

Monday, 16th September, 1935

THE COUNCIL OF STATE DEBATES

VOLUME II, 1935

(16th to 28th September, 1935)

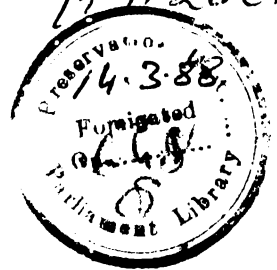
TENTH SESSION

OF THE

THIRD COUNCIL OF STATE, 1935



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} *Members.*

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THE
COUNCIL OF STATE DEBATES

(OFFICIAL REPORT OF THE TENTH SESSION OF THE THIRD
COUNCIL OF STATE)

VOLUME II—1935

COUNCIL OF STATE.

Monday, 16th September, 1935.

**ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY TO THE MEMBERS
OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE AND THE LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY.**

HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY : Gentlemen,—Once again it is my privilege as Viceroy to address Honourable Members of both Houses and to give a brief review of the general conditions affecting India, but before doing so, I wish to make a brief reference of a personal character.

Before I shall have an opportunity of addressing you again, my Government will have said farewell to a valued colleague, and the Upper House to one of its most distinguished Members. Field-Marshal Sir Philip Chetwode's term of office as Commander-in-Chief has been one of the most eventful within living memory for the Army in India, and I cannot let this opportunity pass without paying my heartfelt tribute to the value of the outstanding services that he has rendered to India.

In addressing the Members of the Legislative Assembly in January last I expressed the hope that local Governments and local committees would receive the support of all communities in celebrating the 25th anniversary of the accession of His Majesty the King-Emperor to the Throne, and that the princes and people of India would once more give proof of their devotion to the Crown and of their sympathy for those in need by responding to my appeal on behalf of a fund to commemorate the occasion in an appropriate manner. I am glad to be able today to acknowledge how magnificently my expectations have been fulfilled. From every part of India my Government received reports of the genuine and spontaneous exhibitions of enthusiasm which accompanied the Jubilee celebrations not only in the larger towns but also in small and remote villages. The efforts of a few misguided people here and there to mar the occasion only served to show how few such persons were,

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and how out of sympathy with the general spirit of the people of India, who everywhere were eager to show their loyalty and devotion to the Crown. The response to my appeal has been equally gratifying and it is evidence of the generosity of the princes and people of India that the total collections for the Silver Jubilee fund amount to the splendid sum of over Rs. 125 lakhs. This result could not have been achieved without good organisation and much well-directed effort, and to all those, throughout the length and breadth of the land, who have contributed in any way to the success of the Fund I accord my grateful thanks. It will, I am certain, be a cause of great satisfaction to His Majesty the King-Emperor to know that his Silver Jubilee will for all time be associated in India with so great an increase in the resources of institutions which bring relief to those in sickness and distress.

I now turn to Foreign Affairs. As regards Nepal, I would only say that 1934 added still another year to the long tale of unbroken friendship and mutual confidence which are traditional between India and this her only Asiatic neighbour within the Himalayan wall.

In another frontier field there are interesting developments to record. As the result of an agreement concluded with His Highness the Maharaja of Kashmir in March last, the civil and military administration of the trans-Indus portion of the Gilgit Wazarat was taken over by the Government of India on the 1st of last month. The change, without diminishing the suzerain rights of His Highness, places undivided local control in the hands of the Government of India on an important sector of the Indian frontier. I am happy to be in a position to assure the House that the reorganisation has been completed without additional expenditure to Indian revenues.

Beyond the Gilgit frontier stands Sinkiang or Chinese Turkestan, the westernmost province of China. In this Province the situation continues to be obscure and uncertain. My Government learnt with concern of the distress caused by the recent civil turmoil in this friendly and important province and the ensuing dislocation of the ancient commerce between India and China by the Karakoram passes. The Indian traders in Sinkiang have unfortunately suffered much hardship and loss both to life and property, but there are signs that the efforts of His Majesty's Consulate at Kashgar in their behalf are bearing fruit. Indeed one of the most affecting tributes of loyalty to the King-Emperor came from these very traders, who despite all hardships and losses in this distant land combined to contribute a sum of several thousand rupees to His Majesty's Silver Jubilee fund. Our sympathies are with the local Sinkiang authorities and with the Central Chinese Government in their task of maintaining order and control, a matter of no little neighbourly concern to India.

My Government have under active consideration the question of the improvement of trade facilities between India and Afghanistan in the light of the report of the Trade Delegation which visited that country from India in the spring of last year. In particular it is our desire, if possible, to devise means of lessening the difficulties to Indian trade created by the recent adoption by the Afghan Government of a State trade monopoly system.

His Majesty's Government and the Government of India have special relations of long standing with the independent rulers of the States on the Arab Coast of the Persian Gulf and have accepted special responsibilities towards them. In order to strengthen these ties and in view of the fact that the Arab Coast has acquired a new and increasing importance as a result of the establishment of the Imperial Airways route on that coast and of recent commercial developments, His Majesty's Government, with the concurrence of His Excellency the Shaikh of Bahrain, have now transferred to Bahrain their naval stations hitherto existing at Henjam and Basidu. His Highness the Sultan of Muscat, Their Excellencies the Shaikhs of Kuwait and Bahrain, and certain of the Trucial Coast Shaikhs have concluded agreements with the British Government, which facilitate the passage of the aircraft which form a link of ever-increasing importance in the Empire chain of communications—a link in which the Government of India have a vital interest. I shall always remember with pleasure my meetings with certain of the Arab rulers in the course of my recent journeys by air through their territories. Their loyalty to their ancient associations with the British Government and the Government of India was on that occasion expressed in the most marked manner, and they may rest assured that no Viceroy in India can fail to have their interest at heart.

The frontier province of Baluchistan has been the focus of world-wide sympathy on account of the terrible earthquake which, as Honourable Members are aware, recently overtook the city of Quetta and the surrounding areas and which caused a loss of life and destruction of property probably unprecedented in the history of this country. The outstanding feature of the scene of suffering and devastation that followed this catastrophe was the prompt and effective manner in which the troops of the Quetta garrison—officers and men—were organised for relief and rescue work. I had the privilege of paying them all my personal tribute of admiration during my recent visit to Quetta. I now take this opportunity again of expressing on behalf of the Government of India and myself our heartfelt sympathy with all those who have suffered and our deep gratitude to those, including the various relief organisations, who have spared no efforts to alleviate their suffering and losses; and in this connection I wish particularly to bring publicly to your notice the magnificent work that was done by the ladies of Quetta for whose untiring and devoted service it is difficult to find words of sufficient praise and appreciation. I must also make mention of the most generous way in which Local Governments, particularly of the Punjab, Bombay and the North-West Frontier Province, have responded to our appeal for help with staff, money and medical and other facilities, and we are indebted to them and their officers for the efficient organisations set up by them for the reception and relief of refugees. My very sincere thanks are also due for the generous and world-wide sympathy that has been shown in response to my appeal for funds. It is evident that the damage which has been caused amounts to several crores of rupees, and we shall need all the money we can collect if we are to be able effectively to relieve the thousands who have been rendered homeless and destitute.

The problem of the delimitation of the undemarcated frontier between Burma and China to which I referred when I last addressed this House has advanced a stage nearer to solution. As the result of an agreement reached

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between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Government of India on the one hand and the Chinese Government on the other hand by an Exchange of Notes, a Joint Boundary Commission, with a neutral Chairman nominated by the League of Nations, has been appointed to determine the southern section of the undemarcated boundary between Burma and Yunnan. The League has been fortunate in securing the services of Colonel Iselin of the Swiss Army as Chairman of the Commission. This officer has the experience of having successfully and impartially determined the frontier between Iraq and Syria, and is thus particularly well qualified to preside over the labours of the Commission on the Indo-Chinese frontier. The Commission hopes to assemble by the 1st December next and start operations immediately.

Whilst on the subject of Burma I would remind Honourable Members that when I addressed them in January last, I mentioned that the question of the trade relations between India and Burma after separation was the subject of conversations between my Government and the Government of Burma. These negotiations have now been concluded and the agreement which has been reached has been embodied in the Draft Orders in Council which were recently published for general information. These Draft Orders will in due course be laid before Parliament in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution Act, and it would perhaps be inappropriate at this stage to discuss them in any detail. I would, however, say that they represent the agreed opinions of my Government and of the Government of Burma as to the régime which is best calculated to create an atmosphere in which the two countries may, during the period of transition, soberly and dispassionately consider the problems of their future relations.

I am aware of the deep interest which Honourable Members have consistently evinced, since the legislation of last year, in the position of Indians in Zanzibar. The general question is still the subject of discussion between the Secretary of State for India and the Secretary of State for the Colonies. The decision of the Secretary of State for the Colonies that, if specific cases of hardship alleged to have resulted from the operation of the Cloves Decrees, are brought locally to the notice of the Government of Zanzibar, they will be most carefully investigated by that Government and, if necessary, brought to the notice of the Secretary of State for the Colonies has already been announced. All that I can do at this stage is to assure Honourable Members of the unceasing vigilance and solicitude of my Government.

Honourable Members will remember that in the course of my last address to the two Houses of the Central Legislature I referred to the outcome of Mr. Menon's enquiries regarding the probable effects of the Marketing Bill, which had been gazetted in Kenya, on the interests of Indians. His report has since been published together with the comments of the Governors of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika. I also informed Honourable Members that in deference to the wishes of the Government of India the Kenya Government had agreed to defer progress with the Bill pending consideration of Mr. Menon's report. It was not to be expected that legislation, which had already been announced on the lines of that existing in the sister territories of Uganda and Tanganyika,

and of which the primary object was to improve methods of marketing, would be abandoned. The Government of India, therefore, bent their efforts to securing such amendments in the Bill as would reduce the hardships and remove the apprehensions of the Indian trading community in Kenya. The provision of the Bill which evoked the liveliest criticism was that relating to the grant of exclusive licences. It was feared that if, as was originally proposed, the Governor-in-Council was entitled to issue exclusive licences without reference to the Legislative Council, there would be neither sufficient publicity nor adequate opportunity for discussing the question whether the issue of such licences was necessary or justified. In order to meet this objection the Government of Kenya have inserted a provision in the Bill to the effect that the application of the principle of an exclusive licence to any particular type of produce shall be effected by motion in the Legislative Council after 14 days' notice has been given. Apart from the question of exclusive licences, the chief anxiety of Indians was that the number of buying centres might be unduly restricted, and that they might be located at inconvenient distances from existing markets. In this respect the Government of Kenya had agreed to give an assurance that all important markets existing at present would be declared as buying centres. It is understood that the Government of Kenya have gone further and have inserted an amendment in the Bill itself providing that trading centres will automatically be markets under the Ordinance. Certain subsidiary amendments, such as the provision that reasons for the refusal to grant or renew a licence shall be recorded in writing, have also been effected. Above all a categorical assurance has been given both by the Colonial Office and by the Government of Kenya that the Bill is not racial in its intention and will not be racial in its operation. These are important safeguards. As Honourable Members are aware, the Secretary of State for the Colonies has agreed that the Bill should not be brought into operation until he has had an opportunity of considering it as passed, if necessary, in consultation with the Secretary of State for India. The way is, therefore, still open to further representations by us, should these become necessary.

A subject of considerable general interest and importance on which I should like to dwell is the activities of the Indian Research Fund Association. The Association depends for its activities primarily on funds provided by Government. The Central Legislature is represented on its Governing Body by two members elected by the Legislative Assembly and one member elected by the Council of State, but I am not sure whether the nature or extent of the work done by the Association are widely known. This must be my excuse for referring to the subject.

I think I am correct in saying that the Association which was founded in 1911 was the first organisation of its kind to be constituted in the British Empire; the Medical Research Council in England was started only during the Great War. An increasing degree of public interest is being directed towards the graver diseases which afflict our country, such as malaria, kala-azar and cholera. In kala-azar notable success has been achieved through investigations made by a special Commission appointed by the Association and through ancillary enquiries which it partly financed. As a result, this disease which at one time seemed so menacing a problem in the Eastern parts of India may now be said to have been brought definitely under control. During more recent years

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the problems associated with cholera have been receiving intensive study, and I am informed that there is considerable hope that the enquiries now being carried out will throw new light on many of the puzzling features of this formidable epidemic disease. Malaria is a disease of more widespread incidence and presents more varied problems. I need hardly remind Honourable Members that it was an officer of the Indian Medical Service who discovered how the disease is transmitted and thereby pointed out the course of subsequent investigation. It is, therefore, in the fitness of things that India should continue to take a leading part in the investigation of malarial problems. The Malaria Survey of India organised by the Indian Research Fund Association has been at work for years past and has achieved notable results. As an illustration of its activities I may add that, at the moment, one of its parties is engaged in a survey of Quetta and its environments where malaria has been, and is, one of the major problems of public health.

All of us, perhaps, are familiar by now with the term "deficiency disease" and all that it connotes. The Research Fund Association has been for long cognisant of its fundamental importance and among its most notable achievements are the researches in nutrition carried out in Coonoor by Sir Robert McCarrison who has earned a world-wide reputation and has brought credit to himself and to India. The results of researches carried out under the auspices of the Association are published from time to time in the Indian Journal of Medical Research and the Records of the Malaria Survey—publications issued under its authority—but for the convenience of the general public non-technical articles are also issued periodically to the lay press.

The account that I have given of the activities of the Association has had to be brief. It must not be regarded as exhaustive. But if it should serve to focus interest on a branch of research which is of the utmost importance to the welfare of the country, my object will have been served. For interest begets sympathy and sympathy encouragement. The lot of the research worker is often to miss both, because of the highly technical nature of his investigation and the comparative infrequency of dramatic discoveries. But these latter, when they come, are the culmination of years of patient toil by men whose normal reward is only the satisfaction that comes of duty conscientiously done. Our more enlightened age should at least lend them the encouragement of a public consciousness of the essentially cumulative character of scientific discovery.

Honourable Members will be interested to hear of a recent decision taken by my Government about the disposal of our surplus stocks of quinine. Although Public Health is a transferred provincial subject, the Government of India decided, some time ago, that they should maintain a reserve of 150,000 lbs. of this drug in order to meet possible emergencies. The recent distressing experience of Ceylon where the incidence of malaria on an unprecedented scale last year rapidly depleted locally available supplies has emphasised the wisdom of this decision. The surplus to which I have referred represents the stock of quinine in the possession of the Government of India over and above this reserve. The question of its disposal has been engaging the attention of my Government for some time past. Considering the constitutional

position, we were under no obligation to distribute it to Local Governments below the prevailing market rates. Nevertheless in 1932 Local Governments were offered supplies, in addition to their normal annual requirements, at a price lower than the cost of production, so that they may be enabled to extend "quininisation" of the people at a smaller cost than would be incurred if these additional requirements were obtained at current market prices. This scheme fell through mainly because Local Governments found themselves unable to buy the entire surplus stock with sufficient rapidity even at the reduced price. The Government of India then endeavoured, with the full consent of past Public Accounts Committees, to sell this surplus to trade agencies, not with a view to financial profit but in order to convert into cash a commodity for which there was no effective official demand and thus make available funds that might be utilised for some useful purpose of public benefit. These efforts not having met with appreciable success, it was decided recently to distribute 45,000 lbs. free to Local Governments subject to the condition that this amount will be distributed free over and above the quantities which Local Governments may now be distributing at their expense. The amount which is proposed to be distributed comes to more than half the available surplus, which at the end of June last was only 79,000 lbs. and represents, at the current market price of quinine, a gift of Rs. 10 lakhs to the provinces. It is hoped that the bulk of this will reach the masses in the rural areas and supplement, in the field of public health, the assistance that the contribution of one crore announced by the Honourable Finance Member during his last budget speech was designed to provide towards rural reconstruction.

You will, I think, expect me to make some mention of a matter which, particularly at the present time, is of great public interest. I refer to India's foreign trade. Nine months ago I ventured to express some degree of cautious optimism in spite of the disabilities under which international trade was then labouring. It is a matter for regret that world conditions still show little sign of the long awaited recovery. On the contrary, yet another of our most important markets, namely, Italy, has been obliged to impose a system of drastic control over imports, in order to protect her foreign exchange position. Nevertheless, I feel that I am justified, so far as India is concerned, in repeating that note of optimism. India's exports of merchandise for the first four months of the present trade year show an increase of more than Rs. 4½ crores over the figures for the corresponding period of 1933, and though they show a comparatively small increase of Rs. 1½ lakhs over last year's total, it must be remembered that 1934 was marked by exceptional purchases of raw cotton by Japan. On this one head of our trade accounts alone, namely, cotton purchase by Japan, there has been a decrease of over Rs. 3½ crores in the present year. Omitting this exceptional item, India's export trade in other commodities has improved by Rs. 3 crores in comparison with last year. Honourable Members may be interested more particularly in the results of our trading with Germany and Italy—countries in which the most stringent measures of control have been imposed. In the case of Germany our information is based on the reports of our Trade Commissioner in Hamburg, who has made a critical examination of the German import statistics. Mr. Gupta informs us that in the last quarter of 1934 the balance of trade was

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against India to the extent of 2½ per cent. In the first quarter of 1935 the balance was even, showing an exchange of goods valued at 26 million Reichsmarks. For the second quarter of 1935 the balance has again swung in India's favour and Germany has imported from India goods valued at 31 million Reichsmarks against exports to India of 24 million only. Again, in the case of Italy, contrary to what might have been expected from the new and stringent system of import control, our exports in the first four months of this year have fallen off by 6 per cent. only.

I quote these figures in no spirit of complacency. My Government are fully alive to the dangers with which the course of international trade is now beset and they will continue to watch the situation with the most anxious care.

Before I leave this subject, may I bring one circumstance to the notice of those who may have found little consolation in a comparison of the trade figures of pre-depression years with those of the present day? I would ask them to remember that world prices of primary commodities have fallen some 45 per cent. since 1929, and that values in themselves are no true index to the variation in the quantum of trade.

I turn now to certain industrial matters of interest. The coal industry in particular has been prominent in our thoughts in recent months. You will, I am sure, share my deep regret at the two tragic mining disasters which recently occurred within a month of each other and in which 81 persons in all lost their lives. The second of these accidents was, with one exception, the worst mining disaster that has occurred in India. In spite of all that care and foresight can do, mining remains in every country in the world a dangerous occupation and our record in India in this matter hitherto has been comparatively good. These two last disasters have each been referred for investigation to Statutory Courts of Enquiry by the Government of Bihar and Orissa, and I do not therefore desire to comment further upon them except to say that I trust that the results of the Courts' investigations will be to indicate some steps by which the risk of the recurrence of such events can be minimised.

I noted with pleasure the passing at your last session of the Mines (Amendment) Act which will reduce the hours of labour, will give further protection to children and will effect a number of other reforms. It will come into force in a fortnight's time, and I hope that it will prove effective in increasing the welfare and efficiency of the miners.

As most of you are probably aware we have now constituted within the Government of India a Bureau of Industrial Intelligence and Research, and the Advisory Council for this subject held recently its first meeting in Simla. I am glad to say that we have secured the co-operation of the Provincial Governments, of the leading States and of prominent non-officials on this Council. We have started on a small scale, but it is hardly necessary for me to emphasise the increasing importance of industrial research and intelligence for the advancement of industry. It is my hope that, as this work develops, it may prove of substantial assistance to Indian industrialists and particularly to those who, by reason of the small scale on which they work, are unable to undertake research for themselves or, in present conditions, to avail themselves of adequate expert advice.

Civil Aviation is a subject which will, during the next few years, force itself increasingly upon us all. You will remember that about a year ago we undertook an important programme of development designed primarily to bring the main Trans-India route and certain internal routes into line with modern ideas. In order to ensure the close co-operation required between the Civil Aviation experts and the engineers, we have formed a special Civil Aviation Circle in the Central Public Works Department to carry out the programme directly. The estimated cost of the work was Rs. 92.57 lakhs and you will be interested to hear that orders have already been placed for hangars at a total cost of Rs. 16 lakhs and for lighting equipment at a cost of approximately Rs. 9½ lakhs. Progress with works for which special surveys have to be made will naturally be rather slower, but the outlines of the programme as a whole are being filled in. We are now faced with the introduction of regular night flying and with a greatly increased intensity of the trans-India services. These changes will involve certain important adjustments within the original programme, and I hope that our ground organisation will be developed fast enough to meet the demands of the air.

A less spectacular but not less useful branch of official activity is the administration of the Road Fund. Your Resolutions of April, 1934, prolonged the life of the Road Account indefinitely and made it possible for the Standing Committee on Roads to take a longer and perhaps a more generous view in dealing with the demands of the Provinces. A special contribution of Rs. 40 lakhs to the reserve in the Account was a most welcome addition to the sum available for distribution, and in March last the Standing Committee was able to approve in general outline the distribution of approximately Rs. 118 lakhs from the reserve, this sum representing resources actually in hand *plus* the additional resources likely to accrue during the execution of the works. We have not forgotten the provinces which are most in need of help for road development, and the scheme approved by the Committee allows for grants of Rs. 25 lakhs and Rs. 12½ lakhs to Assam and Bihar and Orissa, respectively. The needs of the new provinces of Orissa and Sind will be specially considered; surveys are in progress in Orissa and will shortly be undertaken in Sind.

You are aware that for some time past my Government have been giving attention to the development of broadcasting. At the last session of the Legislative Assembly a fund of Rs. 20 lakhs was created for this purpose, and we are now considering to which of our many needs this fund should be devoted. We are already erecting a large transmitting station in Delhi to broadcast programmes in English and in Urdu. This station will, I hope, be ready for use before the end of this year. A large transmitting station at Madras will certainly be needed and we hope to instal new and powerful transmitters at the existing stations at Calcutta and Bombay. Whether it will be possible within the resources now at our disposal to instal four relay receivers and two shortwave stations to complete a broadcasting framework for India as a whole, I cannot yet say. A more detailed investigation of costs will be made during the coming winter, and a definite scheme for the expenditure of the sum included in the fund will then be prepared.

It is a matter of great disappointment to me that the improvement in railway earnings, which was so welcome a feature of the previous year, has

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suffered a setback during the current year, though I hope it is only temporary. Till the middle of August railway earnings have been about half a crore below those of last year, and unless there is a change for the better soon the position of Indian railways will again become serious. I can only add at present that my Government are fully alive to the gravity of the situation and are in consultation with those responsible for the administration of Indian railways in order that whatever steps are possible may be taken to improve their net earnings.

This year has seen an important step forward in the development of the financial organisation of India. On the 1st of April last the Reserve Bank of India came into existence and assumed responsibility for the management of the currency and exchange, and for making the sterling remittances of the Government of India. The Gold Standard Reserve and the Paper Currency Reserve were on that date amalgamated and transferred to the control of the Bank. The Bank is at present continuing to issue Government of India currency notes in the form with which the public is familiar. In due course these will be replaced by the Bank's own notes. The Bank did not assume its full responsibilities as head of the credit organisation of India until the beginning of July when the scheduled banks were required to make their deposits. From that date the Reserve Bank became a central bank in the full meaning of the term and on 4th July declared its bank rate for the first time.

In March last the legislature approved of the proposal that out of last year's revenue surplus a sum of Rs. 113 lakhs should be distributed to the Provinces for the purpose of improving the conditions of life in the villages. This action, I am glad to say, has been universally welcomed throughout India. Rs. 15 lakhs of this grant were set apart for assisting the co-operative movement. The Local Governments were invited to make recommendations as to the most profitable use to which the balance could be put, and their proposals have been scrutinised by the Government of India before their approval was accorded. A statement has recently been laid on the table of this House which shows the objects to which the money is being devoted. The objects are various, since they are adjusted to the needs of the different parts of the country. Out of the total grant, over Rs. 25 lakhs will be spent on village water-supply and irrigation, nearly Rs. 19 lakhs on schemes for general improvement in the villages, Rs. 12 lakhs on the improvement of village roads, and Rs. 10 lakhs on sanitation and medical work. A sign of the times is that in certain Provinces money will be spent on arrangements for broadcasting instruction and entertainment in the villages. My hope is that this grant will prove the beginning of a steady advance throughout India in improving the conditions of life in the villages in which nine-tenths of the population live.

Since I last addressed you the Government of India Bill has received the Royal Assent and has become the Government of India Act, 1935. A great and difficult task has thus been completed by Parliament, after an expression, direct or indirect, of the views of all sections of the peoples of British India and prolonged consultation with the Princes of India. Here and in England views of every nature, extreme or moderate, advanced or conservative, have been expressed. We have all sought to obtain this provision or that in the Constitution and we have all sometimes succeeded and sometimes failed. It is

the business of men of practical wisdom now to forget the individual issues upon which opinion has differed and to consider the sum and substance of our total achievement. On such a consideration we must, I think, conclude that the gain to India is great.

I do not, therefore, on this occasion desire to invite your attention to any of the particular provisions of the Act, but I would ask you to consider two broad features of the new Constitution and desire to give you, if I may, one word of advice.

It is a matter of great satisfaction to me that during my Viceroyalty there has been made possible a consummation which many of the great rulers of India through the ages desired to see but did not see and which was hardly in sight when I myself took office over four years ago. I mean that the Act for the first time in the history of India consolidates the whole of India, State and British, for purposes of common concern under a single Government. India for the first time can become one great country.

The second broad feature, in contrast with the existing constitution, is that the Governments of India under the new Constitution will draw their authority by direct devolution from the Crown just as Dominion Governments do. They will cease to be agents and will stand forth as full political and juristic personalities exercising the functions of His Majesty.

The first feature to which I have referred is the consummation of age-long efforts, not only of the British Government but of all great Rulers in India from Asoka onwards. The second feature is the necessary preliminary and best augury for the full attainment by India of the political character which the most developed of His Majesty's dominions enjoy.

My experience of India now extends over two decades, and I have also had no inconsiderable experience of the theory and practice of political life in other parts of the British Empire. It is out of that long and full experience and out of the genuine sympathy which I have ever felt for India's political aspirations that I give you this word of sincere advice. Nothing is to be gained by working the Constitution in a spirit of mere destruction or by the abandonment of constitutional methods. The new Constitution contains within it great potentialities of development. Everything is to be gained by taking up the new proffered role of a consolidated India and a full political personality and by developing the Constitution till it, in due season, sheds those limitations and restrictions which have been designed for the period of its growth. The abandonment of constitutional methods has never led us anywhere in the past and will never lead us anywhere in the future.

It will not be my task to introduce the new Constitution, nor to join with you in its constitutional and I trust harmonious development. I shall hand over that task to one who comes equipped with great technical knowledge of our new Constitution, for he has himself been a builder in the construction of your policy, one who will I know bring to the service of the Crown here the fullest sympathy with your aspirations and ideals. I feel the greatest confidence that, when he comes to the stage which I have now reached in my life here as Viceroy he will look back on a period fraught with great good to the fortunes of India, enriched by the same kindness which you will assuredly accord to him as you have so generously accorded to me.

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Your thoughts are no doubt occupied, as mine are, by forecasts of the steps by which and at which the new Constitution will be brought into operation. It is impossible for me at this stage to give any indication of precise dates. But, as you are no doubt aware, all branches of my Government and all the Provincial Governments in India are actively and industriously engaged on the problems which must be solved before the new Constitutions in provinces and at the Centre can be introduced. We shall spare no efforts which will enable us to introduce the new order of things at the earliest possible date.

In conformity with this intention, the Committee appointed by His Majesty's Government to report on the delimitation of constituencies and connected problems will assemble in Simla before the end of the present month, that is within two months of the date of the Royal Assent. We have secured as the Chairman of that Committee an electoral authority of great eminence in Sir Laurie Hammond, while with him will be associated two Indian members whose experience as High Court Judges ensures that judicial outlook and strict impartiality which are so essential. The problems which face the Committee are of great complexity, but I am confident that they will prove equal to the task.

In conclusion I wish to make an appeal, which is not new, but which is uppermost in my mind at the present time. No system of Parliamentary Government can be expected to work successfully and for the benefit of the people as a whole without the existence of a spirit of accommodation and a willingness on the part of all sections of the people to prefer the wider interests of the whole body-politic to the narrower interests of their own particular section. As I said not long ago in a speech at Allahabad, the shadow of communal strife is hanging at this time over India. It is a shadow of evil portent and a cause of constant anxiety not only to all Governments in India but to all thoughtful and responsible people. If India is to enter on her new Constitution in conditions favourable to its successful development, that shadow must be dispelled and I would appeal to all those who love this country and desire to see it well governed by its own people to show a spirit of tolerance and goodwill and to work for the creation of greater friendliness among all communities.

On Thursday last the Legislative Assembly to the regret of my Government and myself refused by a majority to take into consideration the Bill to give permanence to the Indian Press (Emergency Powers) Act, 1931, and to certain provisions of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1932. I had hoped that the Assembly would share with Government the responsibility for this measure. Their refusal to do so has transferred the responsibility to me and after taking time to consider all the implications of action or inaction on my part I have decided, in discharge of my responsibility for the safety, tranquillity and interests of British India, to give the Assembly an opportunity to reconsider their decision, and the Bill will be brought before that House again in a recommended form. The arguments for and against the Bill have already been discussed at great length on the floor of the Legislative Assembly, and I shall therefore state as briefly as possible my own reasons for considering the passage

of the Bill to be essential. We are on the eve of important changes in the constitution of India. Within the next two years the primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace and good government in the provinces will be transferred to ministries responsible to the legislatures. I consider it my imperative duty to use such powers as I possess to secure that that transfer takes place in the most favourable conditions possible to the stability and success of these new Governments. Dangerous subversive movements are still active in the country. Communal unrest as I have already said is unfortunately a more serious danger than for many years past. The experience of all Local Governments has been that the provisions of this Bill give them powers which are effective in keeping these movements in check and in preventing the publication of incitements to communal dissension. They are unanimous in considering the retention of these powers essential. I am myself satisfied that they are right and that I would be failing in my duty if I did not use my special powers to secure that these Governments have these powers during the remainder of the present constitution and that the new Governments shall also have them when they take over the reins of Government.

And now I leave you, Gentlemen, to continue your labours of this present session, and I do so with full confidence that you will continue to maintain the traditions and dignity which have always characterised the proceedings of both our Legislative Chambers.