

27th January, 1925

THE  
**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES**  
**(Official Report)**

SECOND SESSION

OF THE

**SECOND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 1925**



SIMLA  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS  
1925

CONTENTS—*contd.*

|   | PAGES.  |
|---|---------|
| <b>Monday, 26th January, 1925—<i>contd.</i></b>   |         |
| Resolution <i>re</i> Grant of a Bounty to Steel Manufacturing Companies—Adopted ... ..                      | 235-49  |
| Demand for grant to defray the Bounty to the Steel Industry—Adopted ... ..                                  | 250-52  |
| Nomination of Members to the Select Committee on the Court-fees (Amendment) Bill ... ..                     | 252-53  |
| The Indian Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill—Passed  | 253     |
| <b>Tuesday, 27th January, 1925—</b>   |         |
| Questions and Answers ... ..  | 255-99  |
| Committee on Public Petitions ... ..  | 299     |
| Resolution <i>re</i> Inquiry into the Question of Currency and Exchange—Adopted ... ..                      | 299-318 |
| Resolution <i>re</i> Grievances of the Subordinate Employees of the Indian Railways—Debate adjourned ... .. | 317-44  |
| <b>Wednesday, 28th January, 1925—</b>   |         |
| Questions and Answers ... ..  | 345-94  |
| Message from the Council of State ... ..  | 395     |
| Election of the Members of the Central Advisory Council for Railways ... ..                                 | 395     |
| Resolution <i>re</i> the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Ordinance—Debate adjourned ... ..                    | 395-440 |
| Election of Members to the Central Advisory Council for Railways ... ..                                     | 440     |
| <b>Friday, 30th January, 1925—</b>  |         |
| Questions and Answers ... ..  | 441-80  |
| Statement of Business ... ..  | 480-84  |
| The Indian Penal Code (Amendment) Bill (Age of Consent)—Re-committed to Select Committee ... ..             | 484-86  |
| The Hindu Religious and Charitable Trusts Bill—Referred to Select Committee ... ..                          | 486-508 |
| The Weekly Payments Bill—Circulated for opinions ... ..   | 509-11  |
| The Indian Railways (Amendment) Bill—Passed ... ..  | 512-25  |
| The Maternity Benefit Bill—Debate on the motion to refer to Select Committee adjourned ... ..               | 526     |
| <b>Monday, 2nd February, 1925—</b>  |         |
| Questions and Answers ... ..  | 527-78  |
| Unstarred Questions and Answers ... ..  | 576-88  |
| Election of the Public Accounts Committee ... ..  | 589     |
| Election of the Standing Finance Committee ... ..   | 589     |
| Presentation of the Report of the Select Committee on the Indian Soldiers (Litigation) Bill ... ..          | 589     |
| The Indian Paper Currency (Amendment) Bill—Passed ... ..  | 589-611 |
| The Cotton Ginning and Pressing Factories Bill—Referred to Select Committee ... ..                          | 611-27  |
| The Workmen's Breach of Contract (Repealing) Bill—Passed ... ..   | 627-29  |
| The Legislative Assembly (President's Salary) Bill—Introduced ... ..  | 629     |
| The Indian Income-tax (Amendment) Bill—Introduced ... ..  | 629-30  |

CONTENTS—*contd.*

|  | PAGES.    |
|--|-----------|
| <b>Friday, 20th February, 1925—<i>contd.</i></b>   |           |
| Resolution <i>re</i> Appointment of two Members of the Assembly to the Governing Body of the Lady Hardinge Medical College, Delhi—Not moved ... .. | 1307      |
| The Obscene Publications Bill—Passed, as amended ... ..  | 1307-21   |
| <b>Monday, 23rd February, 1925—</b>  |           |
| Questions and Answers ... ..   | 1323-31   |
| Unstarred Questions and Answers ... ..   | 1331-35   |
| Statements laid on the Table ... ..  | 1335-44   |
| Bills passed by the Council of State laid on the Table ... ..  | 1344      |
| Message from the Council of State ... ..   | 1344      |
| The Cotton Ginning and Pressing Factories Bill—Report of the Select Committee presented ... ..   | 1344      |
| The Indian Penal Code (Amendment) Bill (Age of Consent Bill)—Report of the Select Committee presented ... ..                                       | 1344      |
| Railway Budget—General Discussion ... ..   | 1345-1406 |
| <b>Tuesday, 24th February, 1925—</b>   |           |
| Election of Panels of Standing Committees ... ..   | 1407      |
| Questions and Answers ... ..   | 1407-21   |
| Ballot for Panels of Standing Committees ... ..  | 1414      |
| Public Accounts Committee—Final Report laid on the Table   | 1421-23   |
| The Prisons (Amendment) Bill—Passed ... ..   | 1423      |
| The Cantonments (Amendment) Bill—Passed ... ..   | 1424      |
| The Cantonments (House-Accommodation Amendment) Bill—Introduced ... ..   | 1424      |
| The Indian Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill—Considered ... ..  | 1424-52   |
| Resolution <i>re</i> Legislative Council for Ajmer-Merwara—Negatived ... ..  | 1452-79   |
| <b>Wednesday, 25th February, 1925—</b>   |           |
| Members Sworn ... ..   | 1481      |
| Questions and Answers ... ..   | 1481-82   |
| Railway Budget—  |           |
| List of Demands—   |           |
| Demand No. 1—Railway Board. (Motion for omission of Demand—Negatived) ... ..   | 1482-1545 |
| (i) Pay of Officers of the Railway Board ... ..  | 1515-33   |
| (ii) Appointment of an Indian on the Railway Board ... ..  | 1533-45   |
| <b>Thursday, 26th February, 1925—</b>  |           |
| Election of Panels of Standing Committees ... ..   | 1547-48   |
| Railway Budget—List of Demands— <i>contd.</i>  |           |
| Demand No. 1—Railway Board— <i>contd.</i> ... ..   | 1549-1611 |
| (iii) Appointment of a Rates Tribunal ... ..   | 1549-51   |
| (iv) Reduction of Third Class Railway Fares ... ..   | 1551-65   |
| (v) New Branch Line Policy ... ..  | 1565-86   |
| (vi) Reduction of Coal Freight ... ..  | 1566-97   |
| (vii) Attitude of the Railway Board with reference to the grievances of the general public ... ..  | 1598-1610 |

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, 27th January, 1925.

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

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

### LIMIT OF OVERDRAFTS ALLOWED BY THE IMPERIAL BANK OF INDIA WITHOUT SECURITY.

273. \***Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state what were the reasons that led to the enactment of the proviso to sub-clause (iv) to Part II of Schedule 1 to the Imperial Bank of India Act removing the maximum limit of Rs. 10,000 imposed by the Presidency Bank Amending Act 1 of 1907 on the amount of overdrafts that could be allowed by the Bank without security and permitting the Bank to allow such overdrafts to the extent that may be prescribed?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state whether any bye-laws have been made in this behalf prescribing the extent of such overdrafts and if so, whether they will lay the same on the table?

\* **The Honourable Sir Basil Blckett:** (a) The maximum limit of Rs. 10,000 was removed because it was found that the limitation interfered with legitimate business.

(b) A limit of Rs. 1 lakh has been prescribed in bye-law 4, which reads as follows:

"Accounts may be overdrawn to the extent of one lakh of rupees without security."

### SEPARATION OF RAILWAY FROM GENERAL FINANCE.

274. \***Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** Will the Government be pleased to state the actual steps that have so far been taken in the matter of carrying out the recommendations of the Assembly in connection with the separation of Railway from the General Finance?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** As the Honourable Member will see when the estimates are presented, the separation of Railway from General Finance is being carried out with effect from the current year in accordance with the terms of the Resolution passed by the Assembly. A Standing Finance Committee for Railways has been constituted with the composition recommended in the Resolution, and the composition proposed in the Resolution for a Central Advisory Council is also being adopted. The railway estimates are being laid before the Standing Finance Committee for Railways, and their form and details, and the number of demands for grants into which the

total votes shall be divided, are being discussed with the Committee. Arrangements have also been made to present the railway budget to the Assembly in advance of the general budget, and to allot separate days for its discussion.

**Mr. V. J. Patel:** What steps have Government taken to have the Government of India Act amended so as to enable the Government to present the Railway Budget in the September session?

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** We have placed that suggestion before Sir Alexander Muddiman's Committee.

SPECIAL DUTY OF MR. A. A. L. PARSONS IN CONNECTION WITH THE  
PRESENTATION OF THE RAILWAY BUDGET.

275. **\*Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** Will the Government be pleased to state the scope and extent of the special duty on which Mr. Parsons, Railway Accountant General, has been placed and the progress made therein?

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Mr. Parsons has been engaged to assist the Financial Commissioner in the revision of the arrangements for the presentation of the budget, of the form of accounts, the method of financial control and the institution of the depreciation fund and the revision of financial procedure generally consequent on the separation of the Railway from General Finance.

REVISED ESTIMATES OF RAILWAY EARNINGS AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE  
CURRENT YEAR.

276. **\*Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** Will the Government be pleased to make a statement as to what extent the anticipations made in the memoranda supplied to the Members of the Assembly during the debate on the Railway Finance Separation have been exceeded by the actual figures of railway earnings and expenditure received so far and as to the anticipations of railway revenue and profits expected in the remaining months of the budget year?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** The revised estimates of railway earnings and expenditure for the current year are being framed and will be placed before the House in due course.

ACCELERATION OF RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION.

277. **\*Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state whether any, and if so, what steps have been taken to accelerate the pace of railway construction since the last session of the Assembly and to lay on the table of the House a statement of the several projects worked to accelerate or any instruction to the Railway Administrations that has been issued by the Railway Board in this behalf?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state to what extent this acceleration has increased the amount of stores purchases and indents placed in England or to call for a statement from the Railway Administration concerned in this matter?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** (a) The necessity of expediting the completion of sanctioned works has been impressed upon Agents. The procedure in connection with the preparation of estimates has been simplified and the estimating staff has been increased where necessary.

(b) It is impossible to state what effect this has had upon the placing of indents.

CONSTRUCTION OF BRANCH LINES AND FEEDER RAILWAYS.

278. **\*Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** Will the Government be pleased to state whether any new policy has been adopted or is under discussion in respect of construction of branch lines and feeder railways with special reference to the railways of District Boards, existing and projected, and the ownership, maintenance and management of such lines?

EXPANSION OF DISTRICT BOARD RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION IN THE MADRAS PRESIDENCY.

279. **\*Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** Have the Government raised any new objections to the policy of the expansion of District Board railway construction in the Madras Presidency in accordance with the programme which had to be suspended during the war and the execution of which on the part of the District Board is now overdue?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** I will answer questions 278 and 279 together. The proposals of Government for giving effect to the Acworth Committee's recommendation that branch lines shall as far as possible be constructed and worked by the main lines to which they are tributary and that only if the State is unable or unwilling to provide funds shall the formation of separate branch line companies be encouraged will shortly be discussed with the Central Advisory Council, and I will lay papers as soon as possible.

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE LEE COMMISSION.

280. **\*Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** Will the Government be pleased to lay before the Assembly the despatches that have passed between the Secretary of State and the Government of India on the recommendations of the Lee Commission after obtaining, if necessary, the assent of the Secretary of State thereunto?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** I answered that question yesterday.

**Mr. V. J. Patel:** Not the whole of it. The words "after obtaining, if necessary, the assent of the Secretary of State thereunto" occur here. Has the Secretary of State been consulted with regard to the publication of the correspondence?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** I have already stated that the Government have no intention of publishing the papers.

**Mr. V. J. Patel:** This Government have no intention, I dare say. But the question is whether the Government would be prepared to consult the Secretary of State in regard to their publication?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** The answer is in the negative.

**Mr. V. J. Patel:** Why so?

(No answer was given.)

**Mr. V. J. Patel:** Are Government not prepared to answer that question?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** I have already stated that I have no intention whatever of publishing the papers.

**Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** Will Government kindly state the reasons for not asking the Secretary of State to assent to the publication of the papers?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** Because the Government of India did not think it desirable that the papers should be published.

**Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** May I ask the Honourable the Home Member whether he will not suggest to the Secretary of State the advisability of explaining to the House the reasons why he has thought fit to deprive the House of its powers over the Services in respect of passages and other things?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** I think that arises on the next question.

**Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** I am asking whether the Secretary of State can allow despatches to be published on that ground with a view to furnish an explanation as to why he did so.

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** I think the answer appears in my next reply; I am not prepared to address the Secretary of State on the matter.

**Dewan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao:** May I ask the Leader of the House whether it is not desirable that the reasons of the Government of India and the Secretary of State as put forward in the despatches may be made available to this Assembly so that they may understand the exact grounds on which the Government of India and the Secretary of State have departed from the recommendations made by this Assembly?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** I have endeavoured to explain the attitude of the Government of India in regard to the Lee Commission's recommendations.

**Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** Sir, it may not be desirable from the Government point of view but it certainly is desirable from the public point of view. Will the Government be pleased to consider this question?

#### RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE LEE COMMISSION.

281. **\*Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state whether the decision of the Secretary of State in Council to make all the concessions granted to the All-India Services as to pay, passages, remittance privileges and the rest non-votable and to curtail the constitutional powers of the Legislatures in this behalf by an amendment to the Government of India Act, has been made on the recommendation or at the suggestion of the Government of India? If so, what were the reasons upon which such recommendations were based and why was

no mention made of such contemplated proposals by or on behalf of the Government during any stage of the debate on the Lee Commission's recommendations in September or May last?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state whether they will now afford to the House an opportunity to discuss this new proposal that affects the position and powers of the Assembly under the constitution?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** (a) The Lee Commission in paragraph 64 of the Report emphasised the principle that it was essential that no portion of the relief intended by them should be less certain than another. The action contemplated by His Majesty's Government is the natural outcome of that principle.

(b) I must refer the Honourable Member to the Rules and Standing Orders regarding the tabling of Resolutions.

**Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** May I know, Sir, whether the Honourable the Home Member suggests to me that I can move a Resolution with regard to making these items votable?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** That is a matter for the Honourable Member to consider, and frame a Resolution.

**Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** I am asking the Home Member whether, when he referred me to the rules, he really intends me to take steps to make them votable.

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** It is not for me to say whether a Resolution should be framed; if the Honourable Member can frame a Resolution which is within the Standing Orders and Rules he can put it down.

#### BENGAL CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT ORDINANCE.

282. **\*Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** Will the Government be pleased to state when they first received a request from the Government of Bengal for the enactment of legislation "to supplement the ordinary Criminal Law in that province"? If proposals in this behalf had been under consideration in September last, will the Government be pleased to state why the information relating to this was withheld from the Assembly in the course of the debate on the repeal of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply which I have already given to Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar's question on the same subject.

#### MEMORIAL FROM THE WIDOW OF THE LATE MR. A. R. SESA IYER, HEAD RECORD CLERK, RAILWAY MAIL SERVICE, T. DIVISION.

283. **\*Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** Have the Government of India received any memorial from one Subbalakshmi Ammal, widow of the late Mr. A. R. Sesa Iyer, Head Record Clerk, R. M. S., T. Division, applying for the grant of a gratuity in consequence of the sudden death of her husband from cholera while on duty at Trichinopoly during the time of floods and epidemic in July last? Are the facts stated therein correct? If so, do the Government propose in the peculiar circumstances of the case to comply with the memorialist's prayer to any extent?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** Yes. A memorial has been received and is receiving due consideration.



NON-PAYMENT TO POSTAL ENDOWMENT POLICY HOLDERS OF THE BONUS FOR THE QUINQUENNIAL 1917—22.

284. **\*Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** Will the Government be pleased to state whether there have been cases in which postal endowment policy holders with bonus have not been paid their bonus for the quinquennium 1917—22, and if so, the reason therefor?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** Under the rules of the Post Office Insurance Fund the grant of a bonus to policy holders is not obligatory. Bonuses have been given for the two quinquennia ending in 1917 and the question of granting a bonus for the quinquennium 1917—22 is now under consideration.

CONVENTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCES.

285. **\*Mr. Chaman Lal:** Will Government be pleased to lay on the table a copy of the conventions and recommendations of the Sixth International Labour Conference as well as those of the previous five conferences?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** The Honourable Member will find the Conventions and Recommendations adopted by the first three Conferences in Bulletins of Indian Industries and Labour Nos. 4, 17 and 26, respectively. These will be found in the Library. Copies of the Recommendations adopted at the last three Conferences have also been placed in the Library.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONVENTIONS OF THE SIXTH INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE.

286. **\*Mr. Chaman Lal:** (a) Which of the recommendations and conventions of the Sixth International Labour Conference have been given effect to by the Government of India?

(b) Will Government lay on the table a statement showing the recommendations and conventions of the previous five conferences, which have not been given effect to?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** The Sixth International Labour Conference adopted no Convention. It adopted only one Recommendation. A statement showing the effect given to all the Conventions and Recommendations which have been adopted by International Labour Conferences is placed on the table.

*Statement showing the effect given to each Draft Convention and Recommendation adopted by the International Labour Conferences.*

Conventions and Recommendations.

Effect given.

FIRST SESSION.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Draft Convention limiting the hours of work in industrial undertakings.          | Ratified and Indian Factories Act amended.                       |
| 2. Draft Convention concerning unemployment   | Ratified. Statistics supplied, and inquiries made and published. |
| 3. Draft Convention concerning the employment of women before and after childbirth. | Report submitted to the International Labour Office.             |

Conventions and Recommendations.

Effect given.

FIRST SESSION—*contd.*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 4. Draft Convention concerning employment of women during the night.  | The Convention was ratified and the Factories Act was amended.  |
| 5. Draft Convention fixing the minimum age for admission of children to industrial employment.  | Placed before the Legislature; the definition of "factory" was amended, the age of children was altered, the Indian Ports (Amendment) Act, 1922, was passed, and the Mines Act amended. |
| 6. Draft Convention concerning the night work of young persons employed in industry.  | Ratified. No change in the Indian law was involved.   |
| 7. Recommendation concerning unemployment   | Placed before the Legislature and examined in consultation with local Governments and no further action was considered necessary.   |
| 8. Recommendation concerning the protection of women and children against lead poisoning.   | Placed before the Legislature. Provision was made in the Indian Factories Act.  |
| 9. Recommendation concerning reciprocity of treatment of foreign workers.   | No action was required as no discrimination was in operation.   |
| 10. Recommendation concerning the prevention of anthrax.  | Provision inserted in the Indian Factories Act. (Section 38-A.) No Rules have been issued under this Section.   |
| 11. Recommendation concerning the establishment of Government Health Services.  | Placed before the Legislature and forwarded to local Governments.   |
| 12. Recommendation concerning the application of the Berne Convention of 1906, on the prohibition of the use of white phosphorus in the manufacture of matches. | India already adhered to Berne Convention; no further action was therefore required.  |

SECOND SESSION.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Draft Convention fixing the minimum age for admission of children to employment at sea.       | Placed before the Legislature. The amendment of the Indian Merchant Shipping Act is under consideration.   |
| 2. Draft Convention concerning unemployment indemnity in case of loss or foundering of the ship. | Placed before the Legislature. Enquiry made and amendment of the Indian Merchant Shipping Act is under consideration.  |
| 3. Draft Convention for establishing facilities for finding employment for seamen.               | Placed before the Legislature. A Committee was appointed and following their recommendation, an officer of the Mercantile Marine has now been appointed at Calcutta as Shipping Master to evolve a scheme. |
| 4. Recommendation concerning the limitation of hours of work in the fishing industry.            | } The Legislature resolved that no action should be taken.   |
| 5. Recommendation concerning the establishment of national seamen's codes.                       |  |
| 6. Recommendation concerning unemployment insurance for seamen.                                  |  |
| 7. Recommendation concerning the limitation of hours of work in inland navigation.               |  |

## Conventions and Recommendations.

## Effect given.

## THIRD SESSION.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Draft Convention concerning workmen's compensation in agriculture.   | Not ratified. The Legislature resolved that no action need be taken.   |
| 2. Draft Convention concerning the age for admission of children to employment in agriculture.                        | Not ratified. The law in India is not in conflict with the Convention.   |
| 3. Draft Convention concerning the use of white lead in painting.   | Not ratified in accordance with recommendation of Council of State.  |
| 4. Recommendation concerning social insurance in agriculture.   | The Legislature resolved that no action be taken.  |
| 5. Recommendation concerning the protection, before and after childbirth, of women wage-earners in agriculture.       | } The Legislature resolved that legislation should not be introduced at present.                                       |
| 6. Recommendation concerning night work of women in agriculture.  |  |
| 7. Recommendation concerning night work of children and young persons in agriculture.                                 |  |
| 8. Recommendation concerning living in conditions of agricultural workers.  |  |
| 9. Draft Convention concerning the rights of association and combination of agricultural workers.                     |  |
| 10. Draft Convention concerning the application of the weekly rest in industrial undertakings.                        | Ratified. Provision made in the Mines and Factories Acts.  |
| 11. Draft Convention fixing the minimum age for the admission of young persons to employment as trimmers and stokers. | } Placed before the Legislature and ratified. (Necessary provision is being made in the Indian Merchant Shipping Act.) |
| 12. Draft Convention concerning the compulsory medical examination of children and young persons employed at sea.     |  |
| 13. Recommendation concerning the prevention of unemployment in agriculture.  |  |
| 14. Recommendation concerning the development of technical agricultural education.                                    | } Forwarded to local Governments for necessary action.   |
| 15. Recommendation concerning the application of the weekly rest in commercial establishments.                        | In accordance with a resolution of the Legislature the recommendation was forwarded to local Governments.              |

## FOURTH SESSION.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Recommendation concerning communication to the International Labour Office of Statistical and other information regarding emigration, immigration and the repatriation and transit of Emigrants. | Statistics are being sent by the Government of India. |
|---|---|

## FIFTH SESSION.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Recommendation concerning the general principles for the organisation of systems of inspection to secure the enforcement of the laws and regulations for the protection of the workers. | The subject is provincial and the recommendation was forwarded to local Governments for any action considered necessary. |
|--|--|

## SIXTH SESSION.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Recommendation concerning the development of facilities for the utilisation of workers' spare time. | The subject is provincial and the recommendation was forwarded to local Governments for any action considered necessary. |
|--|--|

EQUALITY OF TREATMENT FOR INDIAN WORKERS ABROAD.

287. \***Mr. Chaman Lall**: Do the Government of India intend to secure equality of treatment for Indian workers abroad?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore**: The Government of India are not aware to what inequalities the Honourable Member refers. If he will be so good as to specify these, I shall be better in a position to answer his question.

LEGISLATION FOR THE UTILISATION OF THE LEISURE HOURS OF INDUSTRIAL WORKERS, ETC.

288. \***Mr. Chaman Lall**: Do the Government of India intend to bring in legislation for:

- (1) the utilisation of the leisure hours of the industrial workers;
- (2) the institution of the Creche system at factories and workshops?

\***The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra**: The answer is in the negative.

SHOOTING OF INDIANS IN BRITISH GUIANA.

289. \***Mr. Chaman Lall**: (a) Are Government aware that in reply to a question of mine it was stated that a report of the firing on Indian workers at George Town was awaited and would be published?

(b) Will Government explain the delay in publishing this report?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore**: (a) Yes. A copy of the report together with the minutes of evidence will be placed in the Library of the House.

(b) The Government of India could not publish the report of the officer of another Government without the authority of that Government. This authority has only just been received.

EMIGRATION TO BRITISH GUIANA.

290. \***Mr. Chaman Lall**: Have Government arrived at any decision regarding the proposal placed before them regarding emigration to British Guiana by Sir Joseph Nunan and the Honourable Mr. Luckhoo?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore**: No. The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the press communiqué issued by the Government of India on the 7th June last, a copy of which has been placed in the Library for the information of the Honourable Member.

APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE TO EXAMINE THE DEMANDS OF THE ALL-INDIA POSTAL AND R. M. S. UNION.

291. \***Mr. Chaman Lall**: (a) Have Government any information regarding the demands made by the All-India Postal and R. M. S. Union at its annual session held at Bombay under the presidentship of Mr. M. A. Jinnah?

(b) Do Government intend to appoint a Committee of Inquiry in order to examine these demands?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra**: (a) Government have received a copy of the Resolution passed at the Conference.

(b) The answer is in the negative.

**Mr. Devaki Prasad Sinha:** May I ask a supplementary question, Sir? Do Government attach any value to the resolutions passed by the R. M. S. and Postal Conferences?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** Government undoubtedly do take cognisance of them.

#### RESETTLEMENT OF THE KOHAT REFUGEES.

292. **\*Mr. Chaman Lall:** Will Government make a statement with regard to the negotiations that their officers have been carrying on for the resettlement of the Kohat refugees?

**Mr. Denys Bray:** There would perhaps be some danger of stirring communal feelings among the Kohat leaders if I attempted to answer the Honourable Member's question in detail and described the ups and downs of the Kohat negotiations. But I can assure him that from the very outset the efforts of Government and their officers have been directed towards bringing about a reconciliation between the two communities, and Government trust that the agreement now concluded between the leading representatives will result in the early return of the refugees in honourable security to Kohat and a resumption by the two communities of their normal life of neighbourly relations.

**Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** May I know, Sir, if the refugees have returned to Kohat? .

**Mr. Denys Bray:** They have not.

**Lala Duni Chand:** Will the Government please state how many refugees have gone back to Kohat and how many of them still remain at Rawalpindi and other places?

**Mr. Denys Bray:** I would venture to deprecate any specific questions on this matter. I have received one or two letters from the Kohat leaders themselves, and they tell me in their letters perfectly plainly that the best chance of their early return is for them to be allowed at present to work out their own salvation. They very earnestly beg me to put this position before the House.

**Lala Duni Chand:** Sir, I feel very strongly on the point, I have also received certain letters from certain leaders. My next question is, will the Government please state if they are prepared to compensate the sufferers of Kohat in any way, and if so, in what way?

**Mr. Denys Bray:** I beg to inquire whether this question arises out of the substantive question?

**Mr. President:** The Foreign Secretary may reasonably ask for notice of it.

**Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qalyum:** Will the Government please state if the Kohat Hindu leaders are not carrying on their business in Kohat itself, if some of them have not constructed their shops and if some of them are not spending their time in Kohat itself keeping only a certain number of refugees in a small camp station in Rawalpindi to retain the sympathy of their coreligionists and the attention of the authorities.

**Mr. Denys Bray:** The facts are as stated with regard to one or two of the Hindu leaders. But I would again suggest to the House that it is exactly this sort of question that makes it desirable to avoid discussion in the House at present.

ARRESTS UNDER BENGAL REGULATION III OF 1818 AND THE BENGAL  
CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT ORDINANCE, 1924.

293. \***Mr. Chaman Lall**: (a) Will Government state the total number of arrests made under Bengal Regulation III of 1818 and under the Bengal Ordinance?

(b) How many of the arrested persons were members of the Swaraj Party?

(c) Will Government state details of the provision being made for the families of the détenus?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman**: Most of this question has already been answered. Provision for the families of persons detained under the Ordinance is made under the orders of the Local Government and the Government of India have no detailed information in regard to it. I do not think any useful purpose would be served by giving in detail the allowances sanctioned under Regulation III, which depend in each case on the circumstances of the détenu's family. I may add that the persons recently arrested under the Regulation have since been restrained by orders under section 12 of the Ordinance.

**Mr. Devaki Prasad Sinha**: Sir, in making provision for the families of those arrested is their standard of life taken into consideration?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman**: Certainly.

**Mr. A. Rangaswami Aiyangar**: May I know, Sir, whether there are any persons under detention arrested after the 25th of October who are still under detention under the Bengal Regulation?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman**: At present there are none arrested after the 25th of October under detention under the Bengal Regulation.

**Mr. A. Rangaswami Aiyangar**: Are all of them under the Ordinance?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman**: All of them.

OPINIONS ON THE WEEKLY PAYMENTS BILL.

294. \***Mr. Chaman Lall**: Will Government place on the table the replies received from representative bodies to their circular containing the Weekly Payments Bill?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra**: The replies received from local Governments will be published.

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA REGARDING THE PROMULGATION OF THE BENGAL  
CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT ORDINANCE, 1924.

295. \***Mr. Chaman Lall**: Will Government be pleased to lay on the table the correspondence which passed between the Government of India and the Secretary of State for India regarding the promulgation of the Bengal Ordinance?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman**: No.

**Mr. A. Rangaswami Aiyangar**: May I know the reasons, Sir?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** It is not in the public interest.

**Mr. Devaki Prasad Sinha:** What does the Honourable the Home Member mean by saying that it is not in the public interest?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** In this connection the term public interest is very clear. It is not in the public interest that I should give any information which would lead to murder of persons, and police officers and others.

**Mr. A. Rangaswami Aiyangar:** Is that not a matter of opinion, Sir?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** No, Sir. It is not a matter of opinion. It is a matter of fact.

#### POSTAL COMPLAINTS.

296. **\*Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to the letter published in the issue of the *Forward* of the 9th December, 1924, page 11, under the heading "Postal Complaints"?

(b) If so, will Government please state if the complaints made therein are genuine?

(c) If genuine, do they propose to issue instructions to the authorities concerned to remove the inconvenience which the public are put to?

**Sir Geoffrey Clarke:** (a) The Postmaster-General, Bengal and Assam, reports that he received a complaint on the subject in November last.

(b) and (c). The inconvenience, which was due to the closure of a steamer station, was removed on the introduction of a revised mail arrangement from the 10th December 1924.

#### PROVISION OF AN OVERBRIDGE AT KALNA COURT STATION.

297. **\*Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to the letter published in the issue of the *Statesman* of the 10th December, 1924, page 17, under the heading "Over-Bridge Wanted"?

(b) If so, will the Government please state if the grievances complained of are real?

(c) If real, do they propose to see that an overbridge is provided on the spot?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). There have been no previous complaints in regard to delays to vehicular traffic at this crossing and the Agent, East Indian Railway, reports that the traffic at Kalna Court station does not justify the provision of an overbridge.

#### QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE IN PORT LOUIS, MAURITIUS.

298. **\*Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** (a) With reference to my starred question No. 2131, parts (d) and (e) of the 17th September last, have the Government been able to find out whether it is a fact that a resolution has been passed in the Municipal Corporation at Port Louis that only those

people should be allowed to vote who have knowledge of English or French, and this resolution has been sent to Downing Street for final sanction?

(b) Is it not a fact that most Indians in Mauritius know only the Indian vernaculars and such a resolution will operate prejudicially against them?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** (a) and (b). Inquiries into these matters have been made but the replies have not yet been received.

#### ALLEGED MALPRACTICES OF LABOUR RECRUITERS AT BENARES.

299. **\*Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** With reference to my starred question No. 2132 of the 17th September last, regarding the malpractices of labour recruiters at Benares, will the Government be pleased to state if inquiries have been made into the occurrence relating to the boy Chotay Lal, mentioned in my question? And if so, what is the result?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to my reply given to Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan's question No. 145 on the same subject.

#### REPORT OF THE FIJI DEPUTATION.

300. **\*Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** (a) Has the attention of the Government been drawn to a letter of Pandit Banarsidas Chaturvedi, published in the *Young India* of the 4th December 1924, in regard to the Fiji Report?

(b) Is it a fact that the Government of India were asked to send a Commission of Inquiry to investigate into the causes of the disturbances which occurred in Fiji in 1920, resulting in the promulgation of martial law and the imprisonment of more than 200 Indians? If so, will the Government kindly state why they refused to send out a Commission of Inquiry, or to press the India Office for an inquiry?

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

(b) The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the answer given to a question asked by the Right Honourable Srinivasa Sastri in the Imperial Legislative Council on the 20th August 1920, and to relevant extracts from the correspondence which passed on the subject between the Government of India and the Imperial Citizenship Association in August and September 1920. Copies of both have been placed in the library of the House.

#### REPORT OF THE FIJI DEPUTATION.

301. **\*Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** (a) With reference to my starred question No. 2133 of the 17th September last, will the Government be pleased to state when do they propose to publish the report of the Fiji Deputation, which was submitted in September 1922?

(b) Is it a fact that the publication of this Report is being delayed as the Colonial Office is understood to have taken strong objections to certain views expressed in the report?

(c) Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table all communications on the subject which may have passed between them and the Colonial Office in this connection, since the submission of the report? And if not, why not?



(d) Who were the members of the Fiji Deputation, and what was the total amount of expenditure incurred in connection with it?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** (a) 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 recognise 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.

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

(d) The members of the Fiji deputation were:—

Mr. B. Venkatapatiraju, C.I.E., M.L.A., *President*.

Mr. G. L. Corbett, C.I.E., I.C.S.

Pandit Govind Sahai Sharma, M.L.C., Bar-at-Law. } *Members.*

Lieut. S. Hissamid Din, Khan Bahadur, C.I.E }

The total expenditure was about Rs. 67,000.

#### REPORT OF THE FIJI DEPUTATION.

302. **\*Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state what action has been taken on the report of the Commission appointed to inquire into the conditions of the Indians in Fiji?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state why the report has not been published yet?

(c) Will the Government be pleased to place the said report on the table of this House during this session of the Assembly?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** (a), (b) and (c). The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to part (a) of my reply just given to Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh's question No. 301.

#### WAGES OF LABOURERS IN CEYLON TEA PLANTATIONS.

303. **\*Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state what the prevailing wages of labourers in the tea plantations of Ceylon are?

(b) What is the minimum wage demanded by the labourers?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** (a) Government have no definite information on the subject, but will make inquiries.

(b) They are not aware that any demand for minimum wage has been put forward by labourers. (The suggestion to fix a minimum wage was made by the Standing Emigration Committee of the Indian Legislature and is now receiving the consideration of the Ceylon Government.)

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** May I ask, Sir, why Government should not have information regarding wages of labourers in Ceylon when they are maintaining their own Agent in Ceylon at a great cost?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** I have just told the Honourable Member that the information is not available here but that I should be able to get it through our Agent.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** What sort of information do Government get from the Agent there?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** The Honourable Member is a Member of the Standing Emigration Committee and I am sure he can answer that question as well as anybody else.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** I have got the information, but when a question is asked in the House I expect the Honourable Member in charge to give the information.

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** I have promised to make inquiries and to get the information. I can do no more.

**Mr. Devaki Prasad Sinha:** Sir, do the Government also propose to inquire what minimum wage is generally promised to the labourers by those canvassers who recruit Indian labour?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** No, Sir, I do not think any useful purpose would be served by such an inquiry.

#### EMIGRATION TO MAURITIUS.

304. **\*Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar:** (a) Is it a fact that the Government of Mauritius has requested the Government of India to send a large number of labourers?

(b) Has the Committee on the condition of labourers in Mauritius made a report?

(c) If so, will the Government be pleased to place their report on the table?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** (a) and (b). A request for the recruitment of 1,500 male adult labourers was received from the Government of Mauritius in April last, but its consideration has been deferred until receipt of the report of the special officer who has been deputed to make certain inquiries into the economic condition of the Indian population of the Colony.

(c) Does not arise.

**Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** Who is the special officer who has been deputed to make inquiries?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** Kunwar Maharaj Singh.

#### REPORT OF THE BRITISH GUIANA DEPUTATION.

305. **\*Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar:** Will the Government be pleased to state what action has been taken on the report of Diwan Bahadur P. Kesava Pillai on the conditions of Indians in British Guiana?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** No action has been taken on the reports submitted by the Government of India deputation to British Guiana in view of the later developments explained in the Government of India press communiqué dated the 7th June 1924, a copy of which has already been placed in the Library of the House.

## DOUBLING OF THE LINE BETWEEN MADRAS AND PALLIVARAM.

306. \***Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar:** (a) Has the attention of the Government been drawn to the resolution passed by the third Railway Passengers' Association held at Madras protesting against the delay in doubling the line between Madras and Pallivaram?

(b) If so, will the Government be pleased to state what action has been taken on it?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** (a) and (b). The Honourable Member is referred to the answer given yesterday to Mr. M. K. Acharya's question No. 255.

## TRAINING OF INDIANS IN MECHANICAL ENGINEERING IN RAILWAY WORKSHOPS.

307. \***Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state how many railway workshops are worked in India?

(b) What is the percentage of railway requirements that are produced in the workshops?

(c) What facilities are given for training educated Indians in mechanical engineering in the said workshops?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** (a) Workshops on Indian railways include the (i) major Loco and Carriage Shops, (ii) minor shops of similar type and (iii) miscellaneous shops working in connection with Engineering, Signal and other Departments. Under (i) there are 24 large shops.

(b) The railway workshops are primarily intended for repair work and I would refer the Honourable Member to the statement placed on the table in reply to the question No. 136 asked on the 23rd instant by Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan. In regard to production the information is not available.

(c) The Honourable Member will find full information on this subject in paragraph 34 of Volume I of the Railway Board's Administration Report for 1921-22. In addition to the facilities therein mentioned the East Indian Railway have a scheme under which Indians are, subject to certain conditions, accepted for a combined course of training in England and India with a view to appointment in the supervising grades of the Mechanical Department of the Railway. The Great Indian Peninsula Railway have also more recently started a scheme whereby they undertake the training in mechanical engineering of a limited number of probationers with a view to eventual appointment as officers. The question of further extension of technical training in mechanical engineering is at present under the consideration of the Railway Board.

**Kumar Ganganand Sinha:** How many students are there in these institutions?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** I must ask for notice of that question.

## GRIEVANCES OF RAILWAY EMPLOYEES AT VILLUPURAM, MAYAVARAM AND MADURA ON THE SOUTH INDIAN RAILWAY.

308. \***Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar:** (a) Has the attention of the Government been drawn to the memorial addressed to the Agent of the South Indian Railway by the railway loco employees at Villupuram, Mayavaram and Madura?

(b) If so, will the Government be pleased to state whether and to what extent the grievances of the memorialists were redressed?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** (a) and (b). A copy of the memorial was sent to the Railway Board. But the Agent has made no reference to Government on the subject and the Government do not know what action if any has been taken on the memorial.

COMPENSATION TO DEFENDANTS OF RAILWAY OFFICIALS KILLED IN THE COLLISION NEAR HARAPPA ON THE NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

309. **\*Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state the number of railway officials who were killed in the collision between Montgomery and Harappa in the Punjab?

(b) What gratuity or compensation was given to the bereaved families?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** (a) Two railway officials died subsequently as the result of injuries received in the accident.

(b) Government understand that this is now under the consideration of the Railway Administration.

COMPENSATION TO DEFENDANTS OF TWO MURDERED POSTAL RUNNERS.

310. **\*Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar:** (a) Is it a fact that two runners *viz.*, Bau Hu Sao of Phulcherry and Murugandi of Kurumandur branch office were murdered while they were carrying mails?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state what compensation was given in each of these cases to the bereaved families?

**Sir Geoffrey Clarke:** (a) Yes.

(b) In the first case a family pension of Rs. 6 per mensem has been granted to the father of the deceased runner. The second case is receiving my attention.

PROVISION OF MEDICAL RELIEF FOR RAILWAY OFFICIALS.

311. **\*Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state what kind of staff is employed for the medical relief of railway officials?

(b) What is the qualification of the medical officers employed for the use of railway officials?

(c) Are they expected to help the public also at their headquarters where there is no other hospital or dispensary?

(d) If so, is any contribution made by Local Boards for such medical service?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** (a) Company-managed railways employ in most cases their own medical staff while State-managed railways generally utilize the services of the Local Government medical officers. The Eastern Bengal State Railway employs however two medical officers of its own. The question of improving the arrangements for medical assistance on the North-Western Railway is now under investigation. Each State-managed railway employs its own staff of Assistant and Sub-Assistant Surgeons who are either borrowed from Government medical service or specially engaged.

(b) The qualifications of all officers employed on the various lines will be found in the Classified List of Railway Establishment, a copy of which is in the Library.

(c) and (d). Railway medical officers and dispensaries are primarily intended for railway work alone but it is understood that where other medical assistance is not available, the railway facilities are to such extent as is possible made available to the public. Such arrangements are, however, necessarily local and if the Honourable Member will specify the particular railways and localities which he has in mind inquiries will be made.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE OUDH AND ROHILKHAND RAILWAY UNION.

312. \*Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: Will the Government be pleased to state:

- (a) Did the Agent of O. and R. Railway offer any terms to the O. and R. Railway Union, on the acceptance of which the Union was promised the restoration of its recognition by the Agent?
- (b) Were these terms accepted by the Union?
- (c) Was the recognition of the Union restored by the Agent on the acceptance of the terms proposed by him? If not, why not?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** (a) No offer was made to the Union. In order however to relieve apprehension the Agent intimated to the staff certain conditions under which he would be prepared to recommend to the Railway Board the recognition of their Union.

(b) and (c). So far as is known no action was taken by the staff on this intimation and consequently no recommendation has been made to the Railway Board.

#### PROMOTION OF MR. S. DOYLE, JUNIOR CLERK OF THE WORKS MANAGER'S OFFICE, O. AND R. RAILWAY.

313. \*Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: Is it a fact that Mr. S. Doyle, one of the most junior clerks of the Works Manager's office (Loco), O. and R. Railway, Lucknow, has been promoted from Rs. 84 to Rs. 70 p.m. and his seniors were passed over?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** Government have no information. The matter is one in which they do not interfere.

#### ISSUE OF TICKETS TO THIRD CLASS PASSENGERS AT MORADABAD RAILWAY STATION.

314. \*Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: (a) Are the Government aware that third class passengers at Moradabad railway station are put to great trouble and inconvenience and some times even miss their trains on account of the tickets being issued only from one window and also because the booking is commenced only half an hour before the arrival of the trains?

(b) If so, what steps do Government propose to take in the matter?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** The Government are not prepared to issue orders in the matter but will forward the request to the Railway Administration for consideration.

PREVENTION OF FLOODS IN THE MORADABAD DISTRICT.

315. \***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub**: Are the Government aware that there is a strong feeling in Moradabad district to the effect that great devastation and loss of life and property caused by the recent flood in the Ganges and the Ramganga in Moradabad district was due mostly to there being insufficient outlets or small bridges for water in the railway road on the O. and R. Railway between Gajrula and Gadhmuktesar and on the R. and K. Railway between Moradabad and Shel station and also on account of the railway bridge at Moradabad being too small for the flow of water?

(b) Are Government prepared to institute an inquiry into the matter and take steps to prevent the recurrence of the floods?

**Mr. G. G. Sim**: Representations asking for more waterways in the railway lines in the area in question have been received.

The whole question is under inquiry. I would however remind the Honourable Member that when excessive rainfall occurs such as was experienced at the end of September last, floods cannot be prevented and all that can be done is to make reasonable provision for the passage of flood water through railway embankments with a view to avoiding breaches in which the Railways are naturally interested as much as the public.

ALLEGED MISAPPROPRIATION OF STORES ON THE OUDH AND ROHILKHAND RAILWAY.

316. \***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub**: Are the Government aware of the stores fraud cases on the O. and R. Railway? What was the amount of the property misappropriated? Who was the officer or officers in charge of the stores when this misappropriation took place? And what if any steps were taken by the Government against that officer or officers?

**Mr. G. G. Sim**: Government are aware of the cases of fraud referred to. There are three distinct cases in all of which prosecutions have been instituted. The court proceedings in one case have been finished and the others are still under trial. It is impossible at this stage to give any estimate of the total amounts of property involved or to make any statement in regard to the officers responsible. It is however the intention to have a very thorough departmental inquiry made after the trials are over in order that the responsibility of the supervising staff may be established and any defects in procedure to which these frauds were attributable may be ascertained and measures taken to prevent recurrence.

DISMISSAL OF MR. RAJARAM, STATION MASTER, BERHAMGHAT.

317. \***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub**: (a) Is it a fact that Mr. Rajaram, late station master, Berhamghat, was dismissed for bringing certain facts of corruptions to the notice of the Administration, against Mr. Goff, the then D. T. S. in June 1923?

(b) Is it a fact that Mr. Goff in his defence before the Agent pleaded that he received £1,000 from the Military Department and thus he cleared his debt at Lahore?

(c) Is it a fact that Mr. Rajaram was challenged, *vide* letter No. 18-10-19-P., dated 2nd July 1923, and he was prepared to substantiate the allegation in a court of law?

(d) Is it a fact that on receipt of the challenge Mr. Goff was immediately allowed to go on long leave?

(e) (i) Is it a fact that Mr. Rajaram's gratuity and bonus were forfeited although he was granted a good service certificate of 18 years' faithful service?

(ii) When Mr. Rajaram was granted "good on the whole" service certificate what other virtues were needed for granting bonus and gratuity? Why was not Mr. Goff asked to clear his position and why was he allowed to go on leave?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** (a) No, Mr. Rajaram was dismissed for making allegations against Mr. Goff, his District Officer, which on inquiry were found to be false and malicious.

(b) The answer is in the negative.

(c) Yes, but an evasive reply was given.

(d) No, Mr. Goff applied for leave on the 28th May 1923. The letter written by the officiating District Traffic Superintendent referred to in (c) was dated the 2nd July 1923. Mr. Goff went on leave on the 6th October 1923.

(e) (i) Mr. Rajaram's gratuity and bonus were forfeited in view of the circumstances of his dismissal.

(ii) The certificate granted to Mr. Rajaram gave as the reason for termination of his service "summarily dismissed" and the further remark thereon applied to his conduct and abilities prior to the misconduct which resulted in his dismissal.

#### CASE OF MR. KAILASNATH, ASSISTANT STATION MASTER, BENARES CANTONMENT, O. AND R. RAILWAY.

318. \***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** Is it a fact that Mr. Kailasnath, assistant station master, Benares Cantonment, was granted 22 months' leave and after he had availed himself of two months' leave, the rest of his leave was cancelled and he was discharged from the service without assigning any reason?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** Government do not know but will inquire and will let the Honourable Member know the result.

#### PAY OF STATION MASTERS AND ASSISTANT STATION MASTERS AT ROADSIDE STATIONS ON THE O. AND R. RAILWAY.

319. \***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** Is it a fact that formerly on the O. and R. Railway the difference in pay of the station masters and assistant station masters on roadside stations was Rs. 5 only and after the revised scale came in force, the difference increased to Rs. 20; that is the maximum pay of a station master "A" class was raised to Rs. 75 and that of an assistant station master was Rs. 55. Why so? What responsibility of the assistant station masters has been shifted and reduced that their pay has been raised to a very low scale?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** No, it is not a fact. Before the revision of scales the difference of pay of these two classes was Rs. 12 and after revision it was Rs. 20.

PROMOTION OF INDIAN STATION MASTERS ON THE O. AND R. RAILWAY.

820. \*Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: (a) Is it a fact that about 500 assistant station masters after reaching the maximum of their grade, are waiting for promotion for years and years? Will the Government please state how their promotions will be regulated with a few higher class stations?

(b) Is it a fact that while hundreds of Indian "A" class station masters are waiting for promotions to higher grades, the Railway Administration stopped their promotion by reverting many of the "B" Class stations to "A" and "C" class stations to "B" class whereas Anglo-Indian and European station masters have not been affected in any way?

(c) Is it a fact that several junction stations are classified special class for providing Anglo-Indian or European station masters whereas booking and parcel clerks of those stations are graded in "A" class? Why so? Why will the clerks not be given the advantage of drawing the pay according to the class of stations?

(d) Is it a fact that many "A" class Indian station masters on the O. and R. Railway, drawing Rs. 75 whose promotions are blocked for years and years, have been served with retirement notice? Is it a fact that they are serving the railway for more than 35 years to the entire satisfaction of the authorities? If so, why were these senior station masters not given promotion to class "B", "C" or "D" and so on?

(e) Is it a fact that "90" per cent. of the stations on the O. and R. Railway are classified as "A" and the station masters after reaching the maximum of the class are waiting for promotions for years and years? Will the Government please state how the promotions of these station masters will be regulated with a less percentage of higher stations?

(f) Is it a fact that the promotions of qualified Indian assistant station masters are restricted to "D" class whereas unqualified Anglo-Indian and European assistant station masters are given a lift to "E" and "F" class? Further, is it a fact that at junction stations out of three assistant station masters one Indian is getting "C" or "D" class scale of pay whereas two Anglo-Indian or European assistant station masters are getting "E" or "F" class scale of pay? If so, what is the reason for this difference?

Mr. G. G. Sim: (a), (b) and (c). The Honourable Member does not mention any particular railway so it is impossible to say if his facts and figures are correct. Promotions must obviously be regulated by the vacancies in the class above and the class of a station by the importance of the work to be performed.

(d) The Honourable Member's question is stated in such general terms that it is difficult to give a precise reply. Station Masters like other employees are required to retire unless their services are specially extended at 55 years of age. If they have not been promoted it is presumably either because there were no vacancies or they were not competent to fill the higher posts.

(e) Government have no information as to the exact proportion of "A" class stations. Promotions are regulated by vacancies in higher classes.



(f) No, it is not a fact that any discrimination on racial grounds is made. The assistant station masters at junction stations are classed and paid in accordance with the duties which they are fit for and called upon to perform and the distinctions referred to where they exist are due to this cause and not to any question of race.

SELECTION OF ASSISTANT TRAFFIC SUPERINTENDENTS FOR THE NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

321. \*Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: Will the Government be pleased to state:

- (a) how many candidates appeared before the Railway Board for selection as A. T. Ss. for the N. W. Railway and how many were selected by the Board?
- (b) Did the Medical Board reject any of the above candidates?
- (c) Is there any rule for the inspection of the candidates by the Medical Board for the second time when once they have been rejected?
- (d) Were any of the rejected candidates re-inspected, or ordered to be re-inspected by the Medical Board?
- (e) Were there any qualified members amongst the candidates who appeared before the Railway Board?
- (f) Has any Musalman candidate been selected to fill up the post?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** (a) Twenty-five candidates were interviewed by the Railway Board, and six were selected for appointment as apprentice Assistant Traffic Superintendents for the three State-managed Railways.

(b) Yes; two.

(c) There is no rule. It would always be a question whether sufficiently cogent reasons were shown for a re-examination.

(d) No, one candidate was permitted to reappear before the original Medical Board. He did not avail himself of the permission.

(e) I do not know what the Honourable Member means by "qualified members". Some of the candidates had received a certain amount of training in England.

(f) If the question refers to the vacancies alluded to in part (b) of the question, further appointments have not been made.

PROMOTION OF JUNIOR GUARDS BY THE DISTRICT TRAFFIC SUPERINTENDENT OF MORADABAD, O. AND R. RAILWAY.

322. \*Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: (a) Is it a fact that the D. T. S. of Moradabad has given promotion to certain junior guards in preference to seniors?

(b) If the answer to the first part is in the affirmative, will the Government be pleased to state the reasons for the same?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** (a) and (b). Government have no information and do not propose to inquire. It is not their practice to interfere in matters of this kind.

BENGAL CRIMINAL LAW (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE.

323. \*Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: (a) Will the Government be pleased to state when was the necessity of promulgating the Bengal Ordinance first brought to the notice of the Governor General in Council; what if any inquiry was instituted by the Government of India and when the result of such inquiry was communicated to the Government?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to enumerate the cases of anarchist conspiracy in which the ordinary law of the country failed to deal adequately with the accused persons?

(c) Will the Government be pleased to state how many bombs and weapons were found in Bengal during the searches made just after the promulgation of the new Ordinance?

(d) Will the Government be pleased to state how many conspiracy cases were prosecuted by the Government of Bengal after the promulgation of the Ordinance?

(e) Will the Government be pleased to state how many persons were arrested in Bengal as a result of the promulgation of the Ordinance and how many of them were members of the Swaraj Party in that province?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: (a) I invite the Honourable Member's attention to the reply I have given to Mr. Duraiswami Aiyangar's question on the same subject.

(b) For the reasons stated in the Resolution of the Bengal Government published in the Calcutta Gazette Extraordinary of 25th October, 1924, it is seldom possible to place cases of anarchist conspiracy before the Courts. Accordingly any attempt to furnish the list asked for would be inaccurate and misleading.

(c) and (d). None.

(e) I have previously answered this.

REVISION OF THE CONSTITUTION.

324. \*Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: (a) Are the Government of India contemplating such revision of the constitution as, (i) will extend the Provincial Governors' prerogatives and the power of certification, (ii) will make the Presidents of the Provincial Councils outside the jurisdiction of the Civil Courts, (iii) will invest the Provincial Governors with the power of certification in respect to the Ministers' salaries, in case they are refused by the Councils; and (iv) empower the Provincial Governors to convert the transferred into reserved subjects?

(b) If the answers to the above question are in the affirmative, will the Government be pleased to state if any proposed revision of the constitution by the Government of India on the lines mentioned in the above question will form a subject for discussion by this Assembly?

The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman: Some of the points mentioned by the Honourable Member will doubtless come up for consideration in connection with the Report of the Reforms Inquiry Committee which I announced yesterday will be published in the course of the next few weeks. I am unable to make any further statement on the subject.

## REPORT OF THE REFORMS INQUIRY COMMITTEE.

825. **Mr. President:** The question has been answered.

## ELECTION BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONE OF THE INDIAN REPRESENTATIVES TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

826. **\*Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state what is the procedure for the selection of India's representatives to the League of Nations?

(b) Will the Government of India be pleased to recommend that in future at least one of the representatives of India to the League of Nations should be a person elected by this House?

**Mr. L. Graham:** (a) The representatives are appointed by the Secretary of State acting in consultation with the Government of India.

(b) The Honourable Member is referred to the reply given to question No. 1778 on the 11th September, 1924.

## NUMBER OF INDEPENDENT CIRCLES OF INCOME-TAX OFFICERS IN THE UNITED PROVINCES.

827. **\*Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state the scheme for the creation and number of independent circles of Income-tax Officers in the U. P.?

(b) Is it or is it not a fact that in the year 1921 a scheme was published by the Income-tax Commissioner, U. P., showing a certain number of Income-tax circles and communicating that full effect was to be given to the scheme by the year 1923? Will the Government be pleased to state if effect has been given to that scheme or not? May it further please the Government to announce the scheme which they intend to follow in future on the subject?

(c) Will the Government be pleased to state how many and what circles they intend to create permanently and by what time?

(d) Will the Government be pleased to state what is the number of Muhammadan Income-tax Officers and additional Income-tax Officers from among those who were recruited as Assistant Income-tax Officers and have completely passed the Departmental Examination? Will the Government further be pleased to state what is the number of such Hindu officers? May it please the Government to state after how many months of passing the Departmental Examination how many Muhammadans and how many Hindus have been given independent charges?

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO INCOME-TAX OFFICERS REGARDING ASSESSEES.

828. **\*Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** Will the Government be pleased to state since the separation of the Income-tax Department from the Revenue authorities what have been the sources of information to the Income-tax Officers about the good and bad condition of the assesseees? Will the Government be pleased to state how far Income-tax Officers with two or three districts or distant headquarters are in a position to make inquiries in the mufassil to learn about the better or worse conditions of the old as well as the new assesseees?

ASSESSMENT POWERS OF INCOME-TAX OFFICERS.

329. \*Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: Will the Government be pleased to state the rules that have been framed to govern the conferment of assessment powers on Income-tax Officers? If no such rules have been framed, will the Government be pleased to consider the desirability of making such rules and embodying the same in the Income-tax Act?

MUHAMMADAN INCOME-TAX OFFICERS.

330. \*Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: Will the Government be pleased to state the number of Assistant Income-tax Officers that were recruited during the years 1922-23 and 1924 and also the community to which they belong? May it further please the Government to state by members of which community the places of discharged Officers have been filled up and how many Mohammedans have been appointed in the course of yearly recruitment during the above mentioned year?

NUMBER OF CLERKS IN THE INCOME-TAX DEPARTMENT IN THE UNITED PROVINCES.

331. \*Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: Will the Government be pleased to state the total number of clerks in the Income-tax Department in the U. P. and the community to which they belong? Will the Government be pleased to inquire and state the number of Hindu and Muhammadan clerks in each of the offices of the Income-tax Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner and Income-tax Officers? May it further please the Government to state the posts and grades which are held by them? May it further please the Government to state the system of recruiting clerks to the department?

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett:** Questions Nos. 327 to 331 all refer to the same subject and as the answer is rather long and I think tedious I propose to lay it on the table.

327. (a) and (b). When the Income-tax Department in the United Provinces was reorganised in 1920 the following posts were sanctioned:

- One Commissioner of Income-tax,
- Four Assistant Commissioners of Income-tax,
- 36 Income-tax Officers, and
- 14 Assistant Income-tax Officers.

31 circles, *i.e.*, units for working, were contemplated. At that time it was proposed to complete the recruitment of officers for the department within two years, but subsequently this idea was modified for the purpose of securing a more even cadre.

A further reorganisation of the cadre occurred in November 1923, the gazetted posts now comprising:

- One Commissioner of Income-tax,
- Three Assistant Commissioners of Income-tax,
- 41 Income-tax Officers and
- Seven Assistant Income-tax Officers.

Four vacancies still exist and will be filled in three years.

There are 25 Income-tax Officers in charge of circles and eleven additional Income-tax Officers; one officer is on leave.

(c) The Government are unable to make such a statement as circumstances may change from time to time.

(d) 21 officers appointed directly as Assistant Income-tax Officers have passed the departmental examination completely, of whom two are Anglo-Indians, twelve Hindus, six Muhammadans and one an Indian Christian. One Anglo-Indian, six Hindus and two Muhammadans have been appointed as Income-tax Officers in independent charge of circles. One Muhammadan declined such a charge as he did not wish to go to the district in question. The officers so appointed are the senior in the list with the exception of one who is a Muhammadan.

328. Income-tax Officers spend much of their time on tour in their circles and obtain information in this way. The assessee has in every case an opportunity of proving his income.

329. No rules have been framed. Powers are conferred on individual officers according to the aptitude displayed by them. No necessity exists for the enactment of any rules.

330. Two Hindus and one Muhammadan were appointed in 1922. Of the former one subsequently received an appointment in the Customs Department. One Hindu and one Anglo-Indian were originally appointed in 1923 of whom the former resigned after a few months in order to compete for the I. C. S. in which he was successful. Subsequently two Hindus and one Muhammadan were appointed to fill the unexpected vacancies which had arisen. In 1924 two Hindus and one Muhammadan were appointed.

331. The total number of permanent clerks is 145, comprising 114 Hindus, 29 Muhammadans and two Christians, and of temporary clerks (readers of accounts) 20—all Hindus.

The distribution of Hindus and Muhammadans by offices is shown in the attached list. Owing to the preponderance of Hindus the Commissioner of Income-tax decided some time ago that the number of appointments to be held by Muhammadans should be one-third and arrangements have been made to work gradually up to this proportion.

*Statements showing the distribution of Hindu and Muhammadan clerks by offices.*

I.

| Office of.                                      | Hindu. | Muhammadan. | Total. |
|---|--------|-------------|--------|
| Commissioner of Income-tax . . . . .            | 6      | 1           | 7      |
| Assistant Commissioners of Income-tax . . . . . | 10     | 4           | 14     |
| Income-tax Officers . . . . .                   | 118    | 24          | 142    |
| Total . . . . .                                 | 134    | 29          | 163    |

II.

| Grade.                                  | OFFICES OF    |                  |                          |                  |                      |                  |
|---|---------------|------------------|--------------------------|------------------|----------------------|------------------|
|   | COMMISSIONER. |                  | ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS. |                  | INCOME-TAX OFFICERS. |                  |
|   | Hindu.        | Muham-<br>madan. | Hindu.                   | Muham-<br>madan. | Hindu.               | Muham-<br>madan. |
| Rs. Above 125 . . . . .                 | 8             | ...              | 8                        | ...              | ...                  | ...              |
| 100—125 . . . . .                       | ...           | ...              | 1                        | ...              | 10                   | 1                |
| 80—100 . . . . .                        | 1             | ...              | 1                        | ...              | 21                   | 4                |
| 60—80 . . . . .                         | 2             | 1                | 2                        |                  | 28                   | 7                |
| 40—60 . . . . .                         | ...           |                  | 2                        | 1                | 39                   | 12               |
| 90—140 . . . . .                        |               |                  | 1                        | 2                | ...                  | ...              |
| 60—80 }<br>40—80 } Readers of accounts. | ...           | ...              | ...                      | ...              | 20                   | ...              |
| Total . . . . .                         | 6             | 1                | 10                       | 4                | 118                  | 24               |
| GRAND TOTAL . . . . .                   | 163*          |                  |                          |                  |                      |                  |

\* The above number does not include two Christians.

MUHAMMADAN OFFICERS IN THE SURVEY OF INDIA.

892. \*Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: Will the Government be pleased to state:

- (i) (a) the number of Muhammadan, Hindu and Anglo-Indian class II officers in the Survey of India?
- (b) the number of Muhammadan class I officers in the same department?
- (c) the number of Muhammadan officers holding minor or major charges in the Survey of India?
- (2) (a) if the answer to (1) (b) is *nil*, will the Government be pleased to state how long it will be before a Muhammadan will get into class 1 service?
- (b) if the answer to (1) (c) is *nil*, do the Government propose to consider the question of giving at least one charge to a Muhammadan?

Mr. J. W. Bhore: (1) (a) The numbers are 5, 28 and 68, respectively (including probationers).

(b) Nil.

(c) Nil.

(2) (a) The senior Muhammadan Class II officer is 65th on the list and therefore too junior at present to be considered for selection to Class I.

(b) The Surveyor General will be glad to select a Muhammadan for a suitable charge when opportunity arises.

**Lala Duni Chand:** Are there any instances within the knowledge of Government in which fit and qualified Muhammadans were forthcoming and they were rejected on the score of their being Muhammadans?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** Not to my knowledge, but I am afraid I must ask for notice of that question.

ALLEGED DISCONTENT IN THE OFFICE OF THE ACCOUNTANT GENERAL,  
UNITED PROVINCES.

838. **\*Mr. M. Yusuf Imam:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state whether it is aware of the fact that there is a considerable volume of discontent in the office of the Accountant General, United Provinces? (b) If the reply be in the affirmative will the Government be pleased to state what steps they propose to take for its removal? (c) If the reply be in the negative, will the Government be pleased to cause inquiries to be made into the real state of affairs there and place the papers on the table?

GRIEVANCES OF THE SUBORDINATE STAFF OF THE OFFICE OF THE  
ACCOUNTANT GENERAL, UNITED PROVINCES.

334. **\*Mr. M. Yusuf Imam:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the present Accountant General, U. P., is acting most arbitrarily in regard to annual increments, leave holidays and other matters affecting directly the interests of the subordinate staff? (b) if the reply be in the affirmative, what action do the Government propose to take in the matter? (c) Are the Government prepared to make an independent inquiry into the matter and inform the House of the result thereof?

GRANT OF LEAVE TO SUBORDINATES UNDER THE FUNDAMENTAL RULES.

835. **\*Mr. M. Yusuf Imam:** Will the Government be pleased to state whether the head of an office is at liberty to grant leave on half average pay to his subordinates when leave on full average pay is due and the absence is supported by a medical certificate? If the reply be in the affirmative, will the Government be pleased to quote any rule under the Fundamental Rules justifying such action? If the reply be in the negative what action do they propose to take against the officer who is not amenable to any rules?

PRESENT OF A SILVER TEA SET TO THE DAUGHTER OF THE ACCOUNTANT  
GENERAL, UNITED PROVINCES.

836. **\*Mr. M. Yusuf Imam:** Will the Government be pleased to state whether the Government Servants Conduct Rules permit the head of an office to accept, on behalf of his daughter, presents from his subordinates in connection with her marriage? If the answer be in the affirmative, will the Government be pleased to quote rule? If in the negative, are the Government aware of the fact that the present Accountant General, United Provinces, is the recipient of such a present in the shape of a silver tea set from a coterie of his subordinates, and will they be pleased to state what disciplinary action they propose to take against the officer and the men concerned? If, however, Government are not aware of this fact, will they be pleased to order an inquiry into the matter and acquaint the House with its result?

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett:** I will answer these four questions together.

Nos. 888 and 884. The replies are in the negative.

No. 885. The views of the Government on this point are expressed in a letter issued by the Auditor General, a copy of which I place on the table.

---

*Letter No. 538-A-72-23, dated the 30th April 1923, from the Auditor General to the Accountant General, Posts and Telegraphs, and other Accountants General.*

In reply to your letter No. Mis. 3950/F. 90 (a), dated the 10th January 1923, asking whether an authority empowered to grant leave has power under Fundamental Rule 67, to interfere with the option of a Government servant to take leave on full average pay or on half average pay under Fundamental Rule 87, I have the honour to state that the Government of India have decided that a Government servant cannot be compelled against his wishes to take leave on half average pay when leave on full average pay is admissible to him unless it be deemed necessary in the public interest and in the interest of the individual also to prevent the too rapid exhaustion of the limited amount of full pay leave available under the Fundamental Rules. These orders must not be interpreted as interfering with the discretion entrusted to an authority competent to grant leave to determine whether leave should or should not be granted.

---

No. 886. I am informed that one silver tea set was sent to Madras to the Accountant General, United Provinces, on the occasion of his daughter's marriage and that he has brought it back and returned it to the donors.

#### CLOSING OF GOVERNMENT OFFICES ON HOLIDAYS UNDER THE NEGOTIABLE INSTRUMENTS ACT.

337. **\*Mr. M. Yusuf Imam:** Will the Government be pleased to state whether the head of an office is free to keep an office open during holidays under the Negotiable Instruments Act in view of G. I., Home Department, No. 5253, dated 16th September, 1901? If the reply be in the affirmative, will the Government be pleased to state clearly the meaning of the said G. I. order? If the reply be in the negative, will the Government be pleased to state what steps they propose to take for the observance of this order?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** The orders referred to by the Honourable Member, in so far as they relate to the detail of closing Government offices on a holiday notified under the Negotiable Instruments Act, may be regarded as obsolete. Heads of offices are now subject in this matter to the orders of the Local Government to which they are subordinate. In the Government of India Secretariat the whole question of the number of holidays to be observed came under consideration as a result of the recommendations of the Incheape Committee. The total number of such holidays has been reduced considerably below the number of holidays notified under the Act; but though holidays must depend upon the exigencies of the public service, and the head of an office must therefore have power to keep his office open on declared holidays, if the state of work demands this, the intention is that the holidays now allowed should be real holidays and in normal circumstances the staff should not be deprived of them.



APPOINTMENT OF MR. J. C. WALTON AS INDIAN DELEGATE TO THE  
OPIUM CONFERENCE VICE MR. J. CAMPBELL.

838. \*Dr. S. K. Datta: Has the attention of Government been called to the following Reuter's Special Service Cable Message, dated Geneva, December 12th, 1924:

"Mr. J. C. Walton replaces Mr. Campbell as Indian delegate for the remainder of the sittings of the Opium Conference."

Will Government state the reasons which led to this change? Did Mr. Campbell fail to give satisfaction to the Government of India? Will Government state Mr. Walton's qualifications to be the Indian representative? What are his instructions?

STATEMENT IN THE *MANCHESTER GUARDIAN* RE FAILURE OF THE  
PRELIMINARY OPIUM CONFERENCE.

839. \*Dr. S. K. Datta: Has the attention of Government been called to the following statement which appeared in the *Manchester Guardian Weekly* of November 21st, 1924:

"A Press Association Foreign Special message from Geneva says that the chief editor of the *Journal de Geneve*, who formerly occupied an important post on the secretariat of the League, contributed a leading article on Tuesday on what he describes as the failure of the preliminary Opium Conference. The truth is, he says, that no State desires to take any serious step. The revenues of the European colonies in the Far East are collected as to more than a third from the opium monopoly. \* \* \*

The United States will be the only Power to be sincerely shocked, because it wants a settlement, and since the first conference has refused a settlement the United States reserves to itself the right to place the matter before the second conference, thus circumventing the Machiavellian calculations of those in India, for example, who had hoped it would be easier to reach an agreement without the United States. The failure of the second conference would have the most unfortunate political repercussions for the League of Nations."

Will Government state whether there is any truth in the charge regarding India made therein? If not, what steps have the Government of India taken to deny the charge?

PROCEEDINGS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE OPIUM  
TRAFFIC.

840. \*Dr. S. K. Datta: (a) Has the attention of Government been called to newspaper reports of the proceedings of the Standing Advisory Committee and the International Conference on the Opium Traffic recently held at Geneva under the auspices of the League of Nations? Will Government place on the table of the House the official report of the debates, proposals and resolutions passed at these International gatherings?

(b) In the event of these reports not being available at present, will Government make a statement to the House regarding the proceedings with special reference to the contributions to the discussions and the proposals made by the Indian representatives?

APPOINTMENT OF MR. J. C. WALTON AS INDIAN DELEGATE TO THE  
OPIUM CONFERENCE VICE MR. J. CAMPBELL.

851. \*Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: (a) Has the attention of the Government been drawn to a Geneva Cable, dated the 12th December 1924, and

published in the Press that " Mr. J. C. Walton will replace Sir John Campbell as the Indian delegate for the remainder of the sittings of the Conference " of the League of Nations?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state the reasons for this arrangement; and also state who is this Mr. J. C. Walton, and how the selection has been made?

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett:** I propose to answer questions 338, 339, 340 and 351 together.

**No. 338.**—The reply to the first part of the Honourable Member's question is in the affirmative. Mr. Campbell's replacement by Mr. Walton is due to the fact that he was called to London and Greece in connection with certain matters requiring his presence there. Mr. Campbell is the British Representative on the Greek Refugees' Settlement Commission, and came to assist us in the Geneva Conferences only for a short period. Mr. Campbell did not fail to give full satisfaction to the Government of India. Mr. Walton is the Assistant Secretary to the Economic and Overseas Department of the India Office, which deals with opium matters, and as such is fully conversant with the details of the Government of India's policy. The appointment of Mr. Walton as an Indian delegate was made by the Secretary of State for India, and so far as the Government of India are aware, apart from being asked to pursue the accepted policy, he was not given any specific instructions.

**No. 339.**—**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett:** The reply to the first two parts of the question is in the negative. As regards the third part, the Government see no reason for taking official notice of such newspaper attacks.

**No. 340.**—**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett:** (a) The Government of India have seen the newspaper reports referred to by the Honourable Member. The official reports of the proceedings of the Conferences have not yet all been received. The Government of India will consider the question of placing copies thereof either on the table of the House or in the Library as soon as they are received.

(b) The Government of India have nothing to add in regard to the deliberations of the first Conference, namely, that one convened to consider the continued use of prepared opium in the Far East. Burma is the only province in India in which opium is smoked to any large extent, but the arrangements for rationing and registration are so complete, and the check against the spread of the habit to the younger Burmans so effective as not to leave any room for outside criticisms. As regards the second Conference the position is as below. The Government of India welcome this opportunity of explaining the facts. The Resolution of the Council of the League of Nations under which this Conference was summoned had in mind not the restriction of the *production* of raw opium and the coca leaf to the amounts required for medicinal and scientific purposes only, but the limitation of *their export* for medicinal and scientific purposes, *i.e.*, for the manufacture of drugs. The American Delegation however placed before the Conference a redraft of the Hague Opium Convention, Article I of which requires the Contracting Parties to confine the production of opium to medicinal and scientific purposes. Mr. Campbell raised the question of the competence of the Conference to discuss a matter that was not on the agenda, had not been in the mind of the Government of India in taking part in the Conference, and in respect of which therefore he had not received specific instructions, and though the Conference decided

against him he reserved the right of the Government of India to raise the question again before the Assembly of the League. The general policy of the Government of India is clear and well known. As regards exports they have no intention to export any drugs or raw materials for manufacture to countries that do not want them; in fact the Government of India have gone further and refused or restricted exports in some cases. As regards imports, drugs and raw materials for their manufacture cannot be imported except under a license issued by the excise authorities and in practice except *charas* (a hemp product) no drugs or raw materials are imported into India otherwise than by smugglers except for medicinal or scientific purposes. As regards internal consumption the Government of India consider that it is an internal question essentially for each country to settle by itself, and that it is not a matter which could be regulated for India by International Conventions. Excise is in Governors' provinces a provincial transferred subject, and it is for the Ministers in consultation with their Legislative Councils to determine policy. Then there are the Indian States, the rulers of which have to settle their own internal policy. Mr. Campbell was instructed to secure the addition of a proviso to Article 1 of the redraft saving the rights of Governments in India to regulate the domestic consumption of raw opium and the Honourable Member will have seen from the newspaper reports that the Indian delegation acted accordingly. The second Conference has recently resumed its sittings after an adjournment, and it will be convenient to postpone any further statement to a later date.

**Dr. S. K. Datta:** Will you allow me, Sir, to put a series of supplementary questions in connection with the answer just now given? Do I take it that Mr. Campbell is still a member of the Standing Advisory Committee?

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett:** I am not aware what the position exactly is. He will no doubt be re-employed if available.

**Dr. S. K. Datta :** May I ask whether the American contention was to regulate the export of opium and to do this it was necessary to control opium production at the source and therefore restriction within the limits of India was to be brought about with that object in view?

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett :** The American contention was, I understand, that, in order to prevent the smuggling of opium and opium derivatives into America, it was desirable that India should restrict her production of opium to production required on medical certificate and for scientific purposes. That is, in order to prevent smuggling into America, the Americans proposed a drastic alteration of the internal conditions in regard to opium in India.

**Dr. S. K. Datta :** Is it a fact that various public bodies, political, religious and social, upheld the American contention that opium in India should be restricted to medical and scientific purposes? The All-India Congress Committee, the Indian Liberal League and, I believe, the National Christian Council all passed Resolutions asking for this.

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett :** There are usually in most countries bodies which oppose the Government. The Government of India will be very ready to discuss the subject at any time if any Member takes the opportunities offered him to obtain time by means of a Resolution for the discussion of this subject in the Assembly. I notice with interest that no Member or body of Members seems to be sufficiently interested in this subject to secure that the opportunities shall arise.

**Dr. S. K. Datta :** May I ask whether the Government of India will be willing to call a conference of those interested in this subject so that the policy of the Government of India might be understood?

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett :** I regret if the Honourable Member does not understand the policy of the Government of India. I have tried to make it clear.

**Mr. A. Rangaswami Aiyangar :** Is the Honourable the Finance Member aware that in the last September Session a number of Members of this House put down Resolutions on this question and they did not get it in the ballot.

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett :** I notice that a certain number were put down but they were not successful in the ballot, which probably implies that the number interested was not sufficient.

**Mr. E. G. Fleming :** Will the Government be prepared to state, with regard to the consumption of opium in Burma, whether it is consumed by Burmans or Chinese labourers resident in Burma?

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett :** I believe the facts are available for those who choose to look them up.

**Mr. M. A. Jinnah :** May I know whether it is a fact that it was represented in this Conference that Indian public opinion was opposed to the proposals which were made by the American delegates?

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett :** I am not aware whether any exact statement to that effect or to the contrary was made.

**Mr. A. Rangaswami Aiyangar :** May I know whether it is the Finance Member's view that we oppose this measure because it is a Government measure?

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett :** I was not aware that the Honourable Member did oppose it.

**Mr. Devaki Prasad Sinha :** With reference to the statement of the Honourable the Finance Member that the Government do not export opium to those countries that do not want it, will the Honourable Member be pleased to state if in exporting opium to certain countries Government require from those countries a certificate stating that the amount of opium which is demanded is required for strictly medicinal or scientific purposes?

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett :** The Government of India export opium only to those countries and in such amounts as are desired by those countries whose Governments give a license for import.

**Mr. Devaki Prasad Sinha :** I will give a definite instance. In exporting opium to the Straits Settlements do Government satisfy themselves that the amount of opium that is generally taken there is required for medicinal and scientific purposes?

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett :** The Government do not inquire what purpose the Government of the Straits Settlements has in giving a license for import. That is surely the job of the Government of the Straits Settlements.

**Mr. Devaki Prasad Sinha :** May I take it that in exporting opium to the Straits Settlements Government do not in any way satisfy themselves that the amount of opium which is sent there is either more or less than that which will be required for strictly medicinal or scientific purposes?

**Mr. President :** The Honourable Member must ask questions which are the direct and primary concern of the Member of Government concerned. I am not aware that Sir Basil Blackett is responsible for the policy of the Straits Settlements Government.

**Mr. Devaki Prasad Sinha :** With reference to the statement of the Honourable the Finance Member that the domestic consumption of opium is left to be regulated by the different Ministers, may I take it that the Government of India have no settled policy so far as the domestic consumption of opium is concerned?

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett :** I do not think the Honourable Member should take that at all. I do not understand the import of his question.

**Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty :** Do the Government of India realise that, before launching upon a philanthropic policy of preventing the use of opium in other countries, their first duty is to see that the use of all intoxicants in India is prevented. Having regard to the injuries caused to the people of India who are suffering from the excise policy of the Government, do the Government realise that the revenue of the country should not be bartered away for philanthropic purposes in favour of other countries?

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett :** I do not think that the Honourable Member is justified in saying that the people of India suffer from the excise policy of the Government of India or the policy of the Government of India in regard to opium. There was a very authoritative committee on the subject of the use of opium in India in 1895. Its conclusions were that the use in India of opium for eating was a well established and on the whole not an injurious habit, that it certainly was not abused to the extent that, shall we say, alcohol is abused in some countries.

**Diwan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao :** Instead of quoting the opinion of the Committee of 1895, may I ask the Finance Member whether the Government of India have given any consideration to the more recent opinions expressed by the Missionary Council of India, the All-India Congress Committee, and the Indian National Liberal Federation in regard to bringing the use of opium under some kind of control in India?

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett :** The Government of India have given very careful consideration to the present position in regard to the use of opium in India and to some of the opinions expressed on the subject. As will have been observed by those Members who have followed the proceedings, the suggestion has been made that the subject of the use of opium should be examined by some kind of an international committee. I do not know what the fate of that suggestion has been, but it has been put up before the Conference in Geneva.

**Diwan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao :** Will that extend to remedial measures in India?

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett :** I do not think it will be the job of a committee of that sort to suggest remedial measures. Remedial measures, I think, are largely a matter of education. In the case of the Bombay Presidency, where there is some suggestion that opium is administered to infants to keep them quiet while their mothers are working, the view taken, I believe, by those concerned is that the only way to deal with it is the education of the mothers.

**Mr. M. A. Jinnah:** May I ask one question? Perhaps the Honourable the Finance Member is aware, as it was reported in last night's paper, that a Commission has been appointed, and, if that newspaper report is correct, will the Honourable Member take any steps to ascertain the real Indian public opinion and in the light of that give instructions to our representative there?

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett:** The Government of India have been at considerable pains to obtain the real opinion of India on this subject. Local Governments have quite recently been circularised with a view to an understanding of their views and the views held in their Provinces in regard to the present condition. The Government of India have stated over and over again that they are not actuated by financial motives in this matter, that the question of the financial results of any restriction of opium is not one which would deter them from taking such action as may be within their power to reduce any evils that may be the result of the present system in regard to the use of opium. But it is obvious that in a country of the size of India, with the problems of the Indian States and the social and religious customs connected with opium, that prohibition of the ordinary use of opium throughout India would be a very drastic step, and I have yet to learn that Indian opinion is in its favour.

**Dr. S. K. Datta:** May I ask the Honourable Member whether he would be willing to transfer the administration of opium from his Department to that of Education, Health and Lands, where it properly belongs; and is the Honourable Member prepared at the next meeting of the Opium Conference to appoint to it a non-official Indian together with an official representative of the Government of India?

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett:** The second question certainly does not arise out of the question. To the first question I can only answer personally. Nothing would give me more pleasure than to transfer this subject to the Education, Health and Lands Department.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** May I ask what is the religious custom connected with opium to which the Honourable Member referred?

**Mr. President:** I think the Honourable Member better give notice of that. We had better pass on to the next question and before we do so I should like to say that the House has enjoyed considerable latitude, and many of the questions which I have passed as supplementary would not have been admitted if they had been placed before me for admission, inasmuch as they referred to matters which are primarily the concern of Local Governments.

No. 351.—**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett:** (a) Yes.

(b) I would refer the Honourable Member to my reply to Dr. Datta's question No. 338.

#### INORDINATE DELAY IN THE DELIVERY OF POSTAL LETTERS.

341. **\*Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to the letter published in the issue of the *Forward* of the 17th December, 1924, page 13, under the heading "Postal

Complaint " stating that the letter dropped at Garden Reach Post Office on the 22nd November 1923 reached Muzaffarpur on the 23rd November 1924?

(b) If so, will Government please state if the statement made is correct?

(c) If correct, will they please state the cause of such an unreasonable delay?

**Sir Geoffrey Clarke:** (a) The Postmaster-General, Bengal and Assam, took notice of the complaint referred to.

(b) and (c). The cover of the letter stated to have been delayed in the post was not forthcoming. No inquiry could, therefore, be made into the alleged delay. The complainant has desired the matter to be dropped.

#### TRIAL OF PERSONS ARRESTED UNDER THE BENGAL CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT ORDINANCE.

842. **\*Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** (a) Will Government please state if the persons arrested under the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Ordinance will be brought to public trial?

(b) If so, when?

(c) If not, will Government please give reasons?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** (a), (b) and (c) The fact that any action has been taken against any person under the Ordinance or Regulation III will certainly not preclude such persons from being brought to trial for any substantive offence regarding which Government are advised that a prosecution is possible and in the public interest. The policy of the Government of India is to bring persons to trial for substantive offences wherever possible.

#### ESTABLISHMENT OF A SUPREME COURT OF APPEAL IN INDIA.

843. **\*Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan:** Will the Government be pleased to state:

(a) the number and the cost of the appeals taken from the Indian High Courts to the Privy Council during the years 1920, 1921 and 1922, respectively?

(b) if they have consulted Local Governments with regard to the desirability of establishing a Supreme Court of Appeal in India?

(c) if not, are they prepared to consult Local Governments on the subject?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** (a) The Honourable Member is referred to the answer given to Sir Hari Singh Gour's question No. 10 on the 2nd July 1923.

(b) Yes.

(c) Does not arise.

THE IMPERIAL BANK OF INDIA AGREEMENT WITH THE GOVERNOR  
GENERAL IN COUNCIL.

344. \*Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan: Will the Government be pleased:

(a) to lay on the table a copy of the agreement entered into between the Imperial Bank and the Governor General in Council?

(b) to state the names of the Directors of the Imperial Banks?

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett:** (a) The Honourable Member is referred to the answer given in reply to Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar's question No. 271 on the same subject.

(b) A list showing the names of the Governors is laid on the table.

"PRESENT GOVERNORS OF THE IMPERIAL BANK OF INDIA.

*President, Local Board, Bengal—*

Sir Alexander Murray, Kt., C.B.E.

*President, Local Board, Bombay—*

F. C. Annesley, Esq.

*President, Local Board, Madras—*

T. M. Ross, Esq.

*Vice President, Local Board, Bengal—*

B. E. G. Eddis, Esq.

*Vice President, Local Board, Bombay—*

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas, Kt., C.I.E., M.B.E., M.L.A.

*Vice President, Local Board, Madras—*

Sir James Simpson, Kt.

*Controller of the Currency.*

NOMINATED BY THE GOVERNOR GENERAL IN COUNCIL.

1. The Hon'ble Sir Maneckji B. Dadabhoy, Kt., K.C.I.E.

2. The Hon'ble Sir Dinshaw E. Wacha, Kt., J.P.

3. The Hon'ble Sir S. R. M. Annamalai Chettiar, Kt.

4. Rai Sir Onkar Mulh Jatia Bahadur, Kt., O.B.E.

*Secretary and Treasurer, Calcutta—*

D. S. McClure, Esq.

*Secretary and Treasurer, Bombay—*

R. Lindsay, Esq.

*Secretary and Treasurer, Madras—*

W. Lamb, Esq.

*Managing Governors—*

Sir Norcot Warren, Kt., K.C.I.E.

N. M. Murray, Esq."



## DISMISSAL OF BELI RAM, BAZAR CHOWDHRY OF RAWALPINDI.

845. \*Lala Duni Chand: (a) Are Government aware that Bazar Chowdhry of Rawalpindi, Beli Ram, who had put in service for 28 years was dismissed by Major Beyts, Cantonment Magistrate?

(b) If so, is it a fact that he was dismissed without any charge having been framed against him or any opportunity having been given to him to answer the charge?

(c) Is it a fact that he was dismissed on the alleged ground of neglect of duty in recovering Cantonment revenue for the first half year 1922-23 and that in point of fact this allegation was quite incorrect, as shown by the statistics of realisation of Cantonment revenue?

(d) Is it a fact that one J. Mathew a native Christian was appointed in place of the said Beli Ram?

(e) Is it also a fact that the said J. Mathew was prosecuted for illicit possession of cocaine in a case in which Major Beyts gave evidence in his favour?

(f) Is it a fact that the said Bazar Chowdhry Beli Ram was granted a lease for a term of 25 years of Cantonment land in Rawalpindi to build upon it and that Major Beyts cancelled it?

(g) Is it correct that under the rules the Cantonment Magistrate or any other authority except the Local Government had no power to cancel the lease?

(h) Is it a fact that the lease was cancelled after the building operations had progressed considerably and that by reason of the cancellation of the lease he has suffered a great loss?

(i) Is it a fact that this lease was granted to him in lieu of manifold services rendered by Beli Ram to the Government?

(j) What action do Government propose to take in the matter?

**Mr. E. Burdon:** (a) Government are aware of the dismissal. Beli Ram served in the Cantonments Department for 5 years and 10 months only.

(b) No. The Cantonment Magistrate's notice of dismissal, dated the 11th October 1922, set forth the charge against Beli Ram, to which the latter replied at great length in a letter dated the 14th October. These papers were fully considered by the Cantonment Committee before they confirmed the dismissal.

(c) The allegation was found by the Cantonment Committee to be correct, and their decision was upheld by the authorities to whom Beli Ram subsequently appealed.

(d) Yes.

(e) The Government of India are informed that Major Beyts was called to give evidence as to Mathew's previous good character.

(f) The lease was granted. It contained a special agreement to the effect that if Beli Ram's appointment changed hands the Cantonment Authority should, if it desired, take over the site and buildings on it, on payment of

the current market value of the buildings. In accordance with this agreement, the Cantonment Magistrate took over the site and buildings with the sanction of the General Officer Commanding, Rawalpindi District, after Beli Ram's dismissal. Beli Ram was paid compensation amounting to Rs. 5,249 as assessed by a Committee of Arbitration.

(g) The Cantonment Magistrate exercised the power conferred on him by the lease deed itself, and did not thereby exceed any limits imposed on his powers by rule.

(h) No. Building operations had only just begun. Beli Ram obtained full compensation.

(i) No. A similar lease was granted to any cantonment servant in conformity with a town planning scheme and in order that cantonment employees might be able to live near their work. The agreement referred to under (f) in this answer was included in all the leases.

(j) No further action. The memorial from Beli Ram was considered by the Government of India and rejected in 1923.

#### INCOME-TAX OFFICERS IN THE PUNJAB.

346. \*Lala Duni Chand: (a) Is it a fact that a number of Income-tax Commissioners, Income-tax officers and Income-tax Inspectors appointed by the Financial Commissioner, Punjab, and the Punjab Government in September 1922 in the Income-tax cadre of the Punjab, have been replaced in consequence of dismissal, reversion or other similar causes at the instance of the Income-tax Commissioner?

(b) If the reply to (a) be in the affirmative, will the Government be pleased to state their number and names and also the number and names of those who replaced them?

(c) Will the Government please give reasons for this action of the Income-tax Commissioner?

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett:** The Government have no detailed information on the subject and do not propose to call for any.

#### YEARLY REQUIREMENTS OF SLEEPERS BY RAILWAYS FORMING THE NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY SLEEPER GROUP.

347. \*Lala Duni Chand: (1) Will the Government be pleased to state the names of railways forming the pool, which use the coniferous sleepers, and which buy their annual requirements through the N. W. R.

(2) Will the Government be pleased to state what have been the yearly requirements of coniferous sleepers of each of the railways that have been forming this pool for the last ten years?

(3) Will the Government be pleased to state, if the N. W. R. consulted these railways as to what their yearly requirements would be from the year 1928 to 1928, when the N. W. R. fixed up a contract for 5 years in 1922? If the answer be in the affirmative, will the Government be pleased to state what was the number indented by each of the railways?

(4) Will the Government be pleased to state if the railways which combine in this pool are taking the same number of sleepers that they used to take before the year 1922? If not, why?

(5) Will the Government be pleased to state if it is a fact that the N. W. R. will have a surplus of sleepers during the years 1925-26, 1926-27, 1927-28. If so, why?

What will be the approximate number of such sleepers, and what steps does it intend to take to dispose of the surplus?

(6) Will the Government be pleased to state if it is a fact that there is a surplus of deodar sleepers at present, and they can be had at Rs. 6-8 and the cost of a creosoted fir and chir sleeper is also about Rs. 6-8, and that the age of the deodar sleeper is nearly double of the creosoted sleeper?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** As the answer to this question is very long I propose, if there is no objection, to lay it on the table.

(1) The following railways form the North Western Railway sleeper group:

North Western, Bombay, Baroda and Central India, East Indian, Great Indian Peninsula and the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railways.

(The Jodhpur and Bikaner Railways are also in this group but information about their requirements is not available.)

(2) A statement showing the yearly requirements of coniferous sleepers for each of these railways for the last 7 years and for next year is laid on the table.

Information regarding the years prior to 1918-19 is not available, as the 'Sleeper Pool' was not in existence then and each railway used to make its own purchases independently before the formation of the 'Sleeper Pool'.

(3) The North Western Railway did not consider it necessary to consult these railways afresh about their requirements for the years 1923 to 1928, when entering into the 5-year contract in 1922, as this question had been fully discussed at the annual meetings of Chief Engineers of the different railways, and the number of sleepers to which each railway concerned had a first claim had been fixed.

(4) In the year 1922-23 the number taken by the above railways from the North Western Railway section of the sleeper pool was higher than the numbers in the last two years; in the years 1919-20 to 1921-22 the numbers taken were considerably lower than in the last two years, while in the year 1918-19 also the number taken was rather lower than in the last two years. It may be explained that in the years 1919-20 to 1921-22 supplies were very seriously short of requirements.

It is difficult to reply to the second part of this question, but it can hardly be expected that the numbers taken would not vary and, as will be seen from the statement, the requirements vary considerably.

(5) It is not anticipated that there will be any unused surplus of sleepers during the years 1925-26 to 1927-28 as those not required on the open lines will be utilised on the construction of new lines.

(6) It is a fact that there is a surplus of deodar sleepers on the market at present, and it is understood that they can be obtained at Rs. 6-8-0 each. The cost of creosoted fir and chir sleepers at present has come down to Rs. 6 each. The life of a deodar sleeper is reckoned at about 15 years; there has not yet been sufficient experience of treated fir and chir sleepers to allow of a fair estimate of their average life being given, but it is anticipated that their life will be about 12 years.

*Statement showing the yearly requirements of Railways for sleepers.*

| Year.       | N. W.     | B., B. & C. I. | G. I. P. | E. I.   | O. & R. | Total in lakhs. |
|-------------|-----------|----------------|----------|---------|---------|-----------------|
| 1918-19 . . | 600,000   | 140,000        | 20,000   | 50,000  | 47,750  | 8.58            |
| 1919-20 . . | 800,000   | 150,000        | 26,500   | 50,000  | 12,000  | 10.38           |
| 1920-21 . . | 1,200,000 | 310,500        | ...      | 100,000 | 50,000  | 16.60           |
| 1921-22 . . | 1,200,000 | 600,000        | ...      | 100,000 | *       | 19.00           |
| 1922-23 . . | 800,000   | 264,000        | 50,000   | 200,000 | 70,000  | 18.84           |
| 1923-24 . . | 1,050,000 | 125,000        | 50,000   | 50,000  | ...     | 12.75           |
| 1924-25 . . | 800,000   | 50,000         | 70,000   | 50,000  | ...     | 9.70            |
| 1925-26 . . | 800,000   | 55,000         | 21,000   | 50,000  | ...     | 9.26            |

\* A demand for 45,000 sleepers, during 1921-22, was first placed on the N. W. Railway, but was subsequently cancelled.

**STEPS TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT TO SECURE THE LIFE AND PROPERTY OF THE INHABITANTS OF THE TRANSFERRED DISTRICTS IN THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE.**

348. **\*Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** (a) Is it not a fact that Lord Elgin, the then Governor General of India, and Sir Mackworth Young, the then Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, were strongly opposed to the creation of a separate Frontier Province?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table the recorded opinion of Lord Elgin on the subject?

(c) Has the attention of the Government been drawn to the following passage in the book called "India under Lord Curzon and After" by Mr. Lovat Fraser:

"In a Province primarily occupied and manned to handle people and issues beyond the administrative boundary, the ordinary details of administration are liable to be somewhat disregarded"?

(d) What steps have the Government taken to secure the safety of the life and property of the inhabitants of the transferred Districts in the N.W. Frontier Province?

**Mr. Denys Bray:** (a) Yes.

(b) I would refer the Honourable Member to the Blue-book on the North-West Frontier published in 1901, a copy of which is in the Government of India Central Library.

(c) No.

(d) The energies of the forces of Government on the frontier—regulars, police, Frontier Constabulary, Militia Khassadars and levies—are directed to this end and the statistics of trans-frontier crime testify to the success of their efforts.

**Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum:** Do the Government propose to extend the benefits of education to the tribesmen across the border as a civilizing measure resulting in the protection of the life and property of the neighbouring settled districts?

**Mr. Denys Bray:** Wherever Government find an opportunity to do so without undue expenditure of money they do so.

349. (*Vide* reply to question No. 212.)

#### ASSAULT BY SOLDIERS ON MR. SIDHVA OF KARACHI.

350. **\*Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** (a) With reference to my starred question No. 1910 of the 15th September last, regarding the assault on Mr. Sidhva at Karachi, is it not a fact that "one of the airmen forcibly ejected him (Mr. Sidhva) from the railway compartment" as admitted by the Government themselves in their official account sent to the Secretary of State?

Have the Government been able to find out the name of the airman, who "forcibly ejected" Mr. Sidhva? And under what law was the airman justified in forcibly ejecting him?

(b) Has the attention of the Government been drawn to the following passages in their report referred to above:

"It appears that Aircraftman Blood on being confronted by the Commanding Officer with Aircraftman McEwan made some sort of an admission"?

"The Government of India are advised that the admission proved to have been made before the Commanding Officer, does not amount to a confession"?

(c) Will the Government be pleased to give the text of this admission as recorded?

(d) Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table "the proceedings of the Court Martial", and "the summary of evidence" of the case? And if not, why not?

**Mr. E. Burdon:** (a) and (b) The Government of India are naturally aware of the contents of their letter to the Secretary of State. They are, however, ignorant of the means by which the Honourable Member obtained access to it, and they do not intend to discuss its contents in this House.

(c) and (d) No, Sir.

**Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** Are the Government aware that the contents have been published in the newspapers—I am referring to the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, of the 23rd December, 1924, a copy of which I specially kept for my friend, Mr. Burdon.

(The copy was handed to the Army Secretary.)

**Mr. E. Burdon:** Thank you very much.

351. (*Vide* pp. 284-285 and 289 *ante*.)

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT DELEGATE TO THE OPIUM CONFERENCE  
ON THE QUESTION OF THE CURTAILMENT OF OPIUM PRODUCTION.

352. \***Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** (a) Has the attention of the Government been drawn to a London cable, dated the 14th December 1924, and published in the press (*Englishman*, 16th December), regarding the opium conference of the League of Nations, that "the discussion of the American proposals submitted by an exceptionally authoritative American delegation is being resisted. The centre of resistance is India's British representative presumably instructed from Whitehall. That is not the position we can creditably maintain under the keen scrutiny of American and world opinion. We trust that early instructions will be sent for its abandonment"?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state what instructions, if any, have they issued to their nominee in Geneva on the question of the curtailment of opium production?

(c) Has the attention of the Government been drawn to a cablegram from Geneva, published in the *Statesman* of the 23rd November 1924 in which it is stated that "when the opium conference was discussing the Philanthropic Societies' suggestions, Mr. Campbell objected to certain remarks by Mr. E. J. Dukes, representing the Board of the Anti-Opium Society, to the effect that the Indian Government delegate did not represent the people of India, and to Mr. Duke's speaking in the name of the 400 signatories of the petition, representing 216,000 people of India, who are in favour of limiting the cultivation of poppy to medical and scientific needs"?

(d) Will the Government kindly state the credentials of Mr. Campbell to speak in the name of the people of India?

(e) Will the Government state their reasons for not giving an opportunity to the representatives of the people of India in the Central Legislature to elect their own representative to the Conference of the League of Nations?

(f) Is it not a fact as stated by Mr. Alexander in the cablegram referred to in (c) above that "he had received a telegram from Mr. Gandhi declaring that all India wanted the suppression of opium traffic except for medicinal purposes"?

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blckett:** Clauses (a) and (c).—The answer is in the affirmative.

Clause (b).—It was not necessary to provide the Indian Delegates with specific instructions on the particular point now raised by the Honourable Member. They were fully seized of the general policy of the Government of India in the matter.

Clause (d).—Mr. Campbell was appointed by the Government.

Clause (e).—The principle that it is the Government that is represented at the League of Nations is a fundamental one.

Clause (f).—The Government of India have, like the Honourable Member, seen a statement to this effect in the press.

SUITABILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS IN KENYA FOR INDIAN COLONISATION.

**Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas:** Sir, I have given private notice of the following question to my Honourable friend, Mr. Bhore, which he has accepted and agreed to reply to here:

(a) Has the attention of the Government of India been drawn to the statement made by the Right Honourable Srinivasa Sastri regarding the announcement made in the inaugural speech of His Excellency the Viceroy to the Legislature this Session that the Government of India were considering the deputation of an officer to Kenya to investigate the suitability of certain areas in Kenya for Indian colonisation?

(b) If so, will they kindly say whether they have reached any decision in the matter?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** (a) The reply is in the affirmative.

(b) With your permission, Sir, I shall explain the general position regarding this proposal at some length. In the Parliamentary White Paper on Kenya, which was published in 1923, the temporary reservation in the Lowlands of an area which did not infringe on native reserves or conflict with native requirements was foreshadowed in order to test the strength of the Indian demand for land for agricultural purposes. In their representations on this subject the Colonies Committee of the Government of India strongly emphasised that they were averse from the principle of reserving land for any immigrant race in Kenya, but suggested that if it was decided to allot land for Indian colonisation, before applications were invited, opportunity should be given to send an officer from India to report on its suitability from the Indian point of view. Information was received last November that an area had been inspected by the local officers and earmarked provisionally for Indian occupation. It is also understood that the East African Indian National Congress has been invited to send its representatives to inspect this area and has agreed to do so. In the circumstances the Government of India decided that the Standing Emigration Committee of the two Houses of the Legislature should be consulted on the proposal to send an officer from India to investigate its suitability for Indian colonisation. The Committee will consider the matter at their next meeting, and until their report is received no decision on it can be arrived at. From the reservation made by the Colonies Committee on the general principle of allotting land to particular communities in Kenya, to which I have already referred, and in which the Government of India entirely concur, it will be observed that at no time has there been any question of acquiescence in a policy of segregation.

**Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** May I know, Sir, if before any decision is reached on the conclusions of the Emigration Advisory Committee, this House will be given an opportunity to discuss the report of that Committee?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** The Standing Emigration Committee is a body which represents both Houses of the Legislature, and I think we may confidently take their advice in the matter without further reference to the Houses of the Legislature especially on a matter of this description.

**Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** May I take it, Sir, that the Government are not going to give the House the opportunity that I ask for?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** I did not say so, Sir?

**Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar:** May I ask the Honourable Member whether the Emigration Committee will be supplied with a copy of the memorandum furnished by the Colonies Committee on this subject?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** That is a point, Sir, I have not yet considered, but if the Honourable Member had been here two or three days ago he would have heard the reply that I gave on this particular question of the memorandum by two members of the Colonies Committee.

**Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar:** I did not mean " by two members of the Committee "; I meant the memorandum furnished by the Committee to the Colonial Office on this very question?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** No, Sir. I do not think that will be placed before the Emigration Standing Committee.

---

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PETITIONS.

**Mr. President :** Under Standing Order 80 I have to appoint at the commencement of each Session a Committee on Public Petitions. The Standing Order provides that the Deputy President of the Assembly shall be the Chairman of the Committee. Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar is accordingly appointed Chairman of the Committee. The following Members will form the Committee:

Mr. K. C. Neogy,

Diwan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao,

Mr. E. H. Ashworth, and

Khan Bahadur Saiyid Muhammad Ismail.

---

RESOLUTION *RE* INQUIRY INTO THE QUESTION OF CURRENCY AND EXCHANGE—*contd.*

**Mr. President :** The Assembly will now resume discussion on the Resolution moved by Mr. Venkatapatiraju. Resolution moved:

" This Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that a Committee with a majority of Indian non-officials on it, and with an Indian chairman be immediately appointed to examine the whole question of exchange and currency in the light of the experience gained since the date of the publication of the Babington-Smith Report, and to make recommendations as to the best policy to be pursued to secure a system of currency and exchange best suited to the interest of India."

Since which an amendment has been moved:

" That for all the words after the words ' to make recommendations ' the following be substituted :

' so as to organise the currency system in India on the basis of gold as the only unlimited standard of value and currency.' "

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett** (Finance Member) : Sir, I rise at once in the hope that this particular amendment, now under discussion, may be quickly disposed of, in order that we may return to the more general subject raised by the Resolution itself. The particular amendment



[Sir Basil Blackett.]

Low proposed would restrict the reference of the Committee when appointed by requiring it to ignore all other possibilities except a recommendation for the introduction in India of a currency system complying with the definition, whatever that may be, of a genuine gold standard. We had a very interesting discussion from Dr. Lohokare of the advantages of a genuine gold standard, as understood by him, and the Honourable Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya gave us what, I think, is probably the strongest argument in favour of the introduction of a gold currency into India, namely, the argument that many people in India have some suspicion that they have been refused something which they want and that therefore they want it. I recognize the real importance of that argument, but I think that when deciding on so important a question as the future currency policy of India, we must be very careful that we are not guided purely by an argument of that sort. I do not propose to-day to enter deeply into the question what are the relative advantages of a gold standard with a gold currency in circulation and other possible currency systems. When I spoke at some length on the Bill which I introduced last Thursday, I happened to say that there were comparatively few people who claimed a full knowledge of currency in India and even fewer who possessed it. That remark of mine has, I am sorry to observe, been taken in some quarters as something of a warning to people to keep off the subject. But if the context in which those words were used is examined, it will be seen that they were not intended in that sense at all. It was in the first place an apology on behalf of the Finance Member for delivering a six thousand word speech on a sixty word Bill. It was in the second place an invitation to the House to the discussion of a subject the measure of whose importance in our daily lives is in inverse proportion to the measure of its general intelligibility. The discussions that we have had have, I think, been quite fruitful. I should like to read to the House a few paragraphs from an article in the *Economic Journal* for December 1924 on the monetary standards of New Zealand and Australia which I happened to be reading last night. It is curiously apposite to our discussion of the gold standard and the gold exchange standard :

" An essential preliminary to any profitable discussion of present monetary conditions is the frank admission that the Gold Standard, as a means of providing for the automatic regulation of the world's prices and exchanges by movements of gold, is now in active operation nowhere. The achievement within the past year or two of a considerable measure of price and exchange stability is due, not to the gold standard, but rather to the cessation of inflationary finance, and to the increased attention given to the exchanges as indicators for monetary regulation to follow. Before the war, when currencies were kept convertible with a common medium, gold, it followed of necessity that they were also kept convertible with one another at rates fixed within narrow limits; since the war when currencies are no longer convertible into gold, it is being more fully realised that they can maintain this desired convertibility with one another without the intervention of the common gold medium and simply by the adoption of some form of exchange standard. Any country whose monetary regulation is centred on the maintenance of an approximately fixed exchange rate may be said to possess an exchange standard; but this standard exists in its most perfect form where monetary regulation is made to depend on reserves held, not in the home country, but overseas, and where both the home money supply and the overseas exchange reserve expand and contract automatically to the extent of the net balance of payments made through the exchanges.

The Gold Exchange Standard, where it operates chiefly through regulation of currency, as in India, has been fully discussed; but where similar systems are operated by overseas banks which by the use of credit instruments link together the monetary conditions of different countries, little beyond slight passing references is to be found in current economic literature. Yet the existence of what might be termed " Credit "

Exchange Standards is widely, if somewhat vaguely, recognised. With the great extension of deposit and overseas branch banking that is taking place, and with the attempts to stabilise paper currencies by means of foreign balances held to support exchange, such standards are becoming of increasing importance, and, if effect is ever given to the recommendations of the Genoa Conference, they are destined to become more important still, both in practice and in theory.

At the present time this "Credit" Exchange Standard is probably most completely developed in New Zealand."

The article, which I would recommend to all those who are interested in the subject, goes on to claim that New Zealand possesses a perfect credit exchange standard.

I quote that in order to show that there is a great deal to be said on the subject of currency systems which does not support the belief which was widely held before the war that a Gold Standard with gold in circulation is the last word in the perfection of currency systems. I have said myself that I am not in favour of a gold currency with gold in circulation—by which I do not necessarily exclude some system of gold certificates,—but I have no authority on behalf of the Government of India to express a view either in favour of, or against the ultimate introduction of, the sort of currency that Dr. Lohokare wishes, or any other system of currency. My view in regard to this amendment is quite simple. We ought, whatever we do, to leave this question open to the Committee, and an amendment to the Resolution as it stands limiting the reference of the Committee is I suggest unwise. The negating of this amendment will not prevent the Committee from recommending a Gold Standard with gold currency in circulation if that be the view which it holds. The matter should, I think, be left perfectly open, and therefore I suggest to Dr. Lohokare and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya that without in any way modifying the views they have expressed in favour of a gold currency they would be well advised to leave the matter entirely open for the Committee's examination and for its final recommendations when it is assembled.

**Mr. President :** The original question was the Resolution as it appears on the paper. Since which an amendment has been moved :

"That for all the words after the words 'to make recommendations' the following words be substituted :

'so as to organise the currency system in India on the basis of gold as the only unlimited standard of value and currency.'"

The question I have to put is that that amendment be made.

The motion was negatived.

**Mr. President :** With regard to the next amendment standing in Mr. Jamnadas Mehta's name the first line is disposed of by that decision; and his proposal for the establishment of a State Bank is, it seems to me, outside the scope of the Resolution. Does he wish to move the remaining part of his amendment of the exact bearing of which I am not sure?

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta** (Bombay Northern Division: Non-Muhamadan Rural): If you will hear me, Sir, I may say, with reference to the establishment of a State Bank, that as the proposal is to examine the whole question of the currency and exchange system of the country, the way in which the currency can be best managed is indicated here. In the light of that explanation will you, Sir, consider whether I am not in order in moving that part of my amendment?

**Mr. President :** The establishment of a State Bank is clearly a separate proposition altogether and must be considered on its own merits. I do not say that as a matter of argument the Honourable Member would not be otherwise entitled to argue that a State Bank would be a better general manager of the currency than the present authorities; but he cannot propose the establishment of a State Bank as an amendment to the original Resolution.

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta :** Then if the only question which is relevant in the remaining part of my amendment is the question of the location of the reserves I will speak on the general proposition.

**Mr. President :** Does the Honourable Member wish to move the remaining part of his amendment? If not, I shall call Mr. Ramachandra Rao to move his amendment.

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta :** I do not wish to move it.

**Diwan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao** (Godavari *cum* Kistna: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I beg to move:

"That in this Resolution all the words beginning from 'a majority of Indian non-officials' to the words 'be immediately appointed' be deleted and the following be substituted therefor:

'an effective and adequate representation of Indian interests be appointed without any avoidable delay.'

Reading the Resolution as proposed to be amended by me it will run thus:

"This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that a Committee with an effective and adequate representation of Indian interests be appointed without any avoidable delay to examine the whole question of exchange and currency in the light of the experience gained since the date of the publication of the Babington-Smith Report, and to make recommendations as to the best policy to be pursued to secure a system of currency and exchange best suited to the interests of India."

Sir, I do not wish to detain the Council with any lengthy speech as many Honourable Members have already covered the whole ground raised in this Resolution. There seems to be very little difference between my Honourable friend the Mover of this Resolution and the Honourable the Finance Member in regard to the main object of this Resolution. The Honourable the Finance Member has admitted the necessity of bringing under examination all the outstanding questions of currency and exchange, not only in the light of the further experience gained since the Babington-Smith Committee's Report was submitted, but also in view of the past history of the currency and exchange policy of the Government of India before that Committee was appointed. Sir, when there is so much agreement between both my Honourable friends, it seems to me that there is no use in shelving this question indefinitely merely on account of the unsuitability of the language that has been used in the Resolution. The Honourable the Finance Member suggested some difficulty by the use of the word "immediate" in the Resolution, and I propose therefore to alter the wording of the Resolution so as to remove his objections. The words that I use are sufficiently elastic to enable him to appoint this Committee without any unnecessary delay. The speeches that have been made already have indicated the absolute necessity of taking action in the direction suggested as early as it is possible to do so.

Sir, as regards the composition of this Committee, several Honourable Members have already given their views as to how this Committee should be constituted. I do not wish to detain the House with my own observations as to how this Committee might be constituted ; but there is no doubt whatever that every section of this House regards it as absolutely essential that if the work of this Committee is to be successful and useful, it must have before it only one consideration, namely, the interests of this country. In these circumstances, in order to avoid affording any opportunity to Government to say that we passed a Resolution which they may find it difficult to carry out, I propose to insert in the Resolution the words that I have chosen in my amendment, but with the fullest hope that the views expressed by the terms of the Resolution and in the speeches will be carried out as far as the Honourable Member is able to do so. With these words, Sir, I commend my amendment to the House.

**Mr. President:** Amendment moved :

“ That all the words beginning from ‘ a majority of Indian non-officials ’ to the words ‘ be immediately appointed ’ be deleted and the following be substituted therefor :

‘ an effective and adequate representation of Indian interests be appointed without avoidable delay. ’ ”

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** Sir, I beg to support the original Resolution and to oppose the amendment of my friend, Diwan Bahadur Ramachandra Rao. The original Resolution, as the House will realise, is different from the Bill which the Honourable Sir Basil Blakett moved last week and from the two Bills which my Honourable friend, Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas proposes to move next week. Those two attempts at legislation, each from its own point of view, seek a solution for the temporary period of transition of our currency difficulties. This Resolution of my friend, Mr. Raju, however, attempts to have a comprehensive inquiry with a view to find some fresh, safe and stable moorings for our currency system which has been dislocated for some years. I want to make it clear that the passing of this Resolution will not in any sense be an indication that the House does not want to proceed with Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas' Bills when they are reached.

Sir, we have heard a great deal of the unanimity both on this side and on the side of the Government about the necessity for an inquiry. But I venture to say that there is a great deal of difference between the Resolution of my friend, Mr. Raju, and the attitude which Government have taken up in this matter. My friend, Mr. Raju, wants an immediate inquiry ; my friend, Mr. Raju, wants an Indian majority ; my friend, Mr. Raju, wants an Indian Chairman ; and I say, Sir, each of these elements is a matter of the greatest importance to the currency and monetary system of this country. It must be immediate because if any country in the world was entitled on account of its economic position to revise or finally to place on a stable basis its economic system long before now, it was this country. Next to America after the war there was no country in the world which was better prepared than ours to place its currency system on a suitable basis at the earliest possible moment. It was not necessary for India to wait for five years, to wait on the pleasure of other countries ; to wait till the bankrupt countries of south-eastern Europe, and Belgium and France which had been ruined by the war had

[Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta.]

had their own schemes ready. Not at all. It was not necessary for India to wait till the last moment till every other country had stabilised exchange, and I cannot see that we should adopt a policy of what is called watchfulness or a "wait and see" policy. The "wait and see" policy, as is well known, led Mr. Asquith to the mummies of Egypt which refused to speak or answer his questions. In this country the "wait and see" policy has led to a very great dislocation of trade and industry. I say, Sir, that every day that we waste in finding out suitable and safe moorings for the currency system of this country means a loss,—I would say that in spite of the wrath of the Finance Member,—at the rate of 48 crores of rupees every year to the producer and an immense amount of loss to the industries and trade of this country. Therefore there is no time to waste. We must here and now, if possible, adopt the system of the gold standard. But that has been ruled out by the House not on its merits, but because it is to be left as an open question. But as to the immediate necessity for an inquiry there cannot be the least doubt. My fear is that the Government by suggesting a period of twelve months within which to appoint an inquiry committee are waiting to see whether the exchange could still be stabilised at 1s. 6d. if not at a higher level, and that is why the Government do not agree with us. Well, Sir, all that I want to say is that we need not wait till the exchange rises to a higher level and remains there. We want an immediate inquiry into the currency system of this country.

Then, Sir, we heard from the Finance Member that the higher exchange had done a lot of good to this country, that prices had been stable and that the consumer had been greatly benefited. I say, Sir, that this concern of the Finance Member for the interests of the consumer will not be taken at its face value in this country. Government may talk as loudly as they like about their concern for the consumer; but these protests, as I say, are not going to be taken at their face value because the stability of prices is the only respectable garb to a policy of systematic raising of the exchange, a very immoral, sordid and sorry policy which has been pursued during the last five years. Sir, let us examine whether the consumer was at all prejudiced by the pre-war ratio and whether a higher exchange is necessary in his interest. I have before me figures from the Calcutta Trade Journal which show that between 1914 and 1924 the prices of almost all necessaries of life except tea and cotton which were 100 rupees in 1914 were only 104 in 1924; that means during ten years the only rise has been 4 per cent. and that too when the exchange was, as in last January, much lower than it is now. In the interval in 1919 all the public bodies, Government and other employers of labour, have given increases in salaries and remuneration on the basis of the top prices ruling then. Under the circumstances, if there is a rise of 4 per cent. after 10 years with increased salaries in the meantime, can it be said that the consumer will be paralysed if there will be a lower exchange? The real reason for maintaining a higher exchange has been to see that there is as much saving on the home charges, that there is as much stimulation to imports, that there is as much bounty on the salaries of civilian officers as possibly can be given. These are believed by the people of this country to be the real reasons for the maintenance of a higher rate of exchange. How does it work? Take only one case. Only yesterday the House had to vote fifty lakhs of rupees in the interests of one industry alone because the rise in

exchange has made the position of that industry absolutely impossible. But every industry does not belong to the Tatas and every industry is not a key industry. Imagine the vast enormous recurring losses which every trade and industry in this country has to bear because of the higher exchange policy of the Government. It is well known, Sir, that after the close of the war, when conditions had still been fluid, when there was a clear case for watchfulness, within six months of the Armistice, Government hurriedly appointed the Babington-Smith Committee; that Committee included only one Indian Member. It took evidence abroad in England and recommended the ratio of 2s. gold for the rupee. It was a packed Committee in the sense my Honourable friend Sir Campbell Rhodes mentioned the other day. If merely the existence of a majority of Indians meant packed Committees, then all the Commissions and Committees that have been hitherto appointed by the Government have been packed Committees in so far as there has always been a majority of non-Indians on those Committees and Commissions. By the way, Sir, why should we not have a majority of Indians on a Committee which concerns only the people of India, and merely to say that there should be adequate, sufficient and effective representation means nothing whatever? We must claim an absolute majority of Indians on this Committee. I know that Government can still by appointing flunkys and flatterers defeat our object. After all, nominations on the Committee are still in the hands of the Government, and they can defeat our object by appointing all manner of people whom they still possess in their armouries to silence the voice of this country, but still we must insist that the majority of the members on this Committee shall be Indians.

Then, Sir, I was referring to the 2s. ratio which the Babington-Smith Committee accepted. On what? On the report of evidence taken six thousand miles away, on the strength and in the face of the evidence of the Indian witnesses to the contrary, they recommended the 2s. ratio which the Government of India and the Secretary of State required. It was a registration of the decree of the authorities, and although the exchange at that time was 2s. 4d. sterling they began to enforce the new ratio of 2s. gold. Then came into existence that policy of selling reverse councils which will for ever remain a blot on the Government of India's management of our finances. It led to the dissipation of the sterling reserves of this country in England which were accumulated at Rs. 15 to the sovereign. These reserves were sold at Rs. 7, Rs. 7-8-0 and Rs. 8, to the sterling, so that on every £ sterling we lost as much as Rs. 6, Rs. 7 or Rs. 8. Reverse Councils were sold to the extent of 55 millions involving a loss of about 40 crores to the sterling reserves of this country, and that too for the mad gamble of maintaining the high rate of 2s. gold. Again, as a writer in the *Times of India* stated—the *Times of India* is not a paper which will unnecessarily come down upon Government unless it feels convinced that the Government are absolutely wrong,—the *Times of India* stated that no tyro in economics or finance would have dared to enforce the rate of 2s. gold unless he was forced to do so from the secret conclave of Whitehall. These are the words of the *Times of India*. A secret conclave at Whitehall which forces a 2s. gold rate on this country; and Government in their endeavour to enforce that policy put this country to a loss of about 40 crores only on the Reverse Councils. It has further meant an enormous loss to trade in this country and it has been followed by an immense social and economic distress in the country which still

[Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta.]

continues as a result of an effort to maintain the exchange at a higher level. The immense crores that have been lost will never be known. Sir, it is high time that we did not leave the management of our currency in the hands of the Government which have so thoroughly mismanaged affairs to the detriment of this country involving the country in losses of crores upon crores, dislocating the money market, strangling the trade, and making the producer lose heavily. I challenge anybody to deny that under the present policy the producer loses Rs. 43 crores a year.

Sir, this country is entitled to a sound monetary system, and once that system is established, it is entitled further to see that the legal relations which arose under that system are protected by Government, and that these legal relations are regarded as sacred and inviolable as any other law of the land. But the 1s. 4d. ratio which was the legal ratio, which the Government were bound to protect, under which our industries were organized, under which our borrowings were taking place, under which the poor peasant and the agriculturist was borrowing at a high rate of interest from the *sowkars* was torn to pieces, and a higher ratio was at once established without caring for the position of the debtors, or of the position of the industries, or of the position of the trade. Why? Because the Government could have a saving of a few crores on home charges, and because the imports to India could be stimulated. But, Sir, the home charges, after all, come to only 8 to 4 crores and it is a concealed method of taxation. The 8 or 4 crores do not drop from the heavens. They do not come out of the coffers of the Government, but they are obtained only when the agriculturist is made to suffer a loss of 43 crores. The 4 crores of saving which is effected at a loss of 43 crores to this country is not a businesslike proposition, and this country is not interested in allowing the Government to have such a secret manner of taxation which really leads to immense losses far greater than the savings which the Government can effect on remittances to England.

Then, Sir, if the rise in exchange would lead to the stability of prices, why does not my Honourable friend the Finance Member begin to raise the exchange higher and higher till we can get everything for nothing? Let him raise the exchange to a tremendously high level so that we may get everything for nothing. If that is in the interests of the consumer, why does he not do it? If he does not do it, it is because he knows that it will break down. On the other hand, what we temporarily want is not to reduce the exchange as low as possible, but to restore it to its original level, to its legally established ratio, which was so rudely disturbed, so wantonly dislocated, five years ago, in order that other interests than Indian might be protected. Sir, this problem to-day is of the greatest importance to this country. Every day gone means so much injury to the interests of this country, and therefore the immediate appointment of this Committee is absolutely necessary.

My Honourable friend Sir Campbell Rhodes asked the other day that if Indians are placed in a majority on the Committee, what would happen to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, to the Associated Chamber of Commerce and to the Exchange Banks. He also asked what would happen to the representatives of the Imperial Bank. Now, Sir, the gentleman who represents the Exchange Banks is very often a Member of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, and this representative of the Bengal

Chamber of Commerce is very often again a Member of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, and he is the same individual under various guises and disguises, for the same individual may be the Member of the Exchange Banks, the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and the Associated Chambers of Commerce. So after all it is not necessary that these bodies should have tripple or fourfold representation. One representative of the Exchange Banks can very well represent both the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, and the Associated Chambers of Commerce, in fact he ought to represent, he must represent, all these associations, and if there is going to be an honest representation in this matter, one representative ought to suffice for all these associations and they cannot ask for more. For that reason, Sir, we must have an Indian majority. There will of course be experts from England who will represent Imperial interests, but I do not see why any other question except that of the question of the interest of India should enter into this matter. Other parts of the Empire do not care to consult the Government of England. South Africa does not even care to consult the Colonial Office. It does not care two brass buttons whether and when the Cabinet in England is going to return to the gold standard. It simply invites two eminent financiers, one from the Netherlands and the other from America, Dr. Vissering and Professor Kamerar and on their advice it has decided to return to a gold standard from June next whether the Government of England does or not. Why? Because the Government there watches and is concerned only about the interests of that country. The Government of India have, as the *Times of India* points out, to act under the mandates of secret conclaves at Whitehall. Sir, a man who gives short weight and measure is treated as a criminal. A forger if convicted is sentenced to 7 years' jail. A deliberate policy of higher exchange is not to be easily distinguished from the practices of a man who deals short weight and measure. The man who in the stress of economic distress gives short measure goes to jail for five years. The Government of this country have given short measure for the last five years and have practised fraud on the producer. They are still practising it. And some people who are responsible for the policy—I do not blame Sir Malcolm Hailey personally; he is a very amiable gentleman. In fact, there is no Member of this House who did not know him only to love him, and I am very sorry not to have him here. But such is the irony of fate that the forger goes to jail for years while the Finance Member under whose regime immense crores were lost finds himself on the *gadi* of the Punjab Government. . . .

**Mr. W. S. J. Willson** (Associated Chambers of Commerce: Nominated Non-official): Is not that a kind of penal servitude?

**Mr. President:** I must ask the Honourable Member now to bring his remarks to a close.

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** I will do so, Sir. Then, Sir, I have only one more point to add; in spite of the Resolution about a gold standard being defeated, I say, as the Finance Member himself has admitted, it does not follow that the Committee will be precluded from considering the question of the gold standard for this country. The gold standard is under the present circumstances the only proper standard. The gold exchange standard is, I agree, theoretically more scientific. I am ready to agree that the gold exchange standard is more scientific and more perfect, and



[Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta.]

when education in the world has become general, when enlightenment has been universal, when Governments can be trusted by their subjects, when the League of Nations has become a more powerful lever for peace and goodwill, then I think the gold exchange standard can be kept not only in this country but all over the world. But to-day the gold exchange standard is neither proof against knaves nor against fools. It is neither a fool-proof standard nor a knave-proof standard. And the people of this country do not want that they should be under a standard which can be manipulated by the Government. Not only in this country. It has been manipulated everywhere, wherever Governments require more money than they are legitimately entitled to. We do not therefore want to be chained down to if we can help it. I say, Sir, that we are free to raise that question of the gold standard when the Committee meets. I further say that the Bills of Sir Purshotamdas stand quite apart from this committee of inquiry; that we will still consider it our duty to support them. And that we will not be precluded by this Resolution from supporting them. With these words, Sir, I beg to oppose the amendment of my friend Diwan Ramachandra Rao; there is little or no difference between the Government policy and his amendment. If that is the position, why have any Resolution at all? Let us say we are satisfied with the Government's explanation. No Resolution. Go home. This is not moderation; this is not sobriety. I cannot distinguish this kind of moderation and sobriety from madness and senility. I have done.

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett;** Sir, this is not moderation and this is not sobriety, and it is time we got back to the Resolution. Mr. Jamnadas Mehta is a licenced libertine, but some of the things that he has said about other people are, I think, even inside this House, a little bit stronger than he would regard himself as justified in saying if his very eloquent gifts did not sometimes carry him away. I found it difficult to discover in the course of Mr. Jamnadas Mehta's speech just whether he was opposing or voting for or against the Resolution which is now before us. The whole of his speech was devoted to an argument that no committee of inquiry of any sort is required because 1s. 4d. is the only possible rate and it ought to be introduced at once. I despair of succeeding in persuading Mr. Jamnadas Mehta that there is something to be said on the other side. Until the day comes when Mr. Jamnadas Mehta ceases to be suspicious of Government, I think that the effort in open Assembly to persuade him would be largely wasted, but I should be very glad indeed to have the opportunity of discussing with him in private—and with some of the other Honourable Members who have spoken—some of the immensely interesting subjects that have been raised in the course of this debate. I do not desire to prolong the debate now. I know that the House is very keen to get ahead and to deal with some of the other Resolutions that are coming on. My Honourable colleagues are straining at the leash in order to discuss other subjects. Even their interest in the subject of currency has not persuaded them to remain here and they have gone out to prepare themselves. So that I do not want to delay the House much longer on this particular Resolution. Let me, however, now deal with the amendment proposed by Mr. Ramachandra Rao. First of all, in regard to the word "immediately", for this word he proposes to substitute "without any avoidable delay". I recognise the very strong view held in many quarters of this House about the urgency of the appointment of a committee, but I

should be deceiving the House if, in accepting the amendment "without any avoidable delay" for the word "immediately", as I am prepared to do, I were in any way to suggest that the Government of India are prepared to go beyond what was stated very clearly by His Excellency the Viceroy in the speech that he delivered here at the opening of the Session as regards the date on which this could be established. I do not want to mislead the House or to leave any room for differences of opinion. The Government of India are prepared to accept the Resolution as thus amended in regard to the words "without any avoidable delay" if it is understood that they are not themselves thereby committing themselves to anything beyond what was definitely stated by His Excellency in the speech that he made the other day. At the same time, the Government of India recognise the view that is held in the House by a great many of those who have spoken that that is not as early as the majority in this House might desire for the appointment of the Committee. As regards the other words the Government of India are prepared to accept the amendment as it stands, that is, in place of the words "a majority of Indian non-officials and an Indian Chairman" the words "an effective and adequate representation of Indian interests". Mr. Jamnadas Mehta provided me with what I think is the very best argument that has been produced thus far for the amendment proposed by Diwan Bahadur Ramachandra Rao. He pointed out that in South Africa they have recently had a Committee to consider the question of South African currency and they have not a single South African. . .

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** Nor any one from England.

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett:** They did not have any one from England . . . .

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** Will you promise not to have any Englishman?

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett:** I happen to know, though Mr. Jamnadas Mehta does not know it, that the two members who were appointed were originally not the first and only choice of the South African Government and two first chosen, one of whom was the late Mr. E. S. Montagu, were both Englishmen. The Government of India are therefore prepared to accept the Resolution as thus amended, provided that it is clearly understood that in doing so they are not committing themselves beyond what the words say, namely, that there should be a Committee to inquire into the currency system of India with an effective and adequate representation of Indian interests to be appointed without any avoidable delay. I have said over and over again, and even in the face of Mr. Jamnadas Mehta I repeat, that the Government of India will be concerned, in considering this question, solely with interests of India; the interests of India alone are the interests which must determine India's currency policy. But that currency policy depends not entirely on internal conditions in India. Two quite separate things have to be considered, internal conditions and world conditions. The Committee will consider what is the best currency policy in the interests of India in the light of Indian internal conditions and world conditions, and for the purpose of doing that, obviously an authoritative committee is required,—a committee that can duly take into account all the considerations. I hope that the House will be able to agree to this concordat between the slightly varying views that are held in different quarters of this House and pass this amendment unanimously.

**Mr. V. J. Patel** (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Before I address myself to the Resolution I should like to congratulate my Honourable friend, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, on the excellent manner in which he presented his case. I am in entire agreement with the view point presented by him, and I may say at once that I am opposed to the amendment moved by my Honourable friend, Diwan Bahadur Ramachandra Rao. There is no question after what Mr. Jamnadas Mehta has said that there should be a Committee appointed immediately. I was waiting to hear the Honourable Sir Basil Blackett reply to one very important argument advanced by Mr. Jamnadas Mehta. Of course, Sir Basil Blackett wants Mr. Jamnadas Mehta to see him in private and hear from him all the explanations with regard to the various points made by him; but this House will not have the opportunity of being wiser by those arguments which might be advanced by Sir Basil Blackett to Mr. Jamnadas Mehta privately. But there is one argument which the Honourable the Finance Member should have met openly on the floor of the House. That argument is this. Mr. Jamnadas Mehta said that Government were waiting to see if the exchange can be stabilised at 1s. 6d. and that therefore they were not willing to appoint a Committee immediately. If that is the intention of Government, then of course a case has been made out for the immediate appointment of a Committee. We do not want Government to manipulate matters in such a way that the Committee would have no alternative but to find that the exchange should stand at 1s. 6d. A definite, deliberate charge has been made against Government that their intention in delaying the appointment of a Committee is to create conditions under which the Committee can have no alternative but to find that the ratio must stand at 1s. 6d. If that is so, then this Assembly must press with all its vigour the appointment of a Committee immediately. As I said, I was waiting to hear the Honourable Sir Basil Blackett reply to that charge, but unfortunately I was disappointed.

Now, coming to the Resolution itself, it wants three things; the appointment of a committee immediately, a majority of non-official Indians on it, and an Indian Chairman. Government are willing to appoint a Committee, but they are not willing to appoint it immediately, and the words proposed by my Honourable friend, Diwan Bahadur Ramachandra Rao, are accepted by Government according to their own interpretation. I do not know what the interpretation of my Honourable friend, Diwan Bahadur Ramachandra Rao, of those words is, but Government have their own interpretation and they ask the House to accept that interpretation as Government are not willing to raise any hopes in the mind of the Assembly that they are going to appoint a committee very soon. The speech made by His Excellency the Viceroy the other day is there and Government are prepared to abide by it and appoint a committee in due time in accordance with that speech. So Government are not going to shift from the position they have taken up in this respect in regard to time. I do not know what my Honourable friend, Diwan Bahadur Ramachandra Rao, means by saying "without any avoidable delay". But Government have put their own interpretation, and, if this amendment is now passed by the Assembly, that interpretation stands and Government will be free to appoint a committee any time within the course of twelve months as stated by His Excellency the Viceroy in this Chamber the other day. Something has been said about moderation. I should like to say that moderation has run amok in this case: it is nothing else. His Excellency the Viceroy made the statement in open Council the other day. The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett made a similar statement to-day emphasising the statement of His Excellency and my Honourable friend,

Diwan Bahadur Ramachandra Rao now comes forward, though in different words, with the same proposal. I do not know what is the necessity of my Honourable friend, Mr. Raju's Resolution at all under these circumstances? Let him withdraw the Resolution and Government will appoint a committee at their own convenience with such men on it as they like! Government have already stated so. Whether the amendment of my Honourable friend, Diwan Bahadur Ramachandra Rao, is carried or not, the position of Government is quite clear. They will act in the matter as they have already outlined; there is no necessity of this Resolution at all because Government have already stated their case that they are going to appoint a committee in due course. Therefore, I submit that if we really want a committee, and a committee immediately, in order not to allow Government an opportunity to manipulate conditions under which the committee would have to find the ratio at 1s. 6d., then it is absolutely necessary that we must carry the Resolution of my Honourable friend, Mr. Raju.

Now, with regard to a non-official Indian majority, we know, we have heard something about the Babington-Smith Committee. We had only one Indian, Sir Dadiba Dalal, on it and he stuck to his guns. He expressed the Indian public opinion and wrote a separate minute of dissent stating that the ratio should be 1s. 4d. If at that time the Committee had had a majority of Indians, then the view point of the Indian public would have been effectively represented and the report would have been quite different. All these manipulations in the currency during the last 5 or 6 years would have been impossible and the country would have saved crores of rupees, as Mr. Jamnadas Mehta has very rightly pointed out. Therefore it is

1 P.M. necessary now to take care to see that any committee which is appointed to examine the question of exchange and currency should have on it a majority of Indians. Of course there are Indians and Indians, and so long as Government are what they are and not responsible to the people, they will appoint such Indians as will play into their hands and register their decrees. That cannot be helped. But there are Dadiba Dalals sometimes. There is absolutely no reason why after the experience we have had in the past of such committees we should not demand an Indian majority on this committee. Without an Indian majority on this committee, the committee will be absolutely futile because we have already expressed our suspicion against Government that they want to manipulate this currency. They want to stabilise exchange at 1s. 6d. and it is for that purpose that they are biding their time and they want to appoint a committee sometime within the course of 12 months and not immediately, and with this suspicion against Government on the part of the Indian public, it is absolutely essential that the personnel of the committee should be such as will be above suspicion. The personnel should be so independent that they would not carry out the dictates of the Government because we have that fear that Government would like that the exchange should stand at 1s. 6d. and that the finding of the committee should be to that effect. If we have a committee with non-Indians on it in a majority, then that committee will justly register the decrees of the executive. That being so, it is absolutely necessary, in view of past experience and in view of the suspicions we have had against the Government in this matter, that we should demand that there should be a majority of non-official Indians on this committee. And if there is a non-official Indian majority on the committee it follows as a matter of course that the Chairman should also be an Indian. On these three points we are very strong and I hope that my Honourable friend Diwan Bahadur Ramachandra Rao will not be tempted by the offer,

[Mr. V. J. Patel.]

a very good offer indeed, made on behalf of Government by Sir Basil Blackett and will see his way to withdraw his amendment in view of the arguments advised by my friend, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta.

Now, Sir, with regard to the Resolution\* itself moved by my friend Mr. Raju, I may say at once that his idea is to have a committee to examine the whole question of exchange and currency in the light of the experience gained since the date of the publication of the Babington-Smith Committee's report. What is the experience we have gained? My friend interjects and says that it is a loss of 85 crores. That is quite true and I will just say a few words on that point. The report was made fixing the ratio at 2s. gold to the rupee at the end of the year 1919 and Government proceeded to give effect to the recommendations of that report immediately. They wanted to enforce the recommendations of that report and they devised all sorts of methods for that purpose. They were determined to keep the ratio at 2s. gold as recommended by the committee. That ratio was based on gold but the exchange rate quoted was in terms of sterling because there was no free market for gold in England. Further, the sterling market was steadily depreciating as can be seen from the sterling dollar exchange rate quoted and therefore Government had to give 2s. 6d., 2s. 7d. and even to the extent of 2s. 11d. in sterling for a rupee worth 2s. in gold. This went on for months and months with the result that the money market was thoroughly demoralised, lots of people began to gamble in these Reverse Councils and several people made fortunes in the course of a few weeks. But Government could not effectively keep the ratio at 2s. gold. The market would not support them and Government went on with their policy of selling Reverse Councils. They were persistent. They were determined to keep the ratio at 2s. gold and they went on spending India's sterling resources till the loss amounted to 85 crores as my friend, Mr. Raju, just mentioned to me. Ultimately they found that it was absolutely impossible to keep the ratio at 2s. gold as they wanted to do, and therefore they gave up that mad policy of selling sterling; but the result was that trade was thoroughly demoralised. The money market was strangled and the currency of the country was discredited in the eyes of the whole world. If only a portion of so many crores wasted had been spent in stabilising the exchange at 1s. 4d. all these things would not have happened. They could easily have done so. India would have been saved crores of rupees if they had only spent a portion of these 85 crores in stabilising exchange at 1s. 4d. But they did not do it. All this manipulation could be prevented only by a gold standard. It is because there is a gold exchange standard that it has been possible for the authorities to manipulate currency in the way they have done for the last five years, and therefore it is that India demands gold standard. My friend Sir Basil Blackett says that Mr. Jamnadas Mehta has not made out a case for a committee because he is for a 1s. 4d. ratio and therefore there is no necessity for the appointment of a committee according to him. No. Mr. Jamnadas Mehta does not want that the exchange should be 1s. 4d. He wants a gold standard. He supports the appointment of a committee because that committee is to inquire into the question whether a gold standard should be established in India or not. Mr. Jamnadas Mehta agrees to the appointment of the committee because that committee is to be empowered to go into the various questions of the establishment

of a gold standard, the location of the reserve and like questions affecting the currency. It is wrong to say that Mr. Jamnadas Mehta has not made out a case for the appointment of a committee. Now this manipulation is not the only evil of this gold exchange standard. The Secretary of State is keeping large reserves in the gold standard and paper currency reserves in England. So long as this gold exchange standard exists he will have the excuse of keeping the reserves there. These reserves, it will be remembered, amount jointly to about 60 million pounds, and had it not been for the devaluation according to the fictitious ratio of 2s. gold, this amount would have been much more to-day. But the Secretary of State keeps these reserves in England on the ground that in the case of an adverse balance he would have to pay money there on behalf of India and therefore it is necessary according to him to keep these reserves there. But if you examine the facts you will find that no more flimsy excuse for such a grievous wrong was ever given. As a matter of fact the balance of trade has always been in favour of India. It is only once in a decade that the balance of trade is against India. It is England and other countries of the world which have to pay to India almost every year regularly, and therefore, if anything, a case has been made out for keeping their reserves in India rather than for keeping ours in England. So these are some of the evils of the gold exchange standard, and therefore it is necessary to examine the whole currency question. My friend Sir Basil Blackett says he is opposed to the gold standard, but that it is possible to improve the gold exchange standard. I shall be very glad if he can show to the Committee some way by which this gold exchange standard can be so improved as to prevent once and for all the Government from manipulating it as it suits their purpose. In fact that Chamberlain Committee in 1913 in their report stated that although the gold exchange standard was a managed system, it was not managed in the sense that the Government could manipulate it for their own ends. But the experience of the last five years has shown us that it is possible under the gold exchange standard for the Government to manipulate the currency for their own ends. As we have found that this prophecy of the Chamberlain Committee has proved to be false, let us see now if, as Sir Basil Blackett says, it is possible to improve this gold exchange standard. Other questions also will be considered by this committee. The question of establishing the gold standard will also be considered; the question of the location of the reserves will also be considered; the question of starting a State Bank and of handing over the management of currency to it will also be considered. These are the various questions for the consideration of that committee, and therefore it is absolutely necessary that the committee should be appointed immediately and, in order that no suspicion might attach to the Government and that no suspicion might attach to the findings of that committee, it should consist, as my friend Mr. Raju has rightly asked, of a majority of Indians with an Indian Chairman. And I say no time should be lost in appointing a committee of that character. I once again appeal to my friend Diwan Bahadur Ramachandra Rao to allow this Resolution of Mr. Raju to pass and then leave the Government to do what they like.

**Mr. M. A. Jinnah** (Bombay City: Muhammadan Urban): Sir, I had no desire to take part in this debate because I do not claim to understand the intricacies of the questions which are involved in this Resolution, but having regard to the amendment which has been moved by my Honourable friend Diwan Bahadur Ramachandra Rao, I thought I might make

[Mr. M. A. Jinnah.]

the position clear. Now, Sir, with regard to that amendment there are two points involved. First, instead of the word "immediately" the words "without avoidable delay" are substituted. Secondly, instead of "a majority of non-officials being appointed on this Committee" we have "adequate and effective Indian representation on this proposed Committee". I was glad to hear from Sir Basil Blackett that he was willing to accept that amendment. But I was somewhat puzzled when I heard his commentary or his reservation on it. While he accepted the amendment, I fail to understand what were the exact implications of the reservation that he made. Does he mean that the Government have already decided that they will not appoint this Committee until the end of the year? Does he mean that the Government have already fixed any period on which auspicious day this Committee will be appointed? What did he mean then when he said that he wanted to make it clear that the statement made in the speech of His Excellency the Viceroy is final? I take it that, when this House passes a Resolution which is accepted by the Government that a Committee should be appointed without any delay, if Government have got any justification for delaying its appointment it means that, if it is delayed, the Government will account to this House as to why they delayed. (*A voice*: "When?") When! And supposing you say "immediately" and the Government find that it is impossible to appoint a Committee immediately, when they explain that to you. . . . (*Mr. V. J. Patel*: "Therefore take what they give.") Therefore let us have some common sense in the matter. (*A voice*: "What is common sense?") Common sense is this, that when you say "immediately" that means the Government must appoint a committee to-morrow or within a week. But if you say to the Government that you must appoint this Committee without avoidable delay then I say that, if the Government accept that position, they will have to justify any delay there may be in appointing the Committee. (*A voice*: "That was their position from the beginning.") I beg your pardon, that was not their position from the beginning. That is why I quarrelled with the commentary or reservation of Sir Basil Blackett. What is the meaning of that reservation? That is what I want to understand before I vote. If that reservation means nothing beyond the terms of the amendment then say so. Do you accept that or do you not? If you accept it, I ask Sir Basil Blackett not to complicate it by any further commentary or reservation, and I expect the Government then to say that, unless they have got some serious reasons, some real difficulty in their way which prevents them from appointing this Committee, they will appoint it as soon as possible. If that is your intention and if you make that clear, Sir, I have no hesitation in supporting the amendment of Diwan Bahadur Ramachandra Rao.

Now, Sir, with regard to the other point about a majority of Indians, I think my Honourable friend Mr. Patel answered his own arguments. He said, "Appoint a majority of Indians." I know, Sir, the only one committee on which I ever had the good or bad fortune to serve consisted of a majority of Indians and I know that we were reduced to a minority. I could understand the Honourable Member insisting not only upon a majority of Indians, but that those Indians should be elected by us. That I could understand. But what does Mr. Patel say? He says: "You appoint, but they should be Indians." Very well, and he himself answered that question. There are Indians and Indians he said. Then you might

appoint some Indians who will probably agree with you and register your decree. Then what is the good of it? (*A voice*: "Safer Europeans.") No, no. Well, I will put it bluntly. According to your argument, your neck is in the hands of Government. Very well, I will at least say this, "Give us an adequate and effective representation." I think that is the object of the Mover, and it is fairer and more reasonable than to fight over words the meaning of which, the effect of which, is useless. I therefore, Sir, strongly support the amendment of my Honourable friend, Diwan Bahadur Ramachandra Rao, and I understand Sir Basil Blackett cannot mean anything else than what the amendment itself says (*Mr. V. J. Patel*: "He has already stated what he means.")

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett**: Sir, I may intervene in response to the appeal that has been made by Mr. Jinnah, I should like to explain the difference between us. The words "without any avoidable delay" are, I take it, moved by the Mover of this amendment in the sense that he and the majority of those who support him, including Mr. Patel and Mr. Jamnadas Mehta even, are of opinion that it is desirable that this Committee should be appointed immediately. But in order to meet the difficulty that they know the Government are in, they alter the word "immediately" to the words "without any avoidable delay." The Government are anxious not to be misunderstood or to lay themselves open to any charge of breach of faith. I thought it necessary therefore to explain that I am not in a position to promise on behalf of the Government that any advance will be made on the position as stated by His Excellency in regard to the appointment of a Committee probably within a period of 12 months. I recognize that the House regards that as insufficient. But I, on behalf of the Government, am not in a position to make any promise that there will be an advance on that. If that is understood, I think that we are both prepared to agree in the meaning of the word.

**Diwan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao**: After the statement made by Sir Basil Blackett that he is not in a position to alter in any respect the position indicated by His Excellency's speech, there is no use, Sir, in pressing my amendment in this House.

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett**: "I am not in a position to promise," I said.

**Diwan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao**: Even when promises are made, we find it extremely difficult to keep the Government to their promises. But without any definite statement in this House by Sir Basil Blackett as to the time when this committee will be appointed, there is no object in my pressing my amendment.

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

**Mr. President**: The question is that the following Resolution be adopted, namely:

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that a Committee with a majority of Indian non-officials on it, and with an Indian chairman, be immediately appointed to examine the whole question of exchange and currency in the light of the experience gained since the date of the publication of the Babington-Smith Report, and to make recommendations as to the best policy to be pursued to secure a system of currency and exchange best suited to the interests of India."



## The Assembly divided.

## AYES—52.

Abdul Karim, Khwaja.  
 Abhyankar, Mr. M. V.  
 Abul Kasem, Maulvi.  
 Acharya, Mr. M. K.  
 Aiyangar, Mr. K. Rama.  
 Almuzzman Chowdhry, Mr.  
 Aney, Mr. M. S.  
 Chetty, Mr. R. K. Shanmukham.  
 Dalal, Sardar B. A.  
 Das, Mr. B.  
 Duni Chand, Lala.  
 Dutt, Mr. Amar Nath.  
 Ghose, Mr. S. C.  
 Goswami, Mr. T. C.  
 Gour, Sir Hari Singh.  
 Gulab Singh Sardar.  
 Hans Raj, Lala.  
 Iyengar, Mr. A. Rangaswami.  
 Jeelani, Haji S. A. K.  
 Jinnah, Mr. M. A.  
 Joshi, Mr. N. M.  
 Kasturbhai Lalbhai, Mr.  
 Kelkar, Mr. N. C.  
 Mehta, Mr. Jannadas M.  
 Misra, Pandit Shambhu Dayal.  
 Misra, Pandit Harkaran Nath.  
 Murtuza Sahib Bahadur, Maulvi Sayad.

Mutalik, Sardar V. N.  
 Nambiyar, Mr. K. K.  
 Narain Dass, Mr.  
 Nehru, Dr. Kishenlal.  
 Nehru, Pandit Shamlal.  
 Neogy, Mr. K. C.  
 Pal, Mr. Bipin Chandra.  
 Patel, Mr. V. J.  
 Piyare Lal, Lala.  
 Purshotamdas Thakurdas, Sir.  
 Rajan Bakhsh Shah, Khan Bahadur Makhdm Syed.  
 Ramachandra Rao, Diwan Bahadur M.  
 Rangachariar, Diwan Bahadur T.  
 Ranga Iyer, Mr. C. S.  
 Ray, Mr. Kumar Sankar.  
 Reddi, Mr. K. Venkataramana.  
 Sarfaraz Hussain Khan, Khan Bahadur.  
 Shafee, Maulvi Mohammad.  
 Shams-uz-Zoha, Khan Bahadur M.  
 Singh, Mr. Gaya Prasad.  
 Sinha, Mr. Devaki Prasad.  
 Sinha, Kumar Ganganand.  
 Venkatapatiraju, Mr. B.  
 Wajihuddin, Haji.  
 Yakub, Maulvi Muhammad.

## NOES—38.

Abdul Mumin, Khan Bahadur Muhammad.  
 Abdul Qaiyum, Nawab Sir Sahibrada.  
 Aiyer, Sir P. S. Sivaswamy.  
 Ajab Khan, Captain.  
 Ashworth, Mr. E. H.  
 Bhore, Mr. J. W.  
 Blackett, The Honourable Sir Basil.  
 Bray, Mr. Denys.  
 Burdon, Mr. E.  
 Calvert, Mr. H.  
 Clarke, Sir Geoffrey.  
 Clow, Mr. A. G.  
 Cocke, Mr. H. G.  
 Cosgrave, Mr. W. A.  
 Crawford, Colonel J. D.  
 Duval, Mr. H. P.  
 Fleming, Mr. E. G.  
 Gidney, Lieut.-Col. H. A. J.  
 Graham, Mr. L.  
 Hudson, Mr. W. F.  
 Innes, The Honourable Sir Charles.

Lindsay, Mr. Darcy.  
 Makan, Mr. M. E.  
 McCallum, Mr. J. L.  
 Mitra, The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath.  
 Muddiman, The Honourable Sir Alexander.  
 Muhammad Ismail, Khan Bahadur Saiyid.  
 Naidu, Mr. M. C.  
 Rhodes, Sir Campbell.  
 Rushbrook-Williams, Prof. L. F.  
 Sastri, Diwan Bahadur C. V. Visvanatha.  
 Sim, Mr. G. G.  
 Singh, Rai Bahadur S. N.  
 Stanyon, Colonel Sir Henry.  
 Sykes, Mr. E. F.  
 Tonkinson, Mr. H.  
 Webb, Mr. M.  
 Willson, Mr. W. S. J.

The motion was adopted.

The Assembly then adjourned for Lunch till Twenty-Five Minutes to Three of the Clock.

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

## RESOLUTION RE GRIEVANCES OF THE SUBORDINATE EMPLOYEES OF THE INDIAN RAILWAYS.

**Mr. M. K. Acharya** (South Arcot *cum* Chingleput: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I beg to move the Resolution standing in my name which runs as follows:—

“This Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that he may be pleased to take immediate steps to institute an inquiry into and report on the grievances of the subordinate employees of the Indian Railways with special reference to:

- (1) the rates of wages, methods of payment and deductions by fines;
- (2) hours of work and holidays;
- (3) provision for old age, leave, gratuity, provident fund, medical relief, etc.;
- (4) opportunities for promotion to higher grades;
- (5) housing accommodation;
- (6) unequal treatment regarding the conditions of service based on racial grounds;
- (7) unfair retrenchment;
- (8) recognition of Railwaymen's Unions by the Railway Agents;

and further that the above inquiry should be conducted by a Committee consisting of five members to be elected by the Legislative Assembly, three representatives of the Railway employees to be appointed by their organisations and three members to be appointed by the Government of India, one of whom to be the Chairman.”

Before I enter into any explanation of the Resolution I have just read I desire to make a preliminary statement. The fact that I sent notice of this Resolution and tacked along with it an alternative Resolution relating to postal grievances; the further fact that in announcing the result of the ballot the alternative was also put in—this seems to have misled a good many people to think that it was in my option to choose which of the Resolutions I should move. In consequence I was flooded with telegrams from postal associations all over the country asking me to give preference to their Resolution. Under the rules even if I had the inclination it was not in my power to go against the order of the ballot; and therefore I have had to assure the postal employees that they have my fullest sympathy and the fullest sympathy of a great many members of the Assembly; but that they must wait a little longer, and that if possible we shall give them our attention at as early a date as we possibly can.

I now pass on, Sir, to the Resolution itself; and here again I desire to state that the drafting of the Resolution is not mine. Well, that does not seriously matter. If I had drafted it I might have made it—at any rate in my opinion—slightly better than it is. At least I should have eliminated all the indefinite articles which are used in the wrong places. However, I repeat the wording does not matter. In the subject-matter of the Resolution I have been taking very great interest for some years and I shall be really glad if I can be of any service by bringing to the notice of this House the very pitiable condition which obtains among those who are employed in the subordinate services of the railways. The recommendation contained in the Resolution rests upon some general and as I consider indisputable facts. The service rendered by the subordinate employees on railways is most invaluable, whether considered from the administrative or

[Mr. M. K. Acharya.]

the national standpoint; and when we consider the hard work which they perform and the efficiency with which through them the railway administration is carried on, we can make this equally indisputable assertion that in return for their hard work they are entitled to adequate remuneration, proper treatment, satisfactory service conditions and if possible a constitutional tribunal to ensure all this from time to time, along with periodical inquiries into the condition of these employees. If then it is a fact that these men are rendering great service, are earning crores of rupees for the State or the Companies concerned, and if we therefore are bound to ensure proper treatment and working wages, living wages, for the men who do all this hard work, then we cannot but know with great concern that among these men there is at the present moment widespread and, as I consider and hope to show, legitimate discontent with respect to the conditions in which they are at present placed. They have very many serious, tangible, substantial grievances such as those that are enumerated in the sub-clauses of my Resolution.

I will now, Sir, pass on very briefly to enumerate what I consider to be the root causes of these grievances. In the first place there is the commercial origin, character and standards of the Indian Railways. Almost all Indian railways have been started by private companies and some of them are still owned by private companies; and the objective of all private companies naturally is perhaps best summed up in the words—maximum profits for the company or the State, and for the employees concerned minimum wages and maximum work. I am not here to dispute the correctness or incorrectness, the rightness or wrongness, of these standards, but there is the fact—that every company tries to get as much as possible out of its employees and tries to give them as little as possible; and that is the Commercial or Company way of looking at things. Therefore, even where officers, and I have the pleasure of being acquainted with one or two officers personally, who try to be sympathetic—even when they wish to be generous to those under them, they find that the business organisation of which they are practically the agents does not permit them to be as generous as they would like to be. Owing to this commercial character of the railways, they desire to make as much profit as possible and therefore to pay as little as possible to their employees; and this very often stands in the way of adequate interest being taken in the employees.

(At this stage Mr. Deputy President vacated the Chair which was taken by Mr. President.)

Here let me answer the question which some one has put to me—the question of what is meant by the subordinate employees to whom I refer. I am not using that term in any technical sense. I am not acquainted with the technology of the Railway Department, and who exactly comes within the superior and who within the subordinate categories. I really do not know whom the Railway Department regards as the subordinate staff; but I am myself speaking of those who are not officers, of all those whose salaries are less than Rs. 300 or less than Rs. 400 per mensem. All these I regard as subordinates and they cover practically a very wide field. The number of men who come into that rank including outdoor workers, indoor workers, clerical staff and so on and so forth, according to the cadre list put in my hands, is something like 7 lakhs of men on whose behalf and for whose sake I am now moving this Resolution. These subordinate employees are under the thumb of the officers; and one of the main causes

of the grievances that these employees legitimately feel consists in the fact that the railway services draw into their ranks as officers not probably the very best men. The best men go into the Government or other services, and into more lucrative professions. If I may be pardoned for putting it in this way, those belonging to the class of boys known as "bad boys" become recruited as officers in the railways; and naturally when these boys grow older, though some of them may become and do become very good men (I know there are many honourable exceptions), the generality of them never quite get over their earlier natures, and when they get into the railways they want to rule with their fists, and try to put down all opposition to their wishes in a mechanical way. This unfortunately is called "the capacity to rule". The man who is more considerate and more cultured is very often put down as incapable of controlling and ruling over workmen. This is one of the causes that lies at the basis of the complaint of several people that they are badly treated. But if in many cases the officers have had low qualifications to start with, the rank and file of the men for whom I am pleading to-day, are of course very much worse from the point of view of education. They are therefore unable to take care of themselves. They get into the railways in the lowest grades and after working there for some years they find they have made a mistake; they cannot get out after putting in five or ten years' service. Further in the case of Indians, they are generally burdened with a family by the time they get to Rs. 30 or Rs. 40, that is after some years' service, on which they have to support themselves and their families. They find they are unable to make both ends meet; their low educational qualification and their middling status, if I may so put it, stand very much in the way of their improving their lot.

Fourthly the racial discrimination is a very old question. Here I have got a copy of the G. I. P. Railway Union Magazine, a very well edited paper, containing a list of the grievances categorically set out: Leave rules outstanding for 3 years, time-scale one year, working hours for two years, education for three and a half years, medical for two years, free pass rules for two years, racial bar for seventy years—this is an old legacy of the East India Company; that is the fact. I know that many deplore it; we all deplore it; at times attempts are made to lessen the rigour of the racial bar, but its existence is a fact. The only place where its rigour is not perhaps so much felt is my own happy, though sometimes called benighted, Presidency. But in Northern India I find that practically an Indian has to stop at the most at Rs. 800; he cannot get to anything above that. There is the G. I. P. classification into 'A' class, 'B' class and 'C' class; only white-skinned men can get into the 'A' class. Here then is the fact; and the theory that these are better men, with better qualifications and better aptitude and better capacity is only invented to justify the existing state of affairs, and does not justify the fact itself. This differentiation is kept all along—in the matter of recruitment, training, pay, leave, housing, gratuities, etc. These I consider, Sir, to be the general causes of almost all the grievances of the subordinate railway employees.

I now pass on—I am very anxious, Sir, to finish as quickly as possible—to a word or two about the detailed grievances that are put down in this list. Pay and promotion is perhaps the most important. I shall just give one or two instances by way of illustration, and, as I say, I shall be very brief. Here is a small statement which I happened to draw up in 1923 with respect to the South Indian Railwaymen, when I was a Vice-President of one of their Unions; and although I know that some slight relief has been

[Mr. M. K. Acharya.]

given since 1923 the facts have not materially changed. Here is the calculation I then made which in the main stands correct to-day. "Of 5,000 and more out-door employées, 30 draw salaries ranging from Rs. 250 to Rs. 400, about 100 draw from Rs. 150 to Rs. 250, and some 230 between Rs. 90 and Rs. 150—total 344. The remaining 4,600 and odd draw below Rs. 90 and may again be divided into two classes—those drawing above Rs. 50 and those drawing below that figure. There are 700 or 800 in the former category and over 3,800 in the latter, drawing below Rs. 50. It is the lot of these 4,500 and odd men that is hard to think of. For almost all of these are family men who have put in long service of at least 15 years on the average. Here are a few instances taken at random. There are 7 booking clerks in the Madras district on Rs. 36, the youngest of whom has put in 20 years' service; one has actually served 27 years; and he still gets only Rs. 36. Again, there is a clerk in Chingleput who joined the railway in 1894 and who after 28 years' service gets only Rs. 41. Among the clerks on Rs. 31 the youngest have put in 6 years; the vast majority more than 10; while there are two who have put in 23, one 24, and one 29 years. Among the station masters on Rs. 50, two have put in 31, one 33, one 36 and one 39 years. Among the guards there are nine getting Rs. 33 after 5 to 10 years' service and one drawing Rs. 31 who joined in February 1908." I do not wish to weary the House with any more details; it may be said that the South Indian Railway is a Company-managed railway and must therefore be allowed to give its subordinates what salaries it likes. But I will take another railway, the Eastern Bengal Railway, which is a State railway. Here I find that an assistant station master gets only Rs. 40 and that is at least after five years' service and he can rise to Rs. 170 at the very maximum, unless somehow he happens to get into some kind of officers' grade. The scales of pay for Indian station masters and assistant station masters are as follows:

|  | Rs.        |
|--|------------|
| For Assistant Station Masters, "A" class . . . . . | 40 to 76   |
| " " " " "B" class . . . . .                        | 80 to 95   |
| " " " " "C" class . . . . .                        | 100 to 120 |
| For Station Masters, "A" class . . . . .           | 52 to 80   |
| " " " " "B" class . . . . .                        | 85 to 120  |
| " " " " "C" class . . . . .                        | 180 to 170 |

In the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway I find there are more divisions still. I have perhaps heard a great deal more of the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway during the past year than I have been here than of any other Company. There too they have to begin at Rs. 40 and the maximum is Rs. 290 so far as Indians are concerned, while Europeans and Anglo-Indians can go up to Rs. 475 and Rs. 550. The Great Indian Peninsula Railway has its own classification of employees. Europeans get Rs. 300 and above; Anglo-Indians between Rs. 120 and Rs. 300 and Indians below Rs. 120; these are called A, B and C classes. The 'A' class draws the most pay and is entitled to most privileges; those who draw the least pay get the least things. I am here reminded of the old biblical saying that "Unto him that hath more shall be given and from him that hath not, even the little he hath shall be taken away". So it is here. To them that have not much, very few facilities are given; and to those that get more pay, more and more facilities are given. I know that that biblical saying was not intended to be used in that sense, however. This then will

show, so far as pay and promotion are concerned, that these men who earn small salaries are very hard put to make both ends meet. As for the burden of work it is not the officers in the railway service, or anywhere else for that matter—it is not the top men that do the most work, it is the toiling men, the rank and file to whom we owe the good work in every department. So it is also in the railways. It is the men that work day and night with no holiday, no Saturday, no Sunday, working twelve hours per day, whose conditions have to be considered. An attempt is being made to bring down the twelve hours to eight—I do not know how far it has been established in all railways; it is in fact one of the points of grievance that the hours of work are not yet reduced reasonably. So these men who work day and night and toil hard for 20, 25, and 30 years rise to the magnificent salaries of Rs. 50, Rs. 70 and Rs. 120; I believe in the South Indian Railway a station master gets Rs. 170 and perhaps in the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway, Rs. 200 after 80 years of service.

I hope, Sir, I have made out a case from these instances. I have got here cartloads of representations. I do not think I shall be able to read out to you even the names of all the places from which I have got these representations. I have got a lot of material here to show how keenly the men feel the very low salaries they are getting.

I now pass on to the next item—provision for old age, leave, gratuity, provident fund, medical relief, etc. And here the story is even sadder. Not only do the men have to work for many long years, but at the end what do they go home with? In many cases they are made to retire compulsorily, or shall we say, dismissed? The department objects to the word “dismissed” being used, they prefer to say that the services of the man are dispensed with “with a month’s salary in lieu of notice.” But whether the man is dismissed or whether his services are dispensed with, the effect is the same. In this connection, Sir, I wish to refer to a case which has been the subject of many interpellations in this House, I mean the case of Mr. Naidu, who after 28 years’ meritorious service, found himself one day with a notice that his services had been dispensed with “with a month’s salary in lieu of notice.” This man I say had to go away after 28 years’ meritorious service and think out what else he could do to live on for the rest of his life. Now, Sir, I am sure such a thing would not be tolerated anywhere else. Here is the case of a man, mark you, who gave all his best life and all his time to railway work, who gave 28 years to railway work, who received very high commendations from all officers above him; and he has been sent away with a month’s salary. Here is a small typed sheet put into my hands. I suppose it has been put into the hands of several other Members also. This sheet gives the story of Mr. Naidu, and because in this House, as I said, many Members have tried to raise interpellations and to obtain redress for Mr. Naidu and because up to date their attempts have been of little avail, therefore it is perhaps worth while to read a line or two from this typed sheet. “The case is of Mr. Naidu who after 28 years’ meritorious service rose to the position of a senior station master on the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway but alas, was one day packed out bag and baggage, ‘with a month’s salary in lieu of notice’, and has since been refused his gratuity as well. What was Mr. Naidu’s crime? In the course of his 23 years’ service, Mr. Naidu made many good friends, but also made some enemies. One of these who rose from very low ranks in the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway service to the position of an officer has managed somehow, by means more foul than fair, to get most of the higher officers under his

[Mr. M. K. Acharya.]

influence, and has been able to have everything his own way on the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway. All those who purchased his good-will have got fat appointments; those who dared to incur his ill-will have been summarily got out. Mr. Naidu was one of the latter. He dared to bring a charge of corruption against the Khan Bahadur gentleman; after a confidential departmental inquiry behind the back of Mr. Naidu, in which the Khan Bahadur's tactics had full play, the charge was held to be false, and Mr. Naidu was dismissed, or in the official language sent away 'with a month's salary in lieu of notice'. Mr. Naidu demanded an opportunity openly to prove his case, but could get none. Interpellations in the Assembly failed to secure any redress. Appeals to the Railway Board and to the Viceroy alike have received no response. Mr. Naidu was denied even his hard earned gratuity and has gone back a ruined old man home." I was one of those, Sir, who put interpellations on this subject, because Mr. Naidu is a Madrassi and indeed some of his people are my voters. Mr. Naidu has gone back, as I said, a ruined man. This is a case which demands surely the sympathy of the higher officers, who were responsible for sending away Mr. Naidu. Even supposing he had made

3 P.M. a mistake, you have not only sent him away after 28 years meritorious service, but you have doubly punished him by denying him even his gratuity. Gratuity technically is supposed to be given only as a matter of grace. We believe however that gratuity is earned for service rendered and not that it is given as a matter of grace dependent on the good-will of the immediate superiors. Anyhow, this is one of the points which the Committee will have to investigate. After all, Agents generally endorse what the General Traffic Managers say, or what the immediate superior of the aggrieved party says. The question whether gratuity is to be given only to people who have earned the good-will of their immediate superiors, or whether it is to be given to all those who render good service, is really a matter that should engage the attention of this Committee. In this present case, Sir, Mr. Naidu was not only sent away after 28 years' meritorious service, but he has been denied his gratuity. What is he to do in his old age? I tried to see and influence the Agent of the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway but to no purpose. I tried to see Mr. Hindley, but he will not receive me. The case of Mr. Naidu is a most tragic instance, it is the case of a man who worked hard for 28 years. Mr. Naidu conducted the operations of the railway at the last Kumbha Mela in Hardwar; he received a very brilliant certificate from the officers above him; and such a man has been dismissed from service and has also been denied his gratuity. I do not know, Sir, how many more cases there are of this description. Mr. Naidu has been lucky to interest some of us in his case, though all our interest in Mr. Naidu has not got him any benefit. But how many thousands of cases there may be of men absolutely unknown, who have been dismissed or sent away, who cannot approach us and about whom we know nothing. This is a state of affairs which, I trust, will appeal to the sympathetic heart of the Honourable Sir Charles Innes.

Now, Sir, I will pass on to another point, I mean the question of retrenchment. There is a good deal of feeling about the manner in which retrenchment is effected in the railways. If it is desired to effect real retrenchment in any department, it must be all round. I would like to ask:—During the past three or four years since the retrenchment policy was inaugurated, how many cases of officers have been seriously taken

in hand. I mean how many officers have been retrenched? Has there been any reduction in the number of officers at all? After all, even if 200 low paid men are sent away, the saving effected would not in most cases be equal to the salary of even one highly paid officer. That is the position. From what I have read, the worst cases would seem to be in the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, where low paid men are sent away and top men are in too large numbers kept on. This is really inexplicable. Of course, top men have great influence; it is they who formulate "the fundamental rules" on which depend the well-being and prosperity not of the Companies or State but of themselves. Under these fundamental rules furlough is granted to the top men for 6, 8 or 14 months on half pay and full pay. I have here some information in last week's Gazette regarding two cases on the Eastern Bengal Railway. Two officers are granted furlough, one for 3 months and the other for 14 months; these rules with regard to furlough are more in favour of the officers than of the low paid men. An officer can take leave for 8 months and 14 months on average pay; but if a poor Indian employee, or for that matter an Anglo-Indian employee,—I do not think that the electors of my friend, Colonel Gidney, are very much better off than their Indian compeers, in this respect,—but if a poor Indian employee applies for a month's leave, I know what is put on his leave application, "Leave granted—to be availed of when available", but it is never made available. The leave never is really granted, the exigencies of the service demand that the man should stick to his post; but in the case of officers, the leave is always at hand. The more service an officer puts in, the greater the amount of privilege leave, the greater the passage money given to him; and we are all quite familiar with such cases from the Lee Commission's report.

Lastly, Sir, I will say a word or two about the question of recognition of Railway Unions. I have noted the deplorable fact that in most of the railways there are Unions but they are not recognised. Many of them, of 3 or 5 years standing, even remain unrecognised. They are unrecognised. Why? Because the Unions will not work according as the officers want the Unions to work. If the Unions are constituted in the way in which the officers desire, then of course it is all right with the Unions. The Great Indian Peninsula Railway staff Unions are doing excellent work; they are not recognised. The Eastern Bengal Railway had a Union in 1920. It was recognised at first, but disaffiliated in 1924. The Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway Unions were recognised at first but later on disaffiliated. The Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway Union is struggling for recognition. I cannot understand, Sir, what difficulty the railway Agents have in the matter of recognising the Unions. On the other hand, I should have thought from the speeches made by big men interesting themselves in the question that these big men were anxious that there should be well-constituted Unions in the lines with which they are connected. But, of course, we are familiar with the attitude of some of them, we know how there is a great deal of grand talk on the platform and little doing outside. That probably accounts for the general disinclination on the part of these gentlemen to recognise the Unions. Of course, this is an old story. My friend, Mr. Joshi, will probably talk about it at greater length, and with more knowledge, as to how these Unions are discouraged for fear of strikes and so on and so on. And this is exactly one of their grievances. A very major grievance indeed it is that Railway Unions do not get recognition. And another grievance, Sir, about which the men are very keen is with regard to what is called the fines fund. These men are fined arbitrarily. They want to appeal but cannot. The fines are spent arbitrarily for the



[Mr. M. K. Acharya.]

amusements of the officers. The funds are spent not for the benefit of those who contribute to them but for the benefit of those who do not.

Now, Sir, I hope I have established the following facts, namely: that these railway men work hard. That is an indisputable fact. And it was admitted by His Excellency the Viceroy the other day that there has been a marked increase in the gross receipts of railways. And the marked increase in these gross receipts were almost entirely due to the hard work of these toiling men, plus of course, the supervision, I have no objection to admitting that. But we owe the receipts mainly to the men who are toiling in the ranks. Therefore they have a right to proper treatment. And I hope from the number of examples I have cited, more examples are not required—the House will see that there are widespread grievances and that discontent is spreading fast among these people. It is to our interest that these hard-working men are content. It is to our interest that they are kept well. We ought not to drive them into discontent, because, if we do so drive them, we shall be harming our own interests. If these three facts are granted, Sir, the fact of their good work, their right to proper treatment, and the existence of grievances, I trust that if these things are granted, the recommendation follows which this Resolution makes; the reasonableness of the recommendation which it makes ought to be admitted. I do not know on that grounds, if any, there is going to be any opposition to this. I cannot, of course, forestall those objections. But possibly one or two that I can think of I propose to answer very briefly before I sit down. Possibly, it may be stated that these railways are under different managements, some under State and some under Company management, and so on. The answer is simple: the committee that will investigate the matter will make recommendations some of them suitable for Company railways and some suitable for State railways. And that is exactly why the committee should be appointed. Or it may be objected that after all the grievances are not so very grave and serious as we are trying to make out. If that be so, let a committee go into the matter, and if such a committee as is here recommended say that there are no serious grievances, I will bow to the decision of the committee. But if simply the department says, the railways are doing their best, the officers are doing their best, the matter will be duly considered, that will not be a satisfactory answer. Or it may be said, the field is too wide. We cannot help it. Or it may be said that the cost will be very heavy. Well, they are earning crores for us, these men. A little bit may certainly be given back to them—it is not too much. I forget what it cost to carry out the recommendations of the Lee Commission. If a very small percentage,—5 or 10 per cent., of what these men are earning is given back to them, it should suffice. I therefore, Sir, reiterate that I have made a case for the appointment of a committee. As to the constitution of the committee, here is some number given, but I personally am not very keen about the number. Three men I would suggest to be elected by this Assembly, three men by the Railways employees' organizations and one officer to represent the whole Government and because he will represent the whole Government, three men are not necessary. If thus a smaller committee will please better the Member to whose department this Resolution relates, if a smaller committee will please him, I certainly will have no objection. And therefore, Sir, I make this appeal. It is a bare duty we owe to the poor men who are struggling to earn their livelihood and who are earning for us as I have said crores

of rupees, it is a bare duty we owe to them to listen to what they have to say and to decide what we can do for them. I hope, Sir, I have done my best in the very limited time at my disposal to present their case. I am ready to confess that I may not have done sufficient justice to the subject which is so very wide. I am old enough to know that in this very imperfect world of ours the incapacity of the pleader damages the cause of his client. But in this House, Sir, where every Member has evinced such keen interest in railway matters and where I am sure the bulk of my Colleagues have great sympathy with the sufferings of the weak and the down-trodden, I trust that my shortcomings will not prejudice the case of these seven lakhs of men who are toiling day and night. I am appealing to the Members of this House, both official and non-official, for the better treatment of these men in order that in our own interests these men may become more contented, more hard working; so that both the efficient working of Government and our national interests may be safe in their keeping. I move this Resolution, Sir, and commend it to the most sympathetic consideration of this House.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes** (Commerce Member): Sir, before we go any further, I wish to raise a point of order in regard to the amendments on the paper. I wish to bring to your notice, Sir, the fact that I received notice of all these amendments, except No. 2, yesterday at 2-30 p.m. Under rule 116, I am entitled to two clear days' notice of amendments. This Resolution has been for some days on the paper and I take formal objection to these six amendments on the ground that I have not received proper notice of them and because I feel that Honourable Members of this House ought to treat Members of the Government Bench with more consideration. We have a lot of work to do and we ought to have more time to prepare for amendments.

**Mr. W. S. J. Willson** (Associated Chambers of Commerce: Nominated Non-official): And other Members of the House.

**Mr. President:** The Honourable the Commerce Member has raised an objection under Standing Order No. 65 against 6 out of the 7 amendments on the paper, the exception being amendment No. 2 standing in the name of Mr. Joshi of which due notice was given on the 23rd instant. The notice in respect of the other 6 amendments was given on the 26th. I confess at once that I have some sympathy with the objection raised by the Honourable the Commerce Member, and yet I am not sure that I shall be entitled to use the discretion with which Standing Order No. 65 invests me in view of the fact that this is not a Resolution inviting the Governor General in Council to take immediate action on the different questions. It is a Resolution inviting them to institute an inquiry into them and it is quite open to the Member representing Government to say that he is prepared to consider the matters raised by the amendments though perhaps he is not prepared to commit himself to them. Therefore, I do not propose to deprive the proposers of these amendments of an opportunity of speech upon them. At the same time, I must deal with the amendments from this point of view, whether they are within the scope of the original Resolution. The first amendment standing in Dr. Lohokare's name is in order. It appears to me to entail only a slight alteration of sub-paragraph (1) of the Resolution. Mr. Joshi's is equally in order and also within the period of notice. Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan's amendment is also in order. The amendment standing in Lala Duni Chand's name is, I think, not in order, because the Resolution is deliberately framed to exclude from

[Mr. President.]

discussion all subjects except the grievances of subordinate employees on the Indian railways and therefore the grievances of the public against those employees are not in order in this debate. Amendment No. 5 standing in Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan's name is also in order as also No. 6. Amendment No. 7 in the name of Khan Bahadur W. M. Hussanally is out of order in respect of the new sub-paragraph (9) which he proposes to add to the Resolution, and in respect of sub-paragraphs (10) and (11) I am not certain as to precisely what he means by the use of the words "concessions to some employees of railways". But it appears to me that whatever doubt there may be about his proposed new sub-paragraph (10) there can hardly be any doubt that the "working of refreshment rooms, dining cars and food stalls at railway stations" is rather a matter for contracts entered into by the Railway Administrations than any matter connected with the grievances of subordinate railway employees who in the ordinary course of events do not make use of these establishments. Therefore I propose in the course of the debate first of all to call upon Dr. Lohokare when the time for moving amendments comes.

**Khan Bahadur W. M. Hussanally** (Sind: Muhammadan Rural): I have only to say a few words with regard to the amendment that I have sent in. My object in sending in these further heads of inquiry was to make the inquiry a perfect and comprehensive one. That was the only object I had, otherwise it may result in the appointment of another committee which will be expensive to the State. I admit, Sir, that sub-paragraphs (9) and (11) are not quite in consonance with the original Resolution, but if you are going to have an inquiry by a committee, I think the committee should once for all inquire into all matters relating to the working of the railways, make a comprehensive inquiry and save further cost to the State.

**Mr. President:** The Honourable Member from Karachi has used the words "all matters connected with the administration of railways." Those matters are precisely not in order here. I understand he accepts my ruling regarding the proposed new sub-paragraphs (10) and (11) and proposes to put in a plea to the Chair in favour of sub-paragraph (9). But it appears to me that if the Honourable Member were able to substantiate his contention, on which I do not pronounce, that there is corruption in the Indian railways it would not be an accusation directed against the subordinate employees but against those responsible for the administration of railways as a whole.

**Khan Bahadur W. M. Hussanally:** So far as the admission of corruption is concerned, we have it in our own records. In 1923 there was a question put by Dr. Nand Lal and the reply was that there was corruption.

**Mr. President:** In that case the Honourable Member should have used his influence with the Honourable Member from Madras to include that in his original Resolution.

**Khan Bahadur W. M. Hussanally:** I hope he will include it now.

**Mr. President:** It is too late.

**Mr. E. F. Sykes** (Bombay: European): My reason for intervening so early in this debate is that my experience in various grades of railway service will enable me possibly to introduce into the debate a certain degree

of proportion and possibly a little calmness which may later in the debate be necessary. In this matter of proportion I think many of the Honourable Members will have received this card referring to the grievances of railway men. I do not think that anybody who has ever occupied any responsible position in any large organisation will admit that nine lakhs of railway men have grievances. If you were to go down any assistant engineer's beat and ask him about grievances in his beat I am afraid he will say he has many needy knife-grinders. At the same time I have no intention of denying that railway subordinates like most other people have grievances. But I think it will be admitted that they are not so universal as the Honourable Mover and the gentleman who has issued this card will like to make out. I do not wish to go into the causes because I have no immediate knowledge of the specific grievances of railway subordinates, but I know generally that the railway world like all other worlds has been a great deal disturbed. I do not think that there is any profession or occupation that did not suffer from the results of the war and was not disorganised, and disorganisation and discontent mean much the same thing. Then we had the Inchcape Committee. I do not want to enter into that part of the Inchcape Committee's report that dealt with railways. I think there are some things there which one finds rather surprising and from what one can hear there was a certain amount of panic in the methods that were adopted to put them into force. However, in the railways as in any other occupation there are permanent causes of discontent, and there are one or two perhaps that are peculiar to railways. In the first instance, owing to facilities for supervision there are not a very large proportion of superior posts to the inferior posts and there is stagnation, I have got a pamphlet here that gives a lot of instances of stagnation. Stagnation there is I agree and you will certainly find assistant station masters stagnating at a wayside station for years, but it is rather difficult to expect the railway organisation to adapt itself to the requirements of assistant station masters. Everybody knows when he enters the railway service that there is stagnation. Further one possible reason why the stagnation is accentuated is that on the whole railway service is remarkably popular. You do not find people who once they get into it wish to get out of it. However there is no doubt that in any service where there is no great scope for promotion there will be discontent. Cases of discontent were referred to by the Honourable Mover. I do not propose to go into them in any great detail except to say that owing to the exigencies of the service it is necessary at present, in the present state of education and development, to employ men of different races in various jobs and these points cause, as we know, a considerable amount of discontent. This is a matter on which my friend Sir Campbell Rhodes will perhaps have something to say later. Further there will always be grievances that arise from excessive zeal on the part of officers and on the part of subordinates. There is another probably a worse class which arises from the indolence of the same parties. So you have got to reckon on these grievances. They are going to exist and so I think the Honourable Mover will agree with me. But when it comes to remedies, then I must part company with him. The Honourable Mover as a matter of fact went into a great deal of detail but the motion on the paper is for the appointment of a committee to consider these questions. In enumerating the grievances that can be fairly recognised among railway subordinates and many railway officers, for the matter of that, there are those that we may regard as permanent and I think it is optimism on the part of the Honourable Mover to think that these

[Mr. E. F. Sykes.]

grievances are going to be remedied by the appointment of a committee or of any kind of inquiry because, as soon as one set has been removed, another set will have cropped up. That is inevitable. There is a further point about the remedying of these grievances. The Railway Department includes very large numbers of administrations and the conditions are very diverse. If the inquiry is conducted by a single committee it will probably find it very laborious to inquire into all the grievances that are brought before it and into the circumstances in which the aggrieved persons are working. From the point of view of the administration of railways the appointment of a committee of this nature would be extremely serious. We have only got to see this card once more. No sooner than Mr. Acharya's notion was put up, we find that nine lakhs of railwaymen have developed grievances. If a committee were constituted, as proposed by the Honourable Mover, probably it would tour the country for a couple of years during which time everything will be in a ferment and the effect on discipline, which is as important in a railway as in an army, would be very serious. Now the Honourable Member will see that I have agreed on the existence of the grievance but I differ from him on the means for remedying them. I may be asked what I propose to do in the matter. I am not quite sure whether it is my business to make any proposals of this kind but at the same time destructive criticism is always deprecated in this House, as elsewhere, and I would suggest to the Honourable Member and those who feel with him that if these grievances require any action on the part of this House they should look and see whether there are no other means of bringing about those remedies. There are a good many things that can be done. The Lee Commission made some proposals about the Public Services Commission and subsequently we heard some more about it. We may perhaps in the course of this debate expect to hear from the Government whether the Public Services Commission when it comes into existence would be in a position to deal with matters connected with railways. Perhaps they may not but short of a Public Services Commission it is a little difficult to see how any organisation except a local one will be able to deal with these grievances. The committee proposed by the Honourable Mover would not be able to deal with those things that are permanent and it will not have the local knowledge to deal with it. I should suggest that the House might inquire from the Government whether any further measures of decentralisation are possible, whether greater powers can be given to Agents so that the remedies for grievances may be not only sure but swift because after all delay in disposing of grievances constitutes an additional injustice. I think the committee proposed by the Honourable Member will fall short of requirements in that it is neither permanent, nor local, nor, and I need not produce any arguments for it, is the constitution of it one that will command a very great deal of confidence. I therefore oppose this Resolution.

**Maulvi Abul Kasem** (Bengal: Nominated Non-official): Sir, I do not deny that there is a good deal of force in the arguments placed before the House by the learned Mover of this Resolution. There is a real and substantial grievance of the railway employees, subordinate and superior, but I do not believe like some people that a Committee, like pills, is a remedy for all evils and will remove all grievances. I oppose the formation of a committee on the ground that the committee will not be able to remove those grievances and in the second place it will be a very expensive matter,

but mainly because there is an Advisory Railway Committee and this matter along with other matters may be referred to that committee for consideration and advice to the railway authorities. After all this committee which is proposed to be created will be an advisory committee. Why not hand over the matter for decision and inquiry to that very committee. That committee is elected by the Legislature and I believe to some extent it enjoys the confidence of this House. I have been told that some of the rules of this committee are defective and that individual members of the committee are not under the rules allowed to put forward Resolutions or to bring forward subjects which they want to be discussed. I think the rules may be amended in that respect and that will satisfy the present demands. Secondly, even if the rules are not amended or cannot be amended immediately, I think the President of the Committee may bring forward this matter for consideration by the Central Advisory Committee and that if necessary a small committee of men may be chosen from the Central Advisory Committee to inquire into the grievances of railway employees and to report the matter to the railway authorities for their consideration. That will save time, expense and, if I may say so, botheration. And I hope and trust that, though the amendments standing in the names of Lala Duni Chand and of my friend Mr. Wali Muhammad Hussanally have been ruled out of order, when the Standing Railway Committee, if my suggestion is accepted, comes to consider this question it will consider also the allied question as well. Because if we have to consider the grievances of railway employees I think the Railway Committee will be quite justified in considering the grievances of the people who have to deal with the railway employees.

**Lala Duni Chand** (Ambala Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I see that the Honourable the President is inclined to rule my amendment out of order, but I venture to think that I am equally entitled to submit for the kind consideration of the Honourable the President that my amendment is in order. I submit that the principle underlying my amendment is exactly the same as that underlying the Resolution. There is no inconsistency or contradiction between the principle of my amendment and that of the Resolution. All that I want is to bring out prominently one aspect of the case, namely, that, when the question of the salaries, etc., of the subordinate employees of the Indian railways is considered, it should be also considered whether there is any corruption prevailing amongst a certain section of railway employees. In fact my amendment simply seeks to emphasise the reason why the demand made in the Resolution should be complied with. One of the main reasons why further concessions should be allowed to railway employees is the fact that they are so poorly paid that they cannot withstand the temptation of being corrupt. Therefore, what I submit is this that my amendment represents one side of the question, and the Resolution represents the other side of the question. I say so far as the Resolution goes it is very good, it is all right. But I submit that if this Resolution is considered the other aspect of the question should also be considered, namely, whether the public has got any grievances against the railway employees. The question underlying my amendment is closely connected with the matter of the Resolution and the two cannot be separated. The railway employees demand that they are entitled to certain concessions. I say that they are entitled to those things, but at the same time the public is also entitled to place before the Government the grievances which they feel against the subordinate employees of the railways. Assume for the sake of argument that my amendment is out of order, suppose this Resolution is passed and a committee is constituted

[Lala Duni Chand.]

to go into the whole question, and the attitude then taken up by the other side is that the employees are entitled to all their demands because they are extremely insufficiently paid and cannot resist the temptation of taking illegal gratification from the public; then I do not think it will be open to any committee to rule that kind of evidence out of order which some representatives of the public may like to produce in support of their case.

**Mr. President:** The Honourable Member is suffering from some confusion of mind. The Mover of this Resolution had only in mind the grievances of subordinate employees of the railways and therefore that is the only question under discussion to-day. But if my Honourable friend were happy enough, or perhaps unfortunate enough, to have to undergo the labours of this inquiry he would be perfectly well entitled sitting at the table of inquiry to press that all the wages of all the employees of the railways should be raised and so place them beyond the reach of bribery and corruption. But here he is not entitled to argue it because unfortunately his Honourable friend from Madras has chosen to restrict the debate to the grievances of subordinate employees. I hope he appreciates the distinction.

**Lala Duni Chand:** As I see that the arguments that I have so far submitted before the Honourable the President have not convinced him, I will not pursue the matter any further. But the Honourable the President will be indulgent enough to allow me a few minutes to support the Resolution as it stands. My amendment may raise a certain amount of implication that I am in some way against this Resolution. I want to make it clear that I am whole-heartedly and fully in favour of the Resolution. In spite of the shortcomings of the railway subordinates and in spite of those things that I have attributed and rightly attributed to them, I say that they are the most deserving class of public servants. They are the people who keep awake while the rest of the world sleeps. They work while other people enjoy holidays. In most of the Departments of the Government six hours is the maximum amount of time for which work is taken from the employees. But railway subordinates are required to work not for 6 but for 8 and even 10 to 12 hours. Therefore, so far as the demands of these people are concerned, they should be generously responded to. It has always appeared most unnatural to my mind that the people who are at the top of the administration should get very fat salaries, while the poor people who are at the bottom get very very insufficient wages. I am one of those people who would like to take away good slices from the salaries of these high Government officials who are paid fat salaries, and distribute them amongst the subordinates. I am a believer in what I should call the process of levelling down the whole administration. (Hear, hear.) I do not like to see a man, perhaps an unmarried man, or even a married man with perhaps one or two children, drawing three or four thousand rupees, while another man who I think really does equally good work gets only Rs. 50 or Rs. 100. That is the policy which has been pursued under this Government and I consider that it is a most pernicious policy. I do know that there should be a certain amount of difference between the pay of the subordinates and that of the higher officers, but the contrast, the difference, should not be so great as it is. I want to place this aspect of the question for the consideration of this House. Why is it that all the officers whose case is dealt with in the Lee Commission's Report should get much more than they are entitled to, while the poor railway subordinates should be altogether neglected? If I know

that the financial condition of my country cannot afford to pay so much, I will be the first man to cut down the salaries of these people who are paid too much. So long as the present conditions are what they are, it is the duty of the Assembly that the case of these poor people should be brought prominently before the Government. I know it is only in our power to cry in this House and that it is not in our power to do anything substantial. But we should continue to cry and cry till the cry is heard and responded to.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi** (Nominated: Labour Interests): Sir, I have great pleasure in supporting this Resolution. Sir, the grievances of the railway employees are of various kinds and are many also. I do not propose to go over all of them in detail just now. I think the Mover of this Resolution has placed some details before this House which I feel will be quite sufficient to convince this House that these grievances are real and that they require to be removed as early as possible. I feel, Sir, that it is not difficult to make out a case that the grievances require to be investigated. It is not possible for non-official Members like myself to place all the details before this House. I shall therefore content myself by making only a few remarks about some of these grievances. As regards the salaries, naturally they vary from grade to grade. If we take the lowest grade of people, known as the inferior servants, the pointsmen and porters, their salaries vary from Rs. 8 a month to Rs. 20 a month. I hope, Sir, that there is nobody in this House who considers that this salary is sufficient for the maintenance of a family. Rs. 8 a month may be sufficient for one man, but Rs. 8 certainly will not be sufficient for maintaining a family. I know, Sir, there are people who maintain that in case of people who take up jobs like those of pointsmen and porters the women and children also work, but is it right, is it in the interests of humanity that women and children even of these poor people should give up the proper work which they should do? The children ought to go to school, and the women ought to manage the household. Sir, if you take another grade of railway employees, the station masters, their salaries vary generally from Rs. 20 a month to Rs. 80 a month at the time of retirement. This too will I hope not be considered a very high salary. I feel, Sir, if the Members of the Assembly can place themselves for a moment in the position of people who begin on Rs. 20 and end their service on Rs. 80 a month, they will realize how hard the lot of these people must be. Sir, the guards and drivers, especially the Indian guards and drivers, generally get the same salaries. There are railways on which the Indian guards begin on Rs. 20 and end their service on Rs. 50, and I am told that in the case of the Rs. 50 grade there may not be more than four or five people. But, Sir, this is not the only thing. On railways there is a practice of fining these subordinate employees, and that practice is very general. Fines of Rs. 5, fines of Rs. 10, fines of Rs. 15 are very common, and these fines are pooled into a fund. This fund is utilized for the recreation and entertainment of the better paid railway employees. I do not say that there is any rule that the fines fund should be spent for the education, recreation and entertainment of only the better paid railway staff on the railways. Moreover, Sir, I feel that if the fines fund is utilized for the entertainment and recreation of the better paid employees of the railways, there is a temptation for these better paid employees to get a good fines fund by fining the subordinate people. I therefore feel that the railway administrations should at once look into this matter, and if they at all want to have the power to levy fines on the subordinates, let the fines be credited to the general treasury of the railway instead of pooling them into a separate fines fund. I should also like to



[Mr. N. M. Joshi.]

recommend to the railway administrations that they should spend money out of their general treasury for the recreation, education and entertainment of the railway employees. But there should be no connection between the fines fund and the entertainment of the better paid employees of the railways. Now, Sir, let us also now look to the hours of work. Generally, the railway employees have to work for about 12 hours a day. Sir, even for factory workers we have got a law that the maximum hours of work should not be more than sixty hours a week. The Government of India have accepted the convention passed at Washington as regards the hours of work, and that convention applies to some branches of railway work. I do not know what the Government of India have done to see that this convention is enforced, at least as far as they have accepted it. But, Sir, for the majority of the people on the railways the hours of work per day is twelve; and I may say that in the case of some people the hours of work are twenty-four. There are stations on branch lines where there is only one station master, and he must work for all the twenty-four hours. (Mr. W. S. J. Willson: "How many trains run on that line?") I will come to that question. Sir, my Honourable friend there asks me how many trains run on that line. There may be few trains. But, Sir, I can quote instances of station masters of these small stations having been fined and dismissed because they were not on duty. If a man, Sir, has to do duty for twenty-four hours and has to be in the station, it does not matter to him how many trains pass that station. If he is absent for five minutes, he is liable to be fined, liable to be dismissed. He has no leisure. It is easy for you to say that only a few trains go there, but when the man is always in fear of being fined and dismissed even for a moment's absence from the station, certainly he has to be on the station for twenty-four hours if he cares for his job. I am quite ready to satisfy any friend of mine here with instances of people, simply because on a particular occasion they had to leave the station or they left the station, having been fined and reduced to a lower grade. It is therefore no good saying that there are only few trains on branch lines and therefore one station master is quite sufficient and he can do duty for 24 hours. Moreover, Sir, as regards the housing conditions of these people, the Indian staff and the European staff are provided with different kinds of houses. I challenge any Member here to say whether people of the same grade do or do not get the same kind of houses. An Indian gets a worse kind of house than a European even if he belongs to the same grade. Then, Sir, there is the question of retrenchment. Thousands of people during the last two years have been dismissed from the railway service on the ground of retrenchment. Sir, if proper inquiry is made I shall be able to prove that thousands of new employees have been also taken into the railway service. Complaints have been made several times that soon after dismissal of some employees, new people practically for the same work have been re-engaged. Retrenchment has been made an instrument of economy in this way. A man is dismissed and he loses sometimes his gratuity. But, Sir, if a new man takes his place he always gets a lower salary. This is the temptation to which the railway administration falls a victim and which makes them dismiss people and employ some others in their place. Sir, if a Committee is appointed I am quite sure this point will be amply proved. Then, Sir, I would like to say one word as regards the method of dismissal on the railways. The Honourable the Mover has already said, that on the railways it is the easiest thing to dismiss an employee. No doubt he has a right of appeal; but, Sir, my experience is that the right of appeal is very seldom

allowed. If a man sends an appeal, generally the appeal is not forwarded.

4 P.M. If the appeal is forwarded, the Railway Board generally does not see any ground for interference. Sir, if a question is asked in this Assembly the Honourable the Member in charge of the Department generally tells us that he cannot interfere in the action of the railway administration. Sir, where are these poor people to get justice from? Let the railway administrations make some arrangement by which proper hearing will be given to these people before they are dismissed. But, Sir, it is not the intention of the railway administrations to give justice to their employees. For this very purpose, when a railway employee takes service an agreement is taken from him. That agreement is that his service is temporary; therefore the railway administration will always be entitled to dismiss him after a month's service or by giving him a month's salary in lieu of notice. Sir, I will just read to the House the second paragraph of the agreement which is taken from the railway employees:

"The railway servants will serve subject to the following conditions of service, namely, that such service is temporary and terminable, etc., etc."

I do not know, Sir, why the service of every railway employee should be considered temporary. I appeal to the Honourable the Commerce Member to say whether it is a good method of securing good service from your employees. Sir, the service to which he belongs and several other services want all sorts of guarantees. They are not content with the guarantees given by the people of India or the Legislative Assembly. They want guarantees from the Secretary of State and from Parliament. I should like to know whether these poor railway employees need some guarantee or not, and whether it is proper that an agreement should be taken from them that the services of every one of them should be considered temporary. Is it a proper method of treating your employees? Sir, this is the case of the monthly rated men; but on the railways there are thousands of people who are considered to be daily rated. Not that they serve the railways casually like day labourers. They serve the railway administration for years together, perhaps till the end of their lives, but still their service will be regarded as the service of daily rated men. This is very useful to the railway administration. Some concessions as regards leave and provident fund and other things are given to the monthly rated men, and in order that these concessions should not be given to all poor labourers and artisans, they are generally treated as daily rated men, so that they should not be given leave or even if they are given leave, that they should be given only a very small amount of leave. I do not know, Sir, why Government should treat people who serve in their workshops all their lives, for 20, 25 or even 30 years, as daily rated men. I hope the Government of India will inquire into this question, and if people are serving in their workshops for years together, for 20 and 25 years, let them be treated as permanent servants and not even as monthly rated or daily rated men.

**Mr. President:** I may observe that the Honourable Member has exhausted his time and further that, as he will have another opportunity of speaking on his own amendment, I think I had better enforce the time limit strictly on this occasion and call upon another Member to speak.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** If you will let me, Sir, I will finish in a very short time. Shall I have another opportunity?

**Mr. President:** I may point out to the Honourable Member that I cannot help giving him a further opportunity!

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes** (Commerce Member): Sir, I may say at once that I regard this as a thoroughly dangerous Resolution. For the last two and a half years our relations with our men have been on the whole very good indeed. As is bound to happen with a labour force of 700,000 men we have of course had occasional disputes now and then; but these disputes have on the whole been easily settled and you may say that for 2½ years the railways have been free from any serious labour trouble. Now I regard that as proof that our railway servants are, generally speaking, happy and contented and the reason for that contentment is that in 1919-20, we gave all the railway servants in India a very liberal increase of pay and since then prices have tended to fall. Now, partly as the result of these favourable relations with our men, our railway prospects I think I may say are for the moment favourable. You all know that a short time ago for about 2 years we were a charge upon the State; we were not able to pay even our interest charges. Last year we paid you from the Railways, over and above our interest charges, 6½ crores of rupees. This year we have undertaken a very heavy obligation. We have undertaken to pay 519 lakhs of rupees, and that contribution increases year after year. Just as we have undertaken that obligation, just as we have entered upon a new order of things, my friend Mr. Acharya selects this very moment to throw an apple of discord between the railway administrations and their men. I know that Mr. Acharya is not the real culprit. I could see that from his speech, from a certain vagueness, I may say, in his remarks. You will note that he admitted to us that he did not draft the Resolution. I have here, Sir, a very interesting document which throws some light upon the origin of this Resolution. It is dated "Servants of India Society's Home". I may at once reassure Mr. Joshi. . . .

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** May I know how the Honourable Member came by that document?

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** I may at once reassure Mr. Joshi that this is not part of the machinations of my Honourable friend the Leader of the House. We do not in any way intercept his correspondence. But what happened was that this letter was addressed to the Secretary of a certain railway union. Now, Sir, we all know that many of these railway unions have a temporary existence and frequently fade out of existence altogether. In this particular railway union, that is exactly what had happened. There was no such person as the secretary of the railway union and it was delivered to the railway administration. It was opened by a railway clerk and the Agent found it upon his table next morning; he read it with some surprise and sent it to the Railway Board with the dry remark "This is the way that railway grievances are manufactured." Let me read the letter:

"DEAR SIR,

I am sending you herewith a copy of a Resolution drafted by me and which I propose to move during the next session of the Legislative Assembly if I get an opportunity to do so. But before I gave notice of this Resolution I feel it may be useful for me to consult you regarding the terms of the Resolution as well as regarding the desirability of moving it at this time. Kindly let me know if you can suggest any change in the Resolution. I also want to know whether you will supply me at an early date with the necessary information regarding the subject. You may be able to give detailed information regarding each grievance so that the case may be included in it."

(*An Honourable Member*: "Signed by whom?") "N. M. Joshi." Sir, in the days of my innocence I used to regard Mr. Joshi as a really responsible labour Member of this House, as a man who believed that the way to improve labour conditions was to work with the employers and not against them. But, Sir, I am afraid that that letter must make me revise my conclusions. I think that Mr. Joshi may have been studying science at his Servants' Home. I am aware that it is a common scientific method first to frame your hypothesis and then to proceed to prove it. That may apply to a cold and aloof science like astronomy, but let me tell Mr Joshi that it is an extremely dangerous method to apply to the difficult and delicate relations between master and man. (*An Honourable Member*: "Who is the master?") Sir, what is his proposal? It is proposed to set up a roving commission composed mostly of people with very little knowledge of railway administration—indeed I may say of managing men at all. It is proposed to set up this commission to wander about our railways and to nose about 700,000 men and find out whether they have got any grievances. Now, Sir, what must be the inevitable result of a commission of that kind? Mr. Acharya said that we ought not to drive our railway men to discontent. Sir, if you send this commission round about our 700,000 railway employees, most of whom are illiterate men, that is the very way to excite them to discontent. What will they regard the commission as? They will regard the commission as an automatic machine for raising their pay. Now we all want more pay; I want it myself. (*An Honourable Member*: "You have got it.") But I want more. If you appoint this Commission the men will apply for more pay. The mere fact that this commission has been appointed will excite their hopes and will create general unrest; and when their hopes are disappointed their discontent will become greater still. So I say without hesitation that the mere discussion of this Resolution is a very bad thing indeed, and it would be fatal if this House passed the Resolution.

You are bound to create a general labour unrest among the biggest labour force in India and that unrest will not stop with the railways; it will spread to all other forces of labour in this country. It will set caste against caste, community against community, man against master, and it will throw back our railways for years to come. I should just like to draw the attention of the House to the terms of this very extraordinary Resolution. There is a very long list of grievances in this Resolution and I regret that time will not permit me to deal in detail with every one of these grievances. I do not pitch my claim too high; as Mr. Sykes said, in every large labour force of this kind you are bound to have grievances. But my point is that, even if there are grievances, a roving commission is not the right way to remedy them; and what is more I claim that in the matter of wages and general conditions of service, railway servants are as well off as, and probably better off than, any other large labour force in this country, and I propose to prove that statement. I have just told the House that in 1919-20 we gave very liberal increases of pay to all railway servants in India. Now, that is not a mere figure of speech. In 1921, in response to certain representations made to us we appointed, not a railway officer, but an expert officer of the Finance Department, to examine the increases of pay we had given to all the railways and report whether those increases were adequate or whether we should give more. That officer reported to us that his deliberate opinion was that we had treated railway servants more generously than any other class of Government servants. That was in 1919-20 and since then it is a matter of

[Sir Charles Innes.]

common knowledge that prices have fallen. Let me give you some statistics. I cannot go into the matter in very much detail. For purposes of prices let me take the latest *Labour Gazette* published in Bombay which I picked up the other day. It is dated December 1924. The cost of living index number shows that, taking food grains, the amount purchasable per rupee was less than the amount purchasable in July 1914 by the following percentages: Rice 26; wheat 22, jowar 26; bajri 26. The actual percentage of increase of prices according to the above figures since July 1914 was: Rice 35, wheat 28, jowar 35, bajri 35. Now, as a result of the investigations of that officer, I have a statement here which shows that in 1920 our staff was costing us 52 per cent. more than it cost us in 1913-14; a small amount of that increase may be due to an actual increase of staff, but the greater part of the increase was due to the increase of wages which we gave in 1920. We have increased the wages of our men, taking it broad and large, by 50 per cent. If you consider that whenever you have a reorganisation of pay you always deal far more liberally with the lower-paid men than with the higher paid men, that will show that the actual increase as given to the lower paid men was very much greater than 50 per cent., and I have got figures here to prove it. I just take at random certain figures. In the North-Western Railway the pay of the watermen. Head Office in 1913-14 was Rs. 7; in 1919-20 it was Rs. 15, and an increase of pay over a hundred per cent. I have got many instances of that kind; but I will give them by percentages. In the increases of pay to menials on the North-Western Railway the maximum was 167 per cent.; on the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway it was 158 per cent.; on the East Indian Railway 200 per cent.; on the Bengal-Nagpur Railway 200 per cent. on the Eastern Bengal Railway 156 per cent. on the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway 134 per cent. and on the South Indian Railway 88 per cent. (*A Voice*: "And on the Bengal and North-Western?") That is not a Government railway, Sir. Then, again, let me take the increases of pay given to men on pay of less than Rs. 50. On the North-Western Railway the actual increase of pay varied from 51 to 78 per cent.; on the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway from 44 to 156 per cent.; on the East Indian Railway from 33½ to 112½ per cent.; on the Bengal Nagpur Railway from 26 to 93 per cent.; on the Eastern Bengal Railway from 81 to 130 per cent.; on the Great Indian Peninsula and Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railways from 50 to 78 per cent.; on the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway from 25 to 66½ per cent.

Now, Sir, I have shown that, taking the figures in the *Labour Gazette*, the prices of food grains in December 1924 were something like 30 per cent. greater than they were in July 1914, and I have shown that in 1919-1920 we increased the pay of our men roughly by 50 per cent. all round and by a great deal more in the case of the lower paid subordinates. But the story does not end there. You have got to remember that we have done a great deal more for our railway servants than merely give them an increase in their pay. What is it that the poor man feels the increased price of, I ask my Bombay friends. They will give me an answer at once; it is cloth, is it not? Well, Sir, the price of cloth has gone up probably more than that of any other article. Now a large percentage of our railway staff receive substantial aid in this matter. Drivers, shunters, firemen, guards, assistant station masters, station masters, ticket collectors, in fact all running and station staff are provided with uniforms. Linemen

and others are provided with warm coats. We give housing accommodation to a large proportion of our railway staff, and all our staff get their travelling absolutely free. The increase in the third class passenger fares which my friend Mr. Joshi stresses so much, when he is not talking about the grievances of the subordinate employees, does not hit them at all. We give them medical attendance free.

Now, Sir, I think that I have proved taking the railway staff as a whole, the grievance of which Mr. Acharya has made so much, boils down to very little. We have given our men a very liberal increase of pay, a much greater increase than the rise in the cost of living would warrant, and in addition we give them numerous benefits, clothing, housing accommodation, free medical attendance and the like.

Now let me just read a sentence or two from the report of the expert of the Finance Department, to which I have already referred :

"I did not commence the investigation as the result of which this note has been written with the object of trying to prove that railway servants had received more than others. My endeavour was to get at the truth. . . . It has surprised me more perhaps than it will surprise some of those who read this note to find how much really has been done in recent years—at, of course, enormous cost, present and prospective, to the State—to make the lives of railway servants easier and their prospects brighter. I am absolutely convinced that though there still may be isolated cases in which further concession is permissible, as much has been done for these men as a body as they can in reason demand."

That was written in 1921, and since then, as I have said, prices have fallen.

As I have said, I have no intention of going through the long list of grievances. I think that every one will agree that what the men think most of is the amount of pay they get, and I have shown that in the matter of pay I do not believe that railway servants as a body have any grievances at all.

Let me just refer to the question of hours of work, of which Mr. Joshi complained. For the history of the matter, as Mr. Joshi himself said, we have to go back to the Washington Conference. At that Conference Mr. Joshi was present. The Conference appointed a Committee to consider this question of hours of labour, and my Honourable friend Mr. Joshi was a member of that Committee. This Committee pointed out as follows :

"In India conditions do not approximate to anything which is known in the western world . . . and that conditions in India are not such as to make easy in the immediate future the application of western standards in the restriction of working hours."

That was Mr. Joshi's own report,—at any rate, he signed it. Consequently, the Convention contains an Article which specially refers to India. It is as follows:—

"In British India the principle of a 60-hour week shall be adopted for all workers in industries at present covered by the Factories Act administered by the Government of India, and in such branches of railway work as may be specified for this purpose by the competent authority."

That is to say, while the Indian Labour Organization did not recommend less than a 60-hour week for ordinary factories, they left it to us to decide whether we could properly apply even this recommendation to railway labour. That was Mr. Joshi's own recommendation. He says that a majority of the railway servants work something like 12 hours a day. That is not true. We have applied the 60-hour week to all our railway workshops which are governed by the Factories Act. We have applied it to all our clerical staff. He says that we have not applied it to the running staff. That is true, but we are within the terms of the convention.

[Sir Charles Innes.]

Now, just let me refer to this question about the poor station master who works for 24 hours a day. That poor station master is generally a station master at a small wayside station. He has a nice little house, close to the railway station and he has to come twice or four times a day to the railway station in order to let a train through. This is all, and Mr. Joshi calls it 24 hours work a day.

Then again my friend Mr. Acharya gave some very heart-rending stories about provident funds, dismissals and forfeiture of deposits. I would like the House to realise what nonsense it all is. Let me give him some figures. Last year 8 Railways distributed 82½ lakhs in provident fund bonuses. They withheld on account of dismissals Rs. 25,000. Sir, railways withheld their provident fund bonuses from 28 men of over 5 years' service. 17 of these men were implicated in thefts, two were dismissed for misbehaving with women, one was dismissed for being found drunk, and two were dismissed for taking bribes. Now I ask the House whether there is anything to complain of in those figures. Mr. Acharya also referred to the question of gratuities. These gratuities are supposed to be a reward for good, faithful and continuous service. The railway staff, I agree, had a grievance when we treated absence on strike as a break in the continuity of their service. That grievance has been remedied, and now I say they have no grievance if we do not give them their gratuity if the Agent cannot honestly say that their service was faithful or efficient or good.

Sir, I do not want to go any further into details, but I am just going to take one more general objection to this Resolution. My first objection, as I told the House, is that it would be absolutely fatal if this House, were to appoint at this time this Commission to wander about India and call railway men to come before them with their grievances. If you do this, I guarantee that you will have strikes on every Railway and you will throw back trade and commerce. Again, let me advise those who are anxious to get the third class passenger fares reduced to be careful about passing this Resolution. It will start fresh labour unrest. Once you get your railway men to believe that if they want a rise in their pay, they have merely to apply to this House, then good-bye to any chance of running your railways in an efficient and economical manner. And if you do not run your railways in an efficient and economical manner, you yourself will pay in higher fares and in higher goods rates, and it will ruin in every possible way the prosperity of this country.

There is one other general objection which I have got to take. This is a more delicate matter. I am aware that a democratic Assembly invariably tries to get details of administration into its own hands. It is my business to try to prevent that. I do not like doing it. You will no doubt call me a stiff-necked bureaucrat for attempting to do it. But the experience of every democratic country in the world shows that, if the democratic Assembly gets its own way and if it gets details of administration of Railways into its own control, then the game is up. Your railways inevitably must be a charge upon the State instead of paying money to the State. You paralyse the efficiency of your Agents. How is the Agent going to do his work? How is he going to control his staff if he knows that at every attempt to punish a clerk or station master that station master or clerk is going to a Member of the Assembly and is going to try and have pressure put upon him in that way? That is the way to paralyse the efficiency of your railways and moreover

you are going to corrupt your own Assembly. You are going to corrupt your own politicians. To-day we have seen the results of this Resolution. Mr. Acharya moves it. It is down in the papers. He at once gets letters from a gentleman writing and saying: This is my case, cannot you do something for me. I do not for a moment suggest that Mr. Acharya had any improper notice in bringing that matter before this House. It is only natural nowadays that Members of the Assembly should not object when disgruntled constituents of theirs come before them and ask them to take action in this Assembly. But, Sir, where is it going to end? If it is going to be known that, if you come to the Assembly, individual Members will get power in that way, what is going to be the effect on this Assembly itself? Let me remind you what I have often said in this House and what is said by Sir William Acworth in his book, if you start allowing the Legislature to interfere in the details of railway administration, politics will corrupt the railways and railways will corrupt politics. And I do hope, Sir, that whatever the Members of this Assembly may feel about individual grievances upon the railways—as I say there may be some—I do hope that you will take your stand against this Resolution, that you will have nothing to do with it and that you will express your agreement with me that if grievances exist, a roving commission of this kind is not the way to remedy them.

**Dr. K. G. Lohokare** (Bombay Central Division: Non-Muhammadian Rural): Sir, the case of this Resolution has just been objected to by the Honourable Member opposite. His main objection is that this sort of Resolution will firstly create discontent in the staff. This will be the instrument on account of which it will be very difficult to conduct the administration and it will be the first seed of further strikes and discontent. I am afraid I have to give the Honourable Member an idea of what things actually are in the railway service. Mr. Joshi has just been accused of manufacturing the Resolution. But, so far as my knowledge goes of the railway service, amongst whom I had been one formerly, I know so many of their grievances, so much discontent, that Mr. Joshi must have promised by this Resolution to organise a constitutional effort of redress of their grievances without having anything to do with their ebullitions of discontent and other feelings. If Mr. Joshi has done anything, I think he has given them the proper remedy by putting in a circular by which he directed their attention to constitutional methods of work rather than doing things which are perhaps wrong even. So the Resolution, instead of creating any discontent in the rank and file of the railway service, will I think teach them the proper method of getting their grievances redressed. The second objection is that the railway administration will corrupt politics and politics will corrupt the railway administration. It is not the whole of the railway administration, Sir, that we have been taking into consideration; it is only the subordinate staff. And as this subordinate staff is a part and parcel of the population of India, I think it is no sin that the Legislative Assembly Members may have taken their case down to this floor because they did not find redress anywhere else. If this is a sin that is going to put politics into conflict with the railway administration I am sorry the case is misunderstood. On the other hand, if it does anything, it will set not only the railway administration but the Legislative Assembly Members even on their proper track in putting any questions regarding individual servants and other persons. If once the general lines have been laid down, there will be no opportunity of creating individual disturbances and putting individual cases for being heckled here before the official Benches. So if they at all want to avoid that sort of



[Dr. K. G. Lohokare.]

thing, I think it is much better for them to put on definite lines the practice of the administration which deals with the services.

The second argument in regard to the futility of the Resolution has just been advanced in terms of price levels. The index of the cost of living in 1914 was 100 and now it is 160 and a comparison of pay in 1914 and 1920 is the argument. I beg to invite the attention of the House to one fundamental fact in referring to these figures; that wages scarcely follow the rise in prices. If you compare the index figure for 1895 and the rate of pay in 1895 with the rate of pay they got in 1919 and the price index I am afraid I shall have sufficiently answered the Honourable Member's argument. Now, in 1895 the starting pay in railways was Rs. 15. Was it adjusted in 1914 according to the standard of prices then? That is my first question. If it was not adjusted, the adjustment in 1919 was long overdue. The adjustment in 1919 was simply a result of the adjustment which was due in 1913-14 already. The adjustment in 1920 does not satisfy the case that they were sufficiently paid then. Secondly, the question of the percentage of rise in the starting and the maximum pay of the railway services is still on the same lines. A man drawing Rs. 15 to start with in the railway subordinate service has now only to start on Rs. 20, or at most in some cases on Rs. 25. That means he is only increasing his start by 60 per cent. If we take the start of Rs. 15 that used to prevail in 1895, the first basis as it were, and if we compare it with the prices of 1895 and the prices to-day, I am afraid the theory that the wages have not followed the prices prevails here too and consequently the argument of the railway servants having been paid according to the rise in prices falls to the ground.

(At this stage Mr. President vacated the Chair, which was taken by Mr. Deputy President.)

I leave the other things and come direct to my amendment. My amendment proposes to put in place of clause (1) of the original Resolution the words "Methods of recruitment, rates of pay or wages, service conditions, punishments including fines and removal from service, and disposal of fines funds." At this stage I may state that it was only on Saturday night that I got a copy of the agenda for to-day. Sunday was a holiday and I am sorry I troubled the Honourable Member in charge by sending the amendment too late. But I beg to point out that this difficulty was not of my own make. I got the agenda on Saturday night, the office was closed on Sunday. I drafted the amendment and posted it on Sunday only but the office having been opened only on Monday he got it only 24 hours earlier. The delay therefore is not of my making. The wording of my amendment is "methods of recruitment." Sir, methods of recruitment have much to do with the satisfactory conditions of service in the railways and if properly laid down they leave no room for favouritism. I shall give instances to support my contention. Government try to lay down the standards of qualifications for employment in various departments under their control. Is there anything like that in the railways? Let me take the engineering department of the railways, or rather what you call the transport department in these days. In the engineering department persons with acknowledged qualifications are to this day never admitted. If a man wants to get in even as a permanent way inspector the railway administration would think more of a man who has served as a time-keeper than of a man who is actually qualified. The Government engineering department want at least the sub-overseer's qualification for being entrusted with engineering

work. The railway departments want nothing of the kind. I do not know if that is the keynote of the whole railway administration in India, making the railway departments spend unnecessarily heavily upon the working and administration of the railways. If properly qualified persons are put in proper places I think the railway departments will gain, the people of India will gain and the employees, that is, the shareholders of the railways, will get a good return from the work that will be expected of such subordinates. But the methods that are followed even to this day are absolutely such as to leave every room for favouritism and corruption everywhere in employing men. I mean to say that if they had introduced some sort of system or certain qualifications for certain branches and then made the selection of employees I would have nothing to say about it. At present a fad of selection is going on. Selection! selection! selection! and no qualification at all is required. If you have a certain examination and then selection, it will be something—I mean to say a certain standard is absolutely necessary. Similarly, in the case of mechanical engineering appointments Government require a person who wishes to take charge of a boiler or machinery to pass the boilers' certificate examination or a mechanical engineering examination. In the case of the railways nothing of the kind is necessary and any man may be put in charge anywhere, so that there is absolutely every room for favouritism. In order to avoid this favouritism and give proper scope for the energies of the people, it is absolutely necessary that all these branches of our subordinate railway service should have some standard of recruitment. The second point I put in here is punishment. At the time of the Provident Funds Bill I explained my case as regards punishments. I will give you an illustration now. In 1921 the District Traffic Superintendent, Belgaum, dispensed with the services of not less than 80 people for the sake of retrenchment. I have here questions in my name, Nos. 513, 514 and 515, giving some of these cases. In order to find money for retrenchment and put in new persons he asked them to resign. He said, "If you do not resign I will dismiss you." By this the men lost their gratuity and thus money was found for retrenchment. This is a case in which I really feel that there should be a judicial hearing or some such method before such a step is taken. I mean to say that the method of punishment in the railways ought to have some form—put it in any form you like, in any way you choose without any detriment to the interests of the employer. I shall never question that there is always the paramount interest of the employer, the shareholder and the Government in the railways, but at the same time I feel that there should be a judicial hearing of these cases. No such system prevails now and the same unsatisfactory manner in which these cases were dealt with in the days when I worked in the railways still continues. That is why I want that these cases of punishment should be properly dealt with according to a certain code if the Committee to be appointed deems it desirable.

The last thing I come to is the disposal of the fines funds. I know that there will be objection raised to this, but I beg to inquire if the fines fund, as Mr. Joshi said, is not used for the entertainment of persons getting high salaries. Let the railways if they so like, set apart a separate fund for the entertainment of highly paid officials, but why should the railways spend money out of the fines fund for the recreation of highly paid officials? The fines fund is not utilised for the education of the menial staff or their children or for giving amelioration to the lot of the low-paid labourer. If the railway administrations are so inclined, let them found a certain fund known as the Entertainment Fund out of which they can lavishly entertain their

[Dr. K. G. Lohokare.]

highly paid officials, but why do they use the fines fund, which is made up of the fines levied from the low-paid staff for the recreation of highly paid officials and thus create an inducement in the minds of the higher paid officials to levy more fines from the low paid staff? Moreover, this use of the fines fund causes heartburning in the minds of the low-paid staff who think, "A fine of four annas was deducted from my pay yesterday and with that amount these big people are making a *tamasha* out of it." This is keenly felt by the low-paid men and that is why I have put in my amendment in place of item (1) of Mr. Acharya's Resolution. I hope the Honourable Mover as well as the House will accept my amendment.

**Mr. Deputy President:** Amendment moved :

" That for clause (1) of the Resolution the following be substituted :

' (1) methods of recruitment, rates of pay or wages, service conditions, punishments including fines and removal from service, and disposal of fines funds.' "

**Mr. M. K. Acharya:** I am willing to accept it, if you will permit me.

**Mr. Deputy President:** The question is that that amendment be made.

The motion was adopted.

**Sir Campbell Rhodes** (Bengal: European): I do not wish to enlarge on the question of discipline which has been so ably dealt with from first-hand knowledge by my friend Mr. Sykes. But I should like to emphasise one point. Circumstances have brought me into very close connection with railway management both in India and in England and I have also had the honour of presiding over a railway conciliation committee. To my mind the successful working of any railway system depends on something more than discipline, though discipline is the foundation of it. I mean *esprit de corps*. The amalgamation of the London and North-Western Railway and the Midland Railway in England did not produce the economies that were anticipated and the cause has been put down by experts to the fact that *esprit de corps* has been destroyed between the competing lines. We are threatened with the same dangers here under State management and it must be our care to do all we can not to jeopardise but rather to increase this *esprit de corps* on the railways. For on *esprit de corps* depends, as Sir Charles Innes has said, the prosperity of the country, the prosperity of the railways and also I might add the safety of the millions of passengers who travel. It can be disturbed in two ways, from the bottom and from the top; from the bottom, as Sir Charles Innes has amply shown, by Resolutions such as this. It can be disturbed from the top if the heads of the railway administrations do not feel that they have wholeheartedly behind them not only the Commerce Member but also the Railway Advisory Committee. The watch word of every successful business is " Trust your manager wholeheartedly or sack him."

But I do want, as Mr. Sykes said, to say a word about the Anglo-Indians on the railways in India. There appears to be an idea that they are specially favoured. Nothing could be farther from the truth. They are not specially favoured but they have been found specially suitable for certain tasks on the railways during the last three quarters of a century. The Mover of this Resolution says that this is merely a theory. I could show him photographs indicating the work undertaken by some of these Anglo-Indians at the risk of their lives during the recent floods, work which I personally should not like to have undertaken. They have

an extraordinary ability for coming up to the scratch in an emergency. In my office I have had the same experience. I find that it is necessary to employ a certain number of Anglo-Indians on special tasks and I do it because I find it pays me to do so. There is nothing unique or strange in this. India draws its armies from one community, its business men from others. Certain communities have a *penchant* for law and certain communities even for politics. Our motto with so many communities in India must be "From each according to his powers, to each according to his needs." Quite recently Sir Malcolm Hailey told the Anglo-Indian community in the Punjab that they were not suited as a community for peasant proprietorship. They doubtless went away disappointed, but Sir Malcolm was right. It is useless and wasteful to the State to put round pegs into square holes. It will lead to the grossest inefficiency if we do not retain our square pegs in square holes. During December, Sir, I took a keen interest in the Anglo-Indian Unemployment Committee in Calcutta. I can assure the House that the conditions are heart-rending. Men whose only offence is that they have done their bit in the war are living with their families, not living but merely existing, under conditions which if they were Indians would bring down all the eloquence at Mr. Joshi's command. It is neither just to the railways nor just to the community that they should be deprived of work for which they are eminently suited. It is sad that for them and for them alone the Reform scheme seems to offer nothing but disillusionment and despair. Admittedly they have at times been badly led. Admittedly there are black sheep in every flock. They do not know, and that has been one of their difficulties in the past, whether to throw in their lot with the Indian or the European. They do not realise, this House itself does not realise that it is a dead issue and what the first fruits of the Reforms have really been. Some thought that the Reforms meant that the British were leaving India. Even to-day few recognise that the first effect of the Reforms has been to cause my community to take deeper root in the country than ever before. For never before were we called upon, with our Indian fellow subjects, to take an active part in the Government of the country. Five years ago would our Carters, our Darcy Lindsay, our Willsons, our Flemings, be devoting their well-earned leisure to the political interests of the community at large? I think not. Even the Government themselves hardly seem to realise the fact judging by the silence. I do not use strong words, Sir, and therefore I will not say the contemptuous silence, even from criticism, in their latest publication "India in 1923-24" presented under authority and with the general approval of the Secretary of State regarding the honest work of our community in the Central and the Provincial Councils. I feel confident that our friends on this side of the House, however we may at times differ from them, will not endorse the apparent view of the Government trumpeter that we are of no use to the State and are here merely to waste our time and yours. The Reforms have brought us all closer together and when the dust of conflict dies down I think we shall realise the fact. It will be illustrated in half an hour's time in another place. It will be illustrated once more outside these walls to-morrow, after the futile strife of tongues in the Assembly has died down for the night.

**Mr. T. C. Goswami:** What has this got to do with the Resolution?

**Sir Campbell Rhodes:** The Anglo-Indian Community, misunderstanding and misunderstood, must take its part amongst us. This House has yet to realise . . . .

**Mr. T. C. Goswami:** I must really protest that all this is out of order. I do not think that whatever he has got to do to square up or promise Colonel Gidney has anything to do with the matter before us. He cannot make this an occasion for it.

**Sir Campbell Rhodes:** Before you give your ruling I wish to say. . . .

**Mr. Deputy President:** I have no doubt about my ruling. The Resolution concerns railway employees and Anglo-Indians are railway employees.

**Sir Campbell Rhodes:** The Anglo-Indian community, Sir, misunderstanding and, as we have seen from my Honourable friend, misunderstood, must take its part amongst us. This House has yet to realize that it is the trustee of the Anglo-Indian community as it must be the trustee of all minorities if it is to impress the Indian and British public with its sense of responsibility and its capacity to assume greater powers when the time comes for the Reforms to be reconsidered. And its trusteeship of the Anglo-Indian community is especially borne in upon us by the fact that of the Anglo-Indians alone can it be said that they are the blood relations of every community practically in this House. I appeal therefore to the House to take a larger, a generous and a just view of its responsibilities and to keep this community on the rails until it has reached that station in the political and economic life of the nation which all at heart must wish it to occupy.

The debate was adjourned.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Wednesday, the 28th January, 1925.

---