

22nd January, 1925

THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES
(Official Report)

SECOND SESSION
OF THE
SECOND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 1925



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 22nd January, 1925.

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber at Eleven of the Clock, and the President (the Honourable Sir ALEXANDER FREDERICK WHYTE, Kt.) took the Chair.

MEMBERS SWORN:

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra, K.C.I.E., C.B.E. (Industries Member); Mr. Lancelot Graham, C.I.E., M.L.A. (Secretary, Legislative Department); Mr. George Gall Sim, C.I.E., M.L.A. (Financial Commissioner, Railways); Khan Bahadur Muhammad Abdul Mumin, M.L.A. (Bengal: Nominated Official); Mr. Ernest Horatio Ashworth, M.L.A. (United Provinces: Nominated Official); Mr. William Alexander Cosgrave, M.L.A. (Assam: Nominated Official); Mr. James Leslie McCallum, M.L.A. (Burma: Nominated Official); and Sir Campbell Ward Rhodes, Kt., C.B.E., M.L.A. (Bengal: European).

STATEMENT OF BUSINESS.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman (Home Member): Sir, I wish to give Honourable Members such information as I can as to the course of business during the next week. To-morrow, as Members are aware, has been allotted for non-official Resolutions. The Assembly will not sit on Saturday, the 24th. On Monday, the 26th, a motion will be submitted for the election of members to the Committee on Public Accounts. The next business will be the moving of a Resolution by the Honourable Member in the Commerce Department in respect of the grant of a bounty on steel manufactured in India. The text of the Resolution is already in the hands of Honourable Members. In the event of the Resolution being passed in a form acceptable to Government, this will be followed by a demand for a supplementary grant to meet the expenditure to be incurred during the current year. Thereafter, if time allows, a motion will be made to refer the Trade Unions Bill to a Select Committee and a motion will be made to take into consideration and pass the Indian Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill, which provides for the levy of fees for inspection of wireless installations of vessels. Any Government business not transacted on that day will be taken on Wednesday, the 28th, on which day it is also proposed to move for leave to introduce the Legislative Assembly President's Salary

[Sir Alexander Muddiman.]

Bill and to move for consideration of the Indian Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill, which relates to the Haj, in a form in which it has been amended by the Select Committee and also to move, if the former motion is carried, for the passing of the Bill. Finally, if found necessary, an Election will also be held on the 28th for the Central Advisory Council for Railways. Tuesday, the 27th, has been allotted for non-official Resolutions and Friday, the 30th, has been allotted for non-official Bills. The House will not sit on Thursday, the 29th, which is a gazetted holiday, nor will it sit on Saturday, the 31st January.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah (Bombay City: Muhammadan Urban): Sir, after the announcement that has been made by the Leader of the House, I wish to draw his attention and also the attention of the Government to the fact that the policy which has led to the promulgation of the Bengal Ordinance of 1924 is very keenly felt throughout the country and also, I believe, in this House by a large body of Members. I am prepared to admit that the Resolution was disallowed on technical grounds, but I am sure the Government do not desire to prevent a free and full discussion on the policy and the provisions and terms of that Ordinance. If I understand rightly that the Government do not wish to prevent a discussion across the floor of this House, then may I ask the Leader of this House whether he proposes to give us an opportunity to raise that discussion with regard to the policy and the provisions of the Bengal Ordinance at an early date?

There is another matter which I want to bring to his notice. The 26th of January is, of course, fixed for very important business. But I want to bring to his notice the fact that a Convocation is going to be held at Aligarh on that day; and large bodies of the Muhammadan Members at least have already accepted invitations and will probably have to go there. In the light of that fact, which I bring to his notice, may I know whether it is possible not to take up such important business on the 26th.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: Sir, with reference to the remarks of the Honourable Member opposite in regard to a discussion on the provisions of the Bengal Ordinance, I may say at once that this Government have no desire whatever to shirk a full discussion on any Resolutions that can be constitutionally discussed and I will examine the state of business on the Government side and, as far as possible, I will endeavour to make available an early day for the discussion of that question. Nothing is further from the wish of the Government than to shirk this discussion or in any way to burke the matter and I recognise that the Honourable Member was also aware of that fact when he made his allusion to a Resolution which might otherwise have come on to-day.

As regards the second matter, the matter of the Aligarh University, that is quite new to me. But, speaking generally, Honourable Members must understand that there can be no business more important than the business of this House. However important any other engagements may be, Honourable Members must always recognise that they may have to give them up. However, I will consider the point and I will consult my Honourable Colleague who is mainly responsible for the business of that day. My Honourable friend must also recollect that there is a good deal of Government business and we have to do the best we can to get it through. But I will consider the point.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

NUMBER OF DEPUTY ASSISTANT CONTROLLERS AND ACCOUNTANTS IN THE OFFICE OF THE CONTROLLER OF MILITARY ACCOUNTS, SOUTHERN COMMAND AND POONA DISTRICT.

1. ***Mr. N. C. Kelkar:** What is the number of:

(a) authorised,

(b) actually working (1) Deputy Assistant Controllers of Military Accounts and (2) Accountants in the office of the Controller of Military Accounts, S. C. and Poona District?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: (a) Deputy Assistant Controllers of Military Accounts—7; Accountants—34.

(b) (1). Deputy Assistant Controllers of Military Accounts on the 1st September 1924—7.

(2) Accountants on the 1st September 1924—35.

OFFICIATING PROMOTIONS IN LEAVE VACANCIES IN THE OFFICE OF THE CONTROLLER OF MILITARY ACCOUNTS, SOUTHERN COMMAND AND POONA DISTRICT.

2. ***Mr. N. C. Kelkar:** (a) Are the officiating appointments in the vacancies caused by Deputy Assistant Controllers of Military Accounts and Accountants on leave from 1st September 1922 onwards made in all cases? If not, will Government please state the reasons for the same?

(b) Is it a fact that the Controller of Military Accounts, S. C. and Poona District has declined to notify officiating promotions in leave vacancies as long as the number of Accountants working in his office and with Units are in excess of the authorised strength? If the reply be in the affirmative, will Government be pleased to state whether the same principle was followed in the same office in notifying promotions to the grade of D. A. C. M. A.? If not, the cause of the difference?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: (a) Officiating arrangements in question have been made from 1st September 1922 onwards, where admissible, with due regard to the acting allowance rules.

(b) I would refer the Honourable Member to the answer already given to Mr. Lohokare's question No. 2317 on the same subject. We have no surpluses in the Deputy Assistant Controllers of Military Accounts' grade in any of the Controller of Military Accounts' offices.

GRANT OF OVERTIME ALLOWANCES TO POSTAL SIGNALLERS.

3. ***Mr. N. C. Kelkar:** Will Government be pleased to state whether it is a fact that an overtime allowance is granted in the case of departmental telegraphists for postal and telegraph service messages dealt with by them beyond their prescribed hours of attendance while the same is denied to postal signallers. If so, why?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: It is a fact that an overtime allowance is granted to departmental telegraphists for postal and telegraph service messages dealt with by them beyond their prescribed hours of attendance.

2. The allowance is not however denied to postal signallers, provided that the combined office is required to be kept open, under competent authority, for substantially longer hours (i.e., for a period of 30 minutes or more) than those fixed for the transaction of telegraph business.

WORKING HOURS OF RAILWAY MAIL SERVICE SORTERS.

4. ***Mr. N. O. Kelkar:** Will the Government be pleased to state whether the attendance hours at the record office and on the railway platforms of R. M. S. sorters on duty are not taken into account in calculating the working hours? If so, why?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: Such hours are not taken into account as working hours, because to do so would be still further to reduce the term of actual duty of R. M. S. officials which is already considerably below that of other branches of the Department.

VACANCIES IN SELECTION GRADE APPOINTMENTS IN THE WESTERN CIRCLE RAILWAY MAIL SERVICE.

5. ***Mr. N. O. Kelkar:** Will the Government be pleased to state whether it is a fact that vacancies in the selection grade appointments in the Western Circle R. M. S. have been kept vacant for over a year and if so, why?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: The appointments were kept vacant owing to a misapprehension of the orders on the subject. The matter has been set right and the vacancies have since been filled up.

INCREASE OF LEAVE RESERVE IN THE RAILWAY MAIL SERVICE.

6. ***Mr. N. O. Kelkar:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state whether it is a fact that Government have accepted the recommendations of the joint R. M. S. conference regarding the increase of leave reserve to 30 per cent. in the R. M. S.? If so, will the Government be pleased to state whether any final orders to that effect have or have not been passed yet?

(b) If final orders have been passed, will the Government be pleased to state what are the orders?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: The question of increasing the leave reserve in the Railway Mail Service is being carefully considered by the Director-General in consultation with the Financial Adviser to the Department of Posts and Telegraphs. His recommendations will be considered by Government as soon as they are received.

WORKING HOURS OF POSTAL AND TELEGRAPH OFFICIALS.

7. ***Mr. N. O. Kelkar:** Will the Government be pleased to state:

- (a) How many hours' attendance daily is considered as normal in the case of officials of (I) the Post, (II) of the Telegraphs;
- (b) Whether any differentiation between postal officials and telegraphists is made in respect of attendance by day and attendance by night;
- (c) If any is made, what are the normal hours of attendance by day and normal hours by night per day in case of the officials of the two departments?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (a) Ordinarily 8 hours daily, for attendance by day.

(b) The work of postal clerks is usually done by day, but telegraphists are, in many cases, called upon to put in a regular term of night duty, and their period of attendance by night is from 6 to 7 hours. In view of the replies to (a) and (b), (c) does not arise.

GRANT OF EXTRA REMUNERATION TO THE SORTERS OF THE POONA
POST OFFICE FOR SORTING THE *KESARI* NEWSPAPER ONCE
A WEEK.

8. ***Mr. N. O. Kelkar:** Will the Government be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the sorters of the Poona Post Office have to work for two hours extra to sort the *Kesari* newspaper once a week and if so, are they paid any additional remuneration and if so, what? If they are not paid extra remuneration, why not?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: The sorting staff of the Poona post office, having been fixed, in accordance with the rules of the Department, on the basis of the amount of work performed daily on the average during a fortnight, the position is that the staff have more work than the average on one day in each week and less work than the average on the remaining days. In the circumstances, it is not considered necessary to grant extra remuneration in connection with the sorting of the *Kesari* newspaper.

TIME TEST OF SORTERS OF THE RAILWAY MAIL SERVICE.

9. ***Mr. N. O. Kelkar:** Will the Government be pleased to state whether it is a fact that orders are in existence to exclude from calculation the work in connection with sorting weekly newspapers and magazines from the prescribed time-test of the work of the R. M. S. sorters? If so, why?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: The reply is in the negative.

GRANT OF COMPENSATORY ALLOWANCE TO POSTAL OFFICIALS AT
BOMBAY, POONA AND KARACHI.

10. ***Mr. N. O. Kelkar:** Will the Government be pleased to state whether they propose to sanction compensatory allowance to postal officers working at Bombay, Poona and Karachi similar to that sanctioned by the Local Government to their officers similarly posted?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: The Government have already admitted, with effect from the 1st April 1924, the gazetted officers of the Central Services who are stationed at Bombay, Karachi and other expensive towns, to the benefits of a special scale of local allowance. Poona is not included in this allowance.

REFUSAL OF THE ANCHOR LINE TO CARRY INDIAN SALOON PASSENGERS
TO EUROPE.

11. ***Sir Hari Singh Gour:** (a) Is it a fact that the Anchor Line steamers refuse to carry Indian saloon passengers to Europe?

(b) If so, will the Government be pleased to state if they have represented to the Directors of the Anchor Line against this racial discrimination?

(c) What subsidy do the Government give to this line of steamers?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) No.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) None.

Colonel Sir Henry Stanyon: Are Government aware of the fact that in October and November last on the Anchor Liner "California" I had the pleasure of a voyage to India with 22 Indian First and Second Saloon passengers?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: I am glad the Honourable Member is able to confirm the information I have just given to the House.

Mr. W. S. J. Willson: Do the Government pay a subsidy to any line of steamers? I am not referring to payments for services done, but to a subsidy.

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: We pay to certain steamship lines what are called mail subsidies which are of course payments for services rendered.

Mr. W. S. J. Willson: My point is that they are not subsidies.

LOCATION OF THE INDIAN STORES DEPARTMENT IN SIMLA.

12. ***Sir Hari Singh Gour:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state what necessity there is for the Indian Stores Department to be located in Simla?

(b) What percentage of the stores are purchased in Simla and what commercial houses have their headquarters in Simla for the purchase of stores?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (a) I propose to answer this question in reply to part (b) of the Honourable Member's next question* on the paper.

(b) It is presumed that the Honourable Member refers to purchases made from firms located in Simla. If this is so, the answer is that no such purchases except some petty supplies have been made. As far as the Government are aware no commercial Houses have their headquarters in Simla for the wholesale purchase of stores.

LOCATION OF THE INDIAN STORES DEPARTMENT IN DELHI.

13. ***Sir Hari Singh Gour:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state how many offices of the Indian Stores Department are located in Simla, and for how many months and what work they do during their stay here?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state why the headquarters of the Indian Stores Department should not be permanently located in Delhi or some other commercial centre?

(c) Is it a fact that the employees of the Indian Stores Department find difficulty in getting house accommodation in Simla and their efficiency thereby suffers?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (a) The only office of the Indian Stores Department which is located for any portion of the year at Simla is the office of the Chief Controller of Stores. This office moves between Simla and Delhi with the headquarters of the Government of India and discharges at Simla the ordinary work devolving on it.

(b) The Honourable Member is aware that the Indian Stores Department is still in process of organization, and it is considered essential in the interests of administrative convenience and efficiency that the headquarters of the Department should remain as a temporary arrangement with the Government of India.

(c) Not, as far as the Government of India are aware.

ENCOURAGEMENT OF INDIGENOUS INDUSTRIES SINCE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INDIAN STORES DEPARTMENT.

14. ***Sir Hari Singh Gour:** (a) Is it a fact that the Indian Stores Department has been inaugurated in this country for the purpose of encouraging the indigenous industry of the country?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state what indigenous industries have been encouraged since its establishment?

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

(b) The Indian Stores Department since its institution has rendered material assistance to the following industries:

Textiles.

Cement.

Miscellaneous iron and steel manufactures including fabricated articles.

Oils and paints.

Sundry Chemical and allied manufactures.

The Department has also assisted the Engineering industries by inspection of manufactures, testing of materials and affording technical assistance and advice.

PURCHASE OF STORES.

15. ***Sir Hari Singh Gour:** With reference to the Rules for the supply of articles for the public services will the Government be pleased to lay on the table the following information:

(a) Names of indigenous industry encouraged under the patronage of the Indian Stores Department since its establishment in January 1922;

(b) Names of the firms whether owned and managed by Indian or English capital and personnels;

(c) Total amount of indents placed by the I. S. D. for the supply of such local industry as is referred to in (a) above during the period the new rules were introduced?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (a) The Honourable Member is referred to the reply to his starred question No. 14.

(b) The information asked for by the Honourable Member is not available. The collection of this information would take a considerable time and entail some expense. It is also doubtful if private trading firms would be prepared to furnish the information asked for.

(c) The value of the purchases, of *locally manufactured* articles, made by the Indian Stores Department, from the date on which the revised Stores Rules were introduced up to the 31st December 1924 is Rs. 77,74,900. I may add that these rules came into force only in May last.

PURCHASE OF STORES.

16. ***Sir Hari Singh Gour:** With reference to rule 1 of the Rules for the supply of articles for the public service will the Government be pleased to lay on the table the following information:

(a) Names of articles manufactured in India from materials produced in India and purchased through the I. S. D.

(b) Names of firms whether owned and managed by Indian or English capital and personnels?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (a) A statement is laid on the table.

(b) The Honourable Member is referred to the reply given to part (b) of his starred question No. 15.

List of stores manufactured from Indian materials and purchased by the Indian Stores Department.

Engineering and Hardware stores—

Anchors.
 Axles.
 Belting.
 Brushes.
 Carts, hand.
 Carts, night soil.
 Casing and Capping.
 Cement.
 Chair spikes.
 Cranes.
 Creosote.
 Dogspikes.
 Firebars.
 Firebricks.
 Fireclay.
 Glue.
 Gymnasium appliances.
 Hydrant standpost.
 Iron, pig.
 Nails, wire.
 Padlocks.
 Petrol.
 Phowrahs.
 Pipes and specials, C. I.
 Sleepers.
 Steel sections.
 Steel yards.
 Tar, coal.
 Tar, wood.
 Tiles.
 Trusses, roof.
 Turpentine.

Valves, wheel brass.
 Wheels.
 Wire, baling.
 Wood blocks.
 Textiles, Cotton—
 Bags, dasooti.
 Calico.
 Cambric.
 Canvas.
 Carriers, waterbottle.
 Cases, mattress, pillow, etc.
 Chintz, Tent.
 Cloth, dasooti.
 Cloth, Grey and other colours.
 Cloth, Jaconet.
 Cloth, Khadi.
 Cloth, Lining.
 Cloth, Long.
 Cloth, Markin.
 Cloth, Oil.
 Cloths, Glass, table, tea, tray, sponge, toos, etc.
 Cord, Bedford.
 Cordage of sorts.
 Corduroy.
 Cotton waste.
 Drill, grey and dyed.
 Duck.
 Dungari.
 Durries.
 Flannelette.
 Fringes.
 Kullahs.

List of stores manufactured from Indian materials and purchased by the Indian Stores Department—contd.

Textiles, Cotton—contd.	Jackets, Cardigan.
Lines, bedding.	Jerseys.
Mulmul.	Jhools, camel.
Naj-kins.	Melton.
Newar.	Putties.
Pugri cloth, bleached and dyed.	Rugs, horse.
Putties.	Serges of sorts.
Ropes of sorts.	Socks.
Safas Police.	Stockings.
Sheeting.	Wool, Raw.
Sheets.	Jute, Coir, Hemp, etc.—
Tape, cotton.	Bags of sorts.
Tents and components.	Canyas (jute).
Thread.	Fibre (coir).
Ticken.	Gasketting (jute).
Towelling cloth.	Hessian cloth.
Towels.	Log Lines.
Twill.	Mats, coir fibre.
Twine.	Nets, hay.
Yarn.	Nets, loading camel.
Wool—	Paulins (jute proofed).
Banat.	Rope of sorts.
Bandages, horse.	String (coir).
Blankets.	Tanks, mule covers.
Broadcloth.	Tanks, mule nets.
Chutt.	Tatputties.
Cloth, Baize.	Twill (jute).
Comforters.	Twine.

PURCHASE OF STORES.

17. ***Sir Hari Singh Gour:** With reference to rule 3 (b) (i) and (c) of revised Store Rules, will the Government be pleased to give the following information:

List of I and II of approved firms.

Number.	Owned and managed by English capital and personnels.	Owned and managed by Indian capital and personnels.

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: The Honourable Member is referred to the reply given to starred question No. 1738, on the 10th September, 1924.

PURCHASE OF STORES.

18. ***Sir Hari Singh Gour:** Will the Government be pleased to state the method followed by the Indian Stores Department in the selection of firms for placing orders in cases of indents for which no advertisement is made?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: A list of approved firms who deal in the various classes of stores purchased by the Indian Stores Department is maintained by the Chief Controller of Stores and in cases in which tenders are not called for by advertisement a number of firms

on the approved list are invited to tender. The selection of the firms who are invited to tender is made after taking into consideration among other things their location in relation to the destination at which the stores are required.

PURCHASE AND INSPECTION OF STORES.

19. ***Sir Hari Singh Gour:** With reference to rule 6 of the Stores Rules will the Government be pleased to state whether a department under the control of Indian Stores Department can purchase its stores from another department which is not under the control of the Indian Stores Department. If so, what is the limit as regards cost of stores thus purchased?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: There is no Department under the control of the Indian Stores Department which is purely an agency for the purchase and inspection of stores on behalf of other Departments.

ACTION TAKEN AGAINST DEPARTMENTS INDENTING DIRECT ON LONDON FOR STORES.

20. ***Sir Hari Singh Gour:** Will the Government be pleased to give the following information:

(a) Names of the departments who in disregard of Government instructions did not send in their indents to the Indian Stores Department but sent them direct to London, during last year ended the 31st July 1924;

(b) What effective action was taken against such departments?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (a) Indents for stores are sent direct to the London Store Department in accordance with Standing Orders and a copy of such indents is sent to the Indian Stores Department for scrutiny.

(b) Does not arise.

Mr. B. Das: May I inquire whether any of the Railway Departments are sending their orders through the Indian Store Department?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: I understand, Sir, that several Railways are placing orders with the Indian Stores Department.

Mr. B. Das: At the end of the last September session the Honourable Member for Commerce assured us that after a conference with the Director of Stores Purchases various Railway Departments would make purchases through the Indian Stores Department. May I know the result of that conference?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: I think there is a question on that subject in the paper later on.

Mr. B. Das: May I know if the Indian Stores Department is calling for rupee tenders in accordance with Mr. Jinnah's Resolution adopted by this Assembly last year?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: That is a matter on which a question has been asked later on.

INDENTS FOR STORES SENT TO THE LONDON STORE DEPARTMENT.

21. ***Sir Hari Singh Gour:** Is it a fact that the indents sent direct to the Indian Stores Department, London, are not first advertised in India in order to give opportunities to Indian firms for quotation? If so, will the Government be pleased to state why this is not done?

INDENTS FOR STORES SENT TO THE LONDON STORE DEPARTMENT.

22. ***Sir Hari Singh Gour:** (a) On the case of indents forwarded direct to London of which only a copy is sent to the I. S. D. what action do the latter take to safeguard the interest of indigenous producers?

(b) Are such indents made known to the indigenous producers?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: With your permission, Sir, I propose to answer this question and the preceding question No. 22, put by the Honourable Member together.

Indents are forwarded to the London Store Department direct by indentors for all articles which they believe cannot be obtained in India under the provisions of the Rules for the Supply of articles for the Public Service. A copy of each such indent is sent simultaneously to the Indian Stores Department for scrutiny. If that Department finds that any articles have been demanded from London which can be obtained from Indian sources of supply, this is brought to the notice of the indentor, full particulars being given of the source of supply, etc.

The information contained in the indents is not communicated to indigenous producers at the time of their despatch to London, but for some years past a statement has been published half-yearly indicating the classes of engineering stores which have been indented for from London. It has recently been decided to expand the statement so as to include all classes of stores.

The bulk of the indents sent to the London Store Department are for stores which are not obtainable in India in conformity with the Stores Purchase Rules and hence the advertisement of such demands in India would only lead in the majority of cases to increased expenditure and also delay in the supply of stores.

COUNCIL OF STATE ELECTORAL RULES.

23. ***Mr. M. Yusuf Imam:** (a) Are the Government of India aware of the fact that the electoral rolls of the several constituencies of the Council of State in the United Provinces are under preparation and were published for objections on September 15, 1924?

(b) Has the Government of India's attention been drawn to the interpellation of Doctor Ganesh Prasad in the meeting of the United Provinces Legislative Council of the 11th September 1924, and the reply of the Local Government thereto?

(c) When and on what date was the communication of the Government of the United Provinces, asking for the amendment of clause (f) paragraph 3 of Schedule II to the Council of State Electoral Rules, received by the Government of India and what action was taken thereon by them?

(d) What is the reason for the delay especially in view of the fact that a similar amendment in case of clause (a) paragraph 13 Schedule II to the United Provinces Electoral Rules was sanctioned by them last year?

(e) Do the Government of India propose to sanction the amendment applied for by the Government of the United Provinces before the revised electoral rolls are finally published?

(f) Are the Government of India prepared, if necessary, to obtain the sanction of the Secretary of State in Council in connection with this amendment?

(g) Do the Government of India propose to stop the final publication of the revised electoral rolls in question until after the amendment asked for by the Local Government is sanctioned?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: The Honourable Member is referred to my reply to Mr. Ranga Iyer's question, dated the 20th September 1924, which is reproduced on page 4065 of the Legislative Assembly Debates, Volume IV. The necessary amendments to the Council of State Electoral Rules have been sanctioned by the Secretary of State in Council and were published in the Home Department Notification No. F.-807-Public, dated the 17th December 1924.

PROVISION OF ROADWAYS OVER RAILWAY BRIDGES IN ASSAM.

24. ***Mr. T. A. Chalmers:** (a) Is it a fact that railway bridges on the Rohilkund and Kumaon Railway are constructed so that the track on which the railway is laid is also used for wheeled traffic when the bridge is not actually carrying or about to carry a train?

(b) What is the extra cost per foot of span of constructing these bridges to fit them for this purpose?

(c) Are Government aware that a great deal of dissatisfaction has been caused in Assam because railway bridges, which are not used for railway trains more than six or eight times a day in Assam, are not utilised for the purposes of wheeled traffic as is said to be the case in Rohilkund?

(d) Is this want of consideration for the needs of improved communication due to the want of co-operation between the Railway Board or Railway Administration on the one hand and the P. W. D. or Local Boards on the other?

(e) If not, why cannot the present bridges and all future bridges be altered or constructed and worked as is said to be done in Rohilkund?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) There are two bridges on the Rohilkund and Kumaon Railway system which can be utilised in the manner indicated.

(b) The extra cost cannot be stated as a definite figure per lineal foot of span of a bridge as it would vary with the requirements of each particular case.

(c) The Government of India have received no representations to this effect.

(d) The provision of roads is the concern of the Local Government but there is no want of co-operation on the part of Railways. The rules for the preparation of railway projects provide for the possibility of roadways being required by the local civil authorities on railway bridges and it is specifically laid down that when a large railway bridge is under consideration the Local Government or other road authority shall be given an opportunity of deciding whether facilities for road traffic should be simultaneously provided for.

(e) The provision of roads over existing bridges is precluded in many cases by the fact that this would entail an alteration in the design of the bridges. This difficulty does not, however, arise in the case of new bridges or when existing ones are being renewed and a roadway could be provided over them if asked for by the Local Government or road authority provided the extra cost to the railway is met by those authorities.

PURCHASE OF STORES.

25. ***Mr. K. Ahmed:** (a) Is it a fact that the Stores Purchase Rules issued by the Government of India are based on a policy which aims at the encouragement of Indian industries?

(b) Is it a fact that these rules are intended to regulate the purchase of stores by all Departments immediately subordinate to the Government of India and by Heads of minor Provinces?

(c) If the reply to the above is in the affirmative, will Government please state whether the purchases at present made by the three State Railways, the Director General of Posts and Telegraphs and the Chief Commissioner of Delhi are being made in conformity with the rules?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: The reply to all parts of the question is in the affirmative.

PURCHASE OF STORES.

26. ***Mr. K. Ahmed:** (a) Is it a fact that Rule 1 of the Stores Purchase Rules requires that all articles which are produced in India in the form of raw material or are manufactured in India, should by preference be purchased locally, provided that the quality is sufficiently good for the purpose and the price reasonable?

(b) If so, is this policy followed in the case of all purchases made by the Indian Stores Department and the Master General of Supplies?

(c) How do the Indian Stores Department and the Master General of Supplies satisfy themselves in regard to comparison of prices of imported and indigenous articles? Do they maintain any rate lists? If not, why not?

(d) Do Government propose to amend rule 1 of the Stores Purchase Rules, so as to make it more effective by providing for disciplinary measures being taken against indenting officers, who may be found to have infringed the principle of the rule?

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

(c) In the case of the Indian Stores Department when orders involve large expenditure, simultaneous tenders are called for in India and from the Director General, India Store Department, London. Copies of all contracts placed by the Director General, India Store Department, London, are forwarded to the Indian Stores Department and in the case of orders for stores which are not of sufficient magnitude to justify calling for simultaneous tenders, the price of similar stores given in recent copies of contracts is compared with quotations received in India. If no recent purchase of the stores in question has been made by the London Store Department and hence no copies of contracts are available for comparison, the current price is ascertained from the Director General of Stores by cable. In all cases the additional charges shown in Rule 8 of the Stores Purchase Rules are added to the prices intimated by the Director General

of Stores. Rate lists are not maintained in the Indian Stores Department owing to the vast numbers and variety of items purchased for the several Government Departments and unstable conditions of market prices. It is considered that the labour and expense involved in the preparation of rate lists and in keeping them up-to-date would not be commensurate with their usefulness, and they would in fact in many cases be misleading.

In the case of the Master General of Supply the instructions contained in Rule 8 of the Stores Purchase Rules are strictly adhered to and rate lists are maintained for the classes of stores purchased.

(d) The answer is in the negative.

PURCHASE OF RAILWAY STORES.

27. ***Mr. K. Ahmed:** (a) Will Government be pleased to place on the table the circular letter No. 2574-S., dated the 18th August 1924, from the Railway Board to the Agents of State Railways?

(b) Are the instructions conveyed in this letter in regard to purchase of stores by the Railways, mandatory or permissive only? If the latter, why?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) The Railway Board's circular letter No. 2574-S., dated 18th August 1924, was laid on the table on the 17th September 1924, in response to the request contained in part (f) of Mr. Neogy's question No. 2185.

(b) As regards the second part of the question, I would invite the Honourable Member's attention to my speech on the 20th September 1924 in this House to which I have nothing to add.

PURCHASE OF MILITARY STORES.

28. ***Mr. K. Ahmed:** (a) Is it a fact that in the communiqué, dated the 31st March 1924, issued by the Government of India in the Army Department creating the office of the Master General of Supplies, it was announced that the production and provision of purely military stores such as lethal munitions and foodstuffs for the Army would be entrusted to the Master General of Supplies and the purchase of general stores, such as textiles and leather goods, engineering plant and material, hardware, oils and paints and other articles, which are in general use in the other Departments and in no way peculiar to the Army, would be entrusted to the Indian Stores Department?

(b) If the answer to the above be in the affirmative, will the Government be pleased to state whether or not the purchases made by the two authorities, are in accordance with the above distribution?

Mr. E. Burdon: (a) I would first of all observe that the Honourable Member, by omitting from his quotation of the press communiqué in question an important qualifying phrase, has altered its complexion. As the communiqué plainly stated, it was only in the ultimate development of the Department of Surveyor General of Supply, if one were created, and of the Indian Stores Department, that the distribution of functions outlined in the communiqué was to take place.

(b) It was agreed at the time that the communiqué was issued that the Indian Stores Department should continue to carry out the purchase of textiles for the Army, and also that the purchase of engineering stores for the Military Works Services should be entrusted to the Indian Stores

Department as an experimental measure for a year. As the Department was not at that time sufficiently organised or developed to undertake the purchase of further classes of articles, it was further agreed that no extension of their activities on behalf of the Army should be carried out until the Department was in a position to buy as cheaply and as efficiently as the Army's own purchasing agency. The Government of India attach very great importance to the position which they desire to assign to the Indian Stores Department as a purchasing agency ancillary to the Master General of Supply, and the question of entrusting further classes of purchases on behalf of the Army to the Indian Stores Department is under the consideration of Government.

THE TAXATION INQUIRY COMMITTEE.

29. ***Mr. T. O. Goswami:** (a) Have Government dissolved the Taxation Inquiry Committee in pursuance of the Resolution passed by the Legislative Assembly during the September session of 1924?

(b) If not, will Government be pleased to say in what manner they have given effect to the Resolution referred to above, or in what manner they propose to give effect to it?

(c) Have Government considered the advisability of setting up an Economic Inquiry Committee, as recommended by the Legislative Assembly? Have they come to any decision on the subject?

(d) (i) How much of the amount voted by the Legislative Assembly for the Taxation Inquiry Committee had been spent before the said Assembly passed the Resolution recommending its dissolution, and how much (if any) has been spent since? What is the balance in hand?

(ii) Will Government be pleased to state how the money has been spent (i.e., the items of expenditure) in connection with the proposed Taxation Inquiry Committee?

(e) Has the Taxation Inquiry Committee ever yet met?

THE TAXATION INQUIRY COMMITTEE.

168. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** (a) Do Government propose to take any action in accordance with the recommendation of the Assembly about the Taxation Committee?

(b) If so, what action thereon is proposed to be taken and when?

(c) Have the members of the Committee been summoned and what work are they now engaged on?

THE TAXATION INQUIRY COMMITTEE.

877. ***Kumar Ganganand Sinha:** Are not the Government aware of the fact that a large number of the people's representatives in the Assembly are refraining from taking part in the Taxation Inquiry? Will the Government be pleased to state the reasons that have led the Government to disregard the disapproval of the House with regard to the personnel and terms of reference of the Taxation Inquiry Committee?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: I propose to answer together with this question, question No. 168 by Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda and question No. 877 by Kumar Ganganand Sinha.

Mr. Goswami's question.

(a) to (c). I would invite the Honourable Member's attention to the statement made by His Excellency the Viceroy on this subject on the 20th instant.

(d) Of the sum of Rs. 2 lakhs voted by the Assembly, Rs. 5,656 was spent before and Rs. 62,739 after the passing of the Resolution, leaving a balance of Rs. 1,31,605. The details of expenditure are as follows:

		Rs.
Pay of officers	...	38,585
Pay of establishment	...	8,495
Travelling allowances	...	11,405
Contingencies ...	...	9,910
Total	...	68,395

With regard to (e) I would refer the Honourable Member to the accounts in the press.

That answers the whole of Mr. Chanda's question.

In regard to Kumar Ganganand Sinha's question a certain number of members of the Assembly have, I understand, published statements in the press to which the Honourable Member may refer. As regards the latter part of the question, I would invite the Honourable Member's attention to the statement made by His Excellency the Viceroy on the subject on the 20th instant.

Mr. T. O. Goswami: Arising out of that answer, may I ask the Honourable the Finance Member if he has any justification to offer for disregarding the Resolution of this Assembly in a manner which suggests peevishness and childish obstinacy.

Mr. President: Order, order. The Honourable Member must choose his words with greater care.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: I might apply the words to the action of somebody else. I would justify the action of Government by pointing out that this Assembly voted the sum necessary to appoint and carry on the work of the Committee for the year and that it was only in accordance with that vote and after it had been voted that the Committee was appointed.

Mr. Darcy Lindsay: Is it a fact that my Honourable friend, Mr. Goswami, in common with other Members of the Assembly was supplied with copies of letters, dated the 10th November and the 20th December, showing that the Committee were very much alive in proceeding with their labours and hence several of his questions have been needlessly asked?

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask, Sir, whether Government are in a position to tell the House what the terms of reference to the Economic Inquiry Committee are and what the constitution of the Committee is?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: The terms of reference to the Committee are:

To examine the material at present available for framing an estimate of the economic condition of the various classes of the people of British India; to report on its adequacy; and to make recommendations as to the best manner in which it may be supplemented, and as to the lines on which a general economic survey should be carried out, with an estimate of the expenditure involved in giving effect to such recommendations.

The personnel of the Committee is as follows:

Sir M. Visvesvaraya, K.C.I.E., D.Sc., M.I.C.E., Chairman;

Rai Bahadur Pandit Hari Kishan Kaul, C.S.I., C.I.E., Member; and

Mr. A. R. Burnett-Hurst, B.Sc., Professor, Muir Central College, Allahabad, Member and Secretary.

Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar: May I know the reason why the Government did not accept the recommendations of this House as to the constitution of this Committee?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: If the Honourable Member will put that question down, I think I can answer it.

USE OF A DEFECTIVE WEIGHING MACHINE AT THE SEALDAH RAILWAY STATION.

30. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to a letter published in the *Forward* on or about the last week of September over the name of Mr. Abdul Gunny Chowdhury, M. L. C., complaining that on his arrival at the Sealdah station his hand-bag was weighed by a railway employé by a weighing machine standing on platform No. 7 which showed a weight of 20 seers, that on Mr. Chowdhury challenging the weight, the bag was reweighed by Mr. G. Moss by another machine which stood by the side of the former machine, and the weight was now shown to be 14½ seers; that the matter being reported to the Superintendent, he inquired and discovered that the former machine had been declared defective and Mr. Chowdhury thus escaped and it was found as stated that the man in charge of the defective machine had once before been punished for weighing by the same machine which is described as I. S. R. Inter and Third class K. L. N. M. B. B. and K. I. R. *vid* L. G. G.

(b) Are the above statements true?

(c) If so, what action has been taken in the matter?

(d) Who is responsible for using a weighing machine after it was found to be defective and what notice has been taken of his conduct?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) Government have seen the letter referred to.

(b), (c) and (d). Government understand that the article in question was a small steel trunk, which had not been booked. When the trunk was weighed, the weighing machine was found to be defective, and, on this being reported to the Station Superintendent, he had the machine put out of use. The statement that the clerk, who weighed the luggage, had been previously punished for weighing by this machine is not correct.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask if the Government have got special machines, not necessarily defective, for weighing the luggage of intermediate and third class passengers?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: I do not understand why we should have separate machines for weighing the luggage of intermediate and third class passengers.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I see here in this question there is reference to a special machine for intermediate and third class passengers' luggage.

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: I am not responsible for the phrasing of the question.

ALLEGED OUTRAGE ON AN INDIAN FEMALE TRAVELLING BY THE RANCHI EXPRESS.

31. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** Has the attention of the Government been called to an account published in the *Bankura Darpan* stating that an Indian female was travelling in a female compartment by the Ranchi Express and had a son with her, that at Purulia a guard of the train removed the latter to a male compartment and that thereafter as soon as the train began to move a guard entered the said female compartment and attempted to commit an outrage on her and on her crying out some one from the adjoining male compartment pulled the "Alarm Chain" on which the train was brought to a stop and the guard ran away, that the police prosecuted the two guards A. J. D. Rossio and A. H. Poke in this connection and the Sub-Divisional Officer of Bankura who tried the case convicted guard Rossio and sentenced him to 9 months' rigorous imprisonment and acquitted guard A. H. Poke.

- (a) Are the facts stated above correct?
- (b) Has it been ascertained whether or not the son of the female passenger could under the railway rules remain with his mother in the female compartment?
- (c) If so, has the Railway Administration held any inquiry about the guard who removed him from the female compartment? Was he the guard A. H. Poke who has been acquitted?
- (d) Has the Railway Administration considered whether he is fit to be retained in service though acquitted by the magistrate?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: The facts as Government have ascertained them are as follows: The incident referred to occurred when the Ranchi Express was leaving Bankura on 5th April, 1924. Two persons, Guard A. J. D. Rozario of the train and H. Paul, were prosecuted by the police. Rozario was convicted and has been dismissed from service. Paul is not a railway employee. There is no information whether the son was removed to a male compartment, but the railway rules do not permit a male above the age of 12 to travel in a female compartment.

Sir Campbell Rhodes: With reference to section (d) of this question, Sir, may I ask the Honourable the Home Member whether it is or is not a fact under the law that a man is held to be innocent not only until he is convicted but even after he has been acquitted?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: The Honourable Member has answered his own question.

PROSECUTION OF RAILWAY SERVANTS RESPONSIBLE FOR OVERCROWDING OF TRAINS.

32. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** (a) Has it been admitted by Government in this Assembly and the old Imperial Council on several occasions that there is, and has always been, overcrowding in some of the trains at any rate?

(b) Is it a fact that there is overcrowding in some trains and that such overcrowding generally takes place with the help of the railway staff who cause passengers to enter compartments already full?

(c) Has there been a single prosecution of any of the railway staff since the enactment of the provisions in section 102 of Indian Railways Act 1890 and the corresponding section 28 of Act 10 of 1879 providing for the prosecution of any railway servant for causing such overcrowding?

(d) Is there any agency in existence or contemplated for prosecuting such railway servants? If not, are the Government prepared either to consider the desirability of taking steps to enforce the said provision of law or to repeal the same if it is found to have been a dead letter for nearly half a century?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) and (d). The Honourable Member asked a very similar question in the Imperial Legislative Council on 7th February 1917, and he was given a very full reply. The position in regard to overcrowding is now very much better as the Honourable Member will see from my speech in this House on 12th February last.

(b) Not so far as Government are aware.

(c) The answer is in the affirmative.

REFUSAL OF A PASSPORT TO DR. SUDHINDRA BOSE, LECTURER IN THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA.

33. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** (a) Has the attention of the Government been drawn to a letter dated the 28th September published in the *Forward* over the name of Pundit Benarasidas Chaturvedi under the heading "Another Passport Scandal" stating that Dr. Sudhindra Bose, Lecturer in the State University of Iowa who is said to have been acting as such in the said University, a Government institution, since 1913 and who when he intended to return to India to see his old mother during her illness, was refused a passport?

(b) Are the statements in the above paragraph correct?

(c) What are the grounds on which Dr. Bose has been refused a passport?

(d) Have Government at any time formulated any charge or charges against him?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: (a) Government have seen the letter.

(b) and (c). I invite the Honourable Member's attention to my predecessor's replies to questions on the subject in this House on the 10th January 1922 and 15th January 1923. Dr. Bose was, when the *visa* was refused, an American citizen. His status has since been changed as a result of the decision of the Supreme Court of the U. S. A. in the case U. S. A. *versus* Bhagat Singh Hind, and His Britannic Majesty's Ambassador at Washington was informed in May of last year that Dr. Bose might be granted permission to return to India.

(d) Does not arise.

RISE IN PRICE OF RICE IN EASTERN BENGAL.

34. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** (a) Has the Honourable Member, Education, Health and Lands Department, received any wire from the Indian Association, Calcutta, stating that floods in Eastern Bengal have

destroyed standing crops and the price of rice has risen abnormally in consequence and serious shortage of rice is apprehended and suggesting control of export and import of Burma rice?

(b) Do Government propose to make inquiries about the situation in East Bengal and take any action to meet it?

Mr. J. W. Bhore: (a) Yes.

(b) The Government have made inquiries and the reports received from the Government of Bengal, who have been consulted in the matter, show that the price of rice has now fallen and that there is no need for Government interference.

RESIGNATION BY SIR DADIBA DALAL OF THE OFFICE OF HIGH
COMMISSIONER FOR INDIA.

85. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** (a) Is it a fact that Sir Dadiba Dalal has resigned?

(b) Is it true that there were differences between the Government and him and that this coupled with the attitude of the English staff under him towards him and his official acts was the cause of such resignation?

(c) If it is not true, what were the reasons of his resignation after a short period of holding the office?

RESIGNATION BY SIR DADIBA DALAL OF THE OFFICE OF HIGH
COMMISSIONER FOR INDIA.

65. ***Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to say if there is any truth in the statement published in the Press that the resignation of Sir Dadiba Dalal of his office of High Commissioner for India is due to differences with the Government of India, and lack of co-operation and assistance from his European subordinates?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to publish all the correspondence relating to his resignation?

RESIGNATION BY SIR DADIBA DALAL OF THE OFFICE OF HIGH
COMMISSIONER FOR INDIA.

164. ***Diwan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao:** Will the Government be pleased to state the circumstances that led to the resignation of the post of the High Commissioner for India by Sir Dadiba Dalal?

RESIGNATION BY SIR DADIBA DALAL OF THE OFFICE OF HIGH
COMMISSIONER FOR INDIA.

458. ***Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state the circumstances which led to the resignation by Sir Dadiba Dalal of his office of the High Commissioner for India?

(b) Will Government be pleased to lay on the table a copy of the correspondence which took place between them and Sir Dadiba Dalal on this subject?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: With your permission, Sir, I will answer questions Nos. 85, 65, 164 and 458 together.

The Government do not propose to make any statement regarding the reasons for Sir Dadiba Dalal's resignation.

Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar: May I know, Sir, what the reasons of the Government are?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: They do not think it is in the public interest.

APPRENTICES ON THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY.

36. ***Mr. N. O. Kelkar:** (a) Is it a fact that at the Parel workshop of the G. I. P. Railway Co. three classes of apprentices are maintained purely on a racial basis, namely, (a) for Europeans, (b) for Anglo-Indians, and (c) for Indians. Further is it a fact that while an apprentice from (b) class can be promoted to (a) class, a candidate from (c) class cannot be promoted to either (b) or (a) class?

(b) Will Government state the exact qualifications prescribed for the apprentices in the three different classes?

(c) Is there any differentiation as between these three classes of apprentices regarding the study of the construction and operation of engines and machinery made available to them at Matunga workshop?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) The three classes of apprentices in the Parel Workshops are not maintained on a racial basis. The apprentices engaged in Class 'C' are of a lower educational standard than those in classes 'A' and 'B' and are not usually fit for promotion to the higher class, although there is nothing to prevent them being selected for class 'B' if they are found sufficiently qualified.

(b) All candidates for classes 'A' and 'B' are required to pass a written examination in the following subjects:—

1. General knowledge.
2. Mathematics.
3. Composition.
4. Dictation.
5. Drawing.

A candidate who has passed the VII standard of a recognised school and obtains 50 per cent. marks in Mathematics and in General Knowledge with an all round average of 60 per cent. is selected for class 'A', while a candidate who obtains 40 per cent. marks in Mathematics and an all round average of 40 per cent. is put in 'B' class. Candidates who are literate in one of the local vernaculars and possess a knowledge of English up to standard II are admitted as 'C' class apprentices.

(c) The training of apprentices in the Parel Workshops which deal with the repairs, renewals and erection of locomotives is different in certain respects from that gained by apprentices in the Matunga Workshops, as the latter deal with the repairs, renewals and erection of carriages and wagons.

Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar: May I know, Sir, how many Indians are in class 'A'?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: I am afraid the Honourable Member must put down that question.

Mr. Chaman Lal: May I ask, Sir, whether matriculate Indians are eligible for classes 'A' or 'B'?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: I am afraid the Honourable Member must also put down that question.

Mr. Chaman Lal: May I remind the Honourable Member that this is a very important factor governing the question of racial discrimination?

Mr. President: The more important the factor, the more desirable the notice.

Mr. M. K. Acharya: May I know, Sir, if there is any differentiation in the pay of these three classes?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: I have no doubt there is difference in pay, but I do not know what it is.

CONSTITUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE, BANGALORE.

37. ***Mr. N. C. Kelkar:** (a) Is there any difference between the constitution of the Council of the Bangalore Institute as recommended by Sir William Pope's Committee and that of the Council as it exists to-day?

(b) Will Government state whether they accept the recommendations of the Pope Committee in this respect? If yes, when will Government improve the constitution of the Council and, if no, will Government state reasons?

(c) Is it a fact that the Committee of Sir William Pope recommended the opening of two new departments at the Institute at the beginning of the year 1924? If so, have these departments come into existence? If not, will Government state reasons?

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

(b) The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the reply given to him on the 18th September, 1924, in reply to his unstarred question No. 404. An attempt was then made to make it clear that it does not rest entirely with the Government of India to give effect to the Pope Committee's recommendations.

(c) The Honourable Member's statement regarding the nature of the recommendation made by the Pope Committee on this point is correct, but it rests entirely within the discretion of the Council, which is the executive body of the Institute, to give effect to this recommendation in consultation with the Senate. So far as the Government of India are aware, the two new departments have not yet come into existence.

BUDGET ESTIMATE OF THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE, BANGALORE.

38. ***Mr. N. C. Kelkar:** (a) Will Government be pleased to place on the table the budget estimates of the Bangalore Institute of Science for all the years beginning with 1920 and ending with 1924?

(b) Will Government place on the table a copy of the report of the retrenchment committee appointed by the Council of the Institute?

(c) Is it a fact that the salary of the Director of the Institute has been raised from Rs. 2,500 to Rs. 5,000 a month?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (a) The budget estimates of the Institute are included in the Annual Report of the Council, of which one copy only is available with the Government of India. This copy will be lent for the use of the Honourable Member if he so desires.

(b) Government are not in possession of a copy of the report of the Retrenchment Committee appointed by the Council.

(c) Yes.

REPRESENTATION OF PROVINCES ON THE COUNCIL OF INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE, BANGALORE.

39. ***Mr. N. O. Kelkar:** (a) Do Government propose to consider the advisability of a more proper representation of the different provinces on the Council of the Bangalore Institute?

(b) Are Government prepared to advise the Council of the Institute to take steps to secure recognition for the work done at the Institute by making representations through the Government of India to the English and European Universities and secure permission for the students of the Institute to submit their thesis for obtaining Ph. D. or D. Sc.?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (a) As already explained to the Honourable Member, the question of a modification of the scheme for the management of the Institute, which includes the constitution of the Council, is under consideration.

(b) This is a matter entirely within the discretion of the Council of the Institute, and the Government of India do not propose to take the action suggested.

ABOLITION OF DIVISIONAL COMMISSIONERSHIPS IN ASSAM.

40. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** (a) Have the Government received from the Assam Government report of a Resolution of the Provincial Legislative Council recommending the abolition of the two Divisional Commissionerships in the Province with effect from April next in accordance with the recommendations of the Assam Retrenchment Committee, which Resolution was passed by 31 against 2 votes in the Assam Legislative Council on the 17th September last?

(b) Are the Government aware that, as appearing in the proceedings of the said Council, there was a motion for refusing the whole votable amount necessary for the upkeep of these two offices in Assam, as a last resort, when the demands of the Provincial budget were placed before the said Council in April last; that it was only when the Honourable Finance Member of the Province pleaded the difficulties which would have to be faced on the refusal of the demand at that part of the year, that the said motion was withdrawn, a European Member of the Council remarking that if the two offices were not abolished by the end of the year, he and his party would vote for the refusal of the whole amount in the next budget?

(c) Are the Government aware that, as appearing in the proceedings of the said Council, the said Resolution was passed in September with a view to give a timely reminder so that there may be no provision in the next budget for the Province for the maintenance of the said two offices?

(d) What action has been taken, or is proposed to be taken, by Government in the matter?

(e) Has any other Provincial Council adopted any similar Resolution?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: (a) Yes.

(b) I have seen the official report of the proceedings referred to.

(c) Yes.

(d) The Government of India have consulted Local Governments in regard to the abolition or reduction of Commissionerships. The replies of these Governments have been received and are under consideration.

(e) The attention of the Government of India has not been drawn to any other similar Resolution.

ALLEGED OUTRAGE ON A WOMAN BY A EUROPEAN SOLDIER AT JUBBULPORE.

41. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** With reference to the reply given to starred question No. 2290 which was put by Mr. Ambika Prasad Sinha, are the Government now in a position to inform the House what has been the result of the prosecution of the European soldier in the District Court-Martial and if any further action has been, or is proposed to be, taken in the matter?

Mr. E. Burdon: The information was given in my letter No. 1087-S., dated the 20th November 1924, to Mr. Ambika Prasad Sinha, a copy of which has been placed in the Library. A copy was also sent to the Honourable Member on the 26th November 1924.

RETRANSFER OF SYLHET AND CACHAR TO BENGAL.

42. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** (a) Have the Government now received the views of the Assam Government regarding the Resolution passed by the Assam Legislative Council in June last recommending the re-transfer of Sylhet and Cachar to Bengal?

(b) Will the Government consider the desirability of placing the letter of the Assam Government on the table to enable the House to examine and discuss the views of the Assam Government?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: (a) and (b). The Government of India have received the provisional views of the Assam Government on the question but they are not prepared to place a copy of the Local Government's letter on the table. As the Honourable Member is aware, a Resolution on the subject will come up for discussion to-morrow, and the attitude of Government on the question will be explained on that occasion.

ALLEGED OUTRAGE BY RAILWAY EMPLOYEES ON AN INDIAN FEMALE PASSENGER AT CHARBAGH.

43. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to a paragraph in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* of the 12th October alleging that an Indian female passenger from Rai Bareilly arriving at Charbagh at 8-30 P.M. on the 3rd October was ravished by four railway servants who after arrest were released on bail?

(b) Is the allegation in the said paragraph correct?

(c) Will the Government inform the House if any prosecution was started or any inquiry made departmentally, and if so, the result respectively?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) Government have seen the paragraph referred to.

(b) and (c). Government understand that the accused have been prosecuted and are under trial. The result will no doubt be published in the public press. If not, and if the Honourable Member will apply to the Railway Board, he will be informed of the result.

SHORTAGE IN THE CLERICAL CADRE OF THE POSTAL DEPARTMENT.

44. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to a letter published in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* of the 11th October in the name of Mr. N. C. Sen Gupta, Honorary Secretary, Postal Club, Calcutta, calling attention to the alleged shortage of over 1,000 men in the clerical cadre in the Postal Department according to the existing time test?

(b) Are the statements made therein correct?

(c) Is it true as also alleged in the letter that there are villages in India where letters cannot be delivered within six months after receipt in the rural Post Office for want of delivery staff?

(d) Do Government propose to consider the urgency of supplying an adequate staff?

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

(b) and (d). There is no reason to believe that any serious shortage of staff exists.

(c) Not as far as I am aware.

PROVISION OF A PASSENGER HALL OR SHED AT GAYA STATION ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

45. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** (a) Are Government aware that Gaya is one of the most important places of pilgrimage for Hindus and Buddhists and that the railway station at Gaya is one of the biggest on the chord line of the E. I. R.?

(b) Is it a fact that there is no passenger shed or hall although there is a large platform for passengers and that they are exposed to rain and sun?

(c) Do Government propose to consider the urgency of providing a passenger hall or shed?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) Yes.

(b) No. There is a third class waiting hall measuring 150 feet by 50 feet with a closed zenana waiting hall at the station and sheds 800 feet long over the main platform and 350 feet long over the new down island platform are being provided.

(c) Does not arise.

GRANT OF THE FRANCHISE TO INDIANS RESIDENT IN AUSTRALIA.

46. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** Have Government any information showing that the Australian High Court has decided the question of the legality of the Commonwealth Government's denial of franchise to Indians residing in Australia in favour of the Indians?

Mr. J. W. Bhore: Government have no information beyond what has already appeared in the press, but have made inquiries.

MR. FAZLUL HUQ'S STATEMENT RE AUTHORSHIP OF A LETTER ALLEGED TO HAVE BEEN WRITTEN BY HIM.

47. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to a cable published in the *Forward* of the 15th October wherein it is stated that the Under Secretary of State for India in reply to a question by Mr. Thurtle in the House of Commons on the 8th stated, without any qualification or addition, that Mr. Fazlul Huq to whom the authorship of a facsimile letter published in the *Forward* was imputed stated that the letter was not genuine, that he did not write it and that the alleged addressee was non-existent?

(b) Was the statement in the cable made on the authority of any information supplied by the Government of India?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: (a) Yes.

(b) No. The source of the information of the Under Secretary of State for India may be gathered from the actual answer which he gave in the House of Commons, the relevant portion of which ran as follows:

"Mr. Fazlul Huq, to whom the authorship of the alleged letter is imputed, has, according to press reports, stated in the Bengal Council that he never wrote any such letter, that the letter is not genuine and that it purports to be addressed to a gentleman who does not exist."

OVERCROWDING OF TRAINS ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

48. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to a communication sent by Mr. K. P. Chatterji, Vakil, to, and published on the 16th October in, the *Forward* complaining that though the composition of an ordinary passenger train is 12 bogie carriages, the 15 Up train arriving at Asansole on the E. I. R. on the 29th September consisted only of 6 carriages while the number of passengers awaiting the said train at the station was extraordinarily large and that there was no inter class carriage in the train for male passengers and that there was serious overcrowding and this was usual and one day a passenger fainted in the train on account of overcrowding and had to be sent to the hospital?

(b) Is there any truth in the above statements? If so, will the Government inquire why the composition of the train was reduced and why then passengers were booked as usual?

(c) Is Asansole a carriage-examining junction station where trains halt for a pretty long time? If so, why could not an extra carriage be attached at an important carriage-examining junction station like Asansole?

(d) Do Government propose to take steps to prevent any continuance or repetition of this arrangement which makes overcrowding usual?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) Government have seen the communication referred to.

(b) They understand that No. 15 Up passenger train did not have its normal composition on 29th September, 1924, and had no inter class carriage for male passengers, owing to a temporary shortage of stock caused by heavy demands elsewhere. The number of third class passengers awaiting clearance from Asansol by this train was larger than usual.

The train was not crowded on its arrival at Asansol and overcrowding in the train is not a regular occurrence. There is continuous booking at Asansol, and, as there were other trains, by which passengers could proceed, following No. 15 Up, booking was not stopped. The Agent states that he has no information of any passenger having tainted in No. 15 Up at Madhupur on the 3rd October 1924 or having been removed from the train and sent to hospital.

(c) Yes. An extra carriage could not be attached, as there was none available at the time.

(d) Government understand that arrangements have been made to obviate further cause for complaint in this direction.

GRIEVANCES OF INDIAN GUARDS ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

49. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** (a) Have Government seen the communication in the issue of the *Forward* of 16th October, under the heading "Grievances of the E. I. R. Indian guards" published in the name of Babu Manmathanath Basu?

(b) Are the complaints made therein true, namely, that the minimum rest of 11 hours to which they are entitled under the rules are very often reduced to 8 and sometimes even to 6 hours, that actually often they do not get more than 3 hours, that they get no allowance for good conduct under rest, Sunday and other holidays, passing headquarters and that the running rooms for the Indian guards are very poor compared to the comfortable two and three storied buildings fitted with electric lights and fans and other amenities allotted to the Anglo-Indian guards?

(c) Is the above description true? If so, why is this discrimination made between Indian and Anglo-Indian guards?

(d) Will Government see their way to remove the grievances of Indian guards?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). The complaints regarding rest are untrue. Indian guards take their turn with European guards on the same roster and the conditions governing rest are exactly the same for all guards. Rest at headquarter stations varies from 14 to 24 hours according to the volume of traffic moving and the rest at out stations varies from 5 to 8 hours in accordance with the distance travelled.

As regards good attendance allowance to guards, it is only gunner guards who do not draw the other allowances for which the main line guards are ordinarily eligible. Allowances for working on Sundays, Christmas Day, Good Friday and the King's Birthday are given to European guards.

Running room accommodation has been provided for Indian guards at terminating stations. The standard type of Indian running rooms have separate accommodation consisting of a dining room, bed room, kitchen and a washing room for Hindus and Muhammadans. The rooms are of a suitable size and sufficient servants are employed for each caste. Electric lights and fans have been provided in the European guards' running rooms in places like Howrah and Delhi where current is available. The question of extending electric fittings to Indian guards' running rooms is under consideration. Elsewhere punkhas are provided in both Indian and European guards' running rooms.

(d) In view of the reply to parts (b) and (c) of the question the question does not arise.

Khan Bahadur W. M. Hussanally: Can the Honourable Member give us any information on the same subject with regard to men employed on the North Western Railway?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: I have no doubt I can give the Honourable Member the information if he will put down a question.

COAL FREIGHTS ON THE BENGAL NAGPUR RAILWAY.

50. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** Has the attention of Government been called to a communication under the heading "Coal freight on B. N. R." published also in the issue of the *Forward* of 16th October, in the name of Mr. P. Khaitan alleging that the B. N. R. is charging excess freight on coal?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: Government have seen the communication referred to. The difference in rates was due to the fact that coal from Bhaga (B. N. Railway) to stations on the Bengal and North-Western Railway *via* Asansol was charged on the actual distance carried and not on the direct distance from Jherriah (E. I. Railway). The Bengal Nagpur Railway have recently decided to charge coal to B. and N. W. Railway stations on the Jherriah distance and rates on this basis were introduced from 1st December, 1924.

GRANT OF RELIEF TO AREAS AFFECTED BY THE RECENT FLOODS.

51. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** (a) Is it a fact that wide-spread distress has been caused in several Provinces by the recent heavy floods?

(b) Do Government propose to grant any relief to the flood-stricken areas out of the Central Revenues or to make a substantial remission of the Provincial contribution from the Provinces affected?

(c) Will Government make a statement giving an account of the damage done in the several Provinces affected?

Mr. J. W. Bhore: (a) Yes.

(b) With the exception of the Government of Madras, whose application for a grant from Central Revenues is under consideration, no other Local Government has applied either for a grant from Central Revenues or for the remission of the Provincial contribution which is governed by Rule 18 of the Devolution Rules. The Government of Madras have, however, been granted a loan of Rs. 20 lakhs to finance the Provincial loans account. The Government of the United Provinces have also intimated their intention of applying for such a loan from the Government of India, if necessary. I may also mention that grants of Rs. 1½ lakhs, 30,000 and 45,000 have been made from the Indian People's Famine Trust to relieve distress caused by floods in Madras, Bombay and the Punjab, respectively.

(c) Extracts from reports from the Governments of Madras, Bombay and the Punjab giving the required information are laid on the table.

No reports have been received from other Local Governments.

Extract paragraph 2 from a letter from the Government of Madras No. 3422/B/24-1, dated the 10th October 1924.

2. As the Government of India are aware the recent floods have caused serious damage to houses, crops, lands and other property in these districts besides damage to roads, communications and irrigation works resulting in general distress and severe privation in the flood-affected areas. The details of damage caused to the riyats are given below :

	No. of houses destroyed.	Standing crops destroyed.	Extent of land silted up.
Malabar	22,000	80,000 acres . . .	Negligible.
Trichinopoly	7,710	11,800 " . . .	6,000 acres.
Tanjore	6,040	8,840 " and seed beds sown with 71,000 kalams of paddy.	3,919 acres besides 60 acres washed away.
Salem	1,323	Valued at 1½ lakhs . .	824 acres.
Coimbatore	6,136	Valued at Rs. 1½ lak .	1,338 "

(A Kalam equals 24 Madras measures).

Extract paragraph 2 of a letter from the Commissioner of Sind to the Government of Bombay, No. 6672-1, dated the 11th October 1924.

2. The extent and the seriousness of the damage caused can be realised from the fact that in the Nawabshah District alone an area of 420 square miles of country was submerged and 212 kacha and 13 paka villages were wholly destroyed and 45 kacha and 26 paka villages partially destroyed, causing thereby a damage to house property to the extent of Rs. 1,23,000 and rendering at least 11,000 people entirely homeless. The area of crops destroyed covers 21,000 acres. The district that has next suffered most is the Karachi district, where the whole of the Ghorabari taluka, two-fifths of Mirpur Bathoro taluka, one-third of Jati taluka and portions of the Tatta and Kotri taluks and the Manjhand Mahal have been affected, rendering between 20 and 25 thousand people homeless. In the Larkana district the crop area submerged is reported to be 10,500 acres, and the damage to house property in the Dadu town alone is estimated at Rs. 80,000. In the Hyderabad district it is reported that an area of about 15,700 acres was submerged, causing thereby damage to crops estimated at Rs. 3,00,000. The damage to house property from the collapse of 3,750 houses, partly on account of floods and partly on account of abnormal rains, is estimated at Rs. 3,85,000. The remaining district that has suffered is the Sukkur district, where it is reported that an area of about 15,000 acres was submerged and house property valued at Rs. 81,000 was destroyed.

Extract from paragraph 2 from a letter from the Government of the Punjab No. 14786, dated the 14th November 1924.

2. In the Indus riverain approximately a thousand square miles of the Muzaffargarh district were under water and in the Mianwali district approximately 1,90,000 acres of cultivated land were damaged. In the Dera Ghazi Khan district some 46 villages

suffered loss. In the Sutlej riverain 6 villages have had a total of 3,500 acres thrown out of cultivation, of which 56 were entirely washed away. The Jumna floods were most sudden and caused still greater damage. In the Ambala Division 469 villages were affected; between 180 and 190 lives are reported as lost; several thousand heads of cattle perished and a very large number of villages have been entirely blotted out. Some, which hitherto existed on low lying lands where they would be exposed to future floods, have had to be removed to a higher level and over a large area both the Kharif crop has been lost and sowings for the Rabi have been rendered impossible. Many people have literally lost everything they possessed.

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COMMUNAL RIOTS.

52. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** (a) Have there been serious communal riots recently attended with loss of life and injuries to persons and property in provinces directly under the control of the Government of India?

(b) Will Government please enumerate those which have taken place in 1924 with the names of the District Officers and the Superintendents of Police of the respective Districts in which such riots have taken place specifying if any one of such District Officers is not a member of the I. C. S.

(c) How many such riots took place in or near cities or towns and how many in or near rural villages?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: There have been such riots in the cities of Delhi and Kohat. The names of the Deputy Commissioners who held office at the time are respectively Mr. R. J. S. Dodd, I.C.S., and Major N. E. Reilly. The Superintendents of Police concerned who were stationed in the districts at that time are Mr. P. L. Orde and Mr. H. Lillie.

RESERVATION OF COMPARTMENTS FOR EUROPEANS ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

53. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** (a) Have Government seen copy of a letter addressed to the Agent as well as the Traffic Manager, E. I. R. by Babu Mrinal Kanti Basu and published in the *Forward* on the 18th October complaining that in the 8 Down Howrah-Delhi Express train of the 12th October there was no inter class compartment for Indian male passengers, that there were two compartments in one of which he with a large number of Indian passengers were seated but the guard of the train turned them out at Allahabad on the ground that it was reserved for "Europeans" though there was no such label and they entered the other compartment but at Moghal Sarai were turned out again on the ground that it was reserved for females and that the male passengers had then to travel third class?

(b) Is it the policy of the Railway administration that a compartment must be reserved for Europeans though there is no accommodation for Indian passengers in the train?

(c) Do Government propose to remove this state of things?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) Yes.

(b) No. Government understand that there were four inter class compartments on the train, only one of which was reserved.

(c) In view of the reply to (b) this does not arise.

ANNUAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS,

54. *Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda: (a) What countries are members of the League of Nations?

(b) Do they have to make annual pecuniary contributions to the League?

(c) On what basis are the same assessed?

(d) What were the contributions for the years 1922, 1923 and 1924 respectively from the following countries:

Great Britain, France, Italy, Poland, India, Netherlands, Belgium?

Mr. L. Graham: (a) A list of the members of the League will be found in Appendix 1 to the Report of the Delegates of India to the Fifth Session of the Assembly which was published in the *Gazette of India* of the 27th December, 1924.

(b) Yes.

(c) The Honourable Member is referred to the opening paragraphs of the Report of Committee No. IV on the Allocation of the Expenses of the League of Nations published as Annexure 5 to the Report of the Delegates of India to the Second Session of the Assembly which was published in the *Gazette of India Extraordinary* dated the 16th February, 1922, and explains the principles in accordance with which the present temporary scale of allocation was originally prepared. Those principles have been largely obscured as the result of subsequent adjustments the last of which has resulted, as the Honourable Member is no doubt aware, in a reduction of India's contribution by 5 units.

(d) A statement showing the contributions made in Swiss gold francs by the countries named by the Honourable Member is laid on the table.

Statement showing the contributions made by certain members of the League of Nations in 1922, 1923 and 1924, respectively.

States.	1922 Gold Francs.	1923 Gold Francs.	1924 Gold Francs.
Great Britain	1,011,335	2,583,608,64	2,193,733,62
France	1,011,335	2,121,327,94	1,944,445,43
Italy	1,011,385	1,658,987,23	1,520,656,43
Poland	1,011,335	679,912,80	623,219,85
India	1,011,335	1,767,773,28	1,620,371,61
Netherlands	606,801	543,930,24	496,575,88
Belgium	606,801	407,947,68	373,931,91

REPRESENTATION OF INDIA ON THE COUNCIL AND SECRETARIAT OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

55. *Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda: (a) Has India ever been represented on the Council of the League of Nations?

(b) How many representatives had Great Britain, France, Switzerland and India in the League Secretariat in 1921 or 1923 or in the Labour office respectively?

(c) Is it a fact that some of the representatives of Great Britain, France and Switzerland hold positions of handsome emoluments and unquestioned influence and authority and that even non-members like the United States of America not contributing a farthing to the League have some of their nationals in occupation of positions of influence as against one single representative from India in the service of the League?

(d) Do the Government propose to take steps to have the contribution from India reduced proportionately to her revenue and the benefits she derives from inclusion among the members of the League as compared to the other members?

Mr. L. Graham: (a) No.

(b) and (c). The Honourable Member is referred to pages 381-404 of the League of Nations Official Journal for 1921 and to pages 1233-1257 of the Journal for 1923 copies of which are in the Library. He will there find a list of all the employees of the League Secretariat and Labour Office classified in accordance with their nationality. The Government of India must leave the Honourable Member to form his own opinion regarding the handsomeness of the emoluments drawn, and the extent of influence exercised by the various employees in question.

(d) Endeavours have constantly been made to secure a reduction in India's contribution and a reduction by 5 units has in fact been made this year. The Government of India must dissociate themselves from the Honourable Member's insinuation that India derives less benefit from her membership of the League than do other members thereof.

Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty: Has any attempt been made to represent to the League of Nations to employ more Indians on the Secretariat of the League and also in the International Labour Office?

Mr. L. Graham: If the Honourable Member will read the papers to which I have referred he will find the answer.

Mr. B. Das: Are the Government aware that the only Indian paper subscribed to by the League of Nations is the *Times of India*?

Mr. L. Graham: The question does not arise.

SELECTION OF PERSONNEL OF INDIAN DELEGATION TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

56. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:** (a) Is it a fact that there have been delegations from India to the League?

(b) Has the Central Legislature had any voice in the election or selection of the members?

(c) Has any Indian ever led any of the deputations to the League?

(d) Is there any other member of this League whose deputation to the League has not been led by one of its nationals?

(e) Do Government propose to place India on an equal footing with the other countries which have joined the League in the matter of selecting the personnel and the leader of the deputation to the League?

Mr. L. Graham: (a) Yes.

(b) No. The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the reply given to question No. 1778 asked by Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan on the 11th September 1924.

(c) No.

(d) The Government of India have no information.

(e) The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the debate on the Resolution moved by the Honourable Mr. Sethna in the Council of State on the 10th March 1924.

P. AND O. TRAINS DE LUXE BETWEEN BOMBAY AND CALCUTTA.

57. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** (a) Is it true that the P. and O. Company is going to start *trains de luxe* for carrying mails and passengers between Bombay and Calcutta?

(b) What will be its relations with the railways concerned as regards the income from passenger traffic and the carriage of mails and how will the financial adjustment be made?

(c) How will the proposed arrangement affect the Department financially, that is as regards cost of carriage of mails?

Mr. G. G. Sim: (a) The P. and O. Company are not going to run trains between Bombay and Calcutta. The Government are however
12 NOON. aware that the Great Indian Peninsula and East Indian Railway Administrations are considering the question of running a special passenger service in connection with the weekly mail steamer.

(b) and (c). Income from the passengers or mails conveyed by that service, if established, will be railway revenue in the ordinary way.

MILITARY MANŒUVRES AT DELHI.

58. ***Mr. Kamini Kumar Ohanda:** (a) Is it proposed to hold military manœuvres at Delhi during this cold weather?

(b) What is the object and probable cost? What are the main heads of expenditure likely to be incurred?

(c) Is there any specific budget provision for the same? If so, under what head or heads?

Mr. E. Burdon: (a) The manœuvres concluded yesterday with a review of troops, and I hope the Honourable Member took the opportunity which was offered to him of witnessing them.

(b) Since the cessation of the war, the army has been occupied almost entirely in working up to the required standard of individual and unit training. The object of manœuvres is to train the larger formations to co-operate in battle and to provide opportunities for the study of problems connected with movements and concentration of troops, co-operation of arms, the use of new equipment, staff duties, tactics, etc.

The probable cost is Rs. 2 lakhs.

The main heads of expenditure are:

Movement of troops by rail and road; pay of additional establishments; miscellaneous equipment, maps, etc.; and compensation to be paid for any damage done to crops, but this is not expected to be a considerable item.

(c) Yes. The cost will be met from the Training Grant.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

BREACH IN THE RAILWAY LINE BEYOND WAITAIR.

1. **Mr. O. Duraiswami Aiyangar:** (a) Are the Government aware that on or about the 27th September 1924 there was a report and scare in the Howrah station that forty miles of railway line were washed away beyond Waltair towards Madras?

(b) Are the Government aware that the said scare was based on railway official telegrams received in Howrah station to that effect whereas in fact only four hundred feet of railway line had been washed away?

(c) Are the Government aware that some passengers beyond Waltair towards Madras (including my humble self) were thinking of going back *vid* Manmad to reach their destination early as it was given out that it may take several days to restore the line even for transshipment arrangements?

(d) Do the Government propose to inquire into the causes of such false alarm and to take steps to prevent such things in future?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a), (b), (c) and (d). Government have ascertained that on the date in question telegrams were received at Howrah station, from the Bengal Nagpur Railway authorities that the line was badly breached at Waltair and that transshipment was not possible. The telegrams did not say that forty miles of railway line had been washed away. The Honourable Member would have ascertained the true facts, had he applied to the Inquiry Office at Howrah for information.

FAILURE OF THE ALLIANCE BANK OF SIMLA.

2. **Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** (a) In connection with the affairs of the Alliance Bank, has the attention of the Government been drawn to the following passages in the joint legal opinion, dated the 25th June, 1924, of Messrs. S. R. Das, L. P. E. Pugh, B. L. Mitter, John Langford James and H. R. Panckridge:

"(i) The misappropriation of £511,000 by Boulton Brothers and Co., by unauthorised use of the Bank's credit in London, appears to constitute a criminal offence calling for prosecution—if a prosecution is possible."

"(ii) We are of opinion that criminal offences have been committed with regard to certain of the balance-sheets issued, namely, those for 1916, 1921 and 1922. These, in our opinion, for the reasons given below, were false balance-sheets within the meaning of section 282 of the Indian Companies Act."

"(iii) The persons liable to prosecution in connection with the above matters would be the Directors concerned, and the Auditors."

"(iv) The downfall of the bank was due—broadly speaking to imprudent financial transactions by the Directors interested in the Firm (Boulton Brothers), and the group of companies floated by it?"

(b) What steps, if any, do the Government propose to take in the matter?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: (a) The answer is in the affirmative.

(b) The Government have taken, are taking and will take all such steps in the matter as their legal advisers think possible and desirable.

PROVISION OF AN OVERBRIDGE ON THE EAST SIDE OF THE B. N. W. RAILWAY AND THE E. I. RAILWAY AT MOKAMEH GHAT STATION.

3. **Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** (a) Are the Government aware that the inhabitants of villages Outa, Murarpur, Hathidah, Darapore, Mohenderpur, Maranchi, and others mostly situated on the east side of the B. N. W. Railway, and the East Indian Railway lines at Mokameh Ghat station are put to great inconvenience, and exposed to great danger for want of an overbridge over the said railway lines?

(b) Are Government aware that the Mokameh Ghat railway station, as well as a Government aided high English school are situated on the west side of the above railway lines?

(c) Is it a fact that a District Board road exists through these villages right across the railway lines; but it has been stopped since the railway transhipment extension?

(d) Are Government aware that the inhabitants of the said villages submitted a representation, dated 11th February 1922, along with the survey map, to the Agent, B. N. W. Railway on the subject, and prayed for an overbridge at the point where the District Board road has been closed by the railway authorities; and that this was supported by the Sub-Divisional Officer of Barh, and the District Magistrate and Collector of Patna?

(e) Are Government aware that in reply to a question on this subject in the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council on the 18th March 1924, it was stated that "the Local Government have no direct control over the Railway, but will inquire further from the B. N. W. Railway administration (who are more concerned with this locality than the East Indian Railway) whether they contemplate the provision of an overbridge?"

(f) Is it not a fact that another inquiry was held by the Sub-Divisional Officer of Barh in April, 1924, in consultation with the railway authorities, and that he strongly supported the proposal of an overbridge?

(g) Do the Government propose to take necessary steps for the provision of an overbridge by the railway authorities concerned?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) to (g). The needs of the inhabitants of the villages mentioned are met by a district road which crosses the railway lines. This road has not been closed. It is being realigned and the realignment will shorten the road by 175 ft. The road in its present alignment has been in existence for nearly 30 years and the Government do not know what special reasons have now come into existence why the railway administration should go to the expense of providing an overbridge. The matter is essentially one requiring local knowledge and might suitably be brought to the notice of the Agent by his Local Advisory Committee.

ABOLITION OF TOLLS ON THE GANDAK BRIDGE AT SONEPUR.

4. **Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** (a) With reference to my starred question No. 2389 of the 23rd September, 1924, regarding the tolls on the B. N. W. Railway bridge over the Gandak at Sonapur, will the Government be pleased to state if they have received any letter from the Government of Bihar and Orissa that His Excellency the Governor in Council has decided not at present to press further for the abolition of the tolls on this bridge?

(b) If the answer to the above be in the affirmative, will the Government be pleased to lay on the table a copy of the letter in question, and indicate the reasons for this decision?

(c) Will the Government be pleased to state in what years, and under what circumstances or conditions the tolls on the railway bridges over the Ganges at Benares, Cawnpore, and Allahabad were abolished?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) Yes.

(b) A copy of the letter is placed on the table.

(c) The tolls on the railway bridges over the Ganges at Benares and Cawnpore and at Allahabad were abolished, at the instance of the United Provinces Government, in the years 1907 and 1905, respectively, without any conditions attaching to the abolition.

FROM RAI BAHADUR BISHUN SVARUP, OFFG. SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT, BIHAR AND ORISSA, TO THE SECRETARY, RAILWAY BOARD, No. 826-C. Ry. VT-1 of 1924, DATED RANCHI, THE 30TH SEPTEMBER 1924.

Abolition of tolls on the Gandak bridge at Sonapur.

With reference to the correspondence resting with letter No. 134—A.-C. & R., dated the 12th July 1924, from the Railway Board, I am directed to state that after due consideration of the facts, His Excellency the Governor in Council, while not accepting necessarily the arguments adduced, has decided not at present to press further for the abolition of the tolls on the bridge in question.

CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS THE EXPENSES OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

5. **Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty:** (a) What is the total amount allocated to India towards the expenses of the League of Nations for the year 1925?

(b) What percentage of the total expenditure of the League is the sum allocated to India?

(c) What percentage of the total expenditure of the League is the sum allocated to the following countries, respectively?

1. Great Britain.
2. Australia.
3. Canada.
4. New Zealand.
5. South Africa.
6. Italy.
7. Switzerland.

Mr. L. Graham: (a) 1,453,998.18 Gold Francs.

(b) 6.41.

(c) Great Britain 9.41; Australia 2.78; Canada 8.74; New Zealand 1.069; South Africa 1.6; Italy 6.52; Switzerland 1.6.

EMPLOYMENT OF INDIANS IN THE SECRETARIATS OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION.

6. **Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty:** (a) How many Indians are employed in the Secretariats of the League of Nations and the International Labour organisation?

(b) What is the pay drawn by each of these Indian officers?

(c) How many natives of Great Britain are employed in the Secretariat of the League and the International Labour organisation and what is the total amount of salary drawn by these?

(d) Has any representation been made on behalf of the Government of India that more Indians must be employed in the League Secretariat? If not, are Government prepared to take steps to represent to the Secretary-General of the League that the number of Indians employed in the Secretariat of the League and their status are quite inadequate in comparison with the amount of India's contribution to the League and that steps may be taken to employ more Indians especially in the higher branches of the Secretariat?

Mr. L. Graham: (a), (b) and (c). The Honourable Member is referred to the first portion of the reply to parts (b) and (c) of Mr. K. K. Chanda's starred question No. 55 of to-day's date.

(d) The answer to the first part is in the affirmative. The second part therefore does not arise.

INDIA'S TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

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

- (a) the total amount of money contributed to the League of Nations from the Indian Exchequer each year from the date of its inception to the end of 1924;
- (b) the names of the delegates who represented India at the several sessions of the League hitherto;
- (c) the expenditure of money out of the Indian Exchequer on the delegation at the several sessions of the League up to this time?

Mr. L. Graham: (a) 1919-20—£16,284; 1920-21—£28,787; 1921-22—£54,916; 1922-23—£48,747; 1923-24—£77,799; 1924-25 (up to end of November 1924)—£70,526.

The accounts for December 1924 are not yet available.

(b) 1920—

The late Sir William Meyer.
His Highness the Maharaja of Nawanagar.
Sir Ali Imam.

1921—

The late Sir William Meyer.
His Highness the Maharao of Kutch.
The Right Honourable V. Srinivasa Sastri.

1922—

The Right Honourable Viscount Chelmsford.
His Highness the Maharaja of Nawanagar.
Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer.

1923—

The Right Honourable Lord Hardinge of Penshurst.
His Highness the Maharaja of Nawanagar.
Mr. Syed Hasan Imam.

1924—

The Right Honourable Lord Hardinge of Penshurst.
His Highness the Maharaja of Bikaner.
Sir Muhammad Rafique.

(c) 1920—Rs. 58,122-5-0; 1921—Rs. 61,839-8-0; 1922—Rs. 24,029-5-0; 1923—Rs. 31,463-15-0; 1924 figures are not available.

EXPENDITURE ON POLITICAL PROPAGANDA IN AMERICA.

8. **Mr. D. V. Belyi:** (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to a leading article in the *Bombay Chronicle* under the caption of "Mendacious Propaganda" published in its issue of the 6th December, 1924?

(b) Is it a fact that the Government of India have been financing the propagation of their political views in America?

(c) If so, since when, and will Government be pleased to state the amount of money they spent on this head during each of the last five years?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: (a) Yes.

(b) No.

(c) Does not arise.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE SALEM-ATTUR RAILWAY.

9. **Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty:** (a) Have the preliminary works in connection with the Salem-Attur Railway scheme been completed long ago?

(b) Is it a fact that the project is held over for the reason that the Railway Board has not yet settled the question of the gauge of the proposed line?

(c) If so, do Government propose to request the Railway Board to settle the question at an early date and sanction the construction of the line?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) No. A survey of the line was made in 1909-1910, but is now out of date.

(b) and (c). No, but the question of alignment has not yet been settled. Alternative up-to-date estimates for metre gauge lines from Salem to Attur and from Salem to Vriddhachalan via Attur and Chinna Salem are under preparation. As soon as the estimates are ready the most suitable alignment will be selected and the possibility of constructing the line will be examined.

ALLOWANCES TO POSTAL EMPLOYEES STATIONED IN UNHEALTHY TRACTS
IN THE MADRAS PRESIDENCY.

10. **Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty:** (a) Whether Government are aware of the fact that the Madras Government in its G. O. No. 778 Finance, dated 31st August 1923 has sanctioned certain allowances to non-gazetted officers stationed in certain specified "unhealthy" tracts?

(b) Whether the allowances to postal employees stationed in these tracts are on a par with the Local Government rates?

(c) If not, whether Government propose to issue instructions to grant to the postal employees (including postmen and menials) allowances on a par with the rates sanctioned by the Local Government?

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

(b) No.

(c) The matter is under consideration.

PROVISION OF QUARTERS FOR THE CLERK ATTACHED TO THE LAWLEY
ROAD POST OFFICE, MADRAS.

11. **Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty:** (a) Whether any representation was made to the Postmaster General, Madras, that the clerk attached to the Lawley Road Post Office suffers considerable inconvenience on account of quarters not being available for him in the locality?

(b) Whether the Postmaster General will be instructed to arrange for the provision of quarters for the clerk?

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

(b) The matter is already receiving due attention from the Postmaster-General.

RESIGNATION BY SIR DADIBA DALAL OF THE OFFICE OF HIGH
COMMISSIONER FOR INDIA.

12. **Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty:** (a) Whether Government will be pleased to state the reason why Sir D. M. Dalal resigned his office as High Commissioner for India?

(b) Whether Government will be pleased to lay on the table a copy of Sir Dadiba Dalal's letter of resignation?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: The Honourable Member is referred to my reply to starred questions Nos. 35, 65, 164 and 458.

REPORT OF THE COLONIES COMMITTEE.

13. **Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty:** (a) Whether the Committee sent by the Government of India to England to confer with the Colonial Office has submitted any report?

(b) If so, whether a copy of the report will be made available to Honourable Members of this House?

(c) Whether the Kenya Immigration Bill has been dropped by the Government of Kenya?

Mr. J. W. Shore: (a) and (b). No report has been received from the Colonies Committee as such. Two members submitted a memorandum and its publication is under the consideration of the Government of India.

(c) The Honourable Member is referred to the answer given by me on the 16th September 1924, to Sir Hari Singh Gour's question No. 2021, on the same subject.

ACCOUNTS OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA IN COUNCIL.

14. **Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty:** (a) Whether it is a fact that the reports on the accounts of the Secretary of State for India in Council do not come under independent review either in England or in India?

(b) Whether the Government of India asked the Secretary of State that copies of these reports should be supplied for presentation to the Public Accounts Committees of the Central and Provincial Legislatures and whether it is a fact that the Secretary of State refused to do so? Whether Government will be pleased to lay on the table a copy of their despatch to the Secretary of State and his reply?

(c) Whether Government propose to request the Secretary of State to take the necessary steps, by amending the Government of India Act if necessary, to enable the Public Accounts Committees to review the accounts?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: (a) No; the reports in question are placed before the Public Accounts Committee.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

SAVING OF THE CHANDPUR MAIL FROM DERAILMENT ON THE 19TH JUNE, 1924, BY THE BRAVERY OF A COWHERD.

15. **Shaikh-e-Chatgam Maulvi Muhammad Kasim Ali:** (a) Is it a fact that on or about the 19th June, 1924, a bridge between Kumira and Bhatari stations of the A. B. Railway was damaged due to heavy rains?

(b) Was the Chandpur mail train bound for Chittagong saved from derailment at this damaged bridge by the bravery of a cowherd belonging to a neighbouring village Hasenabad?

(c) Did the Traffic Manager visit the place of occurrence; if so, did he take any step to adequately remunerate the boy for the encouragement of such noble deeds?

(d) What steps have the Government taken in the matter?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) Yes.

(b), (c) and (d). No. The damage was reported by a gangman (railway employé) and the down Chandpur mail stopped at Kumira Station.

The Traffic Manager did not visit the site and Government have taken no steps in the matter.

GRANT OF FACILITIES TO THE MUHAMMADAN EMPLOYEES OF THE ASSAM BENGAL RAILWAY TO ATTEND THEIR MID-DAY PRAYERS, ETC.

16. **Shaikh-e-Chatgam Maulvi Muhammad Kasim Ali:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state whether sufficient facilities are allowed to the Muhammadan employees of the A. B. Railway for attending their mid-day prayers and specially the Friday prayers?

(b) Is it a fact that the Secretary to the "Islam Association," Chittagong, had written to the Assam Bengal Railway authorities for allowing leave to the Moslem employees of the double mooring, A. B. Railway's jetties?

(c) If the answer to (b) is in the affirmative, will the Government be pleased to lay on the table all the correspondence that passed between the Secretary to the Chittagong Islam Association and the railway authorities, together with the correspondence on the subject with the Superintendent of the A. B. Railway double mooring jetties?

(d) Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing the times fixed for the cessation and resumption of works at the double moorings jetty shed office, double moorings jetty office, Pahartali workshop, Traffic Manager's office, the Agent's office and other attached offices of the A. B. Railway?

(e) Are the Government aware that the Muhammadan employees cannot take their meal on Friday as they have to bathe, make ablutions and other necessary arrangements for Juma prayer within the half an hour at their disposal before noon, i.e., before the actual prayer time?

(f) Is it a fact that the Agent, A. B. Railway, declined by his letter No. 14—27, dated the 24th July 1924 to give an interview to a deputation of the Chittagong Islam Association? If so, why?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) to (f). The Government have no information as to the practice of the Assam Bengal Railway in these matters. The duties of some railway employes are such that it is quite impossible to give them the facility referred to as the Honourable Member will readily understand; but the practice on State Railways is as far as possible to give the facility to Muhammadans not engaged in such duties. The Government will recommend to the Railway Administration that the same practice should be followed on the Assam Bengal Railway.

QUALIFICATIONS OF CANDIDATES FOR EMPLOYMENT ON RAILWAYS.

17. **Shaikh-e-Chatgam Maulvi Muhammad Kazim Ali:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state whether in giving appointments by the railway authorities the qualifications of the candidate are judged by any competitive examination or otherwise?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: It is not known to what class of appointments the Honourable Member refers.

WELFARE OF INDIAN PILGRIMS TO THE HEDJAZ.

18. **Shaikh-e-Chatgam Maulvi Muhammad Kazim Ali:** (a) Has the attention of the Government been drawn to the statements of Hajee Muhammad Taiab Saheb published in the Urdu vernacular newspaper *Khilafat* of Bombay regarding the description of his journey in Hedjaz?

(b) If so, will the Government be pleased to inquire whether the statements made therein are correct?

(c) Is it a fact that ten thousand pilgrims died only owing to the scarcity of water and that proper steps were not taken for the burial of the dead bodies?

(d) Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing how many out of these ten thousand were Indians?

(e) Is it a fact that at the Port of Jeddah all the Indian pilgrims were ordered to pass through a small door to the great inconvenience of the Hajees and that a sum of Rs. 2-8 was realised from every one at the door by the order of the then Sharif's Government?

(f) Is it a fact that out of five lakhs of Hajees this year only a very few had the good fortune to visit Medina Sharif; if so, why?

(g) Are there no representatives on behalf of the India Government to look into the welfare of the Indian pilgrims?

Mr. Denys Bray: (a), (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f). The Honourable Member is referred to the answer given on the 16th September last to a similar question No. 1978 on the same subject by Haji S. A. K. Jeelani.

(g) Yes. Apart from the Indian Vice-Consul and medical officer, who is paid from Indian revenues, a pilgrim officer was specially appointed by the Government for the purpose.

**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN THE UPPER AND SUBORDINATE SERVICES
OF THE ASSAM BENGAL RAILWAY.**

19. Shaikh-e-Chatgam Maulvi Muhammad Kazim Ali: Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing the number of employees in the upper and subordinate services with their present pay, of the different communities, in all the offices including the workshops under the A. B. Railway?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: A statement is laid on the table giving the latest information available. It is not possible to give the whole staff in detail of pay as asked by the Honourable Member.

Statement of Staff employed on the Assam Bengal Railway on the 1st April 1924.

OFFICERS.				SUBORDINATES ON SCALES RISING TO RS. 250 PER MENSEM AND OVER.				SUBORDINATES ON SCALES NOT RISING TO RS. 250 PER MENSEM.		
Muslims.	Non- Muslims.	Anglo- Indians.	Europeans.	Muslims.	Non- Muslims.	Anglo- Indians.	Europeans.	Muslims and Non-Muslims.	Anglo- Indians.	Europeans.
1	5	2	52	4	19	38	22	11,150*	245	15

* Separate information not available.

ABOLITION OF DIVISIONAL COMMISSIONERSHIPS.

20. Shaikh-e-Chatgam Maulvi Muhammad Kazim Ali: What is the final decision the Government have arrived at regarding the abolition or retention of the Divisional Commissionerships all over India?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: No final decision has yet been arrived at. The Government of India have consulted Local Governments whose replies have been received and are under consideration.

**MEMORIALS OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE BURMA POSTAL AND RAILWAY
MAIL SERVICE.**

21. Shaikh-e-Chatgam Maulvi Muhammad Kazim Ali: (a) Will the Government be pleased to state whether it is a fact that a deputation consisting of the representatives of the Burma Postal and Railway Mail Service waited upon the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs, India, on the 28rd July, last?

(b) If so, will the Government be pleased to lay on the table the copies of the memorials submitted and the replies thereto by the Director-General?

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

(b) Government do not consider it necessary to lay these on the table, but I shall be happy to show them to the Honourable Member, if he so desires.

DUTIES OF PASSENGER SUPERINTENDENTS OF RAILWAYS.

22. **Shalkh-e-Chatgam Maulvi Muhammad Kasim Ali:** (a) Do Passenger Superintendents of Railways freely mix with the passengers and look into their comforts specially of lower class passengers?

(b) Do the Passenger Superintendents remain present at the third and inter class ticket issuing windows at Sealdah to see that not more than the correct fares are realised from the passengers and that they are promptly attended to in regard to the issue of tickets?

(c) Is it not a fact that the intending passengers of the Chittagong Mail train find a great deal of trouble at the third class booking office as they are not promptly attended to?

(d) Is it a fact that the booking clerks do not issue tickets at third class booking windows whenever any intending passenger comes but begin the issue of tickets only a few minutes before the time fixed for the leaving of the train?

(e) Do the Government propose to take necessary steps to remedy this grievance?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) and (b). The Honourable Member is referred to the answer given to item (c) of question No. 1651 asked by Mr. Jamnadas M. Melita in this Assembly on 8th September, 1924.

(c), (d) and (e). Government have no information, but copies of this part of the question will be forwarded to the Railway Administration for such action as they think necessary.

PREVENTION OF RUNNING TRAIN THEFTS ON THE E. B., E. I. AND B. N. RAILWAYS.

23. **Shalkh-e-Chatgam Maulvi Muhammad Kasim Ali:** (a) Are the Government aware that in running trains often thefts are committed?

(b) If the answer to (a) is in the affirmative, will the Government be pleased to state what measure the railway authorities or the Government have taken or are taking to prevent the recurrence of such thefts specially on the E. B. R., E. I. R. and B. N. R.

(c) Have the Government taken any steps to prevent pilferage of fresh fruit, vegetables, fish, etc., by the railway and the steamer employees on the E. B. and A. B. Railways?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a) Government are aware that such thefts sometimes occur.

(b) The Honourable Member is referred to item (b) of the reply given in this Assembly on 5th June 1924, to question No. 1283. In regard to the three Railways mentioned, Government understand that good progress is being made in the rivetting of wagons, the percentages at the end of 1924 being 55 per cent., 89 per cent. and 69 per cent. on the Eastern Bengal, East Indian and Bengal Nagpur Railways, respectively. Watch and Ward Departments have been formed on the two latter Railways and a similar department has been sanctioned for and is in process of formation on the Eastern Bengal Railway.

(c) Measures for the prevention of pilferage are taken by Railway Administrations, who are fully alive to their responsibilities in this direction.

**PROVISION OF LATRINE ACCOMMODATION IN THIRD CLASS
COMPARTMENTS ON THE ASSAM BENGAL RAILWAY.**

24. Shaikh-e-Chatgam Maulvi Muhammad Kazim Ali: (a) Are the Government aware that there are no latrine arrangement in all the 3rd class compartments of the A. B. Railway?

(b) If so, do the Government propose to take necessary steps so that such arrangements be immediately made in all such compartments where there are none?

(c) Is it a fact that there is no arrangement for water in third class latrines?

(d) If so, do the Government propose to issue instructions for the convenience of the poor third class passengers so that water be available at all times in all the third class latrines?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: (a), (b), (c) and (d). Government understand that out of 312 compartments on the Assam Bengal Railway 33 are without latrines and 119 without water tanks, and that latrine and watering arrangements in these will be provided as funds permit.

The above figures do not include stock intended for short branches, where such arrangements are not considered necessary.

SALE OF TICKETS AT STATIONS ON THE ASSAM BENGAL RAILWAY.

25. Shaikh-e-Chatgam Maulvi Muhammad Kazim Ali: (a) Will the Government be pleased to state whether the notice regarding the sale of tickets at any time between the hours of 7 A.M. and 8-30 P.M. in the Chittagong station of the A. B. Railway are strictly observed?

(b) Is it a fact that in smaller stations tickets are not issued even before 15 or 30 minutes before the arrival of trains but according to the whim of the booking clerks to the great inconvenience of the intending passengers? If so, do the Government propose to take necessary action in the matter?

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: The points raised are such as may suitably be brought to the notice of the Agent through his Local Advisory Committee.

**SUPPLY OF FREE STATIONERY AND POSTAGE STAMPS TO NON-OFFICIAL
MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL LEGISLATURE.**

26. Shaikh-e-Chatgam Maulvi Muhammad Kazim Ali: Is it a fact that stationery and postage stamps are supplied free of cost to the non-official Members of the Provincial Councils? If so, why are the Members of the Central Legislature deprived of the privilege?

Mr. L. Graham: The Government of India have no information regarding the practice which prevails in Provincial Councils in this respect. Stationery for the use of Members of the Indian Legislature is placed in the library free of charge. If the Honourable Member means to express an opinion that stationery for use outside the Chamber and postage stamps, should be supplied free of charge, Government regret that they cannot agree with him.

FREE SUPPLY OF GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS TO ELECTED MEMBERS
OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

27. **Shaikh-e-Chatgam Maulvi Muhammad Kazim Ali:** (a) Are the Government aware that requisitions for the supply of Government publications by the elected Indian Members of the Legislative Assembly are often not attended to and they are either suggested to apply to the Central Publication Branch, Calcutta, for the supply of the required publications on payment or instructed to consult those publications in the Library of the Indian Legislature and only a very few unimportant publications are supplied gratis?

(b) Are the Government aware that the Honourable Members of the Legislative Assembly are much inconvenienced owing to their not being supplied with proper and adequate information by the Government Members and Government servants and not being supplied with all the Government publications they require?

(c) Do the Government propose to consider this very important matter and henceforth supply the Honourable Members with all the Government publications free of cost for their use whenever they ask for any?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (a) Special arrangements have been made by which orders for publications handed in by Members to the notice clerks are promptly forwarded to the Central Publication Branch. If the Honourable Member will give me particulars of any case in which such a requisition was not attended to, I shall have inquiries made.

(b) and (c). The Honourable Member is referred to the answer given by me to parts (b) and (c) of question No. 1293 on the 5th June 1924.

PAYMENT OF INCOME-TAX BY THE ARMY CANTEN BOARD (INDIA).

28. **Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan:** Will the Government be pleased to state whether the Army Canteen Board (India) has so far paid any Income-tax and if so state the amount so paid in each year since the establishment of the organisation?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: The Government do not consider that the floor of the House is the proper place for discussing individual assessments which as the Honourable Member must be aware are confidential.

ADVANCES MADE BY THE IMPERIAL BANK OF INDIA TO THE ARMY
CANTEN BOARD (INDIA)

29. **Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state the total amount of money so far advanced to the Army Canteen Board (India) by the Imperial Bank of India on the guarantee of the Government of India?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state what steps if any, they have taken to ensure that the operations of the Army Canteen Board (India) do not involve the Government in financial complications and losses in view of the Government's guarantee to the Imperial Bank of India on account of advances made by the latter to the Army Canteen Board (India)?

Mr. E. Burdon: (a) Rs. 20 lakhs.

(b) The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the reply given on the 22nd September, 1924 to part (b) of starred question No. 2312. I may also mention that Government hold a first charge on all assets of the Board.

BALANCE SHEETS OF THE ARMY CANTEN BOARD, INDIA.

30. Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan: (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether any balance sheets of its accounts have so far been issued by the Army Canteen Board (India) and if so, will Government be pleased to lay on the table those balance sheets?

(b) If the answer be in the affirmative, will Government be pleased to state what is the financial position to-day in respect of the affairs of the Army Canteen Board (India)?

Mr. E. Burdon: (a) Audited balance sheets have been issued for the years ending July 31st, 1922, 1923 and 1924. Copies of these will be furnished to the Honourable Member separately.

(b) The balance sheet of the year ending July 1924 shows a total loss up to date of Rs. 3,92,529-9-8. The profit on the year's working amounted to Rs. 20,317-3-5 as compared with a loss of Rs. 1,67,609 in the previous year.

ALLEGED EMBEZZLEMENTS BY EMPLOYEES OF THE ARMY CANTEN BOARD (INDIA).

31. Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan: (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether it is true that the Manager of the Army Mansions, Lahore Cantonments, run by the Army Canteen Board (India) has embezzled over Rs. 30,000? If so, will Government be pleased to state the circumstances which rendered the defalcation possible?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state whether any similar defalcation have been made by other servants of the Army Canteen Board (India) in the area in which they are operating and if so, the extent of the defalcations?

Mr. E. Burdon: (a) The amount embezzled by the individual to whom presumably the Honourable Member is referring was Rs. 15,320-18-0. A fidelity guarantee insurance was taken out on behalf of this employee for Rs. 5,000 and this amount has been recovered. The loss to the Board on account of this defalcation is, therefore, Rs. 10,320-18-0. The circumstances which rendered the defalcation possible are stated in the judgment on the case, a copy of which will be furnished to the Honourable Member separately.

(b) A statement is placed on the table showing the extent of the other defalcations alleged or proved against servants of the Army Canteen Board.

Statement showing the extent of defalcations alleged or proved against servants of the Army Canteen Board (India).

Rs. A. P.

(i) Year ended 31st July 1922—

The late Manager of Institute No. 12, 2nd Gloucestershire Regiment, Gharial (Murree Hills) claimed to have lodged sums amounting to which the Bank did not receive. The case was taken up by the police and the accused was tried, convicted and sentenced to 10 days' imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 5, "in that he misappropriated cash, the property of the Board".

770 9 6

(ii) *Year ended 31st July 1923—*

Rs. A. P.

- (a) The late Manager of Institute No. 8 Murree Depôt failed to give account for goods to the value of . . . supplied to him for sale in his Institute. The police instituted proceedings under section 408 I. P. C., but the Magistrate held that the prosecution had not fully proved dishonest intention and therefore acquitted the accused. 1,346 14 1
- (b) The late Manager of Army Mansions, Peshawar, on behalf of the Board was charged with taking from his clerk, Abdar, and a contractor sums amounting to Rs. 2,700 as security deposits and converted this to his own use, and further misappropriated money, the property of the Board to the value of Rs. 211-6-6. The case was instituted by the police, and the accused was convicted and sentenced to two years' imprisonment in December 1923, but it is understood that he appealed and his appeal was upheld in December 1924.

TOTAL	2,911	8	6
	4,258	4	7

(iii) *Year ended July 31st 1924—*

- (a) The late Manager of Institute No. 701, the Black Watch, Quetta, misappropriated cash to the value of . . . being the takings of "Pay day" in his Institute. He was charged by the police, convicted and sentenced to 9 months' imprisonment. 3,068 1 9
- (b) The late Manager of Institute No. 26, 6 Pack Battery R. A., Bara Gali, forged Bank Slips and misappropriated goods and cash to the value of . . . was charged by the police, convicted and sentenced to one year's imprisonment. 440 9 4
- (c) The late Manager of Institute No. 558, Seaforth Highlanders, Cherat, misappropriated cash and altered bank slips to the value of . . . was charged by the police, convicted and sentenced to two years' imprisonment. 1,571 5 10
- (d) A sum of money was missing and alleged to have been burgled from the late Manager of Institute No. 608, the Royal Scots Fusiliers, Sialkote . . . 8,764 10 6
- (e) The late Manager of Institute No. 561, Cherat Depôt, converted to his own use cash to the value of . . . the property of the Board. The police authorities stated that they were unable to secure sufficient evidence to take the case into Court. 877 11 3
- (f) The late Manager, Institute No. 510, 7th Coy. Royal Tank Corps, Peshawar, failed to account for goods and cash to the value of . . . The case although investigated by the police was not sufficiently strong to take into Court. 200 14 1
- (g) The late Manager of Institute No. 11 Sherwood Foresters, Kuldana, was short in check of cash by . . . but insufficient evidence was available to take the case to Court. 361 11 7
- (h) Small amounts of shortage of goods and cash which have come to light for the period . . . 584 0 0

	10,384	0	4
Year ended July 31st, 1922	770	9	6
Year ended July 31st, 1923	4,258	4	7
Year ended July 31st, 1924	10,364	0	4
	15,392	14	5

CONSTITUTION OF THE ARMY CANTEEN BOARD (INDIA). •

32. Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan: Will Government be pleased to state the composition and constitution of the Army Canteen Board (India) and the amount of pay drawn by members of the controlling staff of this institution stationed at Simla?

Mr. E. Burdon: I place on the table a statement showing the composition of the Army Canteen Board (India). Remuneration is paid only to the Deputy Chairman of the Board of Management who as Controller is in receipt of a salary of Rs. 3,000 per mensem.

As regards the constitution of the Board, the attention of the Honourable Member is again invited to the reply given on the 22nd September 1924.

Members of the Army Canteen Board (India).

Lieutenant-General the Honourable Sir Richard Stuart-Wortley, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O., Quartermaster-General in India.

A. F. L. Brayne, Esquire, C.I.E., I.C.S., Financial Adviser, Military Finance.

Colonel C. H. K. Chauncy, C.B.E., Assistant Quartermaster-General* and Director of Supplies and Transport.

J. S. Pitkeathly, Esquire, C.I.E., C.V.O., C.B.E., D.S.O.

Major-General C. N. Macmullen, C.B., C.M.G., C.I.E., D.S.O., Chairman of the Board of Management.

H. Mansel-Pleydell, Esquire, O.B.E., Deputy Chairman of the Board of Management.

Sir W. C. Currie, Kt., Chairman, Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

L. S. Hudson, Esquire, Chairman, Bombay Chamber of Commerce.

The Honourable Mr. Phiroze C. Sethna.

Members of the Board of Management.

Chairman—Major-General C. N. Macmullen, C.B., C.M.G., C.I.E., D.S.O.

Deputy Chairman—H. Mansel-Pleydell, Esquire, O.B.E.

Representative of Finance Department—A. F. L. Brayne, Esquire, C.I.E., I.C.S.

Member—Colonel C. H. K. Chauncy, C.B.E.

REPAYMENT OF ADVANCES TO THE ARMY CANTEEN BOARD (INDIA).

33. Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan: With reference to clause (b) of the reply given by Sir Godfrey Fell on 26th September 1921 to question No. 58, will Government be pleased to state (1) the amount of money advanced to it towards the preliminary expenses of establishing the Army Canteen Board (India) and (2) the amount so far repaid to Government on this account.

Mr. E. Burdon: (1) Rs. 4 lakhs.

(2) Rs. 4,14,271-10-11 being the above sum with interest.

SUBORDINATE ENGINEERING SERVICE, MILITARY WORKS DEPARTMENT.

34. Mr. O. S. Ranga Iyer: (a) Is it a fact, that the Secretary of State for India has sanctioned the subordinate engineering service, both for the Military and for the Public Works Department?

(b) Are the Government aware, that the Public Works Department has already given effect to this recommendation?

(c) Will the Government be pleased to state, by what date this recommendation will be given effect to in the Military Department?

Mr. E. Burdon: (a), (b) and (c). The question is not entirely understood. The constitution of a subordinate engineering service in the Public Works Department was sanctioned in 1920. The subordinate military engineering service has, however, been in existence for many years.

RECRUITMENT FOR THE INDIAN AUDIT AND ACCOUNTS SERVICE, ETC.

35. **Mr. O. S. Ranga Iyer:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state, how recruitment for the following are made:

- (a) Public Finance (Accountant General's) Department,
- (b) Military Accounts Department,
- (c) A. T. Ss. in the Railways,

(b) Are the Government aware, that the Bachelors of Commerce are specially coached in accountancy, banking, public finance and Railway economies?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: (a) Recruitment for the Indian Audit and Accounts Service (to which the Honourable Member is presumably referring), and the Military Accounts Department is ordinarily made in India on the results of a competitive examination. As regards the Assistant Traffic Superintendents, the question of the method of recruitment is under consideration and an announcement will be made shortly.

(b) The reply is in the affirmative.

STOPPAGE OF RECRUITMENT IN KUMAUN, ETC.

36. **Mr. O. S. Ranga Iyer:** (1) Are the Government aware that out of two battalions of the 1st and 2nd Kumaun Rifles the latter has been totally disbanded?

(2) Will the Government be pleased to state if it is a fact that recruitment for the first battalion of the Kumaun Rifles and other regiments has been stopped from the towns of Almora and Ranikhet and also from the parganas of Baramandal (excepting Danpur) and Pali in district Almora? If so, why?

(8) Will the Government be pleased to ascertain and lay on the table the following details:

- (a) the number of men from the aforesaid towns and parganas that were killed in the last war and also that of those who received 1st, 2nd and 3rd class injuries respectively?
- (b) the ranks that the men from the aforesaid towns and parganas held in the unit?
- (c) the authority according to which the battalion was raised in October, 1917 at Ranikhet?
- (d) the ratio that men from Danpur bear to the total battalion and also with regard to the above details?

(4) Will the Government be further pleased to state if it is a fact that the interests of the men of all ranks of the aforesaid parganas, who are already in the first battalion Kumaun Rifles, are being systematically overlooked as to force some competent Havildars and men with services varying from 11 to 3 years to request for voluntary discharge?

(5) If so, how far do the Government favour this policy?

(6) Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing the number of men enlisted in the aforesaid battalions from the various parganas of district Almora specifying the proportion their parganas bear to the total population of the district?

Mr. E. Burdon: (1) Yes.

(2) and (4). The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the reply given on the 22nd September 1924 to starred-question No. 2315.

(3) (a), (b) and (d). The information desired by the Honourable Member is not available and could not be obtained without an inordinate expenditure of time and labour.

(c) Government of India, Army Department letter No. 16552, dated the 3rd November 1917. A copy of these orders will be communicated to the Honourable Member separately.

(5) Does not arise.

(6) No records are available to show the pargannas from which individual men were recruited.

GRANT OF A PASSPORT TO KESHO RAM SABHARWAL.

37. Lala Duni Chand: (a) Is it a fact that one Kesho Ram Sabharwal was bound down on 27th January 1915 at Peshawar under section 40, North West Frontier Regulation for a period of 5 years and was released on his furnishing the security demanded of him?

(b) Is it also a fact that after having furnished security demanded of him and with a view to avoid harassment the said Kesho Ram Sabharwal had gone to Japan?

(c) Are Government aware that he applied to the British Consul at Tokyo in June, 1924 for the grant of a passport and a safe conduct on the ground that he wanted to return to India, as Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore who had recently paid a visit to Japan had offered him the post to serve as his personal assistant and to work in the executive department of his University, in proof of which he had submitted a copy of the letter from Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore?

(d) Is it a fact that the British Consul at Tokyo refused to grant him either the passport or safe conduct and merely offered to grant him an emergency certificate without giving any assurance that he will not be prosecuted in India on his return?

2. Are the Government prepared to give an assurance that he will not be prosecuted in India on his return and if not, will the Government state reasons for their not doing so?

Mr. Denys Bray: (a) Kesho Ram Sabharwal was bound down for a period of three years. The rest of the facts are as stated.

(b) He proceeded to Japan in 1915.

(c) Government have no information regarding the letter said to have been written him by Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore,—otherwise the reply is in the affirmative.

(d) Yes.

2. In view of his past record Government are unable to give such assurance.

TRAINING OF INDIANS IN CERTAIN BRANCHES OF THE ARMY.

38. Sardar V. N. Mutalik: Will Government be pleased to state what steps they intend to take for training Indians in Artillery, Military (Royal) Engineering, Tank Service, and the Royal Air Force? And when?

Mr. E. Burdon: I presume that the question relates to commissioned ranks.

The Government of India have submitted proposals to His Majesty's Government for the training of Indians at Woolwich and Cranwell, in order to qualify them for employment in the Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers and Royal Air Force.

As regards the Royal Tank Corps, Government do not propose to train young Indian officers in this difficult and highly technical branch of the service, until they have attained to greater experience and efficiency in the commissioned ranks of the cavalry and infantry now open to them.

PUBLICATION OF THE REPORT OF THE FIJI DEPUTATION.

39. Sardar V. N. Mutalik: Will Government be pleased to state:

- (a) when the Report of the Fiji Deputation was submitted to Government?
- (b) when do they propose to publish the Report?
- (c) the reasons why the report has not been published till now?

Mr. J. W. Bhore: (a) In September 1922.

(b) and (c). Some of the points touched upon in the report formed the subject of representations to the Secretary of State for the Colonies by the Colonies Committee appointed by the Government of India last March. The Honourable Member will recognize that until the result of these representations, which were of a confidential character, is known it is not possible to come to any decision regarding the question of publishing the report of our deputation.

PURCHASE OF SOUTH AFRICAN COAL.

40. Sardar V. N. Mutalik: Will Government be pleased to state what quantity of coal they have contracted to purchase from South Africa, since the beginning of the financial year, and the departments for which it is intended and the Governments (Central or Provincial) for whom the contracts have been made? And the periods for which the contracts are entered into? And also the rate at which the coal is being purchased from South Africa?

Mr. E. Burdon: The information required by the Honourable Member is being obtained and will be furnished to him in due course.

ASSESSMENT OF INCOME-TAX ON INTEREST.

41. Lala Duni Ohand: (a) Is it a fact that under the existing law income-tax is assessed on the interest that is not actually realised but only accrues due?

(b) Is it a fact that a considerable portion of the interest so assessed is never realised?

(c) If the reply to (a) and (b) be in the affirmative, are the Government prepared to modify the existing law so as to allow assessment only on the interest realised?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: (a) and (b). Under the present law whether an assessee is assessed in respect of income actually realised or that which has become due to him will depend on the method of accounting regularly employed by the assessee.

(c) Interest that has been assessed is deducted from taxable income if subsequently written off as irrecoverable. For this reason, and because it would cause grave inconvenience to assessees who keep their accounts on the commercial system to assess them on the cash basis, the Government see no reason to modify the law.

ALLEGED ASSAULT ON POSTAL CLERK BY MR. J. H. THOMPSON,
ASSISTANT COLLECTOR OF COIMBATORE.

42. Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty: (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to a note in *The Nilgiri Postal Advocate* for August, 1924, in which it is alleged that Mr. J. H. Thompson, Assistant Collector of Coimbatore assaulted the parcel clerk in the Coimbatore Post Office in the presence of the staff and the Postmaster?

(b) Has any inquiry been made in this matter and what action has been taken?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: Government have not seen the note referred to, but I understand that the matter is at present under inquiry.

REVISION OF PAY OF CLERKS OF THE MILITARY ACCOUNTS DEPARTMENT.

43. Mr. N. O. Kelkar: Is it a fact that the pay of clerks of the Civil Accounts Offices in India has been revised a second time, having effect from 1st April 1924, and if so, do Government propose to revise the pay of clerks of the M. A. D. and if so, when is the revision likely to be notified?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: Yes. The question of the revision of pay of the clerks of the Military Accounts Department is under the consideration of Government and orders on the subject will issue shortly.

PERIOD OF SERVICE AT ADEN OF MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY
ACCOUNTS DEPARTMENT.

44. Mr. N. O. Kelkar: Is it a fact that service at Aden is restricted to two years in the case of the establishment of the I. A. S. Corps, Postal Department, Indian Ordnance and Medical Departments and the Military Engineering services, and to three years in the case of M. A. D.? Were any representations received praying that the members of the M. A. D. should also be subjected to serve there for a period authorised for other Departments and if so how were they disposed of? Do Government propose to bring the employees of the M. A. D. in the same boat as their brothers in other departments are so far as the period of service at Aden is concerned?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: The reply to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. The representations received from the Members of the Military Accounts Department on the subject are under consideration.

IMPORTATION OF ACCOUNTANTS FROM CIVIL ACCOUNTS OFFICES INTO THE MILITARY ACCOUNTS DEPARTMENT.

45. **Mr. N. C. Kelkar:** Is it a fact that Accountants from Civil Accounts Offices are going to be imported into the M. A. Department? If so, will Government please state why this arrangement is considered necessary? If this is for the purpose of increasing efficiency in the Department, is it not possible to utilise competent accountants of the M. A. Department for the proposed scheme?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: No such change is intended at present.

NOTIFICATION OF PROMOTIONS IN THE SUBORDINATE ACCOUNTS SERVICE OF THE MILITARY ACCOUNTS DEPARTMENT.

46. **Mr. N. C. Kelkar:** Is it a fact that permanent promotions in the Subordinate Accounts Service of the M. A. Department have not been notified beyond 1st April 1923? If so, do Government propose to issue orders to enable the M. A. G. to notify permanent promotions early, as nearly two years have elapsed since they were last notified?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: The reply is in the affirmative. For administrative reasons *sub pro tem* arrangements have, however, been made and the question of making permanent promotions will be considered.

REJECTION OF MEDICAL CERTIFICATES GRANTED BY REGISTERED MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS.

47. **Mr. N. C. Kelkar:** With reference to the reply to my question No. 370 to the effect that in certain cases medical certificates granted by registered medical practitioners were rejected as not being countersigned by Government officials, will Government be pleased to state from the details they would have collected from several Districts, whether in a particular command or District Office, the percentage of certificates which were required to be so countersigned was particularly high and if so, do Government propose to issue necessary instructions on the subject with a view to discourage the tendency of the general rejection of registered practitioners' certificates?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: Under the rules the head of an office can exercise his discretion in accepting a medical certificate furnished by a clerk of his office. From information collected, it is observed that the percentage of certificates which were required to be countersigned varies with the varying circumstances in different districts but Government see no reason to interfere with the discretion of Controllers in this matter.

WITHHOLDING OF INCREMENTS EARNED BY CLERKS AND ACCOUNTANTS IN THE MILITARY ACCOUNTS DEPARTMENT.

48. **Mr. N. C. Kelkar:** Is it a fact that increments already earned by clerks and accountants and which they were in receipt of are or were being withheld in the M. A. D. for some alleged inefficiency, etc.? Will Government please state whether this procedure is regular? Were not these increments earned on past approved service? In how many cases were such increments withdrawn during 1923-24?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: It is the ordinary practice that increments in the time scale are not granted as a matter of course but may be withheld for inefficiency or misconduct. Information as to the number of instances of withholding of increments during 1923-24 is being collected.

DUTY ALLOWANCES OF UNIT ACCOUNTANTS AND CLERKS IN THE MILITARY ACCOUNTS DEPARTMENT.

49. **Mr. N. O. Kelkar:** Will Government please state whether duty allowance to Unit Accountants and clerks in the M. A. D. is granted on the condition that they perform their duties satisfactorily? Can the allowance be discontinued for various reasons although the Unit Accountants and clerks continue to perform their duties? In how many cases was this allowance stopped in the year 1923-24?

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett: The duty allowance is granted for the reason stated and also on account of liability for transfer with the unit. It may be discontinued for inefficiency or irregularity in the performance of the duties of the post. The number of instances of discontinuance in 1923-24 will be ascertained.

ISSUE OF RIFLES TO MEMBERS OF THE ALLAHABAD UNIVERSITY TRAINING CORPS.

50. **Pandit Shamlal Nehru:** (a) Has the attention of the Government been drawn to an article "Compulsory Military training for University students, An Appeal" published in the issue of the *Leader*, dated 7th December 1924?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state if it is a fact that the Allahabad University Training Corps was organised in the year 1922 and the members have not yet been supplied with rifles? If so, what is the cause of this delay? When are they going to be supplied?

Mr. E. Burdon: (a) Government have seen the article referred to.

(b) The Allahabad University Training Corps was formed in the year 1922. In July 1924, orders were given for the issue of rifles, but I cannot say whether the rifles have actually been issued as yet. The reason why rifles were not issued to the United Provinces Battalion (which includes the Allahabad University Training Corps) when it was formed, is that no arrangements could be made at Aligarh and Benares for the safe custody of the rifles, particularly during the University vacations.

UNIVERSITY TRAINING CORPS, ALLAHABAD.

51. **Pandit Shamlal Nehru:** Will the Government be pleased to state:

(a) whether the conditions laid down in the Territorial Force rules Part III section (2) and section 16 (2) were observed in practice in the University Training Corps at Allahabad?

(b) How many drills were actually held during the session 1923-24?

(c) Were there any camps during the sessions 1922-23 and 1923-24? If so, for how many days, if not, why not?

Mr. E. Burdon: The information desired by the Honourable Member is being obtained and will be furnished to him as soon as possible.

REVISION OF THE STRENGTH OF THE UNIVERSITY TRAINING CORPS IN THE UNITED PROVINCES.

52. **Pandit Shamlal Nehru:** (a) Are the Government aware of the fact that the Courts of the Allahabad University and the Hindu University of Benares have resolved to make military training compulsory for such of their students as are physically fit?

(b) Do the Government propose to revise the strength of the University Training Corps in the U. P. of Agra and Oudh so as to enable the Universities to accommodate their students in the University Training Corps?

Mr. E. Burdon: (a) Government have no information on the subject.

(b) Government propose to await the report of the Auxiliary and Territorial Force Committee before considering any change in present arrangements.

REPORT OF THE INDIAN TERRITORIAL FORCE COMMITTEE.

53. **Pandit Shamlal Nehru:** Will the Government be pleased to state when they are going to publish the report of the Indian Territorial Force Committee?

Mr. E. Burdon: The Committee propose to re-assemble on the 23rd January to consider their report. The report will be published as soon as possible after it has been adopted by the Committee, and in order to minimise delay the draft report has been set up in type.

NUMBER OF PERSONS UNDER DETENTION IN BENGAL UNDER BENGAL REGULATION III OF 1818.

54. **Mr. K. C. Neogy:** Will Government be pleased to make a statement showing:

(a) the number of persons at present under detention in Bengal under Bengal Regulation III of 1818; and

(b) how many of the said persons were arrested before the 25th October, 1924 (the date of the promulgation of the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Ordinance No. 1 of 1924), and how many since that date?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: (a) 46.

(b) 27 before the 25th October 1924, and 19 on and after that date.

ARRESTS UNDER BENGAL REGULATION III OF 1818.

55. **Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) Is it a fact that Bengal Regulation III of 1818, has been used in Bengal for the purpose of dealing with the alleged criminal conspiracy which Ordinance No. 1 of 1924 is intended to deal with?

(b) Is it a fact that the said Ordinance contains provisions for the arrest of suspects without warrant, their detention in jail without trial, and payment of allowances to them and their dependants; and that these

provisions are analogous to the principal provisions of Bengal Regulation III of 1818, so far as they are applied for the purpose of dealing with persons suspected of association with criminal conspiracies of the kind contemplated by Ordinance No. 1 of 1924?

(c) In the case of persons incarcerated in Bengal under the said Regulation since the 25th of October, 1924, for their alleged association with criminal conspiracies, will Government be pleased to state the grounds on which the Governor General in Council undertook the responsibility of dealing with them under Bengal Regulation III of 1818, instead of leaving them to be dealt with by the Local Government under Ordinance No. 1 of 1924?

(d) Which authority decides as to whether a person is to be dealt with under Bengal Regulation III of 1818, or under the provisions of Ordinance No. 1 of 1924 referred to in clause (b) above; and what circumstances generally determine such discrimination in any particular case?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: (a) Bengal Regulation III of 1818 has been used for dealing with the anarchical associations which exist in Bengal in certain cases before Ordinance No. 1 of 1924 was made and promulgated or could come into effective operation.

(b) The Honourable Member is doubtless fully acquainted with the provisions of both the Ordinance and the Regulation.

(c) Reference is invited to the reply given to part (a) of the question. In respect of persons arrested under Regulation III on or after the 25th of October, orders under section 12 of the Ordinance have been substituted for warrants under the Regulation.

(d) It is the intention to apply the provisions of the Ordinance in the case of all persons who come within its provisions and when it is in the public interest to do so.

DETENTION OF MR. SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE UNDER BENGAL REGULATION III OF 1818.

56. **Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to a statement recently made by Earl Winterton, Under Secretary of State for India, in reply to a question, in the House of Commons, to the effect that Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, Chief Executive Officer of the Municipal Corporation of Calcutta, has been detained under Bengal Regulation III of 1818 under the authority of the Government of Bengal?

(b) Is it a fact that the Governor General in Council have, for all practical purposes, delegated most of their functions under Bengal Regulation III of 1818 to the Government of Bengal, although there is no legal authority for so doing?

(c) What part does the Government of Bengal usually take in the administration of Bengal Regulation III of 1818?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: (a) Government have seen the reply made by Earl Winterton. Mr. Bose was arrested by officers of the Government of Bengal under the authority of a warrant issued by the Governor General in Council.

(b) Certainly not.

(c) The Government of Bengal administers the Regulation in such matters as may not be specifically ordered by the Governor General in Council, under the orders of the Governor General in Council.

REPORTS ON STATE PRISONERS IN BENGAL.

57. **Mr. K. O. Neogy:** Will Government be pleased to lay on the table a summary of:

- (a) the periodical reports under section 3 of Bengal Regulation III of 1818, regarding State prisoners in Bengal;
- (b) the representations made by the said prisoners under section 5 of the said Regulation;
- (c) the official reports under section 6 of the said Regulation; and
- (d) the orders passed by Government on the reports and representations referred to in clauses (a), (b) and (c) above?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: Government have nothing to conceal in regard to the treatment of these State prisoners and I am willing to give all reasonable information about the treatment of any particular prisoner, but I do not think that any useful purpose would be served by summarising all the periodical returns, reports and representations referred to in the question.

TREATMENT OF STATE PRISONERS IN BENGAL.

58. **Mr. K. O. Neogy:** In how many instances have Government received complaints regarding the treatment in jail of prisoners under Regulation III of 1818 in Bengal, and the inadequacy of the allowances granted to them and their families, and what action has been taken thereon?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: No complaints have been received from the State prisoners recently confined under the Regulation in regard to their treatment in jail. It would involve a great deal of labour to examine the monthly reports for other State prisoners since the dates of their detention, and I am not prepared to undertake such a general examination, as complaints, if made, are always promptly attended to. In the matter of inadequate family allowances, five representations have been received from or on behalf of persons who are now detained as State prisoners. Of these, one was favourably considered and the remaining four rejected as there were no grounds to justify a reconsideration of the amount of allowance already sanctioned.

ALLOWANCES TO STATE PRISONERS IN BENGAL.

59. **Mr. K. O. Neogy:** What is the total amount distributed, during the last month for which complete figures are available, to prisoners under Bengal Regulation III of 1818, and their families; and under what head of the accounts of the Government of India are these amounts shown?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: These charges are debited under the head "29—Political." The figures asked for are not immediately available but are being obtained.

MILITARY MANŒUVRES AT DELHI.

Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer (Madras: Nominated Non-Official): Mr. President, may I request you to be so good as to convey to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief our grateful appreciation of the opportunities which he gave to the Members of the Legislature of witnessing the manœuvres. Most civilians have no idea of military operations and seldom have a chance of seeing such operations. Manœuvres on this grand scale are held only very infrequently and it is an opportunity which the Members of the Legislature are not likely to obtain often. We feel deeply thankful to His Excellency for having given us the opportunity of witnessing these manœuvres.

Mr. President: I understand I will be interpreting the sense of the House as already expressed by my Honourable friend Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer if I convey to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief the great appreciation of all Members of this House and particularly of those who were actually present of the arrangements made and so efficiently carried out under his orders and by his officers for Members of this Chamber in connection with the manœuvres and the review of the troops which was held yesterday.

Mr. Chaman Lall (West Punjab: Non-Muhammadan): With your permission, Sir, may I request you to dissociate myself and some of my Honourable colleagues from the remarks which have just fallen from the Honourable Member. We as a body refrained from attending the manœuvres and had no part in the business.

Mr. President: I leave the House to judge of the character of the remarks which my Honourable friend has just made. I did, however, safeguard myself in saying that in conveying the thanks of the House to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief I should specially convey the thanks of those who accepted the invitation which His Excellency was good enough to give.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. President: Diwan Chaman Lall. [Mr. Chaman Lall, on being called, did not rise.] I gather the Honourable Member has forgotten that he sent me notice of his desire to move an adjournment of the House to-day.

Mr. Chaman Lall: In view, Sir, of the statement made by the Honourable the Leader of the House in reply to the Honourable Mr. Jinnah's question, I do not wish to press my motion for adjournment.

GOVERNOR GENERAL'S ASSENT TO BILLS.

Mr. President: I have to acquaint the House that I have received the assent of His Excellency the Governor General to the following Acts passed by both Chambers of the Indian Legislature. The Indian Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 1924. The Indian Post Office (Amendment) Act, 1924. The Imperial Bank of India (Amendment) Act, 1924. The Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1924. The Land Customs Act, 1924.

PETITIONS RELATING TO THE INDIAN PENAL CODE (AMENDMENT) BILL.

(AMENDMENT OF SECTION 375.)

Secretary of the Assembly: Sir, under Standing Order 78, I have to report that twenty-five petitions as per statement laid on the table have been received relating to the Bill further to amend the Indian Penal Code (Amendment of section 375) which was introduced in the Legislative Assembly by Sir Hari Singh Gour.

STATEMENT.

Petitions received relating to the Bill further to amend the Indian Penal Code (Amendment of section 375) which was introduced in the Legislative Assembly by Sir Hari Singh Gour.

1. Brajendra Nath Smrititirtha and others.
2. Kalikesh Chandra Chatterjee and others.
3. Raj Kumar Smrititirtha and others.
4. Sreejukta Prasanna Kumar Smrititirtha and others.
5. Sreejukta Basanta Kumar Tarkanidhi and others.
6. Kamakyacharan Sastri and others.
7. Sarat Chandra Sankhya Vedanta Tirtha and others.
8. Kumar Nagendra Kishore Roy Chowdhury and others.
9. Panchanan Tarkaratna and others.
10. Satish Chandra Mukherjee and others.
11. Birendra Nath Chaudhuri and others.
12. Satish Chandra Roy and others.
13. Kally Charan Chatterjee and others.
14. Sibadas Banerjee and others.
15. Rai Dinanath Bisvas Bahadur and others.
16. Amulya Charan Chatterjee and others.
17. Sukhada Prasad Majumdar and others.
18. Akshay Kumar Smrititirtha and others.
19. Kali Kumar Bhattacharya and others.
20. Sreeharsa Mukerji and others.
21. Women's Indian Association.
22. Md. Ismail Khan and others.
23. Sundar Das Bhalla and others.
24. Citizens of Madras.
25. M. Balasundaram and others.

STATEMENTS LAID ON THE TABLE.

NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY SLEEPER CONTRACT.

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes (Commerce Member): Sir, I lay on the table the information promised in reply to a question by Diwan Chaman

[Sir Charles Innes.]

Lall asked on the 10th September, 1924, regarding the North-Western Railway 5 years sleeper contract.

Record of the meeting of the Central Railway Advisory Council held on 4th September 1924.

PRESENT :

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes, Member for Railways and Commerce, Chairman.

Mr. C. D. M. Hindley, Chief Commissioner.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons, Financial Commissioner.

The Honourable Sir Arthur Froom.

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas, M.L.A.

Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar, M.L.A.

Dr. H. S. Gour, M.L.A.

Seth Kasturbhai Lalbhai, M.L.A.

It was decided to take as the basis of discussion the reports of the Sub-Committee appointed by the C. A. C. and at the suggestion of Sir Charles Innes, it was decided also that in the first instance, the discussion should be confined to the four issues framed by the Sub-Committee.

Issue No. 1.—In calling for a five year contract for whole or part supply in October 1922, did the Railway Administration exercise ordinary business prudence?

After a lengthy discussion, the Council came by a majority to the following conclusion :—

The Council recognises the difficulty of pronouncing judgment on a contract placed nearly two years ago. It is easy to be wise after the event, and allowance must be made for the circumstances of the time when the contract was made. But the Council is impressed by the fact that prices had risen very much during the war and that the effect of the contract was to stabilise prices at a high level for 5 years. It considers that the Railway Administration would have been well advised to watch the course of prices for some time before entering into a long term contract and that in entering into a 5 year contract when it did, the Railway Administration did not exercise ordinary business prudence.

Issue No. 2.—Should the whole contract have been given to Messrs. Spedding & Co.?

The Council recognises that reliability is a factor to be taken into account in deciding between tenders. It notes, however, that under the orders of the Railway Board, tenders were called for part supplies as well as for the whole supply of the sleepers required. It considers that the tenders for part supplies should have been considered on their merits, and a majority of the members are of opinion that the Railway Administration should not have given a monopoly to a single firm. Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas asked that information might be obtained from the N. W. R. Administration as to the manner in which Messrs. Spedding & Co. had fulfilled their contracts since 1914. He desired information in particular on two points :—

(i) whether they had fulfilled their contracts in full and up to time, and

(ii) whether prices had been revised in their favour during the currency of any of the contracts.

Issue No. 3.—Should the terms have been varied after the acceptance of the contract?

The C. A. C. is unanimously of opinion that the terms should not have been varied after the acceptance of the contract and that the Railway Administration should not have called for tenders in a form which was entirely out of date.

Issue No. 4.—Are there any specific points which from a consideration of this case the C. A. C. might suggest investigation by the officers, who are enquiring into the best method of obtaining sleepers in future?

The Central Advisory Council is unanimously of opinion that the first lesson to be derived from this case is that proper arrangements should be made for co-ordination between the Railway Department of the Government of India and the Forest Departments of the local Governments in the different provinces in the matter of sleeper supplies. The Chief Commissioner of Railways explained that this matter had already been taken up and that the joint report of the Chief Engineer and a Forest Officer on the subject was now under the consideration of the Board.

The Central Advisory Council was also of opinion that the whole question of the powers of the Agents in the matter of placing of sleeper contracts should be brought under review. Sir Charles Innes promised that this question would be examined and brought up before the next meeting of the Central Advisory Council.

LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY, RAILWAY BOARD, TO THE AGENT, NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY, No. 185-S-II, DATED SIMLA, THE 6TH OCTOBER 1924.

I am directed to forward for your information copies of the documents noted in the margin relating to the sleeper contract concluded in 1922 by the North Western Railway Administration. This contract, as you are aware, has attracted a good deal of comment in the Legislative Assembly and, in accordance with a pledge given in the Assembly, has been considered in consultation with the Central Advisory Council. I am now to communicate the orders of the Government of India on the four issues considered by the Council.

1. Report of the Sub-Committee to consider the North Western Railway sleeper contract.
2. Proceedings of the Meeting of the Central Advisory Council held on 4th September 1924.

2. As regards the first issue, the Government of India recognise that there is room for a fair difference of opinion. On the one hand, long term contracts have great attractions for a Railway administration working on a programme thought out over a series of years. The benefit of a long term contract is that it secures the supply of sleepers necessary for that programme. Such contracts too suit, and indeed are almost essential for, the contractors. Usually these contractors on securing a contract acquire forest leases and make their own arrangements for extraction.

Such arrangements involve capital outlay, and long term contracts are necessary in order to enable the contractors to recoup themselves for their initial outlay. On the other hand, it might be argued—and this is the view taken by the majority of the Council that when this contract was placed, prices had not settled down after the war and that the Railway Administration would have been well advised if it had allowed time for prices to stabilise themselves before committing themselves to a contract for the long period of 5 years. The Government of India, as stated above, recognise that there is room for a fair difference of opinion, but they are not prepared to subscribe to the view that in concluding a five-year contract the Railway Administration did not exercise ordinary business prudence.

Issue No. 2.—The Government of India recognise that reliability is a factor which must be taken into account in deciding between tenders. But the Railway Administration were definitely ordered by the Board to call for tenders for part supply as well as for whole supply, and the Government of India consider that tenders for part supply should have been considered on their merits. They attach also importance to the considerations urged by Sir Campbell Rhodes in that part of his note which deals with this point.

Issue No. 3.—The Government of India entirely agree with the Central Advisory Council that the terms should not have been varied after the acceptance of the contract, and that the Railway Administration should not have called for tenders in a form which was entirely out of date. Orders have already been issued that the revision of the tender form should be taken in hand at once. As regards the former point, the Government of India understand that the terms of a former contract were merely

[Sir Charles Innes.]

copied out in preparing the contract with Messrs. Spedding and Company. They consider, however, that the terms of this contract should have been compared with the terms in the tender form before the contract was actually issued, and they must record their dissatisfaction that this was not done. They do not propose to pursue the matter further as they understand that the officer who is primarily responsible has now retired.

Issue No. 4.—The Government of India agree with the Central Advisory Council that proper arrangements should be made for co-ordination between the Railway Department of the Government of India and the Forest Departments of the Local Governments in the different provinces in the matter of sleeper supplies, as stated, in the record of the meeting of the Central Advisory Council this question is already being taken up.

GRANTS MADE BY E. B. RAILWAY TO SCHOOLS FOR EUROPEANS, ANGLO-INDIANS AND INDIANS.

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes (Commerce Member): Sir, I lay on the table the information promised in reply to a question by Mr. Amar Nath Dutt asked on the 17th September, 1924, regarding grants made by the Eastern Bengal Railway to schools for Europeans, Anglo-Indians and Indians.

(a) Number of schools aided by the Eastern Bengal Railway—

(i) European and Anglo-Indian	10
(ii) Indian	45
	1922. 1923.

Rs. Rs.

(b) Amount paid by the Eastern Bengal Railway as aid to—

(i) European and Anglo-Indian schools	13,277	15,300
(ii) Indian schools	8,180	10,292

(c) Yes, there is a difference in the payment of aid to schools.

(d) The rates of contribution paid are—

(i) European and Anglo-Indian schools	Rs. 2 per child per mensem.
(ii) Indian Schools	Annas 8 per child per mensem. In the case of H. E. and M. E. schools the rates are Re. 1 and annas 12 per mensem respectively.

The difference in rates is due to difference in the cost of education.

DISBURSEMENT FROM THE FINE FUND OF THE NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

Mr. G. G. Sim (Financial Commissioner, Railways): Sir, I lay on the table the information promised in reply to a question by Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas asked on the 18th September, 1924, regarding the disbursement from the Fine Fund of the North Western Railway for the years 1922-23 and 1923-24.

Statement showing the disbursement from the Fine Fund of the North-Western Railway for the year 1922-23 and 1923-24.

Particulars.	1922-23.				1923-24.				REMARKS.
	European.	Indian.	Joint.	Total.	European.	Indian.	Joint.	Total.	
1. Institutes	Rs. 9,029	Rs. 2,160	Rs. ...	Rs. 11,189	Rs. 10,845	Rs. 2,160	Rs. 420	Rs. 13,425	
2. Reading Rooms	420	240	810	1,470	420	240	800	1,460	
3. Sports Clubs and Tournaments	1,634	2,672	1,224	5,530	1,039	2,813	2,442	6,344	
4. Education, viz., capitation and monthly grants to schools.	...	...	...	...	...	380	...	380	
5. Compassionate education of children of staff killed on duty.	2,969	1,043	...	4,012	3,191	1,360	...	4,551	
6. Apprentices' Home	2,368	...	...	2,368	2,230	...	...	2,230	
7. Holiday Home	2,500	...	...	2,500	1,250	...	...	1,250	
8. Protestant Cemetery	120	...	...	120	110	...	...	110	
9. Chaplain	3,500	...	...	3,500	3,600	...	...	3,600	
10. North-Western Railway Band . . . . .	...	...	6,300	6,300	...	...	4,800	4,800	
11. Recoverable loans and advance to co-operative stores, etc., and Railway employees for outfit of children going to schools.	...	...	...	45,380	...	...	...	27,147	
12. Cost of War Memorial . . . . .	...	...	...	...	2,175	...	...	2,175	
13. Compassionate gratuity . . . . .	...	...	...	...	550	...	...	550	
14. Grant to Red Cross, Karachi . . . . .	...	...	...	...	...	...	500	500	
TOTAL	22,440	6,115	8,394	82,209	25,400	6,983	9,012	68,442	

MESSRS SPENCER AND COMPANY'S REFRESHMENT ROOMS.

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes (Commerce Member): Sir, I lay on the table the information promised in reply to a question by Mr. T. C. Goswami asked on the 19th September, 1924, regarding the privileges allowed to Messrs Spencer and Company's Refreshment Rooms as compared with those allowed to Indian Refreshment Rooms.

Privileges allowed to Messrs. Spencer and Company's Railway Refreshment Rooms as compared with Indian Railway Refreshment Rooms.

Railway.	FURNITURE.		OTHER ARTICLES FOR REFRESHMENT ROOMS.		AERATED WATERS, ICE, ETC.		LIGHT.		TELEGRAMS.	
	European Rooms.	Indian Rooms.	European Rooms.	Indian Rooms.	European Rooms.	Indian Rooms.	European Rooms.	Indian Rooms.	European Rooms.	Indian Rooms.
N. W. Ry.	Carried free	Carried free	Fresh provisions carried free. Oilman stores, etc. wines, etc. carried at half tariff rates. Not carried free.	Fresh provisions carried free. Oilman stores, etc. wines, etc. not carried free; as not sold. Not carried free.	Carried at Revenue rates. Ice carried free but not aerated waters. Carried free from Madras Return empties carried free.	Carried free when not available locally.	Not provided free.	Not provided free.	Telegrams regarding passengers meals transmitted free.	Telegrams regarding passengers meals transmitted free.
M. & S. M. Ry.	Carried free	Carried free	Carried free from Madras Return empties carried free.	Not carried free, as such articles are usually obtained locally.	Not carried free, as not usually sold.	Not carried free, as such articles are usually obtained locally.	Do.	Do.	Do.	Do.
S. I. Ry.	Carried free, as one agency works all rooms.	Not carried free, as rooms are licensed to local contractors.	Carried free from Madras Return empties carried free.	Not carried free, as such articles are usually obtained locally.	Not carried free, as not usually sold.	Where ordinary lights are used contractors provide their own.	Where ordinary lights are used contractors provide their own.	Where ordinary lights are used contractors provide their own.	Do.	Do.

CENTRAL ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RAILWAYS.

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes (Commerce Member): Sir, I beg to move:

"That this Assembly do proceed to elect, in such manner as may be approved by the Honourable the President, a panel consisting of 8 Members from which 6 shall be selected to serve on the Central Advisory Council for Railways, as provided for in clause 6 of the Resolution adopted by this Assembly on the 20th September, 1924, on the subject of separation of Railway Finance."

The motion was adopted.

Mr. President: I may inform Members that, arising out of the motion which has just been carried, the office of the Assembly will be open to receive nominations up to 12 Noon on Saturday the 24th January and the election, if any, will take place in the Chamber on Wednesday the 28th January by the usual method, namely, the single transferable vote.

I have received information that the Honourable Member in whose name the next item stands, namely, Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar, cannot be present till to-morrow. Therefore, I propose to take his motion as the first item of business to-morrow.

APPOINTMENT OF MESSRS E. H. ASHWORTH AND L. GRAHAM AS MEMBERS OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE CODE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Mr. L. Graham (Secretary, Legislative Department): Sir, I rise to move that in place of Sir Henry Moncrieff Smith and Mr. H. E. Holme, the following persons be appointed to the Select Committee on the Bill further to amend the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, for certain purposes, namely:

Mr. E. H. Ashworth and the Mover.

The motion, Sir, is necessitated by the fact that the two Members whose names I have mentioned, Sir Henry Moncrieff Smith and Mr. H. E. Holme, have ceased to be Members of the Assembly.

The motion was adopted.

THE INDIAN MERCHANT SHIPPING (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes (Commerce Member): Sir, I move for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Indian Merchant Shipping Act, 1923, for a certain purpose.

I do not think, Sir, I need say very much about the provisions of this little Bill. The provisions indeed are no doubt familiar to Honourable Members. They were included in the Bill which Sir Montagu Butler introduced this time last year to amend the Indian Shipping Act, on a larger subject, namely, in regard to pilgrim ships and in regard to the provisions for making return tickets for pilgrims to the Haj compulsory. That Bill, as the House will remember, was referred to a Select Committee and though the Select Committee had much to say on the question of compulsory return tickets to pilgrims to the Haj, they accepted without any question the provisions of my little Bill here. I have thought it advisable to separate these provisions from the other Bill because the other Bill is, if

[Sir Charles Innes.]

I may say so, controversial, whereas I hope this little Bill is not controversial at all. This is a Bill merely to give us power to charge fees for the inspection of wireless installations on ships. I think, Sir, I need say no more than that. I move for leave to introduce the Bill.

The motion was adopted.

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

THE INDIAN TRADE UNIONS BILL.

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra (Industries Member): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the registration of Trade Unions and in certain respects to define the law relating to registered Trade Unions in British India.

Honourable Members will find in the Statement of Objects and Reasons a short explanation of the reasons for this Bill. As stated therein, the Bill has been prepared in response to a Resolution adopted in this House some four years ago. It is therefore hardly necessary for me at this stage to dilate at length on the reasons for its introduction. But the House will perhaps expect a word of explanation regarding the long period which has elapsed between the date of adoption by it of the Resolution of 1st March, 1921, and the introduction of the Bill.

As the House is aware, the subject in 1921 was new and unexplored so far as India was concerned. No Indian law ever contemplated such an organization as a trade union; and although laws on the subject were to be found in other countries, I am sure that the House will agree with me when I say that enactments presented to this House should be Indian Bills, designed with ample knowledge and recognition of Indian conditions and not merely blind imitations of Acts framed to suit different conditions in other countries. Before we could prepare a Bill for presentation to this House, it was obviously essential for us to consult Local Governments fully and to give employers' and workers' associations and the public at large ample opportunity of expressing their views.

The opinions expressed in response to our invitation are remarkable for their diversity. There are some who consider the proposed legislation to be premature and who would prefer that we should not proceed with it at all. There are some others who, while recognizing the need for the proposed legislation, apparently consider Trade Unions to be dangerous and pernicious growths whose activities should be controlled rigidly so that they may not eventually overwhelm the commonwealth. There are others again who regard trade unionism as a new religion which, given sufficient license, would bring about the millenium much more rapidly than any existing religions promise to do.

It would have obviously been impossible for us to prepare a Bill which would have satisfied all these conflicting points of view. All that the Bill before the House contemplates is the adoption of certain preliminary measures to foster the growth of Trade Unions in India on right lines.

We fully realize that the progress of the trade union movement in India will not depend to any large extent on legislation. Trade Unions are associations of men bound together by common interests for common ends; and like other democratic growths they cannot be set up by Statute. But something can be done by legislation to retard the progress of the movement, or to encourage its development on right lines. The Bill is intended to secure the latter object.

The Bill is a purely permissive measure. If adopted, it will compel no Trade Union to register. To those who desire to register, and who are prepared to accept the responsibilities which registration entails, we offer a privileged position which includes protection in regard to their legitimate actions and also protection of their funds against speculation or dissipation on extraneous objects. And we have endeavoured to avoid imposing any responsibility which a genuine Trade Union would be reluctant to accept. There are Unions possibly which regard the members as existing for the sake of the Union. These Unions will not register, and we shall not regret their absence. But those Unions which exist for the benefit of their members and which make that their sole aim have nothing to lose and everything to gain by registration. The future of trade unionism in India will be in their hands.

I do not propose at this stage to take up the time of the House by a reference to the detailed clauses of the Bill. These are explained in the notes on clauses. Many of them raise somewhat difficult and controversial issues, which will have to be very carefully considered at a later stage. At the present moment I am content to ask merely for leave to introduce the Bill, and to impress upon the House the importance of the measure. We are breaking new ground in legislation of this kind in India. Our measure is one which is of a simple nature in comparison with similar laws in more advanced countries. But I venture to think that it is wise to start with a fairly simple measure, suited as nearly as may be to the early youth of the trade union movement in this country.

I may mention for the information of Honourable Members that all the opinions received on the Bill are being printed and will be circulated to them as soon as copies are available.

Mr. President: The question is:

"That leave be given to introduce a Bill to provide for the registration of Trade Unions and in certain respects to define the law relating to registered Trade Unions in British India".

The motion was adopted.

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

THE INDIAN PAPER CURRENCY (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett (Finance Member): Sir, I introduce the Bill further to amend the Indian Paper Currency Act, 1923.

Sir, if the Bill which my Honourable friend Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra has just introduced is a simple one, I may claim that this is even more simple. It is a very short Bill. It has only one operative clause and that operative clause makes only one small change in the existing law. It proposes

[Sir Basil Blackett.]

to substitute for the figure "850" the figure "1,000", and the result of doing so will be to enable paper currency to be issued against securities up to a total of 100 crores in place of the existing maximum of 85 crores. No other change of any sort is made in the existing Statutes. No change is made as regards the kind of securities which may be held as cover for the paper currency. No change is made other than the figure. Obviously, therefore, the Bill has a very limited scope. Nevertheless, Sir, I must crave your indulgence and the indulgence of the House if on a Bill which is short and simple—and I hope not controversial—I make a somewhat lengthy speech. I am afraid it is necessary that I should deal at some length with that thorny topic, currency and its allied topic, exchange, equally thorny, because the true nature of this Bill cannot be properly explained unless it is brought into relation with wider issues. I think also it is to our advantage that we should devote some attention to these wider issues. There are comparatively few people who claim a deep knowledge of the subject of Indian currency and exchange; there are perhaps even fewer who possess it. Yet currency enters into our every day life in a way that scarcely any-think else enters. We all know what a rupee and an anna look like. Yet I think probably it is a subject about which less is known than almost any other subject in India. I do not want to delve deeply into past history. From 1898 to 1914, after a somewhat chequered early career, the rupee settled down to a steady and useful existence with a relation to gold and sterling practically constant at 15 rupees to the pound. There was nothing sacrosanct about this ratio and it lasted for less than 20 years. But while it lasted it gave us that stability which we had previously sadly lacked. Then came the war and the ratio of 15 rupees to the pound was disturbed by an entirely unforeseen rise in the price of silver. The rupee became more valuable as silver bullion than as a silver coin. The moment was not propitious, if it ever could be propitious, for reducing the silver content of the rupee and thereby putting it into what some people regard as its proper classification—a purely token coin. The only alternative was to let the rupee rise above 1s. 4d., and as the House will remember it climbed steadily to 1s. 6d., 1s. 8d., 2s. and even for a few glorious moments to 2s. 10d. It certainly was not altogether to India's disadvantage that the ratio of 1s. 4d. had to be abandoned. Silver was not the only commodity which rose in value during and after the war. All other commodities rose very high in terms of gold and if the rupee had been maintained at 1s. 4d., India would have suffered very much more than she actually did from the rise of prices which was a feature of that period. Important as the exchange value of the rupee is, there can be no doubt that for the 820 million people of India or for the vast majority of them, the condition of internal prices is much more important than the condition of the exchanges. What people are interested is the power of the rupee to command the every day necessities of life in the bazaar. They are much more interested in this than in the number of pounds sterling or dollars or yen which a given quantity of rupees will obtain for them. If a choice has unavoidably to be made between keeping the value of the rupee stable in terms of gold or some other currency and keeping prices in India comparatively stable, there is no question that the choice must always be in favour of the latter alternative. We are all apt to suffer from the illusion that a sovereign or a rupee is something which is unchanging and always has a constant value. It is true that a given quantity of gold of a given fineness will always make a sovereign and a given quantity of silver of a given fineness will always make a rupee;

but when it comes to the value of a rupee in exchange that value is subject to constant fluctuations. A bale of cotton of a given quality will always make a certain number of *dhoties*. A maund of rice will provide a certain number of meals, whatever the price may be. The rupee in its quality as a measure of value is much more changing than a bale of cotton or a maund of rice and we shall never be able to think clearly on questions of currency if we do not get hold of this fact. It is the things which rupees buy which remain unchanging and it is the rupee which is always changing. It is subject to constant fluctuations due to causes internal and external. A good or bad monsoon, an earthquake in Japan, a revolution in China or Russia or Mexico or a change in the fashion of ladies' dress, all of them will change the value of a rupee. What the average man and woman in this country wants is a currency which will secure for as long a period as possible a fairly constant quantity and quality of goods in the bazaar and the rises and falls of bazaar prices are what we want to avoid. I shall illustrate the course of Indian prices in recent years shortly with certain figures. But first, I want to say something about the post-war period. The period since the Armistice was signed on November 11th, 1918, has seen unparalleled fluctuations in all the currencies of the world. Gold itself has fluctuated enormously in purchasing power. The French and Belgian francs and the Italian lira have fallen to about a quarter of their pre-war value in terms of gold and even further in regard to their purchasing power. The Austrian and Hungarian krone have felt themselves lucky when they were stopped by international action through the League of Nations in their headlong plunge at a figure at which 300,000 of them were required to do the work which 24 krone did before the war. The Russian rouble has ceased to exist and so has the Polish mark. The German mark has, it is true, recently, for the time being at any rate, recovered a constant relation to gold, but only by the device of making 20,000 million marks equal to 20 marks before the war, that is by the simple device of writing off the last nine ciphers. I notice that some gentlemen in India claim that the rise of the rupee from 1s. 4d. to 1s. 6d. means the loss to the Indian producer for export of—I think the figure is—40 crores of rupees a year. I should like to ask those gentlemen how many marks the German produces for export have gained owing to the fall of the mark to one thousand millionth of its pre-war value. Is it 1,000 million times better? I would like to ask the same gentleman why if he prefers 1s. 4d. to 1s. 6d. so much and thinks that Indian producers gain 40 crores by that difference, he would not be logical if he followed his rupee down to 1 sh., for obviously the Indian producer would gain another 80 crores of rupees; and why stop at 1 shilling? It is the habit of some publicists in India to use the most opprobrious epithets when they talk of the Indian Government's policy in regard to exchange since the Armistice. I wish they would for a moment compare the history of Indian exchange during and since the war with the history of the franc or the mark. When they consider the franc or the mark they will surely see how modest have been the fluctuations of the rupee in comparison. India has suffered less than any country in the world in the matter of price fluctuations and in the matter of exchange fluctuations it has a very fair record. And, even if it is still subject to fluctuations, it is nevertheless regarded throughout the world as one of the few currencies which has remained sane and sound in an insane and disordered universe.

Let me now give the figures which I promised in support of my claim in regard to Indian prices. Taking the prices of July 1914 as 100, the

[Sir Basil Blackett.]

Calcutta index number of wholesale prices in India rose to 197 in September 1918 to 218 its maximum in January 1920. The lowest point to which it has since fallen is 170 in July 1923. Between January 1st, 1922 and the present date its range has been between 187 and 170, a range of under 10 per cent. At the end of December 1924 it stood at 180. Contrast the position in England. I take the Board of Trade figure. From 100 in 1918 it rose steadily till it reached 307 in 1920, a maximum nearly 100 points higher than the Indian maximum. Its lowest point since is 154 in September 1922. Between January 1922 and to-day its maximum movements have been between 154 and 170, a range much the same as in India. In the United States of America the corresponding figures are:

	1913	... 100
	1918	... 194
Maximum	1920	... 226

Minimum since the beginning of 1922, 145. Range since that date and to-day between 145 and 167, a larger range than we have experienced in India. It will be seen that, though the dollar has never been dissociated from gold, prices in the United States rose higher than the maximum Indian figure and have since fluctuated more violently than Indian prices. It is always a little dangerous to take Index figures as an infallible guide. Yet, I think, these figures are striking and I ask whether it can be maintained in face of these figures for a moment that India has suffered unduly through the rupee being divorced from gold in the period since the Armistice.

At the end of 1919 an attempt was indeed made to tie the rupee to gold. The Babington-Smith Committee presented its report and an attempt was made to fix the ratio of 2s. gold. We can say now that that attempt was premature, that it was too soon to try and restore absolute fixity to the exchange value. I have said more than once both here and outside that the Government of India regard the 2s. ratio, which is on the Statute-book, as entirely fictitious. It has become entirely fictitious. There is no intention to conduct our exchange policy with a view to recovery of the 2s. ratio. If the 2s. ratio still remains on the Statute-book it remains there because the time has not yet come at which we can usefully fix some other ratio and be sure that we can maintain it. Mistakes were certainly made in 1920. It is easier now after the event to say so. But we shall be wise if we study the history of 1920 carefully and learn what lessons it teaches us. Perhaps the most obvious criticisms of that attempt are that the attempt was doomed to failure at a time when the £ sterling rising from \$8.20 to \$4: that it was impossible to stabilise the rupee by selling sterling in exchange for rupees if these rupees had to be used to finance a budget deficit and an Afghan war; and generally that it is not of much use selling sterling reserves in exchange for rupees unless the rupees can be used for the purpose of contracting the currency in India. I can understand those who point out that mistakes were made in 1920 and are anxious to learn lesson from them. I cannot understand those who with a self-complacency, which is somewhat staggering in face of the clear lessons of 1920, assert confidently that 1s. 4d. gold is the obvious and immediate remedy for our present difficulties. Since the failure of the attempt to stabilise the rupee at 2s., we have seen the rupee fall to a lowest point of 1s. 2½d. It has since risen again. It has challenged the old ratio of 1s. 4d. and has now passed it. For the last three months its value has been fairly constant at or around 1s. 6d.

sterling. In the meantime sterling has been rising in terms of gold and to-day there is but little difference between 1s. 6d. sterling and 1s. 6d. gold. The extent of the rise in the rupee for the last months can best be observed by taking the quotation of the dollar, because that shows the rise not only in terms of sterling but also in terms of gold. On January 1st, 1924, 327 rupees were required to make \$100. The figure of July 1st, 1924, was 326—very much the same. To-day the quotation is Rs. 281 for \$100. In view of the rapid rise which had been taking place during the late summer in the value of the rupee and of the further rise that was taking place in its gold value owing to the rise of sterling, the Government of India took steps during October to prevent any further rise for the time being in terms of sterling. But this means they have been able to purchase at or above 1s. 6d. all the remaining sterling which they required for expenditure outside India during the current financial year and also to make provision in advance for some of their requirements for 1925-26. They could, by refraining from purchasing sterling to so large an extent, no doubt have allowed the rupee to rise possibly even to 1s. 7d. or even 1s. 8d. but we took the view that it was not in India's interest that there should be so large and rapid a rise in so short a time. It was felt that neither the interests of those who are primarily concerned with the exchange value of the rupee nor the interests of those who are concerned with the internal purchasing power of the rupee would be served by such a movement especially as there was no certainty that the rapid rise might not be followed by an equally rapid fall. The very fact that the Government of India have been able to provide against their future requirements with exchange not rising much above 1s. 6d. must tend to diminish the probability of its falling far below 1s. 6d. later on. And thus our action may be said to be a step in the direction of adding some stability to the exchange value of the rupee. But more important even from the point of view of the interests of Indian business and commerce, the purchases of sterling made by the Government of India have enabled us to secure the important object of diminishing stringency in the money market. As the House is aware, there was considerable anxiety some six months ago lest the winter of 1924-25 should repeat in an aggravated form the stringency which had been experienced a year before, when even those who desired to borrow for what may be called purely legitimate trade purposes sometimes found difficulty in obtaining accommodation. I was asked a good many questions on the subject. The usual Indian question was put, "What is Simla going to do about it?" But I took the view that things would probably turn out better in 1924-25 because the market was better prepared and general conditions were such that the stringency, if any, which would be endured during this season, would probably not be so great as the stringency a year ago. Thanks to the policy of the Government of India, working in close co-operation with the Imperial Bank, we have been able to get through the first part of the current busy season with the bank rate not hitherto above 6 per cent., and with very much easier conditions than a year ago. Our purchases of sterling have enabled us to ease the market in two ways. First of all the rupees which we paid out for purchases of sterling were available for the banks and others for the purpose of re-lending. Those who required funds in India obtained funds from us. In addition, in order to put the Government of India in funds with which to purchase sterling and also to increase the amount of currency available for general trade purposes in India, the Government of India have to the extent of six crores of rupees already added to the amount of currency in India by transferring money

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from the Secretary of State's balances to the Paper Currency Reserve in London and issuing rupees against it. At the beginning of the busy season the total amount of securities, rupee and sterling, in the Paper Currency Reserve was something over 71 crores. With the addition of the six crores I have mentioned, the figure to-day is something over 77 crores. We have therefore a margin of rather less than 8 crores between the amount outstanding at present and the maximum limit of 85 crores. This amount, together with the balance, at present, I think, 6 crores, of the emergency currency which can be issued against self-liquidating *hundis*, constitutes the whole of our available margin for the purpose of providing additional currency if and when it is required during the remainder of the busy season to meet legitimate trade demands. It is possible this amount will suffice, but it is necessary that we should be prepared in advance, and the purpose of this Bill therefore is to enable us to issue an additional 15 crores to extend the margin from its present figure of something under 7 crores to something under 22 crores. The form of the securities which we can deposit against this additional currency under the existing legislation might be either rupee securities or sterling securities, but in practice since October 1920 we have issued no rupee securities as cover for paper currency. On the contrary 11 crores 61 lakhs of rupee securities previously held have been paid off and cancelled. All further additions have been in the shape of sterling securities, and this for the very good reason that rupee securities in the Paper Currency Reserve of the Government of India represent merely I.O.U.s. of the Government of India covering I.O.U.s. already issued. There is no harm in covering a certain amount of your paper currency with such rupee securities. But they must be issued in strictly limited amounts and they are not ideal cover for additional currency. In the elegant language of the City of London, trade bills of somewhat similar character are known, I believe, as *pig on pork*. I hope I need not stop to combat the entirely unfounded belief that keeping a part of our reserve in sterling is due to a consideration for the London money market. India, following the example of a very large number, probably the large majority of the countries of the world, keeps a portion of her currency reserve in sterling because what she requires is reserves which can be rapidly converted in an emergency into international exchange. Let me give an example of this which happens to have been within my own experience. Just before the end of July 1914 arrangements were made in the ordinary course by the India Office to renew several millions of Treasury Bills which they hold for reserves. Then the war broke out suddenly and it became extremely inconvenient, in view of the situation in India and the demand for currency in India, i.e., for cash and for sterling exchange, for the India Office to carry out its contract and pay for its bills. I was rung up on the telephone and within an hour arrangements were made to relieve the India Office of their liability, and the three or four millions of pounds were available in the form of cash for their proper use as a reserve. What would have been the position of India if that part of the reserve had been held in rupee securities? The intention of the Government of India therefore, is, subject always to unforeseen contingencies, that the additional powers now asked for to issue currency notes against securities shall not be used to issue notes against rupee obligations of the Government of India.

But what of the future? We are certainly not willing to contemplate an indefinite continuance of the present conditions under which the rupee has no stable value in terms of gold or other currencies. I have said that

throughout our policy has been to lay stress primarily on the prevention of undue fluctuations of internal prices in India if stability in the exchange value of the rupee seemed to us incompatible with stability in internal prices. Since 1920 this policy, as I have shown, achieved a very considerable amount of success. We have escaped a large part of the violent fluctuations of prices which other countries have suffered since 1919. From 1920 onwards world prices and sterling prices first of all fell rather violently and since then have risen again to some extent in an uncomfortable way. In the intervening period Indian prices have shown a tendency to be comparatively stable, and the fluctuations in prices abroad have been reflected in India in fluctuations in the value of the rupee in terms of sterling. I have no hesitation in claiming that this policy has been thoroughly justified by events hitherto; but it has not been without its critics both in Bombay and Calcutta. It is natural where so many people are directly engaged in the business of import and export that the continuance of fluctuations in the value of the rupee in terms of foreign currencies should be looked upon with growing exasperation, and that demands should be made for stabilisation, especially when there is stringency in the money market. But these demands have not, I think, always been very well considered demands. I do not think that if we had yielded to the demand for 1s. 4d. gold 18 months ago there would have been much appreciation anywhere of the kind of stability that we should have secured, and I am fairly confident that both Bombay and Calcutta would have been very much bothered by the accentuation which would have been involved of the stringency, already severe, in the money market last winter. Stabilisation in terms of gold would have involved at least as great, probably greater, fluctuations in terms of sterling, and in sterling I believe over 90 per cent. of all the exchange transactions of India are negotiated.

To-day there is undoubtedly a change in the situation. The recent improvement in world conditions has clearly brought the date at which we can in all probability look forward to a recovery of stability very much nearer. For the time being at least the acceptance of the recommendations of the Dawes Committee and the MacKenna Committee seems to have taken Europe over one of the worst fences which have to be taken by the runners in the Reparation Stakes. The pound sterling has practically recovered or very nearly recovered parity with gold, but it is still too early to speak with complete confidence as to what the immediate future may have in store. World prices are still fluctuating in relation to gold and in relation to each other. The disturbance in the relations between gold and commodity prices, between the price of one commodity and the price of another commodity, between wages and the cost of production and the value in exchange of goods, which the World War caused can hardly be got over completely in the short interval of only six years since the Armistice. The recovery of parity by the pound sterling, though very gratifying, is due in some part at any rate to an expansion of credit in the United States, and more or less speculative investments and purchases by the United States in European securities and currencies. Dollar prices have recently moved up somewhat steeply but there is reason to doubt whether as yet the rise has been sufficient to justify on the price level theory the parity of sterling with gold. It is still risky, as I said before, to tie the rupee to the chariot wheels of the Federal Reserve Board. That is what stabilisation in gold means. And it is equally risky to tie the rupee to the chariot wheels of the Bank of England—that is what stabilisation in sterling means—until we are sure that the recent recovery in sterling is one that is likely to be permanent or—another contingency—until we are sure

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that it will not be followed by a rapid rise in gold prices. It is surely better to retain our freedom of action for the present in case prices move up very fast. Our successful effort for the last few years to maintain rupee prices fairly stable and avoid the social and industrial unrest which a rapid rise in prices involves would be frustrated if we were to tie the rupee either to gold or to sterling at the wrong moment and subject India to a severe rise in internal prices involving new demands for increased wages and increased emoluments from those whose salaries are fixed in terms of rupees.

It is also too soon to say what will be the effect of the cheapening of the rupee price of gold which has followed on the rise in the gold value of the rupee. The total imports of gold into India for the last four months amounted to the phenomenal figure of over 24 crores. Over 24 crores of gold in four months! No one has the right to prevent India from importing as much gold as India desires; and I recognise that some part of the gold is imported in order to be held as a reserve against bad times—a useful reserve—though perhaps not the most suitable or desirable form in which to keep a reserve, yet a natural form while the banking habit and banking facilities are as restricted as they are at present. But if we wish to import gold in large quantities we have to pay for it in commodities and I for one cannot but regret that India chooses to take gold and lock it up in an unfruitful form in return for so large a proportion of her exports. She would surely be richer if she took payment in some more useful form than gold or if she turned the gold into deposits at an Indian bank which would be just as useful as a reserve for the individual's needs while they would be available as capital for the development of India's economic resources and India's industries and communications. The net figure for imports of gold during the last three calendar years was roughly 100 crores. If this sum, which represents power to command wealth, instead of being kept simply as gold for the enjoyment which the possession of gold affords, had been invested in Indian commercial and industrial undertakings, India would have been poorer by a hundred crores of gold but she would have been richer by a hundred crores worth of capital usefully employed; and even at the low figure of 6 per cent. the people of India would be earning 6 crores a year as the income on that capital. By way of comparison with this figure of India's annual import, averaging over 33½ crores,—and adding 3 crores of gold produced in India, you get a total consumption of gold in India of 36 crores a year—well over a rupee for every man, woman and child of the population,—I tried to find figures for corresponding absorption of gold elsewhere. The best figure I could get for the United States, though I think it relates to the pre-war period, showed an average annual absorption of gold for other than currency purposes of about 20 cents—which is about 9 annas at the present rate of exchange—per head. The United States, the richest country in the world, therefore requires about half of what India is taking. For England I was able to obtain no exact figures but it is well known that since the War there has been a net export of gold from England to other countries in every year since 1914. This that I have said about gold is, however, by the way. The social and religious habits of the country and the remembrance of many centuries of uncertainty of life and property which preceded the establishment of British rule can hardly be expected to yield in a day or even in a generation or even in three generations, to the teaching of the latest economic thought; so further experience is needed, as I have said, before we can arrive at a final conclusion in regard to the exchange value of the rupee. There is no ideal ratio. The choice of a stable ratio depends entirely on what ratio is in fact easily attainable and

easily maintainable. The ratio of 1s. 4d. worked well enough in the years

1 p.m. before the war, but it has less than 20 years, less than two decades, to its credit, and there is no reason to regard it as any more natural a ratio than, say, 1s. 6d. or any other figure. If any ratio is historic, it is perhaps the ratio of 2s. But as I have said that ratio is not at present in our thoughts. The final decision must be a matter for careful examination on no *a priori* grounds, but on the grounds of convenience and experience of what is possible. When the time comes, it will no doubt be desirable to appoint an authoritative committee, that is as soon as world economic factors appear sufficiently stable to justify the formulation of a new policy. The present intention of Government is, as announced two days ago by His Excellency, to appoint such a committee in due course, probably before the end of the present calendar year; but the exact date must be subject to factors not yet fully discernible. The time when a decision can be taken is obviously much nearer than it was six months ago. There are some, I know, who would like to see the committee appointed at once and who are impatient to see it get to work very soon; but after very careful consideration it has been decided that the time has not yet come at which a committee might usefully be assembled, and it is undesirable that we should attempt to prophesy too precisely at what moment that time will arrive. There will be many cognate questions to be dealt with by the committee besides the question of the ratio. We shall have the opportunity of considering what improvements can be made on the gold exchange standard system as worked up to 1914. The war and post-war period have taught all of us much that we did not know before about currency and exchange; and when the committee is appointed the Government of India will certainly not lose sight of the obvious desirability that it should be fully representative of Indian opinion. But it must also take into account international factors, which those who have followed my speech will realise to be of essential importance. The decisions reached must be reached on a consideration of India's interests and India's interests alone. The interests of no other country come into that question; it will be the interests of India alone which will determine the action of the Government of India; but our policy cannot be settled entirely by a consideration of internal conditions in India, and it will probably be desirable that some part of the inquiry should take place outside of India as well as within India.

In view of what I have said I hope that perhaps some Honourable Members who have motions down for a committee on currency and who have Bills which they propose to introduce to re-establish a 1s. 4d. ratio, will be willing to leave them aside till the time comes for a permanent settlement of the question. The time for further advance will come in due course, I am not myself enamoured of a gold currency in actual circulation. That seems to me to involve an entirely needless and wasteful use of gold; but I do recognise the desirability of a nearer approach to the gold standard than was actually attained prior to 1914. But these and similar considerations obviously cannot be taken up before the rupee is ripe for stabilisation. It would no doubt have been preferable that no new legislation should have been introduced at this stage on the subject of currency until the committee can be appointed and present its report; but this little simple Bill of mine cannot wait. We cannot risk being in a position in which we cannot meet legitimate demands for currency.

I should like to say a word about our intentions in regard to the creation of additional currency. The creation of additional currency is always a

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matter which has to be dealt with circumspectly. Even under a system which works, as it is claimed, automatically, the authorities to whom the duty is entrusted watch with very jealous eyes any tendency to increase in the total circulating media and they take steps by their discount policy or other means to check any tendency to inflation with special reference to exchanges. It is necessary that the Government of India and the Imperial Bank should be equally cautious in the present transitional period. All suffer from inflation when it establishes itself; but there is a natural optimism in business circles in all countries which dislikes any check put upon movements which appear to promise increased business and increased profit. As I have heard it said the other day, everybody likes more money. In the first stage of expansion it is usually only in the teeth of opposition that the authorities can take the necessary steps to prevent a legitimate expansion converting itself into an incipient inflationary movement. With the experience of the last ten years behind them, the Government of India can, I think, be trusted not to misuse their powers in the direction of undue facility; and meanwhile the position of our currency is a very satisfactory one.

We have no floating debt properly so-called; it has all been paid off. We have over 73 crores of silver rupees in the Reserve and in addition we have 22½ crores of gold, which, being valued at 2s. to the rupee, is really worth considerably more than its book value if it came to be used for the purpose for which it is kept of securing the note issue. We have a total circulation of 182 crores and we have metallic cover to the extent of 103 crores nominally, but really more than 110 crores, allowing for the undervaluation of the gold. In addition the reserve in sterling amounts to 20 crores, again undervalued owing to the use of the 2s. ratio; and all this can be very rapidly converted into international currency and may be regarded as all but the equivalent of gold. The only merely fiduciary portion of the reserve is that which consists of Government of India securities, namely 57 crores in all, a modest and not unreasonable fraction. The maximum fiduciary issue allowed under the provisions of the Bill is 100 crores leaving out of account the special 12 crores of emergency currency against self-liquidating *hundis*; so there is not the slightest fear in present conditions that our reserve will be unliquid or that our metallic proportion will fall unduly low, even if for a time we found it necessary to use the full powers for which we ask in this Bill.

I know that I have the support of the whole of the business community and the whole of the business and commercial opinion in India in asking for this Bill and, in order that we may be in a position to meet any emergency the moment it arises, I recommend it to the House and ask them to pass it quickly.

Mr. President: Motion moved:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Paper Currency Act, 1923, be taken into consideration."

I understand there is a general desire in certain portions of the House to continue this debate and I propose therefore now to adjourn till a Quarter Past Two of the Clock.

The Assembly then adjourned for Lunch till a Quarter Past Two of the Clock.

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at a Quarter Past Two of the Clock, Mr. President in the Chair.

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas (Indian Merchants' Chamber: Indian Commerce): Sir, it is in the fitness of things that the first official day at the session this time should begin with a debate on the much vexed question of currency and exchange. The Honourable the Finance Member began by saying that his Bill was a very short one and so simple that on the agenda he has had it put down that the Bill is to be taken into consideration and even passed to-day. If the mere length or shortness of a Bill, Sir, were to be the criterion of the importance or otherwise of it, I really wonder if the Honourable the Finance Member would agree that one small dot more or less in calculations and in figures would also matter equally little. But he himself has, in spite of pointing to the shortness of his Bill, given the Assembly a long and learned speech which for its length and also for the various topics touched upon by him can hardly be beaten by any Member in this House.

The Honourable the Finance Member, Sir, warned the Assembly that there are many who claim to know and there are very few actually who do know anything that is worth knowing about exchange and currency. I do not think there is anybody, Sir, within the four corners of this House who has the cheek to compare himself with the great knowledge which Sir Basil Blackett commands not only regarding Indian finance and currency but the authority that he commands in the international banking and financial world. If, therefore, I had to speak, Sir, on the question of anything further than the currency and exchange of India, I should certainly have been the first to keep quiet. If, further, Sir Basil Blackett had asked me to explain why the German mark, which has multiplied by 9 noughts or 6 noughts I do not know what he said—should not be compared with the Indian currency, I would like to put him the question whether Sir Basil Blackett thinks that he is presiding over a department of currency which can be compared to-day with the German mark. If Sir Basil's reply is "yes", I am afraid his reputation as an international banker is in great peril. The reply of Sir Basil even can be nothing other than a great and big loud "no". When, therefore, he asked the House to judge why the German mark, which had depreciated several times and perhaps thousands of times, should not be compared with Indian currency, I thought that the reply might have been given by himself. Though I do not claim either to be an expert or to know much about exchange and currency, representing as I do a commercial community and a commercial electorate in this House, I feel it my duty to use a little of the common sense with which I may be blessed to look on the problem, if not from the point of view of an expert or a savant, at least from the point of view of plain ordinary common sense. Sir Basil said that he was surprised at the staggering boldness of some who recommended a return to 1s. 4d. gold. As the House knows, I happen to be the unfortunate person who has, according to Sir Basil, that staggering boldness. But, Sir, if a suggestion that the Government of India might consider the advisability of return to 1s. 4d. gold can be qualified as staggering boldness, may I ask what adjectives one can aptly use for the policy which the Government of India have followed since 1919-20 in handling India's currency and exchange questions. I know that the Honourable the Finance Member himself was not in India nor was he at the helm of affairs in the currency department of the Government of India then. I also know that he does not like many

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references to that very dismal chapter of the currency policy of the Government of India. I do not propose, Sir, therefore, to dilate on it, but, if any efforts of a non-official to suggest to the Government of India what the Indian commercial community and in some cases I may even say the Europeans, though may be, not collectively, I certainly know individually, think is the right step now, I should have expected from a great expert like Sir Basil Blackett to treat them with a little more consideration than calling it staggering boldness.

Sir Basil, Sir, has covered a very wide field in the course of his very learned speech. For instance, he referred to the location of currency reserves and the securities in which currency reserves may be held. I do not propose to follow him fully there but I feel that I cannot allow those remarks of Sir Basil's to pass unnoticed even at this stage when we are discussing something else without pointing out to Sir Basil that not only in this House but before now in the late Imperial Legislative Council there have been many very interesting debates in which his predecessors have taken very prominent part and wherein the opinions of the non-official community both European and Indian also are unmistakeably on record. But, Sir, there is one point which I must dilate upon for a few minutes. Sir Basil Blackett pointed out that, if all the securities in the Paper Currency Reserve were to be held in India, what would have happened when the war broke out? May I ask Sir Basil if all the countries in the world that were affected by the war had a Secretary of State in London who looked after their cash reserves and their securities and, if not, if in the world there are countries who keep their reserves in their own countries and manage the same themselves without the help of a Secretary of State in London, whether their currency policies were much worse managed and looked after when the war broke out than those of the Government of India? But, Sir, this is perhaps strictly beside the point. I only thought that I might tell Sir Basil what would strike an ordinary person with a little common sense, that the argument which he used in this connection cannot be conclusive.

Sir, the Bill before the House is a very short one. I think in proportion to the size of the Bill the notice given to us of the Bill has been extraordinarily short. The Bill was barely published late last week and I do not know, Sir, whether you were approached with the request to suspend the Standing Orders in order that the Bill may be taken into consideration to-day. But, whether you have given that permission or whether that permission was necessary or not, I wish to suggest to the Honourable the Finance Member that the time that he has given for carrying the Bill through is much too short and the importance of the Bill, although in his opinion it may be very very little, in the opinion of some of us in this House the importance is very great and of far-reaching results. When the Honourable the Finance Member recollects that the Government of India would not give even a special day for discussion of what at any rate a very important section of the Indian public clamoured for in and since last September, I think he will concede that at least more time is due to the Members of this House before they can take this Bill into consideration. I, Sir, therefore rise in the first instance to move that consideration of the motion be adjourned. I feel that those few words which the Honourable the Finance Member wants to be altered in the Act raise the whole question of a principle, and, as, once the Bill is taken into consideration and even though the first motion on the

amendment paper of my Honourable friend from Bombay, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, namely, for the reference of the Bill to a Select Committee, may be accepted by this House, I think it may be ruled by you that, the principle having been accepted, the House cannot throw out the Bill later if they want to.

The Bill, Sir, as it is put before this House, can be said to be nothing less nor more than a last effort to patch up the garment of the Indian Currency Department. It is a big patch that the Honourable the Finance Member wants to be allowed to put in that garment and I therefore submit that in placing this Bill before this House the Finance Member is only trying to treat the symptoms of the wrong policy of the Government of India, since 1920, and overlooks the root cause of it. I make no apology, Sir, to this House for referring, if I may have to hereafter, to my Bills which suggest that the exchange ratio on the Statute-book may be put back to 1*sh.* 4*d.* gold. I would not have referred to it had not my Honourable friend in making his motion criticised it in the way in which he did. But when Government choose to avoid any discussion of this rather important subject of the rates on the Statute-book, it is well that we might have a free, full and very outspoken discussion on the whole question of currency and exchange on this very motion of the Honourable the Finance Member.

Sir, the insufficiency of adequate currency for India has before now been patently and very prominently brought to the notice of the Government of India by both sections of Indian trade and industry—I mean the Indian commercial community and also the British commercial community. Sir Edward Law, Finance Member in 1904, said that Government were responsible for the maintenance of a proper supply of currency which he fully admitted. I feel that all other resources of the Government of India for the supply of currency except the most natural one, namely, the automatic method of allowing gold to be tendered here to the currency office and issuing paper against it, having failed, the Honourable the Finance Member had no option but to come to the Assembly in order to ask that this particular section which it is now proposed to amend should be so amended that the Finance Member can draw 15 crores more than he can do at present. I wish to point out to this House in the course of my remarks that the unnatural, and what the Honourable the Finance Member himself admitted to be, the ineffective ratio that stands at present on the Statute-book practically covers up Rs. 30 crores and if only the Government of India will take action in the right direction, there should be no necessity to increase this figure from 85 crores to 100 crores. But, Sir, in that connection we are told that we must have patience. We are told that we must not rush to conclusions. After the Armistice the Government of India were first in the field in the appointment of a Committee in May, 1919, now known as the Babington-Smith Committee, to go into the question of currency and exchange. I am not aware of any other country which took the field so early to get its currency and exchange set right. That Committee, appointed in May, 1919, took evidence in London. It did not come out to India at all. It had only one Indian Member on it and issued a majority report within about six months of its appointment. The report, I understand, is dated some time in December, 1919. The majority report was accepted by Government. The minority report of the only Indian Member who knew more about the currency and exchange of India than perhaps several on the Committee was absolutely rejected. Forces of nature and the foresight which must come with the closest knowledge of the requirements of India—asserted themselves with the result that it is admitted

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to-day that Sir Dadiba Dalal was the only one on the Committee who could see straight and correctly ahead and that the other Members of the Committee made, to say the least of it, errors of judgment. But, Sir, this rash and wrong step on the part of the Government of India so early as 1919 is now having its reaction. To-day, when many of the other countries of the world have returned to somewhere near their pre-war exchange points, we are told that we must wait. I was told so in September last. I was told that the pound sterling is still much below the pre-war parity. It may be a strange coincidence that just on this very day, when the Honourable the Finance Member asks to be allowed to put a patch on the garment which covers his Currency Department, the parity between the pound sterling and the dollar has returned, for I see from a cutting from a local paper that from to-day the post offices in America will return to the pre-war parity and that the rate of conversion of postal money orders payable in Great Britain, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa from America will be 4·8 dollars per pound.

Still, Sir, the Honourable the Finance Member tells us that the man who suggests to-day that 1*sh.* 4*d.* gold should be reverted to shows staggering boldness.

The main point of the present Bill, as stated in the Statement of Objects and Reasons, is that "the Government of India, in the interests of trade, desire to raise the permissible limit of investment so that additional currency can be provided, if necessary, in order to prevent excessive monetary stringency." In a certain correspondence which the Government of India had with an Association representing commercial interests, the Association pointed out to the Government of India that the Bank of England, whenever they raise their bank rates, have as their motive either of the following, namely (1) either to restrict credit, or (2) to attract gold from abroad, which can be converted into sovereigns at the mint price of gold. The Honourable the Finance Member, who sent a detailed reply to that letter, took exception to this but admitted that the second, namely, the attraction of gold from abroad, was the result of the successful attainment of the purposes for which the bank rate was raised by the Bank of England. Here, in India, with the 2*sh.* rate on the Statute-book, we are in an artificial and unnatural position, in which the Government of India still persist that although so much gold is being imported, it is absolutely impossible to use that gold for purposes of tender at currency offices so that your paper currency may have what is looked upon everywhere as the most natural and the most desirable form of backing, namely, the precious metals. The rupee, Sir, still stands completely isolated. It is linked neither to gold nor to silver. India can claim neither a gold rupee nor a gold standard. In fact, the present state in India is completely undefinable. This is the condition in which we have been almost immediately after the Government of India accepted the Babington-Smith report, to say nothing of that disaster to which I just referred at the start; and I wish, when I make these remarks, Sir, to express what I consider to be the great appreciation of the commercial community in India, both European and Indian, of the very careful manner in which Sir Basil Blackett has managed the currency department since he took charge of it. Whilst I admit that he has not been responsible for the unparalleled disaster which befell India as a result of the reverse councils, he was in an unenviable position when he entered office and he has made the best of it under the circumstances under which he had to work.

There are two sections of the commercial community in India which have been pointing out the insufficiency of currency in India for some time now. The body which I have the honour to represent in this House was perhaps the first in the field; the other body, namely, the European commercial community, hesitated to follow us. But I see that last September even their patience was at an end and they had to write a weighty and important letter to the Government of India urging them, perhaps by some other method, perhaps in milder words, to the same goal which my Chamber have been pressing them to follow, namely, to ensure that there is more currency available. The difference between the Associated Chambers and my Chamber is this. My Chamber suggested that you must revert to the natural process which can allow the tender of gold to the Currency Officer. The other body recommended in that connection what I think has very aptly been called masterly inactivity. By the courtesy of the Honourable the Finance Member, I put to him a few questions by private notice at the Simla session last September. I wish to refer to one of those and to his reply as it has some bearing on what he said in the course of his speech to-day.

My question was :

"Will Government be pleased to state when they expect :

- (a) to take steps themselves to change the ratio in the Statute, or
- (b) to give necessary facility for, and support to, a non-official Member suggesting a change from the two-shilling ratio?"

The Honourable Member replied :

"As regards (a) the Government, as has been stated more than once, regard the 2 shilling ratio as inoperative but harmless. They desire that in due course an effective ratio should be substituted for the 2 shilling ratio, but it is necessary first of all to be sure that whatever new ratio is decided upon can be made fully effective as well as to determine what the new ratio ought to be.

(b) The Government do not think that it will be in the interests of India to fix a new gold ratio for the rupee forthwith, at a time when countries like Holland, Switzerland and South Africa regard a return to the gold standard in their own case as a somewhat rash experiment, until they are more certain of what will happen to sterling."

Regarding the Honourable Member's reply to part (a) of my question he said that he thought that the ratio was harmless. May I ask that if that ratio drives him to ask for more powers for investment under the section that now requires to be amended, he still continues to think that the ratio is harmless? Regarding (b), Sir, has not South Africa now definitely made a declaration, and regarding the pound sterling, about which he said "until they are more certain of what will happen to sterling", is not that very nearly now known and does he still think that it would be a rash experiment and would he still recommend this House to go on devising these patches until the time when the Government of India are convinced themselves or possibly convince the India Office, that they cannot carry on any more with this unnatural ratio on the Statute-book? Meantime, Sir, until the Government of India, absolutely, of course with the concurrence of the India Office, undertake this inquiry and make up their minds that it is not going to be rash to change the ratio from the artificial, unnatural ratio of 2 shillings, what happens, Sir? The gold that we have there continues to be valued at the rate of Rs. 10 per sovereign and with this valuation, Sir, there are 80

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crores of rupees very nearly hidden back in the calculation which is printed and is available to the public from week to week. I have, Sir, in my hands a copy of the Abstract of the Accounts of the Currency Department as on 7th January 1925. The Honourable the Finance Member read out the figures contained in it in order to show how strong was the position of the Indian Currency Department. I suppose he then forgot that he had tried to compare this for some purpose or other with the German mark, but that is neither here nor there. Now, Sir, against a note circulation of 181 crores, we have in silver, gold coins bullion under coinage 102 crores, which is more than half. We have besides that securities. I will refer to the securities a minute later. But it has to be noted that the gold coin and bullion which is put down as worth 22 crores 31 lakhs and odd has got hidden in it value 50 per cent. of it, because all that gold has been valued at Rs. 10 instead of Rs. 15 to the sovereign, which indeed is approximately the value of that gold to-day either in England or here. There you have, Sir, 11 crores more which would be available for the Honourable the Finance Member if he wanted to use more paper currency and which he cannot do for the simplest of all reasons that he has got the ineffective—I wonder if he will still say harmless—ratio on the Statute-book. When you come to securities in England the securities held are for Rs. 19 crores 99 lakhs and 78,000. There again you have 50 per cent. of it, because the securities are all valued at the fictitious rate of Rs. 10 to the pound sterling, a rate which is good enough only for the Government of India to receive gold. If they paid out gold at the rate of Rs. 10, one could understand. But it is the rate only to receive, which practically means that gold is cut out for the purposes of tender to the currency office. I submit, Sir, that the ineffective rate on the Statute-book which the Government of India still persist in maintaining under the guise of not allowing anybody to make a rash experiment is not as harmless as it may look now that as it has put the Honourable Member to the necessity of moving the Legislature to amend the section which is under the consideration of the House. The root cause, therefore, Sir, to my mind of this stringency is mainly that the Government of India persist in keeping on that ineffective ratio on the Statute-book of 2 shillings to the rupee and will not consider the advisability of returning to that other ratio of 1s. 4d., which is the ratio which India did very well with as far as circumstances went until that ratio was disturbed.

The Honourable the Finance Member reminds us of the declarations made by His Excellency the Viceroy in this Chamber two days back that an authoritative Committee would be appointed in due course in order to go into this question. If I mistake not—I am speaking from memory because I have not a copy of the speech—if I mistake not, His Excellency the Viceroy said that the period for it may be up to a year. I do not know how many months this authoritative Committee may take in order to submit a report, nor am I aware of the period that the Government of India may take to come to a decision after the report is submitted. But, if, until all this somewhat tiring process is gone through, it is intended that this ineffective ratio on the Statute-book is to continue, I really wonder whether the Honourable the Finance Member thinks that even this 15 crores will go far enough. And if it does not go far enough perhaps he would come back to this House asking for a further increase. I therefore, Sir, come to the conclusion, which I submit to this House for its serious consideration, that in submitting this Bill to the Assembly the Finance Department are only deal-

ing with the symptoms and not with the root cause of the stringency in the money market which is the main reason put forward by the Honourable Member in his Statement of Objects and Reasons as leading to this Amendment Bill.

There are, Sir, one or two other points which I would like to mention to this House. The securities included or allowed under section 19 of the Paper Currency Act are of two natures—securities in England and securities in India and also what are called created securities or *ad hoc* securities. At present the Government of India have very nearly 50 crore rupees worth of securities which are created and *ad hoc* securities. They are nothing short of 1. O. U.'s of the Government of India to the Currency Department promising to pay the Currency Department 50 crores. Those Members of this House who remember the Paper Currency Act as it exists at present will see that section 19 has the heading "temporary provisions", the idea being that on an appointed day the Governor General in Council may notify that that section shall cease to operate and section 18, which has been put down there, I understand, as being the ideal up to which the Government of

India would work up, would come into operation. Now, section 8 P.M. 19 cannot cease to operate and section 18 cannot come into operation until these 50 crore rupees worth of 1. O. U.'s, which were issued during the war period, are paid back. If, therefore, the Assembly do not wish the Government of India to issue any more of these created or *ad hoc* securities, I would very seriously suggest that the Bill should certainly have a further addition, if the Assembly choose to pass it after a full consideration, to the effect that no more securities than 50 crores shall be *ad hoc* securities under the paper currency reserve. I know it to be a fact that these *ad hoc* securities do not add to the credit of the Currency Department of the Government of India either here or abroad and I have reason to know that the commercial community in India are not very fond of these *ad hoc* securities being put in and retained there as may suit the Government of India. I therefore feel that the Assembly would do well to insist that no more *ad hoc* securities should be allowed in the Paper Currency Reserve without further sanction of the Assembly itself. It would take a long time before these 50 crores *ad hoc* securities are paid back but it would take longer still if they were added to by another 20 or 30 crores of rupees for one reason or another. If we are anxious to retain a Currency Department which will command the best of credit which India needs, then, I think, this safeguard should be insisted upon by the Assembly when this further concession is made to the Currency Department.

The Honourable the Finance Member mentioned a few reasons which appeal to him as to why exchange should be higher than 1s. 4d. I do not propose to weary this House at this time with any lengthy remarks on that subject. I feel that if the Honourable the Finance Member is so sure of his grounds and thinks that they will also appeal to this Assembly, then let him give an official day for my Bills. Let him put his own case before this House and allow me also to do the same and I am quite prepared to take the verdict of the House on that question. If he makes out a strong case, which no doubt he will be able to do because of his long and varied experience, then I shall certainly confess that the Assembly is not with me but that it is with him. Until then I do not think any useful purpose will be served by mixing up the issues in this debate which are, I think, so important that they should be kept clear by themselves.

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Towards the end of his remarks the Honourable the Finance Member threw out a hint that the Movers of one or two motions which happen to be on the paper of the Assembly regarding the appointment of a Committee and I, who have given notice of my two Bills, may rest satisfied with the announcement made by His Excellency the Viceroy and should think it fit not to press them even when the ballot box is more kind to me than it has been till now. As the Honourable Member himself has raised this question, I think I might say that, unless he tells me that he is prepared to give me a Government day for the discussion of my Bills and that he is prepared to take the verdict of the Assembly on them, if the Government of India are really in earnest to put the currency question of India on a sound basis, they might appoint a Committee within the next two or three months. The Committee might take up to six months to submit their report. The whole thing will then come up for discussion before this Assembly this month one year hence at the very latest. That is the longest period for which the Government of India would be justified in asking us to wait. If, on the other hand, as is usual with the Government when any assurance is asked for, we are only to get the ordinary assurance of "as early as possible" and "as soon as convenient", then I am quite prepared to take my chance with the ballot box and then appeal to the Assembly to hear the Honourable the Finance Member and myself and give their verdict as it may suit them. In the meantime, as far as the importance of the Amendment Bill which is before the House is concerned, I feel, Sir, that the policy of the Government of India has come to an end. We have a somewhat difficult problem facing us. On the one hand, there is this acknowledged stringency of the money market which everybody who understands and knows the situation would like to see avoided. Here, the Government have put before the House one method, perhaps the last method, which is now open to them, by which they can under certain circumstances avoid a great or excessive stringency of the money market. On the other hand, it must be said and I would repeat it that for this stringency the Government of India and their policy are mainly responsible to the House and to the country. Despite all the wise counsel and advice of caution which have been given to us, the Government of India might themselves now choose to follow in the wake of other countries in fixing our rates in the Statute, a question which they were rash enough to-day to handle immediately after the Armistice.

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman (Home Member): Sir, I have not the slightest wish to stray into the very difficult subjects which have been so very ably handled by the Honourable the Finance Member and my Honourable friend, Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas. It is a subject on which I might amuse, but on which I should certainly not enlighten the House. The sole subject to which I wish to refer is this question of adjournment. I understand from my Honourable friend opposite (Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas), that he complains that this Bill has been brought before the House without due notice. Well, Sir, that is a charge that I, as long as I am Leader of this House, would never willingly incur. It does occur to me, having listened to the able and lengthy speech from my Honourable friend opposite, to ask, if this is a speech that he had made without due notice, what should we have had if he had had due notice? Still, Sir, on the question of short notice of Bills I hold very strong views, and if the House really are of opinion that they have not really had sufficient time to consider the provisions of this Bill, I think my Honourable

friend will be willing to consent to the Bill being adjourned for the present and taken up some date next week, but that is subject to a condition. The Bill as I see it, not as I say being fully cognisant of this extremely difficult subject, but from the lawyer's point of view, is a comparatively simple one. It consists of one clause and it alters three words. Well, Sir, references to Select Committees are intended to deal with matters of detail. If the House passes a reference to Select Committee, it affirms the principle of the Bill, and I take it that in a Bill of this kind the only question would be the particular figure you wish to substitute or the rejection of the Bill as a whole. Therefore I submit to the House that there is nothing in this Bill which could possibly justify a reference to Select Committee. You may want more time to make up your minds whether to reject the Bill, or whether to move an amendment to the Bill. That seems to me quite reasonable, and if the House will agree that, when this Bill comes up for consideration next week, there shall be no motion for a reference to Select Committee, and the House will deal with the Bill on the floor of this House and will either reject it or amend it, or pass it, then I am prepared, and I think my Honourable friend is prepared, to agree to such a proposal.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta (Bombay Northern Division : Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I am sorry the Honourable the Home Member has made a stipulation on this point, and on that basis only he agrees to have the adjournment of this motion. I must at once say that I cannot vote on this proposition subject to that stipulation. It must have been apparent to the House that, although between the existing Act and the proposed Bill there is a difference of one figure only, i.e., that of a change from "85" crores to "100" crores, in order to justify that change, the Honourable the Finance Member has had to use 6,000 words. He spoke for a full hour and at least 100 words a minute, which makes 6,000 words to which a further 6,000 words have been returned by my Honourable friend Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas; from the speeches that both these gentlemen have made, it must be clear that the matter is neither so easy nor so innocent as it looks. Sir, Finance Members are apt to think that questions of finance and exchange are their close preserve, and on this matter the speech of the Honourable Sir Basil Blackett cannot be said to have erred on the side of modesty. But after all every proposal, however ably sponsored, has to be justified in the interests of the people of this country and we, the representatives of the people, ignorant though we are, ill-informed though we may be, have a right to understand each proposal and to be satisfied about its usefulness before we give our consent to it. I say this matter is not merely a question of a change from "85" to "100" crores; the manner in which that addition will be made, the conditions under which that addition may be withdrawn are also matters of importance. The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett has admitted that the proposed addition is for two purposes, one of a permanent nature to meet the growing demands of trade, and the other to meet the seasonal demand for currency. During the last four years Government have suspended the automatic expansion of currency, have made additions to it not as required by trade and industry but according to their own discretion. And to-day Government, after four years, have to a certain extent admitted that the addition to the currency has not been equal to the demand for it; and by the Bill before the House they are going to remedy the complaint. The Bengal Chamber of Commerce in the letter referred to by Sir Purshotamdas have

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made it quite clear that it is not the seasonal demand or the emergency currency to which they are referring, but that they want a permanent or quasi-permanent addition made to the currency. The resolution of the Associated Chambers of Commerce last month in Calcutta makes it absolutely clear that they want a permanent addition, not a mere seasonal addition when currency is required for the marketing of crops. We want to know quite clearly how far Government are agreed with that view or whether they want at their own sweet will and pleasure to withdraw wholly or partially the addition they might have made. Remember, Sir, this addition to the currency is to be made out of the balances of the Secretary of State for India; these balances are there for what are called "home charges." They are not intended to perform any currency function. Suppose the Secretary of State requires these moneys when the currency situation in this country is acute, and he is not going to wait until the currency situation becomes easier. If he needs 10 crores for his requirements, whatever may be the currency position in this country, he will withdraw it. Therefore we have to consider whether the right of the Secretary of State for India to withdraw the currency once added should or should not be hedged round with certain limitations so that he may not make it a mere question of his pleasure or of his own convenience. As I said before, the 15 crores are to be added only out of the remittances for "home" charges temporarily. They are temporary loans to the currency reserve which may be withdrawn when the Secretary of State wants them and we have to consider whether we will consent to give him an unlimited power to withdraw the whole of the 15 crores just at the moment when a currency crisis may be pending in this country. It is not a light matter, and it must be fully explored in the Select Committee. I cannot agree that a mere delay of eight days will make acceptable what is intrinsically wrong to-day; and if that is the only condition on which the Home Member will consent to postpone this motion I will have nothing to do with it. At the same time I may say that the reference to the Select Committee need not be for more than three days. I do not want to prolong this discussion. The matter can be fully discussed within three days and reported to the House. All we want is to examine it thoroughly; and, having made my position clear, I say again I cannot vote on this proposition if it is backed by this condition.

Mr. President: (After the Division was called) Before I put the question a second time the Honourable Member from Madras on my left (Mr. Shanmukham Chetty) has asked for an explanation of the situation in which the Assembly now finds itself. If the motion for adjournment is carried, the debate will be resumed on a subsequent date, on which date the Honourable Member from Bombay will have a full opportunity to move his original motion. And if I may add a further explanation, the announcement made by Government was simply a warning to him that he may expect opposition from the Government to the motion to refer to Select Committee. Some opportunity to consider the matter behind the scenes seems to be not inadvisable.

The Debate was adjourned.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday, the 23rd January, 1925.