

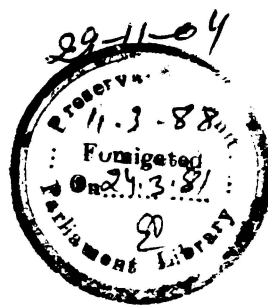
Tuesday, 17th February, 1931

THE
COUNCIL OF STATE DEBATES

VOLUME I, 1931

(10th February to 2nd April, 1931)

FIRST SESSION
OF THE
THIRD COUNCIL OF STATE, 1931



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COUNCIL OF STATE.

Tuesday, 17th February, 1931.

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

MEMBERS SWORN :

The Honourable Sir Dinshaw Eduljee Wacha, Kt. (Bombay : Nominated Non-Official).

The Honourable Raja Bijoy Sing Dudhoria (Bengal : Nominated Non-Official).

The Honourable Mr. Thomas Guthrie Russell (Chief Commissioner, Railways).

QUESTION AND ANSWER.

ARTICLE IN THE OCTOBER ISSUE OF THE *Sketch* ENTITLED "THE RABBIT HUTCH OF SIMLA".

56. THE HONOURABLE MR. K. V. RANGASWAMY AYYANGAR :
(a) Has the attention of Government of India been drawn to an article entitled "The Rabbit Hutch of Simla" in the October issue of the *Sketch* published in London ?

(b) Has the Government of India been able to trace the author of that article ?

(c) Does Government propose to take action against him ?

THE HONOURABLE MR. H. W. EMERSON : (a), (b) and (c). I have not yet been able to trace the article. If the Honourable Member will kindly furnish me with further particulars, I will make endeavours to do so.

MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR GENERAL.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT : I have a Message to the Council from His Excellency the Governor General.

The Message is in the form of the following Order :

DATE FOR GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE RAILWAY BUDGET.

"With reference to my Order, dated the 27th January, 1931, appointing in the alternative Friday, the 20th February, or Saturday, the 21st February, for general discussion in the Council of State of the estimated annual expenditure and revenue of the Governor General in Council in respect of Railways, I, Edward Frederick Lindley, Baron Irwin, hereby direct that the said general discussion shall take place on Saturday, the 21st February.

(Sd.) IRWIN,

Viceroy and Governor General."

(The Message was received by the Council standing.)

THE RAILWAY BUDGET FOR 1931-32.

THE HONOURABLE MR. T. G. RUSSELL (Chief Commissioner, Railways) : Sir, I have the honour to present a statement of the estimated revenue and expenditure of the Governor General in Council for the year 1931-32 in respect of Railways. A Railway Budget, like any other budget, must of necessity be mainly composed of figures, the quotation of which *en masse* is not only wearisome to the speaker but even more so to the listener. I propose, therefore, as far as possible only to give the essential figures and leave Honourable Members to examine the figures in detail from the Budget Memorandum which will be placed in their hands at the conclusion of my speech.

2. I need only refer briefly to the results of 1929-30—these are already generally known. I confess that when I presented the budget estimate last year I was more optimistic than events proved to have been justified. Our weekly earnings had just shown indications of improving and I anticipated that we should have a net gain of 526 lakhs from all lines, commercial and strategic, and that to meet our contribution to general revenues it would be necessary to withdraw only 86 lakhs from our reserves. But the spirit was short-lived and instead of this our net gain was only 404 lakhs which entailed a withdrawal of 208 lakhs from our reserves, reducing them to 16,34 lakhs. The main reasons for our revenues failing to come up to expectations were the world trade depression and the strike on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway. The position of our depreciation fund is, however, more cheerful, and as a result of our transactions we were able to increase this from 11½ crores to approximately 12¼ crores.

3. Next we come to the current year. When last year at this time we framed our estimate of receipts—as we then thought on a conservative basis—we expected to have a net gain of 608 lakhs which would have sufficed to pay the fixed contribution of 574 lakhs to general revenues and give us a small surplus of 34 lakhs to place to our reserves. We were again, I confess, too optimistic. At the time the figures were placed before the Legislature there was little sign that the general economic depression and the civil disobedience movement would develop, to the extent which they have, and we assumed that we could expect though not a bumper year, at least a year of normal or just below normal traffic, and it is indeed tantalising that the two factors, which I have mentioned, should have interfered with what, considering the wonderful crops which India has produced this year, should have been a year of marked prosperity for the railways. But we must face the facts, gloomy though they may appear to be, and the position is that instead of having a small surplus to put to reserves we shall not merely be unable to pay our contribution to the general revenues but shall also have to draw on our reserves to the extent of about 3 crores to pay our interest charges. In more detail the position is that against a budget estimate of 106 crores 11 lakhs we now estimate our gross traffic receipts for commercial lines at 93 crores 60 lakhs. This estimate has, of course, to be made before the results of two of the heaviest months of traffic are known, but I am afraid I cannot hold out hopes that there will be any increase in the figure of earnings estimated. I have already stated what we consider to have been the main reasons for the falling off in our traffic, but the Council will expect me to give some details of how these factors affected the position. The fall in the cost of agricultural products with its consequent effect on earning capacity has restricted the ability of large sections of the population to indulge in railway travelling as freely as usual, with the result that the reductions in passenger fares, which we made two or three years ago with the object of encouraging more travel, and incidentally increasing our revenues

have not had the desired effect and have actually reduced our net earnings. The actual number of passengers carried during the first seven months of the financial year is 23 millions lower than carried during the same period of the preceding year.

As regards goods traffic, there has been a falling off in the amount of carriage of almost all commodities. The only commodity of any importance, which shows a substantial increase, is wheat, and of this commodity we carried 272 thousand tons more in the first 7 months of this year than in the preceding year.

4. Let us now turn to the slightly more cheerful side of the picture—working expenses. Last year we budgeted for working expenses 68 crores 9 lakhs. We now estimate that our working expenses for the current year will be 65 crores 13 lakhs, or a net saving on our budget estimate of 296 lakhs. Admittedly, 84 lakhs of this saving is due to a fortuitous adjustment between the depreciation fund and revenue, but the remainder 2 crores 12 lakhs is all real reduction. For this reduction railway administrations must be given full credit. It could not have been achieved without very strenuous efforts on the part of all railway staff. Our critics will, of course, say that reduced traffic must mean reduced working expenses. This is quite correct, but what they forget is that working expenses do not fall, and cannot fall, in the same ratio as a reduction in traffic. Actually only from 25 to 40 per cent. of the cost of running a railway is dependent on the amount of traffic moved. In addition, this year we have had to operate and maintain over 300 miles of new lines. We have had to take steps to engage additional staff in order to give effect to the Hours of Employment Regulations which are now being brought into force on State-managed Railways. We have improved the scales of wages of the lower paid men on three of the State-managed Railways as a result of the investigation which was promised last year. I think, therefore, that railways can claim that they have done their best to meet the present emergency. I may say that I have lately been reading Directors' Reports on railways in various parts of the world; many of these must make most depressing reading to their shareholders, but I think a perusal of them would probably make quite cheerful reading to Honourable Members as they would then realise that the position of Indian Railways is at least no worse than many railways in other parts of the world and is in fact better than many.

5. Having confessed to having been too great an optimist in forecasting the earnings of railways during the past two years I admit that I approach the task of making an estimate for the year 1931-32 with a good deal of temerity. He is a brave man who at the present time claims to be able to see far into the future; no one can tell when there will be a reaction from the present world-wide depression, but we can only do our best, and I feel sure that the Council will realise the difficulties which beset us when we endeavour to make an estimate of what traffic the railways will carry next year. Even in normal times the difficulties are great. Everything in India depends on the monsoon, but, as usual, in making our estimate we have assumed that the monsoon will be normal. We have also assumed that there will be a slight improvement in trade, and we estimate our gross traffic receipts from commercial lines for the year 1931-32 at 99½ crores or about 6 crores higher than our revised estimate for this year. In making this estimate we have included an amount of from 1½ to 2 crores for minor alterations of rates and fares. My predecessors, Sir Clement Hindley and Sir Austen Hadow, when they presented their Budgets of two or three years back, were in the happy position of being able to announce popular measures, such as reductions in rates and fares. I regret, as I have mentioned, that I am in an unhappy position of having to announce that it will be

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essential to increase certain of our rates, but I can assure the Council that any changes which we make will be done with due regard to the trade of the country and care will be taken not to impose rates which will press too hardly on any particular section of the community. We have recently been pressed to make a general reduction in the rates for agricultural products. We have gone into the question in great detail and are convinced that in the present state of world over-production no decrease, with its consequent loss to railways, can possibly be made up by increased traffic, but I can assure the Council that all railways are alive to the position and are carefully watching the movement of agricultural products, and if there are signs that a reduction in rates on any particular commodity will stimulate traffic this will be considered. As examples of this, rates for wheat to Karachi and rates for cotton seed to Bombay have been reduced, and by a special arrangement with the Punjab Government rates for wheat from the Punjab to Calcutta have also been temporarily reduced. It remains to be seen whether these reductions will have the desired effect. Apart altogether from the railway position, a reduction in rates which does not lead to an increase of traffic can be of little benefit to the *ryot*, the man whom it is desired to benefit.

6. Now I must turn to our estimate of the working expenses for the current year. Here again there are considerable difficulties in making an accurate forecast, though these difficulties are nothing like as great as in the case of forecasting our earnings. Our budget estimate of ordinary working expenses for the year 1931-32 we place at 105 lakhs below our revised estimate for the current year; but, as I have said before, this year's saving has been increased by an unexpected windfall of 84 lakhs from the Depreciation Fund. Therefore, if we are correct in our estimate the reduction amounts to close on 2 crores of rupees. To get this reduction over a year in which railways have made special efforts to save will, it is realised, mean unremitting attention on behalf of every railway administration and on the part of every member of the staff. The task is made more difficult as additional expenditure in certain directions will be unavoidable. Additional staff must be engaged to give effect to the new Hours of Employment Regulations, and the full expense of the recent increases in the wages of the lower paid staff will only be felt next year. There will also be the cost of maintaining and operating nearly 900 miles of new lines which we expect to be opened during this and next year—lines the net earnings from which cannot in the first few years of their existence be expected to cover their interest charges. It must also be borne in mind that in making this estimate we are allowing for a moderate increase in traffic. We have, I admit, set railways a difficult task but we feel confident that the railways and their staff are prepared and willing to shoulder the burden. It is our hope that the general public will realise that they also must be called upon to bear a certain portion of the burden. It will not be possible to give them certain luxuries which are taken as a matter of course in days of prosperity; but we can assure them that despite the efforts which we are making to cut down expenditure, no reduction will be allowed if it entails a lesser degree of safety for the travelling public than they have reason to expect at present. Reductions in expenditure of the magnitude which I have forecasted, must mean of necessity restrictive rationing of staff on all railways. It will also mean that every man will have to do a little extra; but as I have said before, there is no fear that our staff will not loyally support the railway administrations in their efforts to effect the necessary economies. There are two items of expenditure over which we have no control. Under the rules governing the transactions of the Depreciation Fund

37 lakhs more than last year have to be placed to the credit of the fund from revenue. Also with an increase in capital our interest charges increase.

7. To sum up, we anticipate that our total receipts from commercial lines will be 101 crores 2 lakhs, or 5 crores 69 lakhs better than last year; while our charges ought to be 97 crores 85 lakhs, or 41 lakhs less than the current year. If our estimates prove correct we should obtain a surplus from commercial lines of 3 crores 17 lakhs, as against a loss of 2 crores 93 lakhs for the current year. Deducting 1 crore 96 lakhs from the surplus to meet the loss on strategic lines we are left with a balance of 1 crore 21 lakhs. Our contribution to general revenues next year will be 5 crores 36 lakhs; to meet this we shall again have to draw on our reserves to the extent of 4 crores 15 lakhs, reducing the balance to 1 crore 33 lakhs at the end of the year. Again, however, the Depreciation Fund gives a more cheerful picture, and we anticipate that it will stand at 21 crores 47 lakhs on the 31st March 1932. As I shall explain later, we only expect to withdraw 8 crores 25 lakhs next year against 13 crores 43 lakhs paid in from revenue according to the rules of the Fund.

8. Before I turn to the programme of works, there are one or two subjects which I should like to mention to the Council.

During the current year we have been able to make considerable headway with a number of schemes of improvement in the service conditions of the staff. First, with regard to wages, the investigation started last year into the rates of pay of the lower paid employees has been concluded, so far as the State-managed Railways are concerned, and schemes of improvement sanctioned for persons in inferior service on the Eastern Bengal, Great Indian Peninsula and East Indian Railways estimated to cost a recurring amount of 4½ lakhs on the Eastern Bengal and 5 lakhs on the Great Indian Peninsula Railways and 11 lakhs on the East Indian Railway, as also for workshop employees of the Eastern Bengal and East Indian Railways costing 5½ lakhs. Revisions of pay have also been sanctioned on some of the Company-managed Railways: thus on the Assam Bengal Railway the pay of persons in inferior service and of the lower paid subordinate staff has been revised at an annual cost of 1½ lakhs; on the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway the pay of the clerical, lower subordinate, menial and workshop staff has been revised at an estimated annual cost of 4½ lakhs. Following the revision of wages on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway an investigation has also been made into the wages of the lower paid employees of the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway.

Next, as regards Hours of Work, it may be recalled that a Bill amending the Indian Railways Act with a view to giving effect to the provisions of the Washington and Geneva Conventions was passed by the Legislative Assembly on the 27th February, 1930, and by this House on the 19th March, 1930. Soon after, a senior officer was placed on special duty with the Railway Board to direct and co-ordinate the working out of the schemes on the various railways through the agency of officers placed on special duty on individual railways for the purpose and it is expected that the Hours of Employment and Periods of Rest Rules which have been made in pursuance of the Act, will be fully introduced on the North Western and East Indian Railways with effect from the 1st April, 1931, on the Eastern Bengal and Great Indian Peninsula Railways some six months later and on Company-managed railways after a year or so. The total cost of these schemes is estimated to be 45 lakhs per annum on account of additional staff and 75 lakhs under capital for the provision of their quarters.

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The question of speeding up payments has also received attention and a scheme has been introduced on one division of the East Indian Railway to ensure that the payments of salaries and allowances will be made within 7 and 14 days respectively of the close of the month to which they relate. Similar arrangements are in course of extension to the other divisions of the railway.

As a result of complaints made by the All-India Railwaymen's Federation that debits were raised against the staff in trivial matters and without proper enquiry, the Government of India have placed a senior Traffic Officer on special duty to enquire into the existing procedure on the East Indian Railway and are awaiting his report.

The Government of India have also placed an officer of the Education Department on special duty to frame an estimate of the cost of introducing new rules for the grant of assistance to railway employees towards the education of their children and to report on certain other outstanding questions in that connection, such as the standard of education up to which assistance should be given and other cognate matters. In the meantime the Railway Board have issued provisional rules for the grant of such assistance so as to eliminate all racial discrimination for future employees.

The question of devising measures to combat the evil of indebtedness particularly among the lower paid employees has received attention and a new fund called the 'lower paid staff loan fund' has been constituted on the East Indian Railway with the object of advancing loans at reasonable rates of interest to such employees.

The Government of India have also decided to replace the existing fine funds on the State-managed railways by staff benefit funds which shall receive a contribution from revenue in addition to fines and provident fund bonuses which may be withheld under the rules from subordinate employees, and which shall be managed by the representatives of the staff.

The total cost of all these schemes for welfare and improvement in the service conditions of the staff is estimated to be 43 lakhs during the current year and 83 lakhs during the next year while the ultimate cost may mount up to a crore-and-a-half: over and above this recurring cost from revenue is the capital expenditure of 25 lakhs already incurred and a further 50 lakhs to be incurred during the next few years on the provision of quarters for the additional staff required to give effect to the Hours of Employment Regulations.

In addition to the schemes referred to, which deal with welfare and improvements in the service conditions of the staff, we have had to deal with a number of staff questions, such as for instance, the introduction of the scheme of the reorganisation of superior cadres on State-managed railways, elimination of racial discrimination, representation of minority communities in the service, preparation of new rules for the recruitment and training of the subordinate staff and for their medical examination and the grant of medical certificates. Finally, the question of the re-employment of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway ex-strikers of whom about 5,000 men are, according to the latest reports, still out of employment, continues to receive special attention and instructions have been issued to all the State-managed railways in India to give preference to them (including such of them as failed to offer for duty within the period prescribed in the Government of India Communiqué of March 1st, 1930) in filling posts for which they may be qualified over outsiders.

9. Last year I made a reference to the progress made with the standardization of Railway equipment. It was during the close of that year that the Central Standards Office for Railways was formed and all work connected with standardization centralised in one office. The benefits resulting from the new organisation are already beginning to be felt. Apart from the fact that the Railway Board's Office found itself unable to deal with the increasing volume of work which the extended application of standardization entailed, the locating of all such work in one office, in charge of a Controller of Standardization, enables a degree of co-ordination in the standardization of all classes of equipment to be obtained which was impossible when the various classes of equipment were dealt with by different branches of the Board's Office. As an example of the importance of such co-ordination, I need only refer to bridge, track and rolling stock—three separate factors, normally regarded as three separate branches of engineering, and yet the absence of close co-ordination between the three or their failure to advance together, hand in hand, can result, and often has resulted, in heavy financial loss to Railways.

As an example of the valuable work undertaken by the Central Standards Office since its formation I should like to mention the preparation and publication of the standard vacuum brake drawings. The vacuum brake is used exclusively for controlling trains in this country, and the value of the brake equipment fitted to the rolling stock of State Railways alone exceeds three crores of rupees. When first invented the brake was largely covered by patents and the manufacture of the equipment was limited to the patentees; but since the expiry of the original patents, other firms have come into the field. In order to limit competition, as far as possible, both the original patentees and their competitors have consistently refused to issue working drawings of the equipment they manufacture. This jealous guarding of information necessary to the accurate manufacture of the equipment has been so thorough, that besides securing the Manufacturers' ends by limiting competition, it has caused the equipment now in use on various Railways to be to a large extent non-interchangeable. This lack of complete interchangeability between fittings made by different manufacturers has, in the past, resulted in inflated stores balances, defective working of the brake and heavy maintenance charges.

With the issue of the standard drawings to which all equipment will, in future, be made, complete interchangeability is assured, and the manufacture of the equipment, instead of being limited to two or three firms, can be undertaken by any well-equipped engineering firm in India. I need hardly say that Railways cannot but benefit financially in consequence.

As another instance of how economy can be effected by standardization I would mention the East Indian Railway Carriage Underframes Workshop at Tatanagar. Carriage underframes are being manufactured there to-day at considerably less cost than they can be purchased from any other source. This reduction has become possible due to quantity production following the introduction of standard designs of underframes purchased by all Railways, in lieu of the old practice in which each administration purchased underframes to their own particular designs.

The various Standard Committees have continued to meet regularly throughout the year. The Locomotive Committee has been particularly engaged on modifications to the design and details of standard locomotives (of which there are now more than 650 in service of sixteen different standard types) which further experience with the running of these engines has shown to be necessary. In this connection I should like to draw attention to the recent arrival in this country of a Dynamometer Car, with the aid of which it will

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be possible to record important data concerning the performance of our standard engines, which cannot be determined by any other means. This Car is the most completely equipped vehicle of its kind yet constructed, and is to serve as a pattern for the car about to be built at the expense of the British Government in response to the British Railways' demand for the provision of a National Locomotive Testing plant. Although the first cost of such a vehicle is necessarily high, the knowledge that can be derived from its use will, it is anticipated, enable the efficiency of our locomotive power to be further increased.

Another matter which has recently had the close attention of the Locomotive Committee is the application of grease lubrication to locomotives. Although the use of grease for locomotive lubrication has for many years been the general practice of Railways in the United States of America, it was not until the last few years that this method of lubrication was tried in this country. Results so far obtained indicate that considerable economy will result from the extended use of grease lubrication for locomotives.

The Carriage and Wagon Committee has recently completed detailed drawings of a standard Broad Gauge upper class coaching body of the I and II Class composite type. The issue of these drawings will, besides providing for a uniform standard of comfort on all Broad Gauge State Railways, enable the cost of construction of such bodies to be reduced considerably as has already been done in the case of lower class bodies. The Committee is now turning its attention to Metre Gauge coaching bodies and the standardization of electric train lighting equipment. My remarks regarding vacuum brake apply generally to train lighting equipment. Although it cannot be said that any one firm holds a monopoly for the manufacture of such equipment, its manufacture is at present limited to a few firms only. With the standardization of such equipment, and the issue of standard drawings and specifications, other engineering firms will be in a position to compete for our requirements.

Last year I made a reference to the work of the Committee on Standards and Specifications and pointed out that the drafting of specifications recommended by the Committee and approved by the Board had not, owing to shortage of staff, been undertaken. This work has been taken over by the newly formed Standards Office and to-date 150 specifications have been drafted of which the first 95 have either been published or are under print for publication. I think the Council will agree that much valuable work has been done by the Central Standards Office and that the expenditure on this is fully justified.

10. The Council may remember that when I presented the programme of Capital and Depreciation Fund expenditure last year for the year 1930-31 I remarked that our proposals were very modest ones. We budgeted for an expenditure of 25½ crores of which 8½ crores was debitable to the Depreciation Fund. We now expect to spend on works 22½ crores of which 14½ crores will be charged to Capital and the balance to the Depreciation Fund. The total expenditure from the Depreciation Fund will be 9 crores, as this fund has to provide, as I have previously mentioned, about three-quarters of a crore as a credit to revenue. Of the underspending of 2½ crores half is under new lines. We have continued the policy, which we introduced two years ago, of concentrating entirely on pushing schemes already in hand to completion, and the reduction in expenditure will not reduce the mileage

of new lines opened or which we anticipated would be opened when we prepared the budget. The most important lines opened or which will be opened during this financial year are certain sections of the Raipur-Vizianagram Railway, a total length of about 56 miles, Unao-Madhoganj, Mahrabpur-Padidan, Pudukkottai-Manamadura, Mashrak-Thawe and Salem-Chinnasalem Railways, making a total mileage of just over 500 miles.

11. Turning to open line works, the most important events of the year were the completion of the Great Indian Peninsula Electrification from Bombay to Poona and Bombay to Igatpuri. This scheme is, I believe, the largest electrification scheme in the British Empire, and we hope very shortly to reap the full benefits in reductions in working expenses. We also opened during the year the new Central Station at Cawnpore and the new Central Station on the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway at Bombay.

12. If our budget estimate last year was a modest one it is still more so this year. We are providing for a total expenditure during 1931-32 of 21 crores 70 lakhs of which 8 crores 25 lakhs will be expenditure found from the Depreciation Fund. Material to the value of 2 crores of rupees already in stock will be utilised for our new works so that the actual new capital which it will be necessary to find will be only 11 crores 45 lakhs. We are again concentrating on completing works already in hand and on works which will increase the capacity of our main lines. In other words, in these times of scarcity we are making every endeavour to consolidate our position so that when the times of plenty come again our main trunk lines will be fully equipped to take the additional traffic which must follow construction of new lines in undeveloped country. 290 lakhs are allotted for capital expenditure for the completion of new lines under construction, and at the end of the year we hope to have all lines now under construction opened to traffic except the Sagaing Bridge over the Irrawaddy, the Lucknow-Sultanpur-Zaffarabad Railway, and the Tangla-Belsiri Railway in the north-east of India. Open line works in progress have been allotted 410 lakhs of which 98 lakhs will come from the Depreciation Fund, and if our anticipations are realised at the end of the year there will be only two works now in hand, the Dohad Workshops on the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway, and the doubling of the Cawnpore-Tundla section of the East Indian Railway, which will require substantial amounts for their completion during subsequent years. The only new work of any magnitude which it is proposed to take up during the year is the Narbadda Bridge on the main line of the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway between Bombay and Delhi. The cost of this is estimated at 87 lakhs, and an allotment of 15 lakhs has been made. A weak bridge of this description affects the capacity of the whole section, and its renewal is overdue. The position at the end of the year will be that our commitments for completion of works will be reduced to 357 lakhs of which 46 lakhs will come from the Depreciation Fund. This, I think, the Council will agree is a satisfactory position.

13. Turning to our programme for rolling stock. This, after a detailed examination with railway administrations, we have reduced to 5½ crores of rupees of which 2½ crores will come from the Depreciation Fund. It has only been possible to get to this figure by redistribution of existing rolling stock between the various railways. By this means it has been found possible to avoid purchases amounting to nearly half a crore. Other avenues of savings have been explored, *e.g.*, it has been found possible by reconditioning second-hand wheels for carriages and wagons to make a further saving of just over 12 lakhs.

[Mr. T. G. Russell.]

14. I have done my best to place before the Council the principal figures of our revised budget for this year and those for the budget estimate for 1931-32. I do not claim that my review has been exhaustive or that I have mentioned everything that is of public interest, but this is impossible in the short time available and it would certainly be wearisome to the Council. I hope I have made it clear, however, that though we are passing through depressing times there is hope for the future and that Indian Railways will be in a position to meet the requirements of traffic when trade begins to improve.

15. In conclusion, I would like to take the opportunity of bringing to the notice of the Council the valuable service which the Agents, officers and staff of the various railway administrations have rendered to the country during the past years often under very trying conditions, and the assistance which they have given to the Railway Board in their endeavours to improve efficiency and to introduce economies to meet the emergencies of the present day situation.

PUNJAB CRIMINAL PROCEDURE AMENDMENT (SUPPLEMENTARY BILL).

THE HONOURABLE MR. H. W. EMERSON (Home Secretary): Sir, I beg to move that the Bill to supplement the Criminal Procedure (Punjab Amendment) Act, 1930, as passed by the Legislative Assembly, be taken into consideration.

It is unnecessary for me to explain at any length the circumstances in which Government have felt it their duty to introduce this legislation. Honourable Members are aware of the long series of terrorist outrages committed or attempted in the Punjab which made it incumbent on the Local Government of that province to introduce into their Legislative Council in October last a Bill to amend the Criminal Procedure. The chief object of that measure was to confer powers by which the Local Government could refer the trial of persons accused of certain offences to a Tribunal of Commissioners. The Tribunal must consist of three persons, each of whom must have acted as a Sessions Judge or as an Additional Sessions Judge for at least three years, or must be a person qualified for appointment to a High Court. The offences triable by such a Tribunal are those which come within the scope of terrorist crimes, and no person can be tried by a Tribunal unless in the opinion of the Local Government the offence of which he is accused has been committed as a member of an association whose objects include the commission of such offences, or at the instigation or under the control of such a member. The local Bill therefore is concerned with the trial of offences connected with the terrorist movement. It was examined with great care in the local Legislative Council and after such examination it was passed, substantially in the form in which it was introduced, by a large majority. We may therefore assume that the Act which it is the object of the present Bill to supplement has the support of the Legislative Council of the Punjab and of the people whom the Members of that Council represent.

I now come, Sir, to the specific purpose of the present Bill. There is a lacuna in the local Act and it is the object of the present Bill to fill that lacuna. The Legislative Council of the Punjab is not competent to legislate in regard to the powers of the High Court and it was therefore neither able to provide

rights of appeal for persons who are convicted by a Tribunal nor to require that death sentences should be referred for the confirmation of the High Court. The purpose of this Bill is to confer those powers. It gives to convicted persons rights which, in the opinion of the Local Government and of the Government of India, it is proper that they should enjoy. Indeed, when the local Bill was under discussion in the provincial Legislature, the representative of the Punjab Government, with the full authority of the Government of India, gave an undertaking that if the local Bill became law, the Government of India would take the earliest opportunity of introducing legislation with the object of conferring those rights on convicted persons. The Bill imposes no penalties. It is intended solely for the protection of convicted persons, and I am confident that this House will give it its full support.

Sir, I move.

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 and 3 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1 was added to the Bill.

The Title and Preamble were added to the Bill.

THE HONOURABLE MR. H. W. EMERSON: Sir, I beg to move that the Bill, as passed by the Legislative Assembly, be passed.

The motion was adopted.

MOTION FOR THE ELECTION OF FOUR MEMBERS TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON EMIGRATION.

THE HONOURABLE SIR FRANK NOYCE (Education, Health and Lands Secretary): Sir, I move:

"That this Council do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Honourable the President may direct, four Members to sit on the Standing Committee on Emigration."

The motion was adopted.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: In pursuance of the powers conferred on me by that motion, I direct that noon on Saturday, the 21st of February, shall be the latest time for the receipt of nominations, and that if an election is necessary it shall take place on the 24th of February.

ELECTION OF THREE MEMBERS TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON ROADS.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: The Council will now proceed to the election of three Members to serve on the Standing Committee on Roads. There were originally six nominations. Those have been reduced by withdrawals to four and the four Honourable Members who are now seeking election to this Committee are:

The Honourable Mr. Ernest Miller.

The Honourable Rai Bahadur Lala Ram Saran Das.

The Honourable Mr. Satyendra Chandra Ghose Moulk.

The Honourable Mr. Abu Abdullah Saiyid Hussain Imam.

[The Honourable the President.]

Ballot papers will be handed to Honourable Members and they will vote by striking out the name of the Member for whom they do not wish to vote. Of course they are at liberty to strike out more than one name if they so choose. I might add that Honourable Members should not sign their voting papers.

(The ballot was then taken.)

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: As the result of the ballot, the Honourable Mr. Abu Abdullah Saiyid Hussain Imam, the Honourable Mr. Miller and the Honourable Mr. S. C. Ghosh Moulik have received 37, 36 and 35 votes respectively, and I have to declare those three Honourable Members duly elected.

The Council then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Wednesday, the 18th February, 1931.