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# COUNCIL OF STATE.

Monday, the 11th September, 1922.

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

## HONOURABLE MR. SETHNA'S ABSENCE FROM MEETING.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT : I have received information that the Honourable Mr. Sethna is unwell and unable to attend the Council this morning. If any Member of the Government desires to give a verbal answer to any of the Honourable gentleman's questions, perhaps he will express his desire.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

### RADIO COMMUNICATION.

66. The HONOURABLE MR. PHIROZE SETHNA : Will Government be pleased to state :—

- (a) what is the present situation as regards radio communication between India and other parts of the British Empire, especially the United Kingdom ?
- (b) if they have expressed the view that the Indian link in the scheme should be carried out by private enterprise working under contract from the Government of India ?
- (c) if it is a fact that the Imperial Government have decided that they will erect the Indian station but that the Indian Government shall maintain and work it, and, if so, have Government agreed to this decision ?
- (d) if it is a fact that such a decision would amount to one transmitting station which will transmit only in one direction at a time ?
- (e) is it not essential to provide two transmitting stations if traffic is to be handled sufficiently expeditiously to ensure an efficient commercial service ?
- (f) if they have a sufficient personnel with the necessary technical and commercial experience to maintain and work the service on a commercial basis ?

The HONOURABLE MR. B. N. SARMA : (a) The manner in which the Government of India should co-operate in the Imperial Wireless Scheme is under consideration.

- (b) Yes.
- (c) His Majesty's Government have suggested a scheme of the kind, which is now under consideration in the Government of India.
- (d) One transmitting station only in India is proposed in the first

instance capable either of duplex communication in one direction or of transmitting in one direction and receiving from another simultaneously.

(e) Until the volume of traffic is known, the Government of India do not propose to arrive at a conclusion on the subject.

(f) The point will be considered when it arises.

#### RADIO COMMUNICATION BETWEEN INDIA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM.

67. The HONOURABLE MR. PHIROZE SETHNA : Will Government be pleased to state :—

- (a) if there is any objection to providing direct radio communication between India and the United Kingdom by means of a commercial company operating under license from or contract with Government ?
- (b) if it is possible to lay down in the form of a license or contract such terms as will ensure an adequate service in every way in accordance with the requirements of Imperial radio communication being maintained whether in normal times or times of war or emergency ?
- (c) if it is possible to have a contract in such a manner that Government have the right to purchase the concern at any time ?

The HONOURABLE MR. B. N. SARMA : (a) The question is not so much one of objections as of the balance of advantages. The Honourable Member will, no doubt, appreciate the value of retaining direct wireless communication with the United Kingdom in the hands of the State.

(b) and (c) The experience of the terms suggested by the Honourable Member, available in India and abroad, is not yet sufficient to enable the Government of India to answer this question with confidence.

#### RADIO COMMUNICATIONS WITH INDIA.

68. The HONOURABLE MR. PHIROZE SETHNA : Will Government be pleased to state :—

- (a) if any private firm or firms have applied for a license to erect and maintain the necessary service to provide the Indian link of the Imperial radio communication scheme and, if so, with what result ?
- (b) the terms under which the private firm or firms, if any, offered to carry out the service ?

The HONOURABLE MR. B. N. SARMA : The Honourable Member is referred to the reply given in this House on the 6th September 1922 to the Honourable Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas' Question No. 27 on the same subject.

#### EXPENDITURE ON WIRELESS SCHEME.

69. The HONOURABLE MR. PHIROZE SETHNA : Will Government be pleased to state what is the Indian share of the estimated capital and recurring expenditure in a Wireless scheme, if any, as proposed by the Home Government ?

The HONOURABLE MR. B. N. SARMA : In consideration of the financial difficulties of the Government of India, the Imperial Government have offered to advance the estimated capital cost of the station, and to recover it by instalments from the annual profits. It is estimated that, except

possibly during the first year or two of working, the annual revenue will be sufficient to cover the working expenses and sinking fund. If there is any loss on the working, it is proposed that the Indian Government should bear it.

AMENDMENT OF INCOME-TAX ACT.

70. The HONOURABLE MR. PHIROZE SETHNA : Will Government be pleased to say if they will consider the advisability of amending the Income-tax Act for the purpose of removing an anomaly whereby according to section 11 (3) professional fees earned in the Native States are liable to Income-tax, and according to section 4 (2) income from business in Native States is only taxed if brought into British India within three years ?

The HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK : Government are not prepared to consider the advisability of amending the Income-tax Act as suggested. Section 11 (3) of the Income-tax Act, 1922, is practically identical with section 10(3) of the previous Act of 1918. So far as Government are aware, no difficulty has ever been experienced in working this provision, nor has it given rise to any complaints. The object of section 4 (2) of the new Act was to render the profits of a business conducted outside British India liable to taxation when brought into British India. The limit of three years was inserted in order to obviate the difficulty of determining after what period the accumulated profits of a business might be deemed to have taken on the nature of capital. Government do not consider that the enactment of this new provision has created any anomaly ; on the contrary its effect has been to remove one, as under the old Act it was generally impossible to tax the profits of businesses conducted abroad. Moreover, it is extremely unlikely that in practice any professional man ordinarily resident in British India would allow fees paid to him to accumulate outside British India for more than three years.

COLONIALS IN INDIAN ARMY.

71. The HONOURABLE MR. PHIROZE SETHNA : Will Government be pleased to state—

- (1) the number of (a) Canadians, (b) Australians, (c) New Zealanders, (d) South Africans, (e) British West Indians, and (f) other Colonials who have been given regular commissions in the Indian Army since 1st August 1914, and
- (2) the number of (a), (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f) in the preceding paragraph who are included in the surplus list of officers to be demobilised ?

HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF : (1) and (2). It would entail a considerable amount of labour, which the Government of India regret they are unable to undertake, to compile the information desired by the Honourable Member, as it would be necessary to investigate the parentage of each officer who has been commissioned in the Indian Army since 1914, in order to determine whether, by such parentage, he should be considered to have a Colonial or Dominion domicile. In the circumstances the Government regret that they cannot give the information asked for.



## POLITICAL DEPARTMENT IN KATHIAWAR AND RAJPUTANA.

72. The HONOURABLE MR. PHIROZE SETHNA : Will Government be pleased to state the number of officers in the Political Department engaged in Kathiawar and Rajputana drawing salaries of Rs. 500 or over per mensem ?

The HONOURABLE MR. J. P. THOMPSON : (a) in Rajputana 12 ;  
(b) in Kathiawar 4.

## EXPENDITURE ON POLITICAL DEPARTMENT IN KATHIAWAR AND RAJPUTANA.

73. The HONOURABLE MR. PHIROZE SETHNA : Will Government be pleased to state what has been the expenditure on the Political Department in Kathiawar and Rajputana during each one of the last five years ?

The HONOURABLE MR. J. P. THOMPSON : A statement giving the figures required is laid on the table.

*Statement showing the expenditure on the Political Department in Kathiawar and Rajputana during each of the last five years.*

—	1917-18.	1918-19.	1919-20.	1920-21.	1921-22.
Kathiawar ...	2,70,000	2,90,000	3,60,000	3,84,000	4,18,000
Rajputana ...	4,84,000	4,73,000	5,61,000	5,72,000	6,41,000

## POLITICAL DEPARTMENT, CIVIL AND MILITARY.

74. The HONOURABLE MR. PHIROZE SETHNA : Will Government be pleased to give the number of officers (a) Civil and (b) Military in the Political Department drawing salaries of Rs. 500 and over per mensem, and also state how many amongst them are Indians ?

The HONOURABLE MR. J. P. THOMPSON : There are 50 Civil and 91 Military Officers serving in the Political Department drawing salaries of Rs. 500 and over per mensem.

Four of the former are Indians.

## LEGAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

75. The HONOURABLE MR. PHIROZE SETHNA : Will Government be pleased to state if military officers serving in the Political Department are required to possess any legal qualifications and, if so, what ?

The HONOURABLE MR. J. P. THOMPSON : Military Officers serving in the Political Department are required by the rules to pass the same examinations in Law as junior officers of the Indian Civil Service in the United Provinces. The United Provinces Government have now substituted a 3 months' training class in place of the examinations, and the question of extending the new arrangements to military officers of the Political Department is now under consideration.

**TIRHOOT STATE RAILWAY.**

**76. The HONOURABLE MR. PHIROZE SETHNA :** Will Government be pleased—

- (a) to give the date when the Tirhoot State Railway was handed over to the Bengal and North-Western Railway for management and for what period ;
- (b) to state if there were any special reasons for giving it to a Railway under Company management instead of handing it over to the Eastern Bengal which is a State-managed line ;
- (c) to state if any inquiries were made at the time and, if so, what, to consult the wishes of the Tirhoot public for the handing over to the Bengal and North-Western in preference to the Eastern Bengal ?

The HONOURABLE MR. H. A. F. LINDSAY : (a) The Tirhoot State Railway was leased to the Bengal and North-Western Railway Company for working with effect from 1st July 1890. The contract was extended in 1905 till the 31st December 1932.

(b) From the correspondence on the subject it appears that the decision to hand over the Railway to the Bengal and North-Western Railway was taken on the ground that it was desirable in the interests of the districts through which the line passed and that it was likely to prove generally beneficial to the State.

(c) The Bengal Government was consulted, and the Tirhoot public sent memorials protesting against the proposed transfer. These memorials were received however, after the above decision had been reached.

**WORKING OF INCOME-TAX ACT.**

**77. The HONOURABLE MR. PHIROZE SETHNA :** Has the attention of Government been drawn to the omission—

- (a) in section 33 (1) of the Income-tax Act, 1922, of any fixed period within which the Commissioner may, of his own motion, call for the record of any proceeding under the Act ; and
- (b) if such be the case, do Government intend so to amend section 33 (1) as to bring it into line with section 34 of the same Act, according to which the Income-tax Officers' power is limited to one year for assessing or re-assessing any income which has escaped assessment, and with section 35 according to which any mistake can be rectified also within the period of one year ?

The HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK : (a) and (b) : Section 33 (1) of the Income-tax Act, 1922 (XI of 1922), follows generally section 23 of the Income-tax Act, 1918 (VII of 1918) which did not prescribe any period within which the Commissioner was to review assessment proceedings of his own motion. As Government have received no complaints about the working of this section, they do not consider it necessary at present to amend the section in the direction suggested by the Honourable Member.

PROGRESS OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

78. The HONOURABLE MR. PHIROZE SETHNA : Will Government be pleased to make a statement showing the progress of revenue and expenditure during the current financial year up to now with a view to indicate as to how revenues are coming in and if expenditure is keeping within the budgeted amounts ?

The HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK : In replying to a similar question asked this time last year by the Honourable Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy, I pointed out the difficulty of making any forecast, at this stage in the financial year, as to how far the budget expectations are likely to be realised. The difficulty arises from the fact that the Central Government's revenues depend almost entirely upon trade conditions, and it would not therefore be safe to draw any inference as to the whole year's collections from the figures of the first four months of the year, which are normally a period of slack trade. Thus, it would be very unsafe to take under any head the revenue collected in the first four months of the year and to multiply that by 3 in order to arrive at the probable revenue for the whole year.

At present our data are the actual figures of revenue and expenditure until the end of July, while for August we have only approximate figures.

Under Customs, we collected about 11½ crores up to the end of July, and this figure would have been higher were it not for refunds made in April on account of certain higher duties collected in March which were omitted from the Finance Bill as finally passed. The figures for August are expected to show an improvement. So far as can be seen at present, assuming that trade generally will at any rate not be materially worse than last cold weather, and taking into account the favourable character of the present monsoon, it is possible that the year's revenue from Customs may fall somewhat short of the budget figure of 45½ crores, though, we may hope, not by more than a crore or two. Any short-fall that may occur is likely to be due to the revenue from sugar, liquors, matches, the so-called "luxuries," miscellaneous articles, hides and skins, and the cotton excise falling short of that estimated. On the other hand, there have been unexpectedly large imports of tobacco ; the piece-goods trade has at last shown a distinct revival, and we ought certainly to reach the budget figure of 560 lakhs ; the new duty on kerosene is also doing well and may bring us in half a crore more than we expected.

The railway returns have been disappointing, although there has been some slight improvement in the last weeks. The gross traffic receipts to the end of August amounted to just under 37 crores. We can no doubt count on some increase in traffic during the coming cold weather, but unless this is much greater than at present can reasonably be expected, it is probable that the gross receipts will fall short by 2 or 3 crores of the budget estimate of 99½ crores. Unlike last year, it is not anticipated that there will be any excess in the budget estimate of working expenses.

As regards Posts and Telegraphs, the increases in the postal rates appear to have affected correspondence substantially during the first two or three months, and for the present it seems probable that the budget estimates of net receipts may have to be reduced by a crore.

Most of our revenue from income-tax is collected in the last few months of the year. For the present all that can be said is that, owing to heavy business losses, the allowances that we shall have to make for bad debts are likely to be greater than anticipated, but it is too early yet to say whether or not the budget estimate will have to be reduced.

On the other hand, it is possible that we shall get more revenue both from opium and salt than we anticipated, and under these two heads we can probably count on an improvement of from  $\frac{1}{2}$  crore to a crore.

On the expenditure side, no important variations have so far come to notice, so far as civil expenditure is concerned, except that we are likely to save about  $\frac{1}{2}$  crore of our budget provision for interest on debt, owing to the fact that a full half-year's interest on our new loan will not be payable till April the 1st.

Under military expenditure the Finance Member warned the Legislature that the budget provision for the operations in Waziristan would be exceeded ; it is probable that this excess will amount to about a crore and a half. Further, a payment of anything up to 2 crores may have to be made in respect of gratuities to surplus officers in excess of the budget provision of 35 lakhs : I need not add that inconvenient as it may be to have to face this expenditure at the present moment it will lead to a very considerable reduction in our recurring charges for future years.

#### LIFE-BELTS FOR LASCARS.

79. The HONOURABLE SARDAR JOGENDRA SINGH : Will the Government be pleased to mention if any provision in the way of life-belts and life-boats is made for Lascars on boats which employ Indian crews ?

The HONOURABLE MR. H. A. F. LINDSAY : Under the Life Saving Appliances Rules made under the English Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, every British ship is required to carry a sufficient number of lifeboats to accommodate all persons and one life-jacket for each person on board. These rules apply equally to ships carrying lascar crews.

#### LASCARS.

80. The HONOURABLE SARDAR JOGENDRA SINGH : Are the Lascars supposed to take to boats with the other crew or after them ?

The HONOURABLE MR. H. A. F. LINDSAY : Each life-boat has its crew allotted to it. No distinction is made between the members of that crew.

#### PRICE OF FOOD-GRAINS.

81. The HONOURABLE SARDAR JOGENDRA SINGH : How does the Indian prices of food-grains stand to-day in relation to the world prices ?

The HONOURABLE MR. B. N. SARMA : I can inform the Honourable Member that at present prices wheat cannot be landed in England at a profit. More exact information regarding wheat and other grains will be communicated to the Honourable Member later.

The HONOURABLE SARDAR JOGENDRA SINGH : May I ask a supplementary question ? If wheat cannot be landed at a profit, is there any reason for keeping up the embargo by Government.

The HONOURABLE MR. B. N. SARMA : The question is under consideration. It was fully discussed in the Legislative Assembly and Government will decide their policy before very long.

#### COURT FEES ACT.

82. The HONOURABLE MAHARAJA BAHADUR KESHAVA PRASAD SINGH : Will the Government be pleased to state if Local Governments can interfere with the "Court Fees Act" which is Act No. VII of 1870 ? If so, according to which Law or Regulation or Circular ?

The HONOURABLE MR. H. MONCRIEFF SMITH : The Honourable Member's question presumably refers to the powers of a local Legislature to amend the Court Fees Act, 1870. The Act is not included in the Schedule to the Local Legislatures (Previous Sanction) Rules, and it is therefore open to a Local Legislature, in exercise of its powers under subsection (2) of section 80-A of the Government of India Act, to amend it without the previous sanction of the Governor General.

#### SONE BRIDGE.

88. The HONOURABLE MAHARAJA BAHADUR KESHAVA PRASAD SINGH : Will the Government be pleased to state if it is a fact that the Sone Bridge at Koilwar on East Indian Railway has become weak ? If the answer be in the affirmative, when the Railway authorities intend to repair it ? Will the authorities at the time of repair make necessary arrangement for vehicular traffic over the bridge ?

The HONOURABLE MR. H. A. F. LINDSAY : The bridge in question is over 50 years old and not up to modern requirements.

A scheme for its renewal is in hand and funds have been allotted ; work will be undertaken as soon as the plans and estimates have been approved. These are at present under consideration by the Local Government in connection with provision for vehicular traffic.

#### SALT OPERATIONS IN BIHAR.

84. The HONOURABLE MAHARAJA BAHADUR KESHAVA PRASAD SINGH : Is it a fact that the Secretary of State was pleased in 1914 to transfer all control of salt operations in Bihar from the Government of India to the Provincial Government ? If so, has that actually been done ? If not, when the Government intend to do so ?

The HONOURABLE MR. H. A. F. LINDSAY : The transfer of the preventive work of the Northern India Salt Revenue Department to the Government of Bihar and Orissa was sanctioned by the Secretary of State in 1914, but was postponed on account of the war. The Honourable Member is referred to the answer given in reply to question No. 226\* asked by Babu Baidyanath Prasad Sinha at the meeting of the Legislative Assembly on the 27th February 1922. The question of effecting the transfer has been taken up with the Government of Bihar and Orissa.

#### "FREE EXPORT OF RICE."

85. The HONOURABLE MAHARAJA BAHADUR KESHAVA PRASAD SINGH : Has the attention of the Government been drawn to notes

\* Vide page No. 2564, Volume II, Part II.

appearing in *The Modern Review* of Calcutta for June 1922, to the effect "Free Export of Rice" ? If the facts be true, do the Government intend to stop the export ?

The HONOURABLE MR. B. N. SARMA : Government have seen the note. The price of common rice both average and cheapest at Magra hat, the place mentioned in the note, was lower during the first half of August of this year than during the corresponding period of last year. Whatever may have been the facts at the particular place and temporary fluctuations in the prices of particular qualities during a part of the year, Government are satisfied that the general course of the prices of rice does not justify a reconsideration of their decision to remove the restrictions on export : in fact in some parts of the country the price of rice is lower than in March, when the restrictions were removed, though prices of rice are usually higher in September than in March.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA DEBT.

86. The HONOURABLE MAHARAJA BAHADUR KESHAVA PRASAD SINGH : (a) What is the total amount of the debt of the Government of India (permanent and floating) up to the end of August 1922 ?

(b) What is the total amount of sinking fund ?

(c) How is this amount managed ?

The HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK : (a) The total amount of the debt of the Government of India (permanent and floating) up to the end of August 1922 was as follows :

	<i>Permanent.</i>	
Sterling Debt .. .. .	.. .. .	£216 millions.
Rupee Debt .. .. .	.. .. .	Rs. 345 crores.
	<i>Floating.</i>	
Post Office Cash Certificates .. .. .	.. .. .	Rs. 4 crores.
Treasury Bills .. .. .	.. .. .	Rs. 87 crores (of which 81 were with the public and 56 in the Paper Currency Reserve).

(b) Rs. 154 lakhs are set aside annually in India for the purchase and cancellation of the scrip of the two 5 per cent. Loans 1929—47 and 1945—55 so long as the market price of these securities is below the issue price of 95. As regards our sterling liabilities, £500,000 is paid every year to His Majesty's Treasury towards the cancellation of India's liability for that portion of the British Government War Loan 1929—47 which was taken over as part of India's war contribution.

(c) Purchases of scrip in India are made under the management of the Controller of the Currency. As regards England, payments are made direct by the Secretary of State to His Majesty's Treasury.

The HONOURABLE MR. V. G. KALE : Will the Honourable Member state what is the balance of the amount that is still payable to His Majesty's Government on account of the war contribution ?

The HONOURABLE MR. E. M. COOK : I am afraid I cannot answer the question off-hand without notice.

## INDIANS ON UGANDA RAILWAY.

87. The HONOURABLE MAHARAJA BAHADUR KESHAVA PRASAD SINGH : (a) Is it a fact that there are many Indian employees in Uganda Railway ?

(b) Has the aforesaid Railway opened out provident fund or widows' or orphans' fund ?

The HONOURABLE MR. B. N. SARMA : (a) It is a fact that many Indians are employed on the Uganda Railway.

(b) The Government of India understand that there is no widows' or orphans' fund on the Railway. It appears from the Administration Report of the Railway for 1920-21 that there is a Provident Fund to which there are 2,429 subscribers, and that it closed the year with a balance of 1,805,901 florins.

## STATUS OF INDIANS IN COLONIES.

88. The HONOURABLE MAHARAJA BAHADUR KESHAVA PRASAD SINGH : (a) Will the Government be pleased to state if the Resolution of the Imperial Conference, embodying the important new principle that Indians lawfully domiciled in any parts of the Empire should have the right of citizenship, has been accepted by the different Colonial Governments ?

(b) What are the names of those countries which have accepted the principle and those who have rejected it ?

(c) Is any attempt being made to convince the Colonial Governments, who have refused the principle, for accepting it ?

The HONOURABLE MR. B. N. SARMA : (a) The Resolution of the Imperial Conference referred to by the Honourable Member was accepted by Mr. Winston Churchill on behalf of the British Colonies, subject to certain general remarks as to the method of application. These remarks will be found in the extract from his speech published by the Government of India on October 5th last.

(b) The principle embodied in the Resolution was accepted at the Conference by the representatives of the Dominions of Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Newfoundland and by His Majesty's Government on behalf of the Crown Colonies and Protectorates. The Government of South Africa have expressed their inability to accept the Resolution in view of the exceptional circumstances of the greater part of the Union.

(c) The Government are in correspondence with the Union Government on the subject.

## PERSONNEL OF INDIA SECRETARIAT.

89. The HONOURABLE KHAN BAHADUR SIR AHMEDTHAMBY MARICAIR : (a) Will Government be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing :—

(i) the number of Muslims, Hindus, Europeans and Anglo-Indians, respectively, employed permanently in the Upper Division of the various Departments of the Government of India Secretariat ;

- (ii) the proportion of Muslims to non-Muslims in each Department ;
- (iii) the total proportion of Muslims to non-Muslims in all the Departments of the Government of India ?

(b) Is it a fact that in the Railway Department out of about 40 men in the Upper Division there is only one permanent Muslim employee ?

The HONOURABLE MR. S. P. O'DONNELL : The information required is being collected and will be laid on the table in due course.

#### MUSLIMS IN SECRETARIAT.

90. The HONOURABLE KHAN BAHADUR SIR AHMEDTHAMBY MARICAIR : Will the Government be pleased to state how many Muslims have been appointed by the Staff Selection Board in the various offices of the Government of India for the Upper Division since its establishment, and what is the total number of such men of the other communities ?

The HONOURABLE MR. S. P. O'DONNELL : 17 Muhammadans passed the Staff Selection Board's test for the Upper Division. Of these 17, eleven have been appointed to permanent or temporary appointments in the Imperial Secretariat or attached offices ; 3 hold other appointments, one has had his name placed in suspense as he did not reply to an offer of an appointment and two are without appointments at present. Of these two, one has refused a temporary upper division appointment and the other has been employed in a temporary vacancy in the Upper Division but is now available. The total number of non-Muhammadans appointed to the Upper Division is 41.

#### RECRUITMENT OF MUSLIMS.

91. The HONOURABLE KHAN BAHADUR SIR AHMEDTHAMBY MARICAIR : Will the Government be pleased to state whether they have hitherto issued instructions to the Staff Selection Board to keep an eye on the due representation of Muslims while recruiting officers and clerks for the various offices of the Government of India ?

The HONOURABLE MR. S. P. O'DONNELL : No specific instructions have been issued to the Staff Selection Board for the selection of Muslim candidates for the offices of the Government of India. But the Secretariat Procedure Committee (a copy of whose report has recently been placed in the Council Library), when recommending the constitution of the Board, suggested that the Board should take care that the main sections of the community are adequately represented on the list of selected candidates prepared by the Board, and the Government of India accepted this recommendation in their Resolution of the 15th September 1920 which was published in the Gazette of India.

#### MUSLIM EMPLOYEES IN SECRETARIAT.

92. The HONOURABLE KHAN BAHADUR SIR AHMEDTHAMBY MARICAIR : In view of the impending retrenchments in the staff of the Government of India Secretariat and in view of the fact that the proportion of Muslim employees to other communities is very inadequate,



do Government intend to pass orders so that the services of Muslim employees are not dispensed with ?

The HONOURABLE MR. S. P. O'DONNELL : Government cannot pass orders in the sense desired by the Honourable Member. If any retrenchment of office establishment is carried out, the selection of the men to be reduced must be based on such factors as relative efficiency and the character of the employment, whether temporary or permanent and cannot be governed by communal considerations.

#### MUHAMMADAN HOLIDAYS.

93. The HONOURABLE KHAN BAHADUR SIR AHMEDTHAMBY MARICAIR : (a) With reference to my Resolution moved at the meeting held on the 20th March 1922, regarding the grant of two hours' holiday for Muhammadan employees of all the Courts and public offices in all the provinces including the Central Government offices for saying their Jumma prayers on Fridays, will Government be pleased to state whether they have forwarded the copies of the Debate to all the Provincial Governments with their comment to take proper steps to provide adequate facilities for their Muhammadan employees to say their Jumma prayers on Fridays, as promised by the Government ?

(b) If the answer be in the negative, do Government propose to take steps to safeguard the religious susceptibilities of the Muslims and grant sufficient facilities in the performance of their religious duties ?

The HONOURABLE MR. S. P. O'DONNELL : (a) Yes.

(b) The question does not arise.

#### PAY OF BRITISH ARMY IN INDIA.

94. The HONOURABLE SIR DINSHAW WACHA : (a) Will the Government be pleased to inform the Council of the monthly pay in Rupees, exclusive of exchange, of British Officers of the rank of Subaltern, Captain, Major and Field Officer, and of British soldiers of the rank of Private and Non-Commissioned Officer in the Cavalry, Infantry and Artillery of the British Army in India on 31st March 1912 and 31st March 1921 ?

(b) What was the annual average rate of exchange in 1911-12 and in 1920-21 ?

The HONOURABLE MIAN SIR MUHAMMAD SHAFI (on behalf of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief) : (a) Two statements furnishing the information desired by the Honourable Member are laid on the table.

(b) The rate of exchange in 1911-12 was Rs. 15 to the pound. During 1920-21, the rate of exchange fluctuated considerably from time to time. I will hand over to the Honourable Member a statement showing the approximate average rate of exchange for each month of that year. The rates quoted are those which governed transactions between the Government of India and the Imperial Government.

STATEMENT A.

Pay on the 31st March 1912.

Rank.	ARM OF SERVICE.			
	CAVALRY.		ARTILLERY.	INFANTRY.
	Royal Horse Artillery.		Royal Field Artillery, Royal Garrison Artillery and Mountain Artillery.	
	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
2nd-Lieutenant ... ..	250 10 4	250 10 4	215 5 0	202 12 5
Lieutenant ... ..	305 4 0	305 4 0	266 12 0	256 10 0
Captain .. ..	473 0 4	473 0 4	417 7 8	415 6 0
Major ... ..	691 1 0	690 6 4	759 3 0	640 14 0
Major after 2 years' service as such	800 6 4	800 6 4	759 3 0	759 3 0
Bt. Colonel and Lt.-Colonel ..	1,037 0 0	1,037 0 0	1,002 4 0	1,002 4 0

Pay on the 31st March 1921

Rank.	ARM OF SERVICE.		
	Cavalry.	Artillery.	Infantry.
	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
2nd-Lieutenant ... ..	425 0 0	475 0 0	422 0 0
2nd-Lieutenant after 2 years' service	475 0 0	475 0 0	475 0 0
Lieutenant ... ..	475 0 0	475 0 0	475 0 0
Lieutenant after 7 years' service	550 0 0	550 0 0	550 0 0
Captain ... ..	750 0 0	750 0 0	750 0 0
Captain after 15 years' service	850 0 0	850 0 0	850 0 0
Major ... ..	950 0 0	950 0 0	950 0 0
Major after 5 years' service as such	1,050 0 0	1,050 0 0	1,050 0 0
Lieutenant-Colonel ... ..	1,250 0 0	1,250 0 0	1,250 0 0

The above rates are the fixed rupee rates of pay for service in India and are not affected by the exchange.

STATEMENT B.

Pay on 31st March 1912.

Rank.	ARM OF SERVICE.			
	CAVALRY.		ARTILLERY.	INFANTRY.
	Royal Horse Artillery.		Royal Field Artillery, Royal Garrison Artillery and Mountain Artillery.	
	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
Private or equivalent rank ..	25 7 0	20 6 8	27 9 0	22 12 0
Corporal ... ..	42 9 8	60 12 4	57 0 8	38 0 4
Sergeant ... ..	42 9 8	76 0 8	72 3 0	53 3 8
Squadron or Battery Sergeant Major and Colour Sergeant of a Company of Infantry.	96 12 1	96 12 1	95 10 0	79 12 6
Regimental Sergeant Major ...	121 20 8	120 14 0	122 1 2	112 1 0

\*Gunner, Royal Horse Artillery.

†Driver, Royal Horse Artillery.

## Pay on 31st March 1921.

Rank.	Normal rates of pay.	TRADESMEN'S RATES OF PAY FOR MEN QUALIFIED AT A TRADE IN THE UNDERMENTIONED GROUPS.				
		A.	B.	C.	D.	E.
	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
Private or equivalent rank for all arms of the service.	62 11 0	102 10 0	96 14 0	91 4 0	85 8 0	62 11 0
Private or equivalent rank for all arms after 3 years' Service.	79 13 0	126 7 0	119 12 0	114 1 0	108 5 0	79 13 0
Corporal ... ..	114 1 0	165 6 0	159 11 0	153 15 0	136 14 0	125 7 0
Sergeant ... ..	159 11 0	205 5 0	205 5 0	205 5 0	205 5 0	205 5 0
Battery, Squadron or Company Sergeant-Major.	228 2 0	250 15 0	250 15 0	250 15 0	250 15 0	250 15 0
Regimental Sergeant-Major ...	319 6 0	365 0 0	365 0 0	365 0 0	365 0 0	365 0 0

These rates are the sterling rates of pay laid down in the Royal Warrant, converted at the normal rate of exchange, *viz.*, 1s. 4d. to the rupee.

## ROLLING STOCK ON RAILWAYS.

95. The HONOURABLE SIR DINSILAW WACHA : Will the Government be pleased to state for the information of the Council :—

(a) The number of the following on the Indian system of railways (Native States excluded) on 30th June 1914 and on 30th June 1922 :—

- (1) Locomotives,
- (2) Passenger coaches,
- (3) Goods wagons and trucks ; and

(b) the number under repairs on 30th June 1914 and on 30th June 1922 :—

- (1) Locomotives,
- (2) Passenger coaches,
- (3) Goods wagons and trucks ?

The HONOURABLE MR. H. A. F. LINDSAY : As the accounts are prepared for the financial year, the information asked for by the Honourable Member can only be furnished as for the 31st March 1914 and 31st March 1922, and a statement has been prepared giving this information, a copy of which is being furnished to him direct.

## SAFETY MEASURES ON RAILWAYS.

96. The HONOURABLE SIR DINSILAW WACHA : What measures, if any, have been adopted or ordered for the necessary safety of life and property on all descriptions of railways in British India ?

The HONOURABLE MR. H. A. F. LINDSAY : The Honourable Member is referred to the provisions made in the Indian Railways Act (Act IX of 1890) under which rules have been framed and are framed as considered desirable.

WATERWAYS IN INDIA.

97. The HONOURABLE SIR DINSHAW WACHA : Will the Government be pleased to place on the table all correspondence, reports and despatches on the subject of the development of the great waterways in the country ?

The HONOURABLE MR. B. N. SARMA : The collection of all correspondence, reports and despatches on the subject of the development of the waterways in India would entail an immense amount of work and research which the Government of India are reluctant to undertake, as it is not evident that the results will be of material value. But if there be any particular waterways in which the Honourable Member is interested, I undertake to supply to him material information on the subject, in so far as it is not of a confidential character.

CIVIL AND PROVINCIAL SERVICES.

98. The HONOURABLE SIR DINSHAW WACHA : Will the Government be pleased to state the number of members of the Indian Civil Service on 30th June, 1914, and on 30th June, 1922 ; and similarly of the Provincial Service ?

The HONOURABLE MR. S. P. O'DONNELL : The information is being collected and will be supplied to the Honourable Member in due course.

RESOLUTION RE COLONY-RETURNED INDIANS.

The HONOURABLE SIR MANECKJI DADABHOY (Central Provinces : General) : Sir, I beg to move :

“ This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that steps be taken immediately, in consultation and co-operation with philanthropic and religious bodies, for the readmission into society of Colony-returned Indians, where possible, and for the creation of one or more settlements for the benefit of such of them as are not so admitted.”

This Resolution simply invites the attention to an aspect of oversea emigration, which gives little scope for serious difference of opinion or controversy. It deals only with the question of the manner of doing our little bit for the Colony-returned emigrant. I am prepared to confess at the outset that my Resolution presents some difficulties. In the first instance, I am prepared to admit that it might be said—and said perhaps with some reason—that the subject is a provincial one and that I was not in order in bringing it before this Council. I quite realise the gravity of that argument. At the same time, I would point out that the policy of emigration has been shaped and dealt with for the last 12 years by the Imperial Government in consultation with the Government of India. Correspondence has hitherto passed on the subject between the Government of India and the Imperial Government to give some measure of relief to the Indian emigrant in foreign colonies, both in Crown Colonies and in the self-governing Dominions, and the question of repatriation has also been taken up by the Government of India with the Imperial Government, and, in pursuance of that policy, a large number of Indian settlers have repatriated to India. It is therefore necessary, and I feel it is necessary, that

[Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy.]

this Resolution should first be considered in the Council of State, so that the Government of India may be able not only to give mere advice and some stirring up to the Provincial Governments, but also some measure of relief from Imperial Revenues. I shall presently show in what manner the Government of India could possibly move in this matter. I may say at once that it is not my object in moving this Resolution to re-open at present the difficult and ticklish question of emigration. His Excellency the Viceroy only the other day at the inaugural opening of the Indian Legislature has settled the question by making the following weighty reference to this matter. His Excellency said :

“ I note your anxiety in watching the fortunes of our Indian brethren overseas. Let me assure you that my Government have been and will be unremitting in asserting their rights and urging their cause in all parts of the Empire. If I do not say more upon this occasion, I hope you will understand that it is not because I am unmindful of the vast importance of the subject. I shall be in a better position to address you more fully when the result of the pending discussions has been reached and can be announced.”

We should therefore allow the general question of emigration to rest at present, and I feel certain that not only the Indian Legislature but the public at large in India will await the pronouncement of His Excellency on the subject with considerable interest. My present Resolution refers to the repatriated Indians. In pursuance of the policy adopted by the Government of India in deference to the wishes of the Indian public, a large number of Indian settlers have been repatriated to India, and a large number are in course of repatriation. Now, Sir, it will be remembered that in the late Imperial Council, in the Legislative Assembly and in this Council, numerous Resolutions from time to time have been passed pressing upon Government the advisability of taking necessary measures to improve the political condition of our fellow-subjects in the various parts of the Empire. We have pressed upon the Government the necessity of obtaining for our fellow-subjects free rights of citizenship, the franchise and various other privileges in other parts of the Empire. This we have incessantly and vigorously done during the last few years. The Right Honourable Sastri is now on his great mission. He has also been moving in the matter and His Excellency the Viceroy also announced to us the other day that he has succeeded in removing in some measure the minor disabilities affecting domiciled Indians. We shall anxiously await the announcement of the full statement of the Right Honourable Srinavasa Sastri when he returns to India, and I know the account of his stewardship will be received with great interest. But, at present, the situation of the repatriated Indians is deplorable. I have no doubt Honourable Members must have read in the papers the distressing and I might say almost the heart-rending information of their present condition. Many of these people have returned to India against their wishes because they have not been able to secure work in the Colonies. I will also quote here a passage from the speech of His Excellency. He says :

“ The condition of the sugar industry in those islands gives us cause for apprehension that Indians in Fiji may no longer be able to earn a living wage, and the Government of India are engaged in arranging, at the cost of that Colony, for facilities for repatriation of all Indians who desire to return.”

Sir, the Government of India is now going to afford all facilities, and at the cost of the Colonial Governments allow the Indian settlers to return to their country. It is therefore necessary and opportune to move this Resolution. You may bring back this large number of people to their native land, but may I ask what they are to do on their arrival here ? May I ask the Honourable Member in charge of Government, what kind, what measure of relief, the Government of India is prepared to give these people in the manner employment, in the manner, at least, of being able to barely maintain themselves ? As regards the condition of these people, I do not propose to dilate on that subject. The Reverend Mr. Andrews found in Natal, I will quote his very words, "a very large number of the labouring Indian population sinking below the level of the Kaffir in the scale of labourer's wages and living under conditions far worse than those of labourers in India." In 1917 in Fiji the same reverend gentleman's experience was very bitter. I will quote his words again. He said :

"Wherever I went, they (Indians) fell at my feet, imploring me to get them ships to go away. They followed me about from place to place with blank looks of despair and with entreaties of every kind."

This has been their condition in the Colonies. But have we done anything to improve their condition on their repatriation to this country ? We, Indian politicians, we, Members of the Indian Legislature, have brought forward Resolutions asking and imploring Government to claim for them in foreign countries a measure of civic relief and rights of citizenship. But may I ask what have we done for our fellow-subjects in this country ? We talk, we make speeches and we go home and retire into our arm chairs. (*The Honourable Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas* : "Not all of us".) My Honourable friend says, "not all of us". I ask him what action has he taken towards rendering help to these unfortunate people. I think, therefore, the best thing we can do is to set our own house in order. Before we appeal to the Government of India to secure better, and higher privileges for them in foreign countries, we should endeavour in our own country to see that at least they are kept free from starvation on their repatriation.

I read Mr. Andrews' letter only last July in a Calcutta paper in which he stated that five hundred of these repatriated emigrants, for want of food, were awaiting reshipment to the Colonies and willing to undergo again the trials, the difficulties and the disabilities which were attached to their residence abroad, instead of starving in this country? Now, Sir, it might be said that this advocacy in their interest is all well and good. How is the object which I have mentioned to be attained ? I know there are difficulties in the matter. I am conscious that the tyranny of the caste and the strict rules and injunctions of your caste prevent you from taking back under your fold these unfortunate colony-returned Indians. They have all lost their caste. They have become homeless, penniless and friendless. • • •

But, there are ways of affording them help and assistance. I know that the Government of India under the Charter Act of 1833 has to maintain a policy of strict neutrality in religious matters, and the Government of India cannot ask you take measures which will be opposed to your caste rules in any way, but is it too much to expect that some measure of

[Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy.]

relief, some measure of sympathy should come from your great Hindu community to these unfortunate men. You have already got some very useful societies such as the Arya Samaj, the Dev Dharam Samaj and the Khalsa Diwan. Would it be too much to ask you to make an earnest effort for the rehabilitation of the returned emigrant in the village in consultation and in co-operation with religious societies mentioned above? Is it too much to ask that the Imperial Government should ask the Provincial Governments to lay some funds at the disposal of these and other societies for the purpose of helping these starving people? Is it too much to expect that the Government of India should give from the Imperial revenues some small measure of relief for the sustenance and support of these unfortunate people and has not the same thing been done in England? Do not the Poor Laws of England provide means to look after their poor? Are not the Old Age pensions given in England and could not some of our revenues, —however infinitesimal the amount may be, be earmarked for this purpose? Is it a big affair? This cannot be done unless you press upon Government the necessity of adopting such a policy, unless you ask Government that they should move in this matter and supply some measure of relief to these repatriated people. His Excellency the Viceroy told us the other day that in Fiji the people could not get even a living wage. In India they are not able to get a starving wage. They have not been able to secure any employment. Would it not therefore be advisable and politically right and proper for the Government of India to intercede at this juncture and to give some measure of relief to these people, and what has been the policy of Government? The Government is asking the Colonial Governments to repatriate these people and the Government of India is sitting tight and adopting no measures, when these people have arrived in the country, to look after them and to supply them with some employment or some measure of help. I say that this attitude of *non-possumus* will work against this very policy and the Government of India will find it extremely difficult to reconcile their position with the Colonial and other Governments. Sir, the first part of my Resolution only refers to this matter and makes a request that the Government in consultation and co-operation with philanthropic and religious bodies take necessary steps for the readmission into society of these people. Here too the Hindu Community have a great part to play. India is progressing. India's progressive realisation towards responsible government is now set on foot, and India is rapidly marching headway in the matter of industrialisation. Help and assistance should therefore be rendered to these people by industrial bodies co-operating among themselves and finding employment for these unfortunate people. I have no doubt that the Government of India willingly will give a lead in this matter to the Provinces and see that the first part of my Resolution is accorded not only a sympathetic expression of support, but actual material assistance. Sir, the second part of my Resolution refers to the creation of one or more settlements for the benefit of such of them as are not so admitted. If the tyranny of the caste is such that these people should be left perpetually helpless and homeless, is it not the duty of Government to start a settlement for these people? Why should not Provincial Governments supply land to these people to settle down in various parts of the country. Why should not Government give them lands free of rent, free of all charges,—fallow lands in order that they may

settle down and earn their subsistence ? In this matter I may remind the Council of one commendable precedent. The Government of India in the past has helped the Salvation Army in the matter of reclaiming criminal and wandering tribes. The Salvation Army, through the assistance which it received from the Government of India has rendered very very useful service to the country in supplying lands and other means of subsistence to criminal and wandering tribes. Why should not a similar experiment be tried in the case of these people ? Is it too much for this Council to press upon the Government the advisability of giving lands for the settlement of these unfortunate people ? I am sure no one in this Council would grudge the gift of free lands to these unfortunate people who are homeless, in order that they may settle down and carve out their miserable existence. Sir, I shall not detain the Council any further. These are my humble representations. I think it is only right as citizens, specially when we have enunciated and supported a policy of repatriation, to ask Government to take relief measures for these poor emigrants, and see that our fellow subjects who have returned penniless from the Colonies get some measure of support and not be left to walk about the streets of principal towns without food and clothing. I therefore commend my Resolution to your acceptance.

The HONOURABLE RAJA SIR ILARNAM SINGH (Punjab : Indian Christian) : Sir, the position and prospects of our Indian brethren overseas has been a matter of serious concern to the Government of India as well as to the Indian public during the last few years. In spite of the recent efforts of the Government to protect the interests of the Indian immigrants in the Colonies, repatriation of a large number of these men has been found necessary. Disappointment and hardship have, in some cases, made many of the free Indian labourers in the colonies think of leaving the countries of their adoption and coming back to India. Economic conditions have also operated against these unfortunate men, and repatriation has been the only course open to them. Referring to the Indians in Fiji, His Excellency the Viceroy said in his opening address to the Indian Legislatures, on the 5th of this month "the condition of the sugar industry in those islands gives us cause for apprehension that Indians in Fiji may no longer be able to earn a living wage, and the Government of India are engaged in arranging at the cost of that Colony, for facilities for repatriation of all Indians who desire to return."

Sir, the fate of those who returned during the last few years has been far from enviable—it was a sad home-coming for them indeed. I have heard reports of how they were treated by their countrymen, on their arrival. Some of these men brought with them considerable sums of money, the savings of lives of hard labour. But they were robbed of the bulk of their fortune within a fortnight after landing, by their unscrupulous and wily countrymen who, scenting the money they had with them, attached themselves to their victims as friends ! They were strangers in their own country, and hardly able to protect themselves. Deceived and destitute, when they turned to their own distant villages, a strange reception had been waiting for them. They had lost their caste by crossing the seas, and their villagers would not have them back. Their last hopes lost, they were compelled to drift to the industrial centres of the country where they could find work and bread. They had to submit to the conditions of life they had learned to detest, earning poorer wages,



[Raja Sir Harnam Singh.]

and were much worse off on the whole than they had ever been in the colonies.

Sir, we have a responsibility to these men. Apart from other considerations, humanity demands that they should have the protection and the ordinary facilities for peaceful and self-respecting lives in their own country when they returned home. It is not a safe policy for the Government to interfere with the social or religious prejudices of the people, I admit; but it is not justice to leave these unfortunate men entirely to their own resources. The idea, therefore, of the creation of one or more Settlements for the benefit of such of them as are not admitted into society appeals to me as not only a feasible, but an effective measure. Such agricultural Settlements would be a great blessing to these men and highly appreciated by them. In answer to the anticipated objection on financial grounds, I would like to point out that these men generally bring with them sufficient money which, if saved from the nefarious attempts of cheats and robbers, would pay for the shelter and land provided. Co-operation of philanthropic and religious bodies may be sought, if necessary, to raise adequate funds for the initial expenditure.

It might be urged, however, that the matter should be dealt with by the Provincial Governments, and not by the Government of India. To this my reply would be that Emigration is an Imperial subject, and the protection of the Indian emigrants from abroad and at home when they are repatriated, should be the duty of the Government of India.

The HONOURABLE DR. GANGANATH JHA (United Provinces : Nominated) : Sir, tempted as one feels to lend support to this very humanitarian Resolution, the wording of the first part of it makes it rather difficult for one to lend that support, inasmuch as it throws the initiative upon the wrong party. The Honourable the Mover himself has made a very eloquent appeal in the course of which he says that before we ask the Government to look after the interests of Indians abroad, it is *our* duty to look after the interests of those people who have returned to this country itself. There lies the whole position. In this matter the initiative lies with *us* and not with the Government ; especially as, fortunately or unfortunately, in this country social matters are inextricably mixed up with religious notions and ideas, and in the present temper of the country, it will be rather risky for Government to take the initiative in this matter. I am therefore not prepared to support the first part of the Resolution, and as I suppose the whole Resolution goes together, even though I have nothing to say against the second part, I think I must oppose the Resolution as it stands.

The HONOURABLE LALA SUKHBIR SINHA (United Provinces, Northern : Non-Muhammadan) : Sir, the Resolution consists of two parts. The first part, I beg to submit, relates only to a social and religious matter and I do not think it desirable for the Government to interfere in such a matter, until and unless it reaches such a climax that it becomes a nuisance to the public. So far as my information goes, this matter has not reached such a stage. There are some people who have come back from other countries to this country. But they are taken back to their society without any difficulty now, as compared with conditions that existed in past years. After the war, thousands of people

came back demobilized from the army ; all of them went back to their homes and they were taken back to their society. They did not find any difficulty in returning to their society.

As for the second part of the Resolution, I have no objection if Government takes any steps to find out some settlements for those who do not go back to society or to their homes. But there will be difficulties in the way. The first will be in finding out suitable places for such settlers and then the finding of suitable professions. But if Government thinks it necessary, and there is a case made out for it, I have no objection to support the second part. But as regards the first part, I do not think that the matter has reached such a stage as to make it desirable for the Government to take any steps.

The HONOURABLE RAJA V. N. VASUDEVA OF KOLLENGODE (Madras : Nominated Non-Official) : Sir, while I sympathise with and appreciate the sentiments of the Honourable Mover in bringing forward this Resolution, I should express my serious doubt as to the practicability and usefulness of the suggestion contained in the first paragraph of his Resolution. He recommends that Government should take steps, no doubt, in consultation and co-operation with the philanthropic and religious bodies for the admission into society of Colony-returned Indians. I am afraid if Government were to attempt to interfere in social matters of this kind, it will not only be misunderstood by the people, but it will also not achieve the object in view. Any social reform must come from the people themselves and not be forced on them by any outside body and much less by Government. When ignorance, illiteracy and prejudice are dispelled from the country by the gradual spread of education, the necessary social reform will follow of itself. We have also been hearing a good deal of late that every blessed thing should be handed over and worked by the non-officials, and while so, I wonder why in this matter, Government or Official intervention is sought. I deprecate any suggestion of official interference in purely social matters.

With regard to the second part of the Resolution, namely, the creation of one or more settlements for the benefit of such of them as are not so admitted, I have no objection to lend my support. If there are colony-returned people who are unable to get re-admission into society, and if they are labouring under any disadvantages and desire one or more settlements for themselves, it is the duty of Government to give them every facility and protection. So far as Madras is concerned where orthodoxy is even more strict than elsewhere, these disabilities are fast disappearing with the civilizing influence of education. There even the highest class of Brahmins go to Colonies and other parts of the Empire and they are admitted into society without any fuss and sometimes without even the usual prayachitham or expiatory ceremonies. But if the Mover's experience elsewhere is different and if he thinks separate settlements ought to be found for them, I have no hesitation in supporting his demand. But if the Honourable Mover wants, as he amplified in his speech, that free distribution of lands and other privileges should be made to them on their return, I cannot agree to that, as it would be encouraging emigration to an undesirable extent,

[Raja V. N. Vasudeva.]

I think, Sir, it would be well if the Resolution is split up into two parts and they are separately voted on.

The HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS (Punjab : Non-Muhammadan) : Sir, I cannot understand why my Honourable friend the Mover seeks legislation in this matter, it being the established policy of Government not to interfere in matters of religion, no effort should be made to get any change in this policy. For this reason, Sir, I can only support the second part of the Resolution of the Honourable Mover, which requests Government to create one or more settlements for the benefit of colony-returned people. The number of these people being rather considerable I think they will be able to form a society for their benefit. These people who have not been well treated by the Colonies do certainly need help from Government, and some funds should also be set apart for the amelioration of the condition of these repatriated emigrants who have come back to India penniless and helpless, without home and without friends. The question of Indian emigration is already receiving careful consideration of Government, and we hope that the prospects of future emigrants will be duly safeguarded to avoid a recurrence of such hardships and misfortunes to these people.

The HONOURABLE COLONEL UMAR HAYAT KHAN (West Punjab : Muhammadan) : Sir, I do not see how this Resolution is worded and how it is divided. All that is meant by it is that when these unfortunate people come back to India, where are they to go, and from where are they to get food ? The Government, when there is a famine, very kindly see that people do not starve. It is exactly the same thing here. These people were born in India ; they are Indians ; they come back to their own country, and surely it is India's business to provide them with food. Not only India's business but the business of the Government which is governing India. It is also for them to see that these people do not starve. Hitherto, Sir, it has been the practice that whenever there is a big colony, the lands thereof are sold by auction, and naturally it all goes to those who have lots of money already, and with that money they make more money. But when we have got poor people like these, as the Honourable Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy has said, it is our first business to see that they get land here ; if other countries will not have them, we must have them. It is for this reason that I strongly support the Resolution, and I think there should be no Indian who would oppose it—anyhow the principle of it.

The HONOURABLE MR. B. N. SARMA (Revenue and Agriculture Member) : If I rise at this stage it is because I feel that discussion on the subject may be facilitated if I explain to the House the attitude of the Government of India and what the Government of India has been doing in this respect during the past 3 or 4 years. The Government fully appreciate the spirit which has induced my Honourable friend, Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy, to move this Resolution. They understand clearly that there is a great feeling of uneasiness in the public mind as to what is becoming of these repatriated Indians, whether these Indians return to India of their own accord freely and willingly with money or without money, or are compelled owing to the peculiar conditions prevailing in the Colonies and Protectorates in which they may have been

settled, to return to India somewhat against their will. The Government of India when they prohibited emigration of unskilled labour a few years ago during the war knew full well that there might be some difficulty and had addressed Provincial Governments to take all the necessary steps to help repatriated Indians by way of finding employment for them, ascertaining and providing for their wants, reporting their condition and seeing that all that has to be done in order to facilitate their settlement on return is being done. The Governments of Madras and the United Provinces are the Governments which are particularly concerned in the matter. They are the provinces from which there is a large emigration to foreign and distant countries. We need hardly allude at the present juncture to the emigration that has been going freely to Ceylon and the Straits Settlements. There is a free flow of labour to and fro between those Colonies and India, and there has never been any difficulty in the way of finding these returned Indians a home in the Madras Presidency, from which place they chiefly go to these parts.

We have then Fiji and the West Indian Colonies chiefly concerned in this respect. There have been about 16,818 emigrants from Fiji and the West Indian Colonies during the year 1920-21, and about 5261 from South Africa during the same period. So far as the Madras Presidency is concerned, we have been anxiously inquiring from that Government as to whether the people who had returned to that Presidency had found any difficulty whatever, what measures they had been taking in this regard, and whether anything more could be done to help these returned emigrants. The reports from the Madras Presidency have been fairly satisfactory. The Government appointed advisory committees in the beginning in the provinces concerned, but found that they were not of much use, and that there was no need to call for any special reports from Collectors because it was not known where these emigrants had gone and it was impossible to ascertain as to the whereabouts of these emigrants, specially because there were no complaints of any serious character or of any character drawing public attention to the inconvenience or the hardships felt by these colonists who had returned to Madras. Not satisfied with the general answer, we directed the Madras Government's attention recently again to the subject and asked them what the returned emigrants needed and what assistance was being rendered. I will read a few lines from one of the latest reports. They say :

“ Almost all the repatriates who have arrived here merely wanted to be sent to their native villages and did not require any assistance in seeking employment. Only a very few applied to this office for assistance in securing employment and all possible help was given them. Two repatriates who wanted employment were appointed as peons in the office of the Commissioner of Labour. The scheme so far as this Presidency is concerned worked well, and as almost all repatriates wanted only to resume their old avocations there was no actual difficulty about securing employment for them, as far as this office is aware.”

We have an account here in paragraph 5 of what they had done  
 12 noon. previously. It runs as follows :

“ When the first batch arrived in September 1920, references were made to the Collectors of the Districts concerned to ascertain and report whether the repatriates had comfortably settled down in their villages and to give them all possible help in securing employment. This procedure was subsequently abandoned as correct information as to the whereabouts of these men could not be obtained once they left Madras.”

[Mr. B. N. Sarma.]

So we have no reason to suppose that, so far as the Madras Presidency is concerned, there is any room for anxiety or anything that can be particularly done in the direction of finding employment for the repatriates to Madras. If Honourable Members can bring to the notice either of the Madras Government or of the Government of India any particular cases of hardship, they may rest assured that every possible attention will be paid to such complaints, that those complaints will be investigated and that the necessary practicable relief will be forthcoming in all deserving cases. The question of caste is not one of great importance in Madras from the fact that the emigrants all belong to castes where the religious feeling of exclusions is not so very strong or does not exist. The depressed classes, namely the Panehamas and others, who contribute in a very large proportion to the emigrant population, do not observe any rigid caste distinctions preventing absorption. The same may be said of some of the lower castes of Hindus in that Presidency. So the caste problem does not present any very great difficulty in that part of India.

Then with regard to the United Provinces, we are not aware that there has been any difficulty whatsoever experienced by that Government, and there is nothing before us to show in what directions we ought to urge the United Provinces Government to move with regard to repatriates to that Province. Our experience and our reports show that most of these repatriates are absorbed in the villages or in the districts from which they originally proceeded to these foreign countries. I am not going to suggest for one moment that the caste difficulty does not exist in the United Provinces or elsewhere and that a few of these unfortunate people, who have returned to this country with great hopes of finding a comfortable home, a home among happy surroundings, welcomed by their friends and relations, have not been disappointed. There is not the slightest doubt that where there were mixed marriages in the case of these people who have emigrated to Fiji and other places, the returned emigrants or their offspring have not been welcomed in the villages owing to the strict caste rules observed amongst the people there, but that is a matter in which society moves very slowly, and Honourable Members have already recognised that there is nothing that the Government can do except to deprecate these unfortunate caste distinctions and to try to do nothing which is likely to encourage the perpetuation of these caste differences. The Honourable Mover himself has distinctly recognised that it is impossible for the Government in any way to depart from their time-honoured policy of absolute neutrality in this regard. They cannot contemplate with equanimity any departure, either in spirit or in action in the slightest degree, from that policy. They do not wish that either by word, by speech or by action they should be understood to interfere with the religious or caste customs and practices and feelings of the people. While they do suggest and welcome co-operation on the part of the people themselves to remove these caste barriers, so far as the Government are concerned, they can adopt only a neutral attitude. Any help by way of encouragement to any philanthropic bodies who wish to do something to settle these people on land or otherwise to promote their social comfort would certainly be given, where possible, but beyond that

I feel that the House recognises that the Government cannot proceed without being gravely misunderstood.

Then, my Honourable friend said the Government have been embarking upon a policy of asking these people to come back to their homes or at any rate of facilitating repatriation, and he asked what they are going to do. In this respect the Government position should not be misunderstood. They do not wish to encourage any repatriation on sentimental or other grounds. They are not going to ask the people who are settled down comfortably in foreign countries to come back to India simply because they are moved by sentimental considerations to come back to their native home. There are provisions in the various Emigration Acts which provide for the repatriation of Indians after a certain number of years whenever they express their desire to come back to India. All that the Government can do is to insist upon the repatriation of those Indians settled in foreign countries, Dominions or Protectorates, if they are desirous to come back to India, and that is their position. If any Indian, who is entitled to be repatriated to India at the expense of a Colony, wishes to do so, then I think it is the inherent duty of the Government of India to see that he is so repatriated, and that is the position which the Government has assumed in this respect and will assume in future. But the Government are not idle. They have provided funds to various societies in order to make the position of these Indians comfortable during the time that may be necessary for them to seek and find employment. A few of them were to be found at Calcutta. Every step was taken to find employment for them, and this has a bearing upon the second part of my Honourable friend's Resolution, there were zemindars who very kindly undertook to settle many of these people on their lands, but those generous offers were not availed of by these returned emigrants. Rs. 15,000 were provided by the Government for the comfort of these people during the intermediate stage. A large portion of this sum was utilised by the Indian Emigrants Friendly Service Committee, which was constituted in Calcutta for this purpose, and many of those who were desirous of returning were helped and encouraged to emigrate back to Fiji and British Guiana. A sum of Rs. 10,000 was provided by the Government for the repatriates from Trinidad and Surinam. The money has not been utilised except to a very small extent, and we have a balance of about Rs. 9,000 odd out of that money still lying unutilised. So it cannot be said that the Government of India have been idle. They have been trying to ascertain the position of these repatriates; they have been trying to find employment for them in various parts of Calcutta and to get them settled on the land. But some of these returned emigrants find the climate unsuitable or have not been accustomed to a particular type of labour and they are not willing to settle on the land and are not willing to work in the various factories and other manufactories where they can readily find employment, that is the reason why the Emigration Act wisely provides that all those who have been in a foreign colony for five years can freely go at any time, assisted or unassisted, to these colonies, without bringing themselves within the prohibitive sections of the Emigration Act.

They can go either unhelped or helped, so nobody can blame the Government of India for placing restrictions in their way and preventing them from going back to these distant colonies from whence they have come

[Mr. B. N. Sarma.]

to India. There does not seem to be much chance of any scheme of colonisation succeeding even if it can be undertaken by the Government of India. But let it be understood distinctly that the Government of India cannot undertake any scheme of colonisation themselves. Colonisation is a provincial subject. It is not within the province of the Government of India to do so, to spend any money from Central revenues for that purpose. They would suggest to the Local Governments the desirability of forming schemes of colonisation, should the conditions require it, and they suggested that such colonisation schemes should be embarked upon during the war for the soldiers returning home. The Local Governments readily came forward to do so, but, on an analysis of the position as stated to us by the Local Governments, we find that in most of the tracts from which emigrants go there are no large areas which can be readily expanded and made suitable for colonisation without much expenditure of money. There are vast tracts of land in Assam and Madras and the United Provinces, somewhat unhealthy, requiring a large amount of capital for development, and I do not think any Honourable Member of this House will consider it a feasible or practical plan to suggest to Local Governments to undertake colonisation schemes, especially when the number that has to be provided for being unabsorbed in the present population is only about 800 or 900, or say 1,000 or 2,000. There is absolutely nothing to show that these men are willing to settle down on land ; but I undertake to ask the Local Governments should they find any of these repatriated Indians helpless and desiring the help of Local Governments, that everything should be done towards facilitating their settlement, if possible, on land ; but I cannot give any encouragement to the hope that any large colonisation schemes would be practicable or necessary having regard to existing conditions. We do not expect any large number of repatriates from South Africa. Such again as are willing to come back could be readily assimilated here. The Punjab can readily absorb the few thousands who have come back, and those who have returned to Madras and the United Provinces ; but I am not sure whether there will be large tracts of land ready to welcome these people as settlers ; but if the provinces are willing to absorb the surplus populations, from other provinces, it will certainly be a welcome feature in the situation. I do not think it is necessary for me to say more. Our thanks are due to the various philanthropic bodies who have been helping the Government in ameliorating the condition of the returned Indians. I think it is my duty to thank the Indian Empire Friendly Services Society and I do so with pleasure. It has done great service to the Government and to the people concerned for nearly a year in Calcutta, and all outside assistance is welcome. The Government would be only too glad, ready and willing to utilise such assistance, should it be forthcoming. I am glad this motion has been made to-day, because it shows, it is an indication, that the public conscience is really touched. I hope that something beyond mere talk will be done towards assisting the Government in the constructive work that has to be undertaken to improve the condition of those who may return to India. I regret, however, that I am unable to accept this Resolution, firstly, because the Government cannot depart from their policy of strict religious neutrality ; secondly, because colonisation is a provincial subject, and thirdly and lastly, because they

do not think the present requirements of the case necessitate any very close investigation into the possibility of colonisation projects.

The HONOURABLE SIR AHMEDTHAMBY MARICAIR (Madras : Muhammadan) : Sir, I quite endorse all that the Honourable Member, on behalf of the Government, said. After all there is very little to say with regard to the first part of the Resolution, which asks the Government to consult and co-operate with philanthropic and religious bodies, for the re-admission into society of Colony-returned Indians. As my Honourable friend on my left (the Raja of Kollengode) has already said, in Madras there are a number of higher class Brahmans who have been to the colonies, and a large number of them on their return have been taken into society after performing certain religious ceremonies. At this stage I do not think any such demand is necessary in the case of coolies who are low caste men, such as Pariahs and Pallaks. In their case there is no need for prayachitam or expiatory ceremonies to be performed, and no difficulty has been experienced in this respect as far as Madras is concerned. As the Honourable Member in charge of the portfolio expressed it, the emigration to the Colonies is mostly from Madras and the United Provinces. With regard to the emigration from Madras, the people who mostly go to Ceylon and Malaya are people who find no such difficulty of staying in the colonies for want of repatriation facilities. They come and go freely. After all, the cost of repatriation does not exceed Rs. 10 to Rs. 25. There is no such difficulty experienced in Madras by people returning from those two colonies in finding employment in their villages. As a matter of fact, the people who return from these two colonies—Ceylon and Malaya—frequently go back with a view to getting jobs there. They are quite willing to go back there to get work ; and as far as my experience is concerned, there is no such difficulty in people who come back from these two Colonies finding employment in their villages or asking for help from the Government. There is always ample work available as long as they remain in their villages, and they are freely going back. One other fact I wish to mention for the information of this House, and that is, that coolies who return from the Colonies and who have no money to go back to their villages are provided by the Emigration authorities in Madras and Negapatam with passages or rather train fares to go to their villages.

And so, Sir, there is no such difficulty in regard to the second portion of the Resolution as to necessitate Government making arrangements for the settlement of these coolies in their villages. I do not know whether the Government of India have got any power to dictate to the Local Governments in regard to their administration. They are doing all they can to ameliorate the conditions concerning this question. I really cannot understand how the Local Government could take action in regard to colonising these coolies in their own villages. Does it mean that they should be confined to their own villages ? Does it mean that they should not be allowed to go wherever they want to go ? I cannot understand how a Local Government or the Government of India could prevent anybody from going where he likes.

And again as the Honourable Member for the Government explained, there is no difficulty whatever and no complaint whatever has been raised, At this stage I do not know whether it is proper for the



[Sir Ahmedthamby Maricair.]

Honourable Mover to press his Resolution. Things are going on so well as the Honourable Member said that the Government of India has already taken up such questions and provided Rs. 10,000 to allow coolies, wherever they were found, to go back. Again, in the new Emigration Act sufficient safeguard has been provided to see that the Indian emigrants who are suffering in distant colonies, such as Fiji and other places, are repatriated at the cost of the colony concerned. We all know the policy of the Government of India. They are quite willing to dictate to other colonies to give facilities at the cost of the colonies themselves and not at the cost of the Government of India, and having known all this, I cannot understand why my Honourable friend thinks it proper to insist upon this Resolution. I am sure it will not be convenient for Government to open its purse to do anything for these unfortunate people. I therefore request the Honourable Mover of this Resolution not to press it.

The HONOURABLE MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS (Bombay : Non-Muhammadan) : It is a matter for congratulation that the pricking of the conscience of the Honourable Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy has made him a philanthropist and made him bring up a Resolution of this kind. I hope he will not end merely by moving Resolutions, but will take some active interest in the subject. He asked me to give some instances of what we had done in that direction. I will give him two specific instances. When the first batch of repatriated Indians, from South Africa voluntarily repatriated as that Government said, and compulsorily repatriated as some of us thought, came, to Bombay they were received by the Indian Imperial Citizenship Association and were feted. They were asked if they wanted any further assistance. We were quite prepared to find the money to take them back to their homes. They said they had their own money and did not require our assistance and that they were grateful for what little we were able to do for them. The second occasion was in connection with the society, to which my Honourable friend, the Revenue Member referred, in Calcutta under the management of Mr. Gourlay. When that society wrote to me and other friends for money we were able to send money for the purpose. I hope Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy will also do some tangible work of that nature to relieve the condition of these returned emigrants and not merely rest satisfied, as he thought all members of the House were, by moving Resolutions or talking in this House. Sir, as regards the caste difficulty, most of my Hindu friends and colleagues said all that could be said, but there is one aspect to which I would invite the attention of the Honourable Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy. We Hindus do not object to take the lead from a member of any other community in social reform movements. As an instance I need name only one distinguished Parsi gentleman, Mr. Malabari. He did not move Resolutions. He did not ask Government to do anything. He led the movement himself. If Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy is prepared to lead the social reform movement himself we will be very glad to follow his lead.

Then, Sir, as regards the difficulty of the emigrants. As the Honourable the Revenue Member has put it clearly, most of them are really

absorbed in the country, in the provinces and villages from which they come. In some cases there have been difficulties. People who came out from Fiji and other places were under the impression that the country was willing to extend to them something like a royal welcome, and they were necessarily disappointed when they did not get it. When these people came back to Calcutta from their villages their difficulties began, and the extract which was quoted by my Honourable friend from Mr. Andrews' letter, which appeared in one of the Calcutta papers, was written at that time. I believe those of us who know Mr. Andrews know very well that he is a very sympathetic and emotional gentleman. When he saw the sufferings of these people he wrote letters which pricked the conscience of my Honourable friend Sir Maneckji Dadabhoj as a result of which he has moved this Resolution to-day. If he is prepared to give the lead in social reform matters and assist in constructive measures, as asked by the Honourable Mr. Sarma, we should feel grateful to Mr. Andrews for having written the letter and to Sir Maneckji for having moved his Resolution. The Resolution as it stands cannot be accepted by the Council.

The HONOURABLE SARDAR JOGENDRA SINGH (Punjab : Sikh) : There is just one word that I should like to say in regard to this Resolution. To control supply and demand of labour on a large scale by bringing back the emigrants to India can only prove as ineffective as the Honourable Mr. Sarma's control of wheat.....

The HONOURABLE MR. B. N. SARMA : It was very successful.

The HONOURABLE SARDAR JOGENDRA SINGH : I don't agree. We should be very careful in interfering with the supply and demand of labour. The Honourable Mr. Sarma told us that for twenty thousand people who came back to India the Government of India set aside Rs. 15,000, hardly one day's food. If the Government of India is going to start any large scheme of repatriation they will have to provide enough funds to establish the returned emigrants. They will also have to find land for their settlement.

The opinion of this Council has been very clearly expressed, and I have nothing more to say but to ask Sir Maneckji Dadabhoj to adopt the dignified procedure, of which he is such a strong advocate, of withdrawing his Resolution.

The HONOURABLE SIR MANECKJI DADABHOJ : Sir, excepting the very valuable and sympathetic statement made by the Honourable Member in charge of the department, this debate has not raised any point of importance which needs serious refutation. As I expected, Honourable Members, and particularly my Honourable Hindu friends, have contributed to the debate in a manner which we all anticipated. I had in my preliminary address made it abundantly clear, as far as the English language was permissible and capable of, that I had not the remotest intention of transgressing the rules and regulations of caste or to enforce by legislation anything on any community which is opposed to their religions and traditional instincts. In the face of that clear statement of fact, I am rather surprised at the attitude taken up by many Honourable Members that I was making a sort of inroad on their

[Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy.]

religious susceptibilities, and my Resolution cannot be accepted as it was opposed to the past policy of the Government and also opposed to their religious feelings. My Honourable friend, Lala Sukhbir Sinha was one of the foremost in that attack, and it is a matter of regret that my Honourable friend has got such a short memory. On to-day's agenda paper, you will find the fourth Resolution, where my Honourable friend wants to stop the slaughter of cattle for the purpose of food and raise such an important religious question.....

THE HONOURABLE LALA SUKHBIR SINHA: My Resolution has nothing to do with religion. 'It is an economic question.

THE HONOURABLE SIR MANECKJI DADABHOY: Again we shall have shortly before the Council the Chelas Bill which he proposes to introduce and the Council will be asked to discuss it.....

THE HONOURABLE LALA SUKHBIR SINHA: It has also nothing to do with religion.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: Order, order. The Honourable Member must not interrupt.

THE HONOURABLE SIR MANECKJI DADABHOY: We will be asked to discuss a Bill affecting the religious susceptibilities of a certain class or section of people. My friend the Honourable Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas has given the Council a treat by a description of the admirable work that he has done as a patriotic citizen of Bombay for the removal of the misery of these people, these repatriated Indians; but there are very few such patriotic citizens like my Honourable friend Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas. Sir, this is the old story. When matters of this nature are brought before the Council, when any Resolution is brought affecting the amelioration of these unfortunate classes of people, when any Resolution is brought in Council about the amelioration of the condition of the depressed classes, this sort of opposition, this sort of clamour is raised. We are tired of hearing such nice speeches, patriotic speeches, showing lip sympathy on behalf of their own countrymen. So, it is further superfluous for me in this connection to occupy the time of the Council. These patriotic citizens will do better if they move in the matter and realise that the progress of their country will depend upon the removal of these caste tyrannies, caste prejudices and the adoption of a little forward policy. Sir, I can only say that we are not going to get responsible government by these narrow-minded methods. We shall have to rise to a higher level as citizens if India wants to claim responsible government. Sir, so far as the Resolution is concerned, I am grateful to the Honourable Member for the sympathetic speech. I am pleased to hear that commendable efforts have been made by the Madras Presidency and the United Provinces in this connection. But my Honourable friend has made one or two remarks which need elucidation. My friend has pointed out that Rs. 15,000 and Rs. 10,000 were provided by Government to render help to these unfortunate repatriated citizens, but they did not avail themselves of the offer of Government. Now, in this connection, I would only remark that many of these repatriated people never know that the Government or anybody is prepared to offer them assistance. The red-tapism of Government, the rules and regulations requiring the presentation of these people at the public offices of the Emigration Department and various other rules make

it extremely difficult for these unfortunate people to avail of the help of Government, and I am not therefore surprised that this money which was ear-marked for the purpose has not been spent. I am grateful to the Honourable Member for his assurance that he is prepared to advise Provincial Governments and sketch out for them schemes of colonization, and if it is found in any province that it is necessary to adopt any particular measures of colonization, that Government would be at liberty to do so. I am also glad that the Government of India is in full sympathy with my Resolution. My real object in moving this Resolution was to pointedly attract the attention of Government to this question. There are about 16 to 20 lakhs of emigrants, Indian settlers, all over the various colonies. If, as is happening, the European settlers in various colonies are making it rather impossible for Indian settlers to work in the same colonies and under similar conditions, and as trade is in a bad way, not only in Europe but in various other countries, we must be prepared to face the situation that will arise. You will find that shortly a large number of these Indian settlers will return back to the country, and it is very necessary that the Government should awake in time to the necessity of taking measures which will relieve these people from their precarious predicament on their return to their motherland. I, Sir, have had the consolation of moving the Resolution, but I have no desire to press this Resolution either to a vote or a division. My object was to secure the attention of the Government of India to this most important question, and I have secured that attention and consideration. I shall therefore ask the leave of the Council to withdraw my Resolution in view of what has fallen from the Honourable Mr. Sarma.

The HONOURABLE MR. B. N. SARMA : Sir, there is one point on which I should like to give greater information to the Council and the outside public with regard to the Rs. 10,000. My Honourable friend suggested that the bureaucratic methods of the Government.....

The HONOURABLE SIR MANECKJI DADABHOY : I did not say 'bureaucratic methods,' I said red-tapism.

The HONOURABLE MR. B. N. SARMA : My friend suggested that the red-tapism of the Government does not enable it to reach the public whom it wishes to reach, and consequently it may be that these destitute repatriates did not know where to seek help. I think the position is not so ; it is entirely the other way.....

The HONOURABLE SIR MANECKJI DADABHOY : I am glad to hear it.

The HONOURABLE MR. B. N. SARMA : Some of these men from Surinam and Trinidad were willing to go back. Those colonies were not willing to pay their passages ; our Legislature was not willing to pay their passages either. They were in Calcutta. They needed help. So the Government of India were prepared to help them and they placed at the disposal of the committee I mentioned Rs. 10,000 for the purpose of settling these people on suitable areas and on suitable work in India. A few of these emigrants were so settled. The Surinam repatriates on hearing that there was no hope of sending them back, voluntarily left the depôt in order to seek, I suppose, fresh fields of employment. So there

[Mr. B. N. Sarma.]

were no destitutes running about the streets of any place, not knowing where to seek help, or left destitute because the Government of India did not assist them. It is because the country has been able to absorb them or because they thought that they could find employment without help from the Government, that they left the depôts. The Government could not do more to help them at that particular time.

The Resolution was, by leave of the Council, withdrawn.

### RESOLUTION *RE* SEPARATION OF POST AND TELEGRAPH ACCOUNTS.

The HONOURABLE MR. V. G. KALE (Bombay : Non-Muhammadan) :

Sir, I beg to move the following Resolution :

“ This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that in view of the repeated complaints regarding the allocation to the Telegraph Department of revenues earned by the Postal Combined Offices on telegraphic messages transmitted through those offices and in view of the differential treatment accorded to the Postal and Telegraph Services, (1) the revenue and expenditure accounts for Postal Combined Offices in relation to the above messages and those of the Departmental Telegraph Offices be separately maintained and shown and the profits that may accrue, as a result of this arrangement in the accounts of the Postal Combined Offices, be credited to the Post Office : and (2) that such profits may be utilised for the improvement of Post Offices and of the conditions, pays and prospects of the Postal employees.”

Sir, at the outset it is necessary for me to point out one or two basic facts concerned in the discussion of this Resolution. In the first place, it must be realised that the Post and Telegraph Department is not what is usually called a revenue-earning department. There are departments and services which are called revenue-earning departments ; they are intended for the purpose of raising money from the public. There are other departments which are called spending departments. It is not the business of these departments to earn but to spend money upon the improvement of the condition of the people. Midway, between these two, the earning and the spending departments, stand departments like the Post and Telegraph Department. The object of these departments is to render certain services of very great public importance and benefit, which cannot be undertaken by private agencies, and it is beneficial to the public that Government or other public bodies should undertake the rendering of these highly important services. It is for this reason that in almost all countries the Posts and Telegraphs are managed by the State itself, the object being not to make money, not to raise revenue, but to obtain from the people what may be called prices or fees for the services which are rendered to the public. This is, therefore, an important point which has to be borne in mind in understanding the Resolution. The service rendered by the Government, in this instance, is of the highest value and of the greatest convenience to the public ; and, if there is any department, more than another, which has been rendering very useful service to the public, it must be frankly stated that it is the Postal and Telegraph Department. It has been giving to the public various amenities of life and rendering to them services which no private agency would have been able to undertake. These departments are also of indirect benefit to the Government. Though no direct revenue is obtained by Government through these departments, indirectly they enable the Government to raise money by means of taxation.

The second point to which I wish to draw the attention of the House is that, until the years 1912-1913, the Post and the Telegraph Departments were separate, and it was about that time that the scheme of amalgamation was brought into operation. The accounts of the two departments were, previously to that year, separately maintained, and the profits and the losses on account of those departments were separately shown. We could therefore clearly see whether a department was a paying or a losing department. However, amalgamation was brought about presumably for the purpose of managing the two departments more efficiently instead of duplicating machinery, particularly of the management in the higher grades of those departments, and especially for the purpose of bringing about uniformity and economy in the management of these departments. Probably it was for such reasons that the two departments were amalgamated. Since that year, therefore, the accounts with regard to the profits and losses of the two departments are not separately shown. The public, therefore, has no means of knowing how these departments are working. No doubt in the accounts of the Posts and Telegraphs we are told that the Postal Department earns so much and whether there is a deficit or a surplus. Then, again, we know whether the Telegraph Department is making a profit or is making a loss. But there is one matter in connection with this Resolution which has to be explained at this stage, and it is this. The Telegraph Department has its own independent or 'departmental' offices. At the same time, in the postal branch of the Postal and Telegraph Department after amalgamation there are certain Post offices which are called 'combined offices,' which also do telegraphic work. Telegrams can be despatched either from departmental telegraph offices or from combined offices which combine the two functions of posts and telegraphs. Now, there are about 3,400 combined offices doing postal and telegraphic work, and about one-third of the total earnings of the separate Telegraph Department are derived from the work of the combined offices. The combined offices contribute as much as one-third of the total revenue of the Telegraph Department. For a number of years the Telegraph Department was working at a loss. It is only very recently that we see from the reports that profits are shown against the Telegraph Department. But how are the accounts of the two departments adjusted? They are adjusted in this way. All charges for the work which the combined postal and telegraph offices perform for the Telegraph Department are borne by the postal branch, while all the revenues which are earned by the combined offices go to the telegraphic branch. I have no objection to an amalgamation of departments provided we find that this amalgamation leads to greater efficiency of administration, but, at the same time, we must clearly know how the branches which are amalgamated into one department are working. I can understand that in many cases it may be necessary for one branch of a department to draw upon another. It is impracticable to make all branches of departments self-supporting, and therefore these branches will have to draw upon one another. So I have no objection to amalgamation, but what I want is that Government should maintain and show separate income, revenue and expenditure accounts in the case of the Posts and Telegraphs, because, as matters now stand, as I have already shown, all the revenues earned by the combined offices for their telegraphic work are allocated to the telegraphic branch; And

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at the same time all the cost incurred on this telegraphic work that is done by the combined offices—all that cost has to be borne by the Postal branch of the Department alone. Now this amalgamation appears to me to be like a joint Hindu family in which one brother takes away the cream of the income of the family for the use of his children, and leaves the others to starve. The motto of the Telegraph Branch appears to me to be : ‘ Heads I win, tails you lose.’ It says to the Postal branch : ‘ I am going to take all the income you derive from the work you do for me, and all the charges of this work I will put on you ’. To my mind, that is a very wrong principle, and consequently proper justice has to be done to the Postal Department.

In my Resolution I have referred to the differential treatment accorded to the Postal and Telegraph Services. Now the unfairness involved in the keeping and issuing of the accounts is intensified when we remember that the distinction in the treatment given to the postal employees and to the telegraph employees is, to say the least, most invidious. Take any point with regard to their salaries or the general condition of work of the employees in the different branches. Take the starting pay ; take the time they have to work ; take the house accommodation ; take any feature of the treatment that is accorded to the two branches of the amalgamated Department ; and Honourable Members will find that the postal employees, though they perform equally important work, are equally well trained and make an equally great contribution to the revenues of the amalgamated Department, receive treatment which I will say is, on the part of the amalgamated Department, nothing but stepmotherly. The Telegraph employee seems to be a favourite child—I will not say a spoiled child. He is a favourite child of the Amalgamated Department while the postal employee is the child of another mother. I have to call pointed attention to this invidious distinction which is maintained between the two services. You take a telegraph employee and you will find that he has to work for a definite number of hours. If he works for a few minutes longer, he receives an allowance, an extra allowance, an overtime allowance, pie money allowance, and many other allowances. But a postal employee who does the work of a signaller does not get any of these advantages, any of these facilities. Now a postal signaller is oftentimes called upon to work in a departmental telegraph office and there he is paid only an extra allowance of 20 per cent. of his own salary. The salaries of the employees of the two branches are different. The salary of the postal employee is much lower than the salary of the telegraph employee, so that in the matter of overtime allowance, in the matter of housing and accommodation, in the matter of the hours that have to be put in, in every feature of the position of the postal employees, you will find there is an unfair and unjust distinction, much to the serious disadvantage of the postal branch as against the Telegraph Branch.

Under these circumstances it is necessary that we should try and see if we can possibly improve the position of the postal employees. But the difficulty of the lack of funds will always be adduced, and very rightly adduced, in this connection. If the position of these postal employees cannot be improved owing to lack of funds, we must see exactly whether

the Postal Department is a losing concern. I have tried to show that the cost of the telegraphic work done by the combined offices is thrown on the Post Office, and that is surely unjust. If the accounts are re-cast, re-arranged in the way I have ventured to suggest, it will be found that the Postal Branch has not been a losing concern. On the contrary, for the past few years the Telegraph Department has been a losing concern, and if there are any profits, a large part of those profits comes from the earnings made by the Postal Branch. Under these circumstances, it is necessary to show the accounts separately and to give sufficient credit to the Postal Branch for the work done on account of the Telegraph Branch. At the present moment, retrenchment and economy are in the air, and from the public point of view we have to inquire whether postal facilities which the public enjoys and wants more and more, must be curtailed on that account. There are instances where this kind of economy is proving a serious inconvenience and disadvantage to the public. In the case of the Post Office in Poona City, for instance, the last clearance is now at 7 P.M. You post a letter at 5 minutes past 7 for Bombay, and it reaches not in the early morning of the next day, but late in the afternoon or evening of the next day. The letter takes this long time to travel a distance of 120 miles. The last clearance used to be at 9-15, but it has been pushed back now to 7 P.M. and perhaps it is done in the name of economy. But has the Post Office no funds? Is it not earning enough that public facilities should be curtailed in this fashion? What the mercantile community and other sections of the public want is more facilities in the way of post offices. The public is required to pay postal charges. These have now been enhanced. The public therefore is prepared to pay for these facilities, and it does not wish them in any way to be reduced. But if you want to get any idea of the financial position of the Post Office, you must have first of all separate accounts, and when these accounts are separately shown we shall see exactly how the Post Office and the Telegraph Office stand, and then it will be possible for us to suggest improvements in the Post Office. I have suggested that in the first part of my Resolution. In the second part of it I suggest that if there are any profits so accruing, they may be utilised for the improvement of the Post Offices. That is the crying need at the present moment. In our villages such postal facilities as exist are most inadequate. We want expansion in the Post Office, and there are other improvements also that we require. Post Offices are performing various important duties which might be supposed to lie outside the purview of the ordinary Post Office. A hundred and one things are being done by them that are useful both to the Government and the people. If this usefulness is to be enhanced it will require the spending of more money. If there are any profits which accrue, they should, therefore, be utilised, as I have humbly suggested, for the improvement of the Post Office, and, secondly, for the improvement of the conditions, pay and prospects of the postal employees.—especially the prospects of signallers who have to do very hard work with regard to the telegraphs. At present the lot of these signallers is most unsatisfactory. I have already shown that the contrast between the treatment accorded to the postal signaller and that accorded to the regular signaller of the Telegraph Department is most invidious, and most disadvantageous to the postal employee. Now that position will have to be improved out of the profits which are legiti-



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mately earned by the Post Office. I will repeat that I do not want that a hard and fast line should be drawn between one branch of the Department and another. I will repeat that these branches will have to co-operate with one another ; but some line will have to be drawn. There will be difficulties no doubt in finding out what is the cost that the Post Office has to bear for doing a certain amount of work on behalf of the

1 P.M.

Telegraph Department, and what is really the income of the telegraph branch on account of the work done by the Post Office. We can approximately arrive at some understanding with regard to the cost and the revenues of the two branches and a fair and just allocation of revenue and expenditure between the two sides ought to be made in the interests of improvement of the post office and also on the improvement of the lot of the postal employees. These are then the two main suggestions which are contained in this Resolution, and I hope I have been able to demonstrate that the proposals I have made are not suggestions which in any way go against the spirit of the management of the Postal and Telegraph Departments, especially their amalgamation. Amalgamation may be maintained and ought to be maintained if it leads to efficient management, but at the same time justice and fairness require that the accounts of the Postal and Telegraph branches should be kept separate and that the two branches ought to receive the equitable treatment they deserve. With these words, Sir, I commend this Resolution to the acceptance of this Council.

The HONOURABLE MAHARAJA SIR MANINDRA CHANDRA NANDY (West Bengal : Non-Muhammadan) : Sir, the conditions, pay and prospects of the very numerous class of people who are associated with the Postal Department—particularly clerks, post-masters and postal signallers—undoubtedly deserve the kindest consideration of the Government, and I, therefore, think it a public duty to extend my whole-hearted support to the second portion of my friend Professor Kale's motion before you. It is evident that the postal employees, above the class of peons, runners and messengers, have generally very hard life to live and hard conditions of work and service. While generally he has to put at least one year's unpaid apprenticeship, the average postal employee begins his service on terms much less inviting than those sanctioned for men in the Telegraph Department. The ' E ' Scale postal employees begin their service on Rs. 40 a month and retire, after 25 years' service, on Rs. 125 a month. The ' A ' Scale men, the most favoured employees of the Postal Department, begin with Rs. 50 and end with Rs. 140. In the Telegraph Department, with only a general technical knowledge of the subject and with lesser responsibility and shorter hours of work, with better quarters to live in and higher travelling allowances, the Station Service men—the lowest grade in the Department—begin with Rs. 60—and, at the end of the 20th year, draw Rs. 150 a month. This, undoubtedly, Sir, amounts to a great injustice to the army of His Majesty's postal employees. Sir, I do not intend to cover the ground which my friend, Professor Kale, has so carefully and elaborately gone into to show that it is the Postal Department that gives any profits to the Government,—at any rate more than the Telegraphs. Two years ago, our Finance Minister, Sir Malcolm Hailey, could not definitely tell us what Department gave the State Ex-

chequer a profit, and what the profit was like. But I will not enter into that debatable controversy here, and will confine myself only to making an appeal to the Government to re-examine the conditions of service of the postal employees, and compare their pay and pensions, quarters and allowances, with those of the men in the Telegraph Department, and extend to the postal employees the consideration and justice which they so highly deserve. I am not making this appeal on behalf of the men in the general scales only, but for the Selection Grade Appointments also. It is as well to point out that, at present, the postal employees are not allowed any local allowance, overwork or over-time allowance of any kind, and have nothing for additional work done on holidays and Sundays. This matter also deserves reconsideration. I think it is needless to point out to the House that you can never get good service out of a dissatisfied lot of employees, and, with prices of things having gone up in every possible line, it is not human to expect postal employees to be satisfied with the scales of pay I have mentioned before. While the Government seem to have done more than justice to several classes of their employees in other Departments,—beginning from the Indian Civil Service, the Medical, Educational, Police and Forest Services, not to mention the Special Scientific Departments and the Provincial, Judicial and Executive Services,—it is eminently desirable that the hard-worked men in the Postal Service should be converted into a contented and satisfied lot of men,—more in the interest of the State itself than of anything else.

The HONOURABLE SIR ARTHUR FROOM (Bombay Chamber of Commerce) : Sir, we have all listened with great interest to the very lucid way in which my Honourable friend Mr. Kale has spoken to his Resolution. But what I think we should carefully keep before us in this House is that if his Resolution were admitted and the pay of a certain section of postal clerks increased, we should be faced with the whole problem of increasing the pay of postal clerks throughout India. So far as I can understand it, Sir, this question has arisen from a certain amount of jealousy between two sections of the employees of the combined Post and Telegraph Office. It is perfectly true that a number of postal clerks do telegraphic work. It is equally true that the telegraphic employees are paid on a higher scale than the postal employees.

But I understand that the postal employees who do telegraphic work are interchangeable with their fellow employees, and that at any time they may be switched off to do other work and on that account they cannot be given any special consideration in their immediate pay for learning telegraphy. I believe that one of their objects in learning telegraphy is that it does qualify them for higher posts in their service. If these men were given higher pay I think we should immediately have an appeal from those in the postal service who look after money orders, deal with registered letters and many other classes of work which they would claim to be of equal importance. Now, Sir, the mover of this Resolution claims that the Postal Department should not be a revenue-earning department. That I fail to see. To my mind the Postal Department is a means of obtaining revenue throughout the country and in a very far reaching manner, and provided its employees are paid adequately and that the post offices generally throughout the country are kept up to a proper standard, I see

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no reason whatever why any profit made by the Post Office should not go into the general revenue.

Last March we discarded a means of taxing the people generally throughout this country and I fancy thereby threw away something like 5 crores of revenue. Buying postage stamps or rather selling postage stamps is another means of extracting revenue for the country in a most far reaching way, and I see no reason whatever why any profit made by the Post Office should not go into the general funds. As regards the pay of the employees, I think we should bear in mind that this question was very thoroughly sifted by a representative committee, I think only two years ago, possibly three, certainly not longer. On that committee were two post office employees, and it will be generally agreed that the cost of living now is not higher than what it was then, and as the scale of pay was fixed so recently ago and accepted as fair, I see no reason whatever why it should be altered now. We heard to-day in answer to a question from one of our Members, who is unfortunately ill, that the anticipated revenue from the post office is likely to be short by Rs. 1 crore, and the present time is not one in which we should consider increasing the pay of the employees. There is another point. The pay of the employees, I think, should not necessarily go up when the post office is running at a profit. The scale of pay has been fixed on a grade scale. Why should the pay go up with the profits of the post office, unless you are going to reduce it when the post office is working at a loss? I do not think that the pay of the post office employees should be dealt with in that way; they are not entitled to a share of the profits of the Post Office.

There is one other point that I should like to mention, and that is some mention was made that there is no overtime allowed to post office employees, but that overtime is allowed to the telegraph people. I think we can readily understand that overtime in telegraph offices is necessary because the work goes on continuously. It might be argued that it is equally necessary for the post office. I say it is not. I know of nobody who is better capable of spreading out a few hours' work into 8 hours than a clerk in this country and thereby working and claiming overtime. I have no doubt that many gentlemen here have also had a similar experience. Overtime I consider is a very bad way of paying your men. They do not work their hardest during the regular hours, in order to earn extra money for overtime. I have no doubt that most of the members of this Council have received a rather voluminous letter on this question. I am quite sure that the Honourable Member who spoke before me had it, because I recognised many phrases from it. It comes from a Union. It is a very well written letter, but it struck me as presenting only one side of the question. I therefore took an opinion from the other side from one who knows something of the post and telegraph department. As regards the point which Mr. Kale very rightly brought up, *viz.*, the question of accounts, it will be explained that it is practically impossible to separate the revenue received from telegrams in these combined post offices, and it is quite true that such revenue as is received there is credited to the Telegraph Department. I think that was Mr. Kale's point. Mr. Kale's next point was that the cost of running these offices was debited

to the postal department. I quite agree with Mr. Kale and consider that even if you cannot separate the revenue, the cost of running the department should be debited to the telegraph department. I am afraid perhaps I am anticipating the Honourable Member who will reply. I have heard that the minimum pay of the postal employee in Bombay and in one other big district is under consideration. But of course it will be rather difficult for Government to accept a proposal for any increase of pay when we have got this retrenchment looming on the top of us.

Sir, as a whole, I cannot accept the Honourable Mr. Kale's Resolution. As, I have explained, I do not consider that the pay of the postal employees should go on increasing with an increased profitable revenue of the post office any more than they would like to have their pay cut down when the post office is working at a loss ; and secondly, the Committee or Commission that we had but two or three years ago decided the pay and fixed it on a fair basis, and I cannot believe that conditions have altered in so short a time as to require revision of the pay now.

The HONOURABLE MR. B. N. SARMA (Revenue and Agriculture Member) : Sir, the Honourable Mr. Kale wants modifications and changes to be introduced into the method of keeping accounts in the Postal and Telegraph Departments, mainly with the object of ascertaining what is the correct nett revenue which the post office officials can claim for their share ; and with this further object, *viz.*, as to whether anything could be done for improving the conditions of the people employed in the post office, who, he thinks, are not adequately remunerated at the present time chiefly owing to financial conditions, and partly owing to a misunderstanding of the position of the postal revenue, inasmuch as the post office is not given credit for all the revenue that it earns, whereas it is debited with expenditure which on a proper accounting ought to go to the telegraph share. I shall place the position as it stands in a few words in order that Honourable Members may exactly see what is the condition of the post office and that of the employees relatively to what it was, say, in 1914, as to whether there are any real grounds for complaint on the part of the post office officials as regards their emoluments, and as to whether this system of accounting which he advocates can be adopted either in whole or in part, or whether it is impracticable. The Government of India appointed a Committee to investigate the conditions obtaining in the telegraph offices. They submitted a report which resulted in increased expenditure to the State. Similar complaints were received from the post office employees and another committee was appointed in 1920-21 which went into the whole matter, and they suggested increased expenditure which ultimately came to somewhere about 1 crore and 30 lakhs. The emoluments of the officials in question whom the Honourable Member has in mind, especially signalling clerks included amongst the general grading of clerks, especially drawing pay below Rs. 100, have been substantially increased, so that it may be said that they now draw nearly a hundred per cent. more than what they drew in 1914. I wish just to read a few lines from the Committee's report which would elucidate that point. " In the aggregate " they say, " the scales which we now propose raise the average to 75 as against 40.1 average pay, which means an increase in present pay and allowances of 31 per cent. " That is the present

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pay as it stood when the Committee instituted its inquiries. Various improvements have been effected in this matter from time to time. They go on "and on pre-war pay of 88 per cent. If to the direct benefit conferred by the substitution of proposed time scales for grades up to 100 is added the indirect but substantial benefit which accrues from the revision proposed further on in this report of the higher or selection grades, it is not by any means an exaggeration to say that if our proposals are accepted (and they were substantially accepted) the clerks of the department will have gained, as compared with 1914, to the extent of 100 per cent., if not more." I think Honourable Members will realise what it has cost the State and also realise that the cost of living now if anything has fallen below what it stood at in 1920-21 when the members of the Committee drafted and submitted their report and the Government considered it.

The Committee took pains to ascertain the pay and emoluments obtaining in the various corresponding departments and here is what they say they have done in fixing the scale.

"We have in each case considered carefully the scale of pay which should be allowed having regard to the present pay and allowances, to pay recently sanctioned for other services and departments, to rates of pay given to clerks in banks and in merchants' offices, to the recommendations of Postmasters General and to representations made to and, evidence recorded by us."

So, having thoroughly exhausted the subject in the way of whatever inquiries they could make, they made certain recommendations which were almost wholly adopted and accepted by Government. Further probing of this subject at the present juncture might facilitate the Finance Department suggesting to us as to whether any more savings could be effected having regard to the scale having been fixed when prices were very high. At any rate a hint was thrown out to me by one of the officers in the Finance Department, and I do not think any inquiry at this stage would facilitate the object which my Honourable friend has in mind. The differentiation between telegraph signallers employed in the ordinary departmental offices and the signallers who are working in the combined offices has no doubt given rise to great heart-burning, especially in the Post Office, and the point was brought prominently to the attention of the Committee of which I was a member for some time. Well, it is not necessary to go into it because it would lead to a very elaborate defence of the Government position in this respect; but, roughly speaking, our advisers have pointed out how greatly the conditions of the signallers in the Post Office and in the departmental offices vary, how a greater scale was fixed in one case and not so much in the other and that various other factors had to be taken into consideration in fixing the pay of the telegraphists. If you are going to adopt the scale that is paid to telegraphists in the ordinary departments on the assumption that the conditions of work are the same, the scale is the same, and so on, which I do not for one moment admit, I am sure that you will have to go in for another one or two crores of rupees additional expenditure. I am only putting it very roughly, for this reason that you cannot stop with the signallers. If the telegraph signallers in the combined offices want a little more

emoluments because they compare themselves with the signallers in the telegraph office and on the ground that they earn a little more revenue, well the money order clerks might get up and say "this money order work is very much more paying than the other branches of the Post Office, so you must pay us a little more"; and so it will go on. Apart from this impossibility of differentiating between one clerk and another clerk in the Post Office, there is no reason why the Government should embark upon this additional expenditure on the ground that perhaps they are paying a little more than was necessary in another department. If my Honourable friend suggests that economies could be effected in another department, well the matter might be investigated, not that I say that they can be effected, because the Government do not accept that position at all; but I say there is no reason why, assuming for the moment that we are paying a little unnecessarily and extravagantly in one department owing to various antecedent circumstances, that the same procedure should be followed here. The point is whether the post office official is not receiving an adequate wage at the present moment. If he is not getting a proper living wage, there is room for an inquiry; but I contend that the figures I have quoted and the comparisons which we have been able to institute as regards other Government departments, justifies me in saying that the Post Office official is getting as much as his due share, and perhaps a little more.

Then, of course my learned friend has not, so far as I have been able to understand it, put his case on the ground that the Post Office employee should be placed on the footing of a profit-sharing member of a private business where emoluments may be regulated by the profits or losses of that concern. He has not put it on that ground and, of course, it is unnecessary to argue it. Government have to pay a living wage whether they earn money or not, because that is a proposition which the Government can controvert. My Honourable friend Sir Arthur Froom has fully gone into the question as to whether it would not be right for the Government to make a little money on the assumption that their employees get a living wage, that all the improvements that can be effected from savings in Post Office administration are effected, that the department is not starved, and that there is a real surplus without affecting the general taxpayer. I think I need not be drawn into a controversy as to the exact nature of this department, as to whether it is a *plus* department or a *minus* department, a revenue-earning department, a commercial department or a money losing department, a non-earning department. I think I have said enough. There is common ground between both of us to this extent that a living wage ought to be paid, and that if the Post Office earns a very large net revenue, possibly their case, when they present one before the Government of India for improvement would stand a better chance than it would if financial conditions are gloomy or if the department as a whole sustains a loss. To this extent there is validity in his argument and I think he puts it only at that.

We come next to the changes that he suggests in the Post Office account keeping. Firstly, there is a good deal of reason on his behalf when he contends that the expenditure incurred in telegraphy in the postal department should be debitable to the Telegraph Department and not be debit-

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able to the Post Office. Certain recommendations have been received by the Government of India from a committee of chartered accountants who were appointed recently to go into this question. They are under consideration, and I daresay the point of view which my Honourable friend has put before us will receive adequate, and I may go further and say, sympathetic consideration. But I am not equally hopeful as to whether his position is correct when he asks us to credit to the Post Office all revenue that is derived by the combined offices for telegrams which are presented at the combined offices or delivered through them.

For this reason, that it is absolutely impossible for us correctly to appropriate to the Post Office or the Combined Post Offices the legitimate share of revenue which they are entitled to. Now, for instance, we know that the total number of telegrams is so many—in 1920-21 it was about 20 millions. Well, the number of telegrams that were presented at the Combined Post Offices was about 10, but the signalling operations in respect of these 20 million telegrams amounted to about 90,477,182. That is to say, in the case of a message which is received at the Combined Post Offices and has to go through several combined and departmental offices, to apportion the revenue resulting, correctly is a matter really impracticable. If you say it is roughly one-fourth and allocate that proportion of the revenue, will it be satisfactory, will it be right ?

Then if there are overhead charges, how are we to take account of that ? What is the share which is to be apportioned in regard to various other items ? It is so very difficult to say ; and consequently our advisors think that no good purpose would be served by instituting inquiries of this description. In the first place, it would lead to a considerable increase in the accounts establishment. In the second place, it would be a rough guess-work after all. In the third place, the system of maintaining accounts is not in respect of actuals but in respect of estimates. I shall read just a few lines from a memorandum as to the process which is adopted with regard to these accounts. This is how it is done. Practically the whole of the telegraph revenue is collected in stamps and included in the figures for stamp collection. The total number of telegrams issued is known from an examination of the details of those issued during two particular weeks of a year. The average value of each telegram is calculated. The total amount of telegraph revenue collected in stamps for the whole year is estimated on this average value and from the known value. Telegraph revenue is therefore an estimated and not an actual figure. And what is the object to be gained after all ? Not much. It is for the purpose of clearly apportioning the revenue in order to see that the Post Office administration is not starved.

I have already dealt with the position that the Post Office officials have as much as they ought to get. They have received ample and sympathetic consideration during the past few years at the hands of Government with regard to the complaints which they have made at different times ; and I therefore regret the Government are unable to accept the Resolution. I have already indicated that an attempt will be made to apportion the expenditure correctly, so that the Post Office may show a correct net revenue as far as possible, that its administration may be improved having regard to the financial conditions which may be shewn as a result of the improvements that may be effected by an examination of the accounts. But I

think no useful purpose will be served by the Honourable Mover pressing the Government to undertake anything further specially at the present juncture, and I hope, therefore, his object having been achieved, namely, to draw public attention to what he considers to be the hardships under which Post Office officials are labouring, I would suggest there is no further need of pressing the question.

The HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT : The further discussion of this Resolution will stand over to the next non-official day. The subject of the Resolution is not such as to necessitate the attendance of Honourable Members for an afternoon Session. I may say that I do not propose to adjourn the Council till to-morrow, because a very important Bill is to be brought before the Council on Wednesday, and I desire that Honourable Members may have a clear day in order that they may examine that Bill with the care and attention which it deserves.

The Council then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Wednesday, the 13th September 1922.

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