bill as a practical measure. There are obviously different ways of counting support and opposition. Several Local Governments draw attention to the absence of reason which mark some of these opinions. Many resolutions have been passed ; some of them are entitled to very great respect and attention, but some, I must confess, remind me of the three tailors in Tooley Street with their ' We, the people of England.' Most of the reasoned opinions of those who have really gone into the matter and have practical experience of elementary education as it works end up with the conclusion that the Bill is impracticable and premature. In spite of the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale's fervid appeal to his own countrymen at the end of last year ' either tax yourself or stop talking about improving the lot of the masses,' there is a very common objection to taxation ; there is a very common distrust of the efficacy of the village school attendance committees ; there is also a very common dread of official compulsion worked through the police or other special agency. ' Inhuman locusts,' ' insatiable blood-suckers,' are the terms by which the village attendance committees are described in one of the Punjab opinions. That is the language of exaggeration no doubt, but I have lived in the villages among the people ; for seven years I was a Settlement Officer, and the people knew me and I knew them ; and during these seven years I learnt how very oppressive on the people themselves may be the most beneficial measures which are passed in Councils like this.

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I have seen how these beneficial measures may be distorted into oppression by local tyrants no less than by subordinate agency.

"I heard with regret, with stern regret I heard, Sir Vithaldas Thackersey, ordinarily so fair-minded, insinuate that officials are guided by considerations of their prestige in determining issues of this kind submitted to them. I repudiate this."

The Hon'ble Sir Vithaldas D. Thackersey : "My Lord, may I explain myself clearly? I did not say that they were guided by these considerations. What I said was that, in this case, even those considerations were absent."

The Hon'ble Sir Harcourt Butler : "The distinction is really I think without a difference. The instruction remains. I repudiate it with all the warmth at my command and with all respect to my Hon'ble friend. The officials give credit to their opponents on this question for honest motives, and they expect the same. I read in the vast majority of opinions of officials a deep and genuine and earnest desire for the welfare of the people.

"The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale claims that a number of Boards are in favour of the principle of the Bill. They have been converted by his persuasive eloquence. He had to stump the country hard to do it."

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale : "I did not attend a single Board meeting anywhere."

The Hon'ble Sir Harcourt Butler : "It was not necessary. The Hon'ble Member's influence is so great that he hypnotises from a distance. But he did have to stump the country, and we admire his energy and enthusiasm. I wonder how many of these Boards would adhere to their opinion when it came home to them in definite proposals for additional taxation. I will tell the Council a little story which I heard in another place. A certain Durbar, which shall be nameless, had once expressed its strong opinion in favour of some administrative proposal that had been made to it and to the neighbouring States. When the Political Officer came some years afterwards, he was a little surprised to find that no action had been taken on the proposal. He asked the Durbar why nothing had been done when the Durbar had said that the proposal was in every way commendable. The Durbar explained with evident sincerity that it had meant that the proposal would be very good for other States. I think that a good many of these Boards, if their opinions come back to roost with definite proposals for taxation, will find that free and compulsory education is very good for other Boards. I should like to quote from two of the best reasoned opinions in the whole collection—those of the Bombay Corporation and of the District Board, Malabar. The Bombay Corporation say that education should be free and compulsory and they are in favour of the ultimate introduction of the principle throughout the country. They disapprove however of this Bill. They say :

'The Corporation are of opinion that the method embodied in the Bill is not likely to attain the object in view in a practical and satisfactory manner, and they consider that at present the great need of the country is a strenuous acceleration of the policy of Government to push primary education as rapidly as possible and to adopt a definite policy by which the number of schools can be increased from year to year within a definite period and thus to pave the way for the proposed measure.'

"Then I will quote the opinion of the District Board, Malabar. This is one of the advanced District Boards, because 42·8 per cent. of the children of schoolgoing age are already at school. After pointing out the many advantages of the measure which in principle it was in favour of and after considering the very great practical drawbacks of the introduction of the measure, the Malabar District Board say :

'Speaking for its own district, the Board is of opinion that the improvement of elementary education should take two lines—firstly, the improvement of existing schools, their masters, their appliances and their buildings, and secondly, the opening of schools in important villages where they do not now exist. It believes that a well-considered scheme of improvement on these lines would do more good than a premature scheme for universal and compulsory education.'

“These are the wise and weighty words of responsible men.

“As regards free elementary education, there is very little to be said. The principle of free elementary education has long been accepted in India. In the Frontier Province of Assam, in Baluchistan and in the North-West Frontier Province, elementary education is already entirely free. In the Punjab and in certain districts of the United Provinces, all the sons of agriculturists get their education free. In Burma a very large proportion of the children pay no fees. In other Provinces proportions of the school population, varying from 20 to 83 per cent. and even a higher figure, do not pay any fees in elementary schools. And in a recent communication to Local Governments in connection with the 50 lakhs recurring grant, the Government of India have expressed themselves in favour of the principle of extension of free elementary education for all those who cannot afford to pay fees. This, I hope, will fully meet the demand for free elementary education at the present time.

“Now, I turn to the probable cost of this measure as a practical measure of legislation. My Hon'ble friend puts it at $4\frac{1}{2}$ to $4\frac{1}{4}$ crores of rupees and requires another crore separately for the education of girls. This estimate leaves out of account altogether the cost of increased inspection, the cost of training of teachers, the cost of adequate school-buildings and appliances, the cost of machinery for enforcing compulsory attendance and the multiplication and cost involved in the provision of separate school-buildings in numerous areas where there are other classes who cannot attend the same school. It leaves out of account also the cost of prolonging the course beyond four years, which is admitted by all experts to be quite inadequate although it may suffice as a commencement. Already in Baroda they have had to increase their course by another year. Apart from these shortcomings, if I may so call them, the estimate is based on an assumed figure of 5 rupees per scholar per year. Now, that leaves very little or no margin for improvement, and if we are to make education compulsory throughout India, we must give sufficient and suitable education, and we cannot give that at the present rate of the salaries of teachers with the present cost of living. I pass by the fact that we could probably not get teachers at all for a considerable number of years for any large and impetuous expansion. Teachers have to be made; they cannot be picked up in India; and what I want to emphasize now is this, that we must have solid improvements in our elementary schools concurrently with the expansion of elementary education, or else we shall be doing a great injustice to the people and a permanent injury to India. I suppose I have inspected at least a thousand elementary schools in my time and have been instrumental in opening over a hundred new schools. Now, my experience is that in every case the success of the school depends on the teacher. I ask those Hon'ble Members who may have greater experience than myself, is not that so? Is there not a general demand among the parents for a better type of elementary school—a more practical type which will train the hand and eye, which will fit the boy for his position in life and give him a sound practical training? But what can we expect on the present salaries of our elementary teachers? There has been progress. The strenuous labours of the Local Governments and Departments of Public Instruction have not been in vain. But at the Allahabad Conference, over which I had the honour of presiding last year, there was a consensus of opinion that our modern and up-to-date curricula exist still for the most part on paper because we cannot get the right stamp of teacher. No; at the very lowest estimate the cost must, in my humble opinion, be at least double the figure proposed by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale, if we are to make any impression in the country. And then there are the girls. They have not entered at all into the calculation. We have to educate the girls not less than the boys. We need not contemplate compulsion in their case; but the widespread education of girls is of vital importance to India of the future. How can we as practical men pass a measure which, if it is to be effective, will involve such an enormous expenditure?

“My Hon'ble friend says in effect: ‘I only ask you to make a beginning with compulsion.’ But is this a time to make a beginning with compulsion? From every side we hear a demand for more elementary schools. In the United

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Provinces schools have been closed for want of funds. Elsewhere there has been a check from the same cause. We know that we can have a large expansion of elementary education on the voluntary principle, if only we can find the money. Are we to stop the expansion of the voluntary system in the backward areas in order to make experiments in compulsion in the more advanced localities? We have not enough money to go round as it is. Is it wise, is it just, is it practical statesmanship to stop those who want to go to school from going there in order to force into school those who do not want to go? I ask you, has not my Hon'ble friend begun at the wrong end? Even if it be the case, though instances are not forthcoming, that a local body here and there may desire in the near future to introduce the principle of compulsion and is prepared to raise the whole of the necessary funds by local taxation, even assuming such a case, which we should be quite prepared to consider on its merits, would not the natural course be to provide for it by local legislation, by the amendment of the Municipal Law or otherwise? So long as large tracts of the country are crying for the expansion of the voluntary principle, can we, as responsible legislators, divert the money of the general tax-payer to meet exceptional demands for compulsion by an Act of the Imperial Legislature?

"My Hon'ble friend in kindly terms, which I appreciate, justifies the existence of the Education Department and asks me further to justify its existence by adopting his Bill. Take over compulsion, he says, and leave the voluntary principle to the Local Governments. Guarantee two-thirds of the cost all round. Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird! We have a good deal in hand as it is, without embarking on compulsion in local areas under Local Governments against the wish and behind the authority of those Governments. No; this is not practical, nor is it practical to guarantee two-thirds of the cost of any experiment even were it desirable. The resources of the local bodies vary enormously, and so does their financial position. To some of them two-thirds of the cost would be an excessive grant; to others it would be altogether inadequate. Some Boards are rich and others are poor. We cannot possibly have one figure for all.

"My Lord, I must oppose the further progress of this Bill on the ground that it is premature and calculated to damage the cause of elementary education. But this does not imply any hostility to the principles which underly it. Our mind is fixed to spread and to improve elementary education. We believe that great progress is possible, that India in varying degree is at last waking up to the advantages of elementary education. We see that there has been real progress under the voluntary system. In the last ten years the number of public elementary schools alone has increased from under 98,000 to over 120,000 and the number of boys at school from under 8½ millions to over 4½ millions. Ten years is not a very long time in the life of India. The figures enclosed with the Bombay Government's opinion on this Bill reveal a remarkably advanced state of elementary education in parts of that Presidency. I grant you that we are not satisfied—we are profoundly dissatisfied with the general rate of progress; but we are advised by all our experts that it can be enormously accelerated by the provision of funds to finance schemes of advancement. We are working out those schemes with Local Governments. They take time. They cannot be framed in a day. We must not be wasteful when there is such urgent need of money for education all along the line. But we hope to finance these schemes with liberal grants from Imperial revenues. On the solemn occasion of the Delhi Durbar, in the most solemn manner, we have recognised the predominant claims of education on the resources of the Indian Empire and announced our firm intention to add to the 50 lakhs recurring grant further grants in future years on a generous scale. We desire to spread schools throughout the land and to raise and make more practical the whole character of our primary education. Primary education cannot do everything. It cannot, as my Hon'ble friend said, create a new heaven and a new earth. It cannot on a sudden lift the veil and open up new avenues to prosperity. There are limits—we have touched them in the West—to what education can put in that Nature has left out, and to what education can take out that Nature has put in. But it can do much. It can fit the masses in this

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country to cope on more equal terms with the forces—the strong on-pressing forces—of material progress. It can—in time it can—create greater adaptability to agricultural and industrial advancement. It can enlarge the minds and brighten the outlook of the people and foster progressive desire which is the root of the economic growth of a community. There are many difficulties ahead. But we shall not flinch, we shall not falter in the way. Though our views may differ as to means, we are all united as to the end—the Government of India, the Local Governments, the Departments of Public Instruction and enlightened public opinion are single-eyed as to the end in view. We are determined, resolutely determined, to combat ignorance through the length and breadth of this ancient land, up and down and to and fro, and though the struggle may be long and arduous, I do believe, my Lord, with all my heart I do believe, we shall prevail.”

The Hon'ble Babu Bhupendranath Basu: “My Lord, there is nothing older in the story of human progress than hostility to new ideas. Even the most cautious step to abandon the beaten track in whatever region of thought is sharply challenged, both as to its purpose and its method, and I did not expect that this very cautious move of my friend the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale would not also be sharply challenged. This is true of religion, of politics and of education also. My Lord, our ancestors were brought up in the belief that the universe turned round the earth, and then, when in the 15th century a philosopher was born who challenged that theory and said that the earth was turning round something else, people naturally felt disconcerted and the natural consequence was that this philosopher was cast into prison. But though change is gradual and is resisted with all the force of orthodoxy, it nevertheless comes, and I believe the time has come even in India when a change in its educational methods, especially as regards the elementary branch, has become absolutely needful. That greater attention should be paid to this branch of education has been admitted in very eloquent language by the Hon'ble Member in charge of Education. Our only difference now is not as regards the necessity but as regards the method. The goal is the same, it is the way by which the goal is to be attained. My Hon'ble friend would leave everything to voluntary efforts, and he points with justifiable pride to the enormous results which the voluntary system has succeeded in achieving during the course of the last ten years. I for one readily acknowledge the great strides that have been taken on the onward path of education; our countrymen and I pay our humble meed to the strenuous efforts which Government has made in that direction. But we, who desire to support the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale's Bill, think that more ought to be done than has been done, and that the pace has not been fast enough, because the motive power was not strong enough. There have been occasions in human history where we have gone from one stage to another through a long process of evolution. There have also been occasions where the progress has been much more rapid owing to causes which were within the control of the men concerned. We had in the early stages of human development, I shall not take the Hindu sages of old, but taking the teachings of Plato and Aristotle, who drew their inspiration from the primal forces of nature, the ideal that gathered round the abounding energies which surrounded human thought,—then, my Lord, through early Christian times and medieval Europe that ideal passed from things connected with the earth to the supernatural and things beyond the earth, until recent years Descartes and Kant established the necessity of relying upon human consciousness alone for the elevation of humanity. These changes have taken years to accomplish and be accepted. They have been accelerated by thoughtful men of different ages, and now that other countries have set the example as to what may be achieved in the domain of elementary education and how it may be achieved, I think that the time is ripe for consideration as to whether the methods which have been followed in other countries with success may not be adopted with equal success in India. Difficulties have been suggested and have been raised. One of these difficulties was given expression to at this Council to-day, namely, if the lower classes were educated, a great social problem would arise about the relationship between the different strata of society.”

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I am sorry, my Lord, that that objection proceeded from a gentleman who professes the Moslem faith; for if any one teacher of mankind more than another has successfully taught the equality of man, it was the great Prophet of Arabia. He it was who accentuated what was more or less a theory in India in Hindu and Buddhist times, and what was in those days also more or less a theory in Christianity. He it was who reduced into actual practice what was the highest ideal of religion in other countries, and he successfully combated the old ideas of differences with which mankind was supposed to be born in this earth; and I am sorry that one who professes that religion should now start the difficulty that, if the lower classes are educated, they will no longer follow their avocations of serving the upper classes but will be independent or try to be independent of them. That is an argument which I think has had its day.

"My friend, the Hon'ble Malik Umar Hyat Khan, opposes the Bill on very much the same grounds. He has by his own conduct contradicted his principle. He says that he has started a free school in his own place. I mean no disrespect to him, but I think it would have been of advantage to him as well as to us if he had spent a little of his time in that free school himself. But that may go.

"My friend, the Hon'ble Mr. Madge, has dwelt upon the paucity of teachers for these small schools, the difficulty of buildings, and also upon the fact that the higher classes in India are unwilling that their children should associate with those of the lower classes. I do not know whether he is aware that in Bengal we have got schools which are known as the Guru training schools."

The Hon'ble Mr. Madge: "My Lord, I did not make the last remark at all."

The Hon'ble Babu Bhupendranath Basu: "I did not catch what my Hon'ble friend said. But there are Guru training schools in Bengal from which trained teachers for these elementary schools are turned out in large numbers every year. I do not say that these teachers are sufficient; but if anyone takes the trouble to read the history of free and compulsory elementary education in other countries, he will see that all these countries were confronted at the start with that very same difficulty—the difficulty of having a sufficient number of trained teachers. But that difficulty has not prevented them from introducing the legislation which we seek to introduce to-day, and that difficulty has not retarded the growth of elementary education in those countries: given the demand, there will not be much difficulty in finding the supply.

"Much has been said of buildings for schools. My Lord, in our country amongst the humble dwellings of the poor we do not require the assistance of the Public Works Department and of chartered contractors to build elaborate houses for the education of the children of the agricultural and industrial classes. In my Province of Bengal, a few bamboos cut from a neighbouring tope and a few bundles of straw would immediately give a nice little school for the boys to attend, and they will be happier in a school of that description than in any very elaborate and ambitious buildings which the Public Works Department may set up for them, where roofs curiously enough behave as sieves on the least throat of a downpour. So that this is a difficulty which does not frighten us very much. There is another difficulty; there is another reason why we suggest, why we desire, to press upon the attention of Your Lordship's Government that this measure or a measure like this should be placed on our Statute-book. My Lord, I had the privilege of being present at the House of Commons at the time of the last Indian Budget, and there I heard our present Under-Secretary of State referring to the enormous and appalling mortality from plague. In the course of the last 15 years, he said, more than 7½ millions of people in India had died, and he said—notwithstanding the formidable rat-flea of my friend the Hon'ble Surgeon General Lukis—that much of these deaths could have been prevented if people had been sufficiently educated to adopt the methods which would have saved them from the attack of the rat-flea. Well, my Lord, if 7½ millions were an appalling figure in the course of 15 years for all India, for Bengal alone for the same 15 years, taking only one disease—preventible malaria—notwithstanding the predatory

character of the mosquito, taking Bengal alone during the same 15 years, the toll of death has been about 20 millions. So that what plague has not done for all India in 15 years, malaria levied more than twice that toll from my unhappy Province of Bengal, within the same period. And if a little more knowledge among the homes of the poor would enable them to save a few lives from the ravages of plague, of malaria, of cholera, that would be an achievement worth achieving. My Lord, it has been said that compulsion is a measure which the Government at the present moment is not prepared to adopt or to suggest for adoption. Nobody denies that the idea of compulsion is a repellent idea, but, my Lord, when your great predecessor Lord William Bentinck undertook another compulsory legislation, namely, the preventing of burning widows who wanted to be *sati*, it was said that these widows wanted to be burnt voluntarily,—the death-rate that was then shown was about 750 a year for all India. I am only speaking from memory, but I believe I am fairly correct. Well, my Lord, what does Your Lordship's Government say of 7½ millions against 750? If you take that seven hundred and fifty for ten years, it will be only seven thousand and five hundred, but it is nothing compared to the millions that are lost owing to the ravages of plague, malaria and other preventible diseases, and if by little compulsion you can educate the people to a sense of their danger, if you can educate them to adopt means and methods which will protect their lives, would it not be doing a great thing for India? And would Your Lordship not feel justified in those circumstances, having regard to the enormous amount of lives at stake, would Your Lordship not feel justified in having recourse to some amount of compulsion in educating the people? And it is not only the death-rate that is to be considered. If Your Lordship goes into the mufassal, into the malaria-stricken villages of Bengal, and if Your Lordship looks at the emaciated men and women, at the devitalization that goes on, at the lowering of the vital energies, at the lowering of the race, at the unhappiness and misery in every home, at the inadequacy of sanitary methods and sanitary appliances to cope with this dire calamity, Your Lordship would say that you would give anything to alleviate even a hundredth part of this suffering and misery. As a matter of fact, this compulsion that my friend Mr. Gokhale suggests is nothing if taken in the scale. And what is this compulsion? This compulsion would be exercised through the means of School Committees where the parents of the children will be represented. It may be said—it has been said—that that compulsion will be merely a nominal compulsion, that it will err more on the side of leniency than of stringency. Well, my Lord, I believe in these Boards will also be School Inspectors, who will see that these Boards are not unusually lenient. And then again my friend has provided another safeguard, namely, that the desire for education in a particular locality should have so far developed that at least 33 per cent. of the boys should be found to be going to some school or other. And then, this measure is to be imposed at the desire of the people themselves who are concerned in carrying it out. Where then is the bogie of compulsion? I submit that there is nothing of compulsion in it. My friends have drawn harrowing pictures of what the fate of the poor villagers will be—boys hunted and brought up in batches by their own fathers and relatives and co-villagers into these schools, kept there as close prisoners for the day, and then let loose upon an innocent world where they will develop into political agitators, and they will throw to the winds the respect that they entertain for their official superiors. I do not share that apprehension. No man who has studied the question of rural life would share in that apprehension. My Lord, I shall not tire the patience of this Council, but in the opinions that have been circulated to us there is a statement by the Director of Public Instruction of my Province, where he says that in Bengal, wherever a school is opened, he does not find any difficulty in getting boys, and therefore the fear that so far as Bengal is concerned that the agriculturists will be forced against their will to send their boys to school is unfounded. I cannot speak with personal knowledge of other parts of India, but I believe in many parts (it may not be in the United Provinces), from where my friend the Hon'ble Nawab Sahib comes, but in many parts the conditions must be the same.

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“Then, my Lord, what is the other objection? The other objection is taxation; it is the financial difficulty. Between two great experts, my friend Mr. Gokhale on the one side, and the Hon'ble Member for Education on the other, without any previous examination of the figures, it would be indeed venturesome to hazard an opinion; but I shall take the higher figure. I shall take against us everything that can be said; but I may remind my friend the Member for Education that the law will not be introduced in one day; that this Bill even if it becomes law will not be put into operation throughout India in the course of one year, or two years, I believe it will take another 20 years. My friend the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale is very sanguine when he thinks it will be accomplished only in 10 years. I say it will take at least another 20 years before the Bill becomes one of general operation throughout the country. In my Province a one-anna cess brings in a revenue of about 80 lakhs of rupees a year; a cess which is known there as the road cess. That cess is contributed half by the zamindar and half by the raiyat. Much has been said for and against the permanent settlement of this Province, but I do not look with any degree of horror upon a slight additional burden being put upon the zamindar, who pays no income-tax, who pays no succession-duty, in the shape of an education-cess. My friend here (the Hon'ble Raja of Dighapatia), the representative of a big body of zamindars, exclaims from behind me that there is succession-duty. I may tell my friend that there is no such duty so far as the great bulk of the people are concerned and specially as regards landed estates. But apart from that I might ask my friend that when the permanent settlement was entered into in the days of Lord Cornwallis the State reserved to itself three-fourths of the revenue then yielded from these properties, and gave to the zamindar one-fourth of the revenue. What is the proportion now? Much has been done by zamindars in Bengal to improve their property; but is not the State entitled—leaving the permanent settlement intact without in any way encroaching upon it, is not the State entitled to some part—a very small part—of the unearned increment, not by the alteration of the settlement certainly, but by way of sharing the burdens of the Empire with other communities? I do not suggest that forthwith and incontinently my friends should be taxed; but I say there are means. Succession-duties have not yet been introduced into our country, and it is only when a probate is applied for and obtained, or when cash or securities have got to be dealt with, that any succession-duty is payable by our people in India. There are other sources. I do not see why the professional classes should not contribute in the shape of some graduated income-tax upon their incomes. All talk about the improvement and the progress of the country becomes mere empty talk, and worse than empty talk, becomes hypocritical cant if you are not prepared to undergo some sacrifice in the interests of your people. If you are not, then all this talk about the progress of the country may as well not be said, and may as well not be heard. My Lord, these are unpleasant things to say, but at the same time these are things which are agitating the mind of the people, and, my Lord, the lower classes to-day, sunk and depressed, are beginning to feel, for the missionary has been going round among them starting schools and teaching them the dignity of manhood and the position that they occupy in the social life of India, and if the higher classes will not do their duty they will be made to do it at no very distant time. But apart from that, my Lord, in our country there was compulsion in matters educational in Hindu times. That compulsion was in favour of ignorance. Why should you not in the 20th century impose a compulsion in favour of knowledge? For, my Lord, it is the great pride of British rule in India that they have, for the first time in the history of India, made knowledge, which was the privilege of the few, the heritage of the many, and because we wish that that heritage should be extended, should be amplified, that all our countrymen should partake more largely than they do in the benefits of that heritage, that we appeal to Your Lordship's Government to support the measure which my friend the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has introduced. We are told by the Hon'ble the Educational Member that the Government is not prepared. We shall accept that; but I join my friend in his appeal to Your Lordship's Government that the Government itself, after mature deliberation, will bring forward a measure

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which will be devoid of many of the drawbacks to which a private Bill like the present is subject, and that that measure will meet the necessities of the case, will extend to the dumb millions of India, to the depressed classes—I might as well say the sunken classes—of India the benefits of that education which have made other countries great in the scale of nations.”

The Hon'ble Mr. Muhammad Shafi : “ My Lord, one of India's ablest sons striving to bring about universal diffusion of elementary education among the masses of the Indian people so as to dispel the gloom in which millions of our countrymen are at present shrouded, is a fact calculated to rouse feelings of admiration in the hearts of all true well-wishers of the country. It is unquestionable that the object which the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has in view in undertaking this great task is indeed an enlightened one, being the result of that intensely patriotic spirit which is the main-spring of his manifold activities for the furtherance of our country's cause. Had my Hon'ble friend introduced in this Council a measure embodying a comprehensive scheme of extension of elementary education on a voluntary basis, I can give him my most solemn assurance that I would have given that scheme my most enthusiastic support. For, my Lord, in respect of this most important problem there is nothing clearer to my mind than what I said the other day, that the establishment of an increasing network of elementary schools throughout the length and breadth of the Indian continent and the gradual adoption of measures calculated to make elementary education ultimately free so as to bring it within easy reach of the masses, is the most crying need of the time.

“ But, my Lord, my opinion as well as my duty in regard to the question of extension of primary education by means of compulsion are equally clear. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale first advocated the introduction of compulsion for the purposes of extension of elementary education in the well known Resolution moved by him in the spring of 1910. Having, ever since my return from England in 1892, taken an active interest in the educational advancement of my country, I naturally gave to this important problem my most anxious consideration. And when, nearly a year after, my Hon'ble friend introduced the Bill now under discussion in the meeting of the Council held on Thursday, the 16th March 1911, I closely followed the preliminary discussion and carefully examined the various provisions contained in the proposed enactment. The Bill was discussed in two successive meetings of the Lahore Municipal Committee in the month of June 1911, and having, by that time, definitely settled in my own mind that the use of compulsion as a means for the wide diffusion of elementary education among the masses was premature, impracticable and inadvisable, I gave expression to this opinion during the course of that discussion. By a majority of votes the Municipal Committee of Lahore decided against compulsion, the said majority consisting of the entire body of Musalman members and a number of Hindu and Christian Municipal Commissioners. At the same time, in response to a communication from the Provincial authorities, I submitted a memorandum embodying my opinion on the various provisions of Mr. Gokhale's Bill which was subsequently printed in the form of a pamphlet and circulated in various parts of the country. In August and September 1911 I wrote a series of articles in the *Paisa Akhbar* of Lahore, giving my views upon the proposed legislation in greater detail. These views were commented upon in various English and Vernacular newspapers throughout India. In December 1911 my lamented friend the Hon'ble Sardar Partab Singh met with untimely death, and I was elected by a clear majority of the non-official members of the Punjab Legislative Council as their representative on the Imperial Council in the place of the deceased Sardar. Not only were all my colleagues of the Punjab Council fully aware of my views on the Bill now under discussion, but, of the 14 non-official members, 9 were entirely opposed to compulsion while 3 regarded it with favour. Of the remaining two, whose opinions I recently asked for by wire, one telegraphs as follows :—‘ Quite approve free education but do hesitate to make it compulsory. Would give Local Governments power to make it compulsory in selected areas and to extend compulsion gradually in the

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light of experience gained'; and the other wires :—' Difficult to give categorical reply to such important question by wire.' It is clear, therefore, that the views I have already submitted in writing, and those I am about to express to-day, represent the opinions of a clear majority of those who have done me the honour of electing me as their representative on the Imperial Council.

" My Lord, before proceeding further it is absolutely essential for me to clear the ground by determining the real issue upon which the Council has to pronounce its judgment. According to the Statement of Objects and Reasons annexed to the Bill, its object is 'to provide for the gradual introduction of compulsion into the elementary education system of the country.' And a careful examination of the various provisions contained in the Bill as introduced makes it abundantly clear that the main end in view has been carried out by setting up a highly inquisitorial machinery of compulsion, and compulsion alone. In view of this incontrovertible fact, it seems to me that the title of the Bill is somewhat of a misnomer and the preamble is obviously calculated to confuse the real issue. It would have been far more consistent with precision and exactitude to have framed the preamble of the Bill in terms of its Statement of Objects and Reasons and to have called it as 'The Compulsory Education Bill'. A glance at some of the opinions sent up from various parts of the country would show that this criticism is amply justified, these opinions having been recorded more on the desirability of extension of elementary education generally than upon the real question in issue in this controversy. As I have said in the memorandum embodying my opinion, 'the extension of elementary education is, to my mind, not only "expedient," as stated in the preamble, but is highly desirable. *** But the introduction of compulsion, for the purposes of such extension, constitutes an entirely different question and must be considered on its own merits.' In that memorandum I have analysed the principal features of the Bill under six heads, have discussed each separately and have mentioned some of the reasons which have convinced me of the undesirability of a resort to compulsion for the realisation of the end in view. I have there shewn that compulsion is, from every point of view, unsuited to the existing circumstances of this country; that the analogy of self-governing countries is absolutely inapplicable to India; that elementary education must first be made free before compulsion can even be thought of; that the power of initiation given under this Bill to Municipalities and District Boards, far from avoiding the irritation admittedly likely to arise from this enactment, is calculated to give rise to difficulties and misapprehensions; that the levying of a special education rate is not only unjustifiable but will be extremely unpopular; that the proposed school attendance committees will be a source of oppression, annoyance and corruption; that the penal clauses of the Bill will create unrest among the masses; and that compulsion in the case of girls will be resented by the people. I do not now propose to repeat the reasons given in my memorandum in justification of these opinions as I have to deal with other matters to-day. I ask Hon'ble Members to bear these reasons in mind when giving their votes on the motion now before the Council, to keep the real issue clearly in view, and not to allow themselves to be led away from it by eloquent dissertations on the desirability of the extension of elementary education in general among the masses.

" My Lord, the supporters of the Bill claim that an overwhelming majority of public opinion in the country is in favour of the adoption of compulsion for the achievement of the desired end. I shall now proceed to examine the validity of this claim. It is obvious that the measure under discussion will not directly affect the educated classes, or even those who are already sending their children to school although themselves not educated. Now, if a referendum were taken among the masses upon whom the enactment will have direct effect, I venture to assert that the result will be an almost unanimous and albeit a vehement protest against the proposed legislation. In this connection I would like to refer the Hon'ble Members to the elaborate and well-reasoned opinion recorded by Mirza Habib Husain, B.A., Head Master, Husainabad High School, Lucknow, to which special attention has been invited by the United Provinces

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Government. This educationalist of exceptional experience took the trouble of making extensive inquiries among the classes who will be directly affected by this measure, and has sent up what appears to me a most valuable memorandum worthy of special consideration.

"But let us turn to the views expressed by members of the educated classes, official as well as non-official, whose opinions, on a question like this, undoubtedly carry special weight. In going through these, what strikes one as highly significant is the hopeless conflict and divergence of views visible everywhere, in spite of natural predilection in favour of extension of elementary education. Broadly speaking, these are divisible into three groups: firstly, those who have expressed unconditional approval of the Bill as introduced, including even those who have, to my mind, been influenced by natural predisposition towards elementary education generally and have not really considered compulsion upon its own merits; secondly, those who have voted against resort to compulsion under the existing circumstances; and, thirdly, those who are prepared to support the introduction of compulsion provided certain conditions laid down by them are complied with. And in this connection, I am glad to notice, from the speech delivered by him to-day, that the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale himself, whatever his original position as indicated in the Bill as originally introduced, has now been converted partly to the views held by the third group, and I am not hopeless that a little further consideration of the problem by him may lead to an entire agreement between him and those who fall under the second head.

"Now, my Lord, a careful examination of these opinions would make it clear to Hon'ble Members that there is really no substantial difference between the views held by the second and third groups. Generally speaking, concurrence by the third group in the principle of compulsion is coupled with the conditions that elementary education must be made free, that it should not involve any additional taxation on the people, and that, in the constitution of the School Attendance Committees, the adoption of the school curriculum, fixing the language through the medium of which instruction is to be imparted and in certain other cognate matters, the interests of minorities should be adequately safeguarded. To cite but one instance, and that undoubtedly the most important of this group. The guarded and cautious resolution, which had the support of 84 out of 61 members who attended the Anniversary, passed at the recent meeting of the All-India Muslim League held in the Calcutta Town Hall, read together with the letter sent up by the Council of the League, having been adopted by a majority at an adjourned meeting in which 7 members were present, clearly show that the members of the League who are prepared to support the introduction of compulsion consider it absolutely essential that education be made free; that Muslim boys should receive at the same time religious instruction; that Urdu should be the sole medium so far as Musalmans are concerned throughout India; that their teachers should be Muhammadans; that text-books for them should be prepared by competent Muslim writers; that *Maktabs* should be recognised by the Education Department; that School Attendance Committees should be composed of equal number of Hindus and Muhammadans; that Muslim Inspectors should be appointed; that if there is to be any taxation only those people should be taxed who will benefit directly by the scheme; that compulsion should not be sanctioned by Government unless more than two-thirds of the members of a Board are in favour of the measure, the views of the leaders of the various Committees being ascertained at the same time, and that there should be no compulsion in the case of girls. 'Without these safeguards', declares the Council of the League, 'compulsion in elementary education will never be acceptable to Musalmans as a whole.' And the letter concludes with these significant words: 'In conclusion, the League begs to impress it upon the Government that as the introduction of the principle of compulsion in education is a great innovation in which the ignorant masses of India are likely to doubt its good faith, it should proceed with great caution, and the penal clauses of the Bill should be so amended as to make the scheme work without friction in the various parts of the country.'

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“My Lord, I do not know whether my Hon’ble friend is prepared to accept all these conditions without which, according to the Council of the League, compulsion will not be acceptable to the Muhammadan community. So far as his speech to-day is concerned, he has accepted only one, *i.e.*, the language condition, and I venture to invite the attention of my Muhammadan colleagues particularly to this fact. But, for the purposes of the present discussion, I venture to submit that a close examination of this combination of possible and impossible conditions makes it abundantly clear that, at the bottom of these conditions, there lurks a conviction in the minds of the exponents of these views that a resort to compulsion, under existing circumstances, is premature and impracticable. For, the condition that compulsory elementary education must, at the same time, be free and should not involve additional taxation implies an admission that the introduction of compulsion is, at present, premature. Keeping the present state of the public exchequer in mind, it must be recognised that the steps which the Government will have, and in my humble judgment ought, to take for the purpose of making elementary education ultimately free will be gradual. Only four days ago my Hon’ble friend himself urged upon the Government the claims of the local bodies for a larger share in public revenues to enable them to discharge adequately their urgent duties in connection with sanitation and other local needs of the people which he rightly pointed out called for early attention. It is, therefore, obvious that the exponents of this view, while supporting compulsion in theory, cannot but recognise that, in view of the existing financial conditions and needs, the proposal is, from a practical point of view, obviously premature. Again, when possible and impossible conditions relating to the safeguarding of the interests of minorities are put forward as conditions precedent to the enforcement of compulsion, these in themselves constitute an admission of impracticability of the scheme and establish the validity of the position taken up by those who fall within the second group mentioned by me at an earlier stage.

“For, my Lord, what does, after all, the position taken up by the second group amount to? It amounts to this: compulsion is the last rung in the educational ladder. An effort to reach the top of the ladder by one long jump may result in a tumble-down highly injurious to national progress. You must proceed step by step in order to secure a steady and enduring national advancement. The first rung in this ladder is the establishment of a school in almost every village and provision of a large staff of duly qualified teachers, which you do not now possess, for these schools. The next is the adoption of measures to make elementary education ultimately free. These measures are certain to give such a tremendous impetus to the widespread extension of elementary education among the Indian masses as will delight the hearts of the most ardent advocates of national progress. And if the results should happen to be still unsatisfactory, there will then be time to think of compulsion. By that time the existing conflict and divergence of communal and other interests will have disappeared, special measures for safeguarding the interests of minorities will no longer be necessary, and there will be very little cause for that anxiety which the Hon’ble Mr. Gokhale himself expressed in the speech delivered by him when introducing his famous Resolution in March 1910. I venture to remind the Council of what my Hon’ble friend said on that occasion. ‘I recognise, my Lord,’ said he, ‘that the unpopularity that will be evoked by the principle of compulsion in certain sections will be considerable; in view of the special circumstances attaching to the position of the British Government in this country, I recognise that this unpopularity should not come to the State on account of any direct compulsion introduced.’ My Lord, I venture to think that these words then uttered by the Hon’ble Member himself are full of significance. So far as the uneducated masses of our people are concerned, the laws promulgated by this Council, whether at the instance of a private member or of a member of the Executive Government, are the laws of the *Sarkar*: all orders issued by authority, whether Imperial, Provincial or local, are orders of Government. Therefore, my Lord, when we say that compulsion is, under existing conditions, premature and impracticable, the position adopted by us is substantially the same as that taken up by the third group.

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“ My Lord, in the analysis of opinions which my Hon'ble friend gave to this Council to-day, he has taken into account all those who fall under the third head as supporters of his Bill, and that is the reason—

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale : “ Supporters of the principle of the Bill.

The Hon'ble Mr. Shafi : “ Excuse me for not having said the principle of the Bill. A lot has been said of the principle of the Bill. We all know what the principle of the Bill is, but we are discussing here the Bill itself. Whatever the principle may be, is the procedure laid down in this Bill practicable? Are the provisions of the Bill desirable? Is not the Bill which my Hon'ble friend has brought forward inopportune and premature? These are the questions which this Council have to consider, and I submit that my Hon'ble friend has no right whatsoever to take the opinion of local bodies and Municipal Committees that recognise the principle of the Bill but are opposed to any taxation as supporting the Bill when at the same time he insists upon the imposition of taxation to which these Committees are strongly opposed. My Hon'ble friend ought to allow me to take the opinions of those Committees as are in my favour and not in his favour. But in any case, putting aside the opinions expressed by the third group as neither favourable to him nor to me, let us see what is the proper analysis of the opinions sent up, an analysis showing how many are the supporters of my Hon'ble friend and how many are the opponents of compulsion. I have prepared an analysis of these opinions to which I wish to invite the attention of the Council.* My Hon'ble friend laid a good deal of stress on the Punjab opinion, and therefore I shall give the Punjab opinion separately; but in order to save the time of Hon'ble Members, I will give the sum total of the opinions of the six major Provinces. In the Punjab the Local Government is strongly against it. Out of the European officials, those who have given their unqualified support are 10 and those who oppose compulsion 35; out of the Hindu officials, those who have given their whole-hearted support to the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale are 7 and those who are against compulsion 5; out of the Muhammadan officials, those who have given their support are 2 and those who have opposed it are 10; out of the European non-officials, there is only one opinion, and that is opposed to the Bill; out of the Hindu non-officials, 11 have supported my friend and 4 have gone against him; out of the Muhammadan non-officials, 2 have supported him and 5 have opposed compulsion. Out of the Municipalities, 21 have supported my friend and 31 have gone against him. Out of the District Boards, 4 have supported him and 12 are against him. Out of the various associations and public meetings—of course we know how meetings can be arranged and resolutions obtained—while 3 Hindu meetings have supported him, one Muhammadan meeting has supported him and 4 Muhammadan meetings have opposed him; and one mixed meeting has supported him. This is the analysis of the first and second group of opinions in my own Province, showing that the opinion that I am expressing here to-day, as representative of the Punjab, has the support of the majority of the people of that Province.

“ Well, my Lord, so far as the sum total of the opinions of the six major Provinces go, all the Local Governments in the six major Provinces have opposed it; 20 European officials have supported my friend, 134 have opposed him; 16 Hindu officials have supported my friend, 19 have opposed him; 3 Muhammadan officials have supported my friend, 16 have opposed him; 2 European non-officials have supported him, and 7 have opposed him; 37 Hindu non-officials have supported him, 18 have opposed him; 7 Muhammadan non-officials have supported him and 15 have opposed him; 38 Municipalities have supported him, 45 have opposed; 17 District and Rural Boards have supported him and 24 have opposed him. I now come to the meetings: 14 meetings have supported him; 1 Muhammadan meeting has supported him and 8 have opposed him; 21 mixed meetings have supported him and 5 have opposed him. This is the analysis of the first and second group of opinions of these 6 major Provinces excluding those who have approved of the principle of the Bill and have laid down possible and impossible conditions. But there

* *Vide Appendix A.*

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is one remark made by my Hon'ble friend the correctness of which I am bound to contest. He said that the Indian Press almost without exception had supported his Bill. Well, my Lord, without reference even to the opinions expressed, I can give at least 8 newspapers—Muhammadan newspapers—who have strongly opposed him. The *Afghan* and the *Edward Gazette* of the North-West Frontier Province, *The Paisa Akbar*, the *Millat*, the *Yakil* in the Punjab, the *Albaskir* and the *Nayyar-i-Azam* of the United Provinces and the *Muslim* of Bombay have opposed him. He said almost without exception: I daresay he would be able to give the Council a similar number of Muhammadan newspapers who have supported him. Well, I will leave it for him to do this in his reply. But it is clear that without going through the papers, I am giving the Council at least 8 Muhammadan newspapers who have gone against him. This analysis makes it clear that even among the educated classes there is a hopeless conflict of opinion upon the adoption of compulsion as a means for the extension of elementary education in India. In these circumstances, when, apart from the unanimous opinion of all Local Governments and almost all the Directors of Public Instruction in the various Provinces, we have bodies like the Syndicate of the Calcutta University, Bombay Corporation, the Municipal Committee of Lahore, Anjuman-i-Islamiya, Amritsar, British Indian Association, Calcutta, Central National Muhammadan Association, Bengal, Muhammadan Literary Society, Calcutta, Bombay Presidency Muslim League, etc., etc., pronouncing against the Bill, surely there is reason sufficient against precipitate action being taken in this Council.

“ My Lord, the main argument put forward in support of compulsion is based upon what has actually happened in self-governing countries. To that argument I have given my answer in the written opinion to which I have already referred. But, in addition, I would like to invite the attention of Hon'ble Members to paragraph 7 of the Madras Government letter, wherein the difference between the conditions prevailing in the Western countries and in Japan at the time of the introduction of compulsion there and the existing conditions in India is fully brought out. But says my Hon'ble friend, in reply, that he does not wish to introduce compulsion throughout the country all at once but would make use of this inquisitorial method only in such areas which are sufficiently well advanced in education. To quote the words used by him when introducing this Bill in the Council last year: ‘ In practice, a limit of 33 per cent. will exclude for several years to come all District Boards and will bring within the range only a few of the more advanced Municipalities in larger towns in the different Provinces.’

“ Now, so far as the ‘ advanced Municipalities ’ are concerned, I cannot do better than quote from the opinion recorded by the Bombay Corporation, a local body presided over by that veteran Congress leader Sir Ferozshah Mehta and occupying the most leading position of all Indian Municipalities in educational progress. The Bombay Corporation are of opinion that the method embodied in the Bill is not likely to attain the object in view in a practical and satisfactory manner, and they consider that at present the great need of the country is a strenuous acceleration of the policy of Government to push primary education as rapidly as possible and to adopt a definite policy by which the number of schools can be increased from year to year within a definite period and thus to pave for the proposed measure.’ In other words, the Corporation considers the measure under discussion premature and advocates, at present, a multiplication of elementary schools all over the country as a means of extension of elementary education on a voluntary basis.

“ But, my Lord, there is one aspect of this discussion to which I should like to invite special attention. In taking up the position which I am now dealing with, my Hon'ble friend, it seems to me, could not have given sufficient consideration to the serious consequences likely to result from a partial compulsion in urban areas upon the general advancement of the country as a whole. The comparative advancement of one section of our people within limited areas and their relative backwardness in the rest of this vast Continent does not constitute a state of things conducive to the general welfare of the country as a whole.

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Even under existing circumstances, complaints have been frequently heard from certain quarters that the backwardness of our rural areas, the inhabitants of which form the bulk of the Indian population, is taken advantage of by certain persons, belonging to the bureaucratic and other classes, to resist and at any rate to hamper reforms advocated by leaders of the advanced school of Indian thought. The results so lightly contemplated by my Hon'ble friend are not likely to improve the situation. On the contrary, with a more rapid advancement of the urban section of our population and the consequent relative sliding-back of the rural communities, the existing gulf between the two sections of our people will have been widened. There will be a still further lessening of the sympathies, still wider divergence of opinions and feelings between them and the conditions thus resulting will be in the highest degree detrimental to the best interests of the motherland. What India needs most is a steady advance all along the line and this certainly will not be gained by the method advocated by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale.

"My Lord, is resort to this inquisitorial and irritating method at all necessary even for the patriotic end my Hon'ble friend has in view? As he himself pointed out, in the speech delivered by him when introducing his Resolution in March 1910, 'It is well known that our modern educational system dates from the time of the famous despatch of 1854.' Assuming the correctness of the figures given by my Hon'ble friend in that speech, at that time 'about 9 lakhs of pupils were receiving instruction in indigenous schools,' as estimated by the Education Commission of Lord Ripon's Government. In 1882, according to that estimate, there were about 21½ lakhs of pupils attending primary schools recognized by the Department and, in addition, there were about 3½ lakhs attending unrecognized schools. According to the Education Summary furnished to us the other day by the Education Department, the number of pupils in 1910-1911 had risen to 4,625,890 (not some 40 lakhs as Mr. Gokhale said), presumably in recognized schools. These figures show a steady increase from year to year, in the number of school-going children throughout the country. And now that the Government of India has met the popular demand more than half way by frankly recognizing its paramount duty in respect of a wide diffusion of elementary education among the Indian masses and has taken the first step towards the discharge of that high obligation by making a permanent recurring grant of 50 lakhs a year over and above the ordinary Educational Budget of the country, the rate of progress is bound to be considerably accelerated. As soon as a vast network of schools is established all over the country and elementary education is gradually made free and thus brought within easy reach of the masses, the results achieved will, I feel sure, be in the highest degree satisfactory.

"My Lord, for a most ardent and patriotic mind like that of my Hon'ble friend, it is natural to desire a universal diffusion of elementary education among the mass of our countrymen within as short a time as possible. But in a country like India, inhabited by a heterogeneous mass of population consisting of communities belonging to diverse races and creeds not yet bound together by a community of identical interests, and ruled over by a race belonging to a different religion from across the seas, you cannot within a little over half a century expect to bring about results which even in the case of homogeneous and self-governing races have been reached after centuries of educational progress. In a land such as ours what is really needed is steady and gradual evolution, and not revolution. Nations are like the English oak, magnificent and strong when allowed spontaneous growth in God's free air, dwarfed and hideous if forced to grow in a hot-house: or like the Indian mango-tree, firm and fruit-bearing if nurtured under normal conditions, rootless and fragile if planted under the juggler's cloth as was humourously alluded to by the Hon'ble the Finance Minister the other day. With the gradual harmonization of divergent interests the beginning of which is already visible, with the establishment of a sufficient number of schools and the provision of free elementary education, the first step towards which has already been taken by Government, and in view of the remarkable educational activity

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[*Mr. Muhammad Shafi.*]

discernible all around us, let us be full of hope for the future of our country. There is a well-known Punjabi proverb 'Chhetingge toai,' literally translated 'Deep pits in front of haste,' which applies particularly to transitional periods in the history of a people. My Lord, while fully appreciating the enlightened and patriotic motive which has impelled my Hon'ble friend to put forward this legislation and having myself as great a desire for the wide diffusion of elementary education among the masses of my countrymen as that entertained by him, I feel that I should be untrue to myself and false to the duty which I owe to my people if I were to give my vote in favour of an enactment which, I am sincerely convinced, is premature, impracticable and undesirable in the circumstances at present existing in my country. A great deal of the object which my Hon'ble friend had in view when introducing his Bill last year has already been achieved. I earnestly appeal to him to stop here and to watch with care and vigilance the results of the steps already taken and yet to be taken hereafter for the extension of elementary education on a voluntary basis. In any case, my Lord, while full of admiration for his patriotic zeal in the national cause, I am convinced that the reference of the Bill to a Select Committee will serve no useful purpose and, in consequence, I regret I cannot vote in favour of the motion now before us."

The Council adjourned to Tuesday, the 19th March 1912.

W. H. VINCENT,

*Secretary to the Government of India,
Legislative Department.*

CALCUTTA;

The 28th March 1912. }