

*Wednesday,  
20th February, 1918*

ABSTRACT OF THE PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
Council of the Governor General of India,  
**LAWS AND REGULATIONS**

**Vol. LVI**

**April 1917 - March 1918**

**ABSTRACT OF PROCEEDINGS**  
OF  
**THE COUNCIL OF THE GOVERNOR GENERAL OF INDIA**

**ASSEMBLED FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAKING**

**LAWS AND REGULATIONS,**

April 1917 - March 1918

Vol. LVI

*Published by Authority of Governor General.*



**& Debates Section**

**Gazette  
Parliament Library Building  
Room No. FB-025  
Block 'G'  
DELHI**

**SUPERINTENDENT GOVERNMENT PRINTING, INDIA.**

**1918**



GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.  
LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE INDIAN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ASSEMBLED UNDER  
THE PROVISIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT, 1915.  
(5 & 6 Geo. V, Ch. 61.)

The Council met at the Council Chamber, Imperial Secretariat, Delhi, on  
Wednesday, the 20th February, 1918.

PRESENT :

The Hon'ble Sir GEORGE LOWNDES, K.C.S.I., K.C., *Vice-President, presiding*, and  
56 Members, of whom 49 were Additional Members.

OATH OF OFFICE.

The following Additional Member made the prescribed oath of allegiance  
to the Crown :—

The Hon'ble Sir James DuBoulay, K.C.I.E., C.S.I.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

The Hon'ble Sir Dinshaw Wacha asked :—

1. "Is it true that out of the 100 million of ounces of silver contracted, according to the circular of Messrs. Montagu and Company, for November last, by the Government of the United States from American producers, on behalf of the Allied Governments, 60 million ounces are for India, costing about 40·11 pence per standard ounce in New York, including exchange?" silver purchased for India.

The Hon'ble Sir William Meyer replied :—

"The Government of India have no information which would bear out the statement said to be contained in a circular of Messrs. Montagu and Company. As was indicated in a Press Communiqué, dated the 30th November, 1917, certain discussions are in progress with the United States Government on the subject. These discussions are still proceeding, and no settlement has yet been reached. It is, therefore, not possible to add anything to the statement then made."

[ *Sir Dinshaw Wacha*; *Sir C. Sankaran Nair*; [ 20TH FEBRUARY, 1918. ]  
*Sir George Barnes*. ]

**The Hon'ble Sir Dinshaw Wacha** asked :—

Dwelling-  
houses for  
the working  
classes.

2. "(a) Is it a generally recognised maxim that it is the duty of the State to provide suitable and healthy dwelling-houses for the working classes ?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state what steps, if any, they have taken towards achieving that object; and if no such steps have been taken, whether any well-reasoned-out scheme dealing in a practical manner with this vital problem is in contemplation?"

**The Hon'ble Sir C. Sankaran Nair** replied :—

"(a) The Government of India have not yet recognised it as their duty to provide suitable and healthy dwelling-houses for the working classes, but the State in India has, as occasion offered, given assistance to the efforts of local bodies and private persons to provide suitable and healthy dwelling-homes for these classes.

(b) The steps taken by the State in India towards providing proper housing accommodation for the poorer classes in cities and large towns will be set out in a reply which is still under preparation to a similar question put by the Hon'ble Mr. Srinivasa Sastri on the 12th September 1917."

**The Hon'ble Sir Dinshaw Wacha** asked :—

Postal peons  
strike in the  
city of  
Bombay.

3. "Will Government be pleased to state the real causes which led to the serious strike of postal peons in the city of Bombay during the month of September last?"

**The Hon'ble Sir George Barnes** replied :—

"The main causes of the strike of postal peons in Bombay in September last are probably to be found in the rise in the cost of living and of house rents in Bombay and in the general labour unrest in Bombay produced by these causes."

**The Hon'ble Sir Dinshaw Wacha** asked :—

Cost of  
the strike  
of postal  
peons in  
Bombay.

4. "Will Government be pleased to state the actual extra cost (if any) with full particulars, which the post office in the city of Bombay incurred in order to carry out the daily postal service during the three weeks of September last that the postal peons were on strike?"

**The Hon'ble Sir George Barnes** replied :—

"A statement\* showing the expenditure incurred under different heads is laid on the table for the Hon'ble Member's information."

**The Hon'ble Sir Dinshaw Wacha** asked :—

Increase in  
pay of  
postal em-  
ployees in  
Bombay.

5. "Is it true that Government have been appealed to during the last three years by certain postal employes in Bombay city and elsewhere for an increase in their pay and improvement of their prospects while in service? If so, will Government be pleased to inform the Council of the number of such employes, with their names, the nature of their respective work and the salary or wages drawn by each of such applicants?"

**The Hon'ble Sir George Barnes** replied :—

"The answer to the first part of the Hon'ble Member's question is in the affirmative.

The detailed information asked for in the second part of the Hon'ble Member's question cannot be supplied except by an expenditure of time and labour, which would be wholly incommensurate with the result. The substance

[20TH FEBRUARY, 1918.] [Sir George Barnes; Sir Dinshaw Wacha; Sir Claude Hill.]

of what the Hon'ble Member wishes for appears in a statement\* showing the number and rates of pay of employes in the Postmaster-General's office and in the Post Office of the Bombay city, all of whom submitted applications. This statement\* is now laid on the table for the Hon'ble Member's information."

**The Hon'ble Sir Dinshaw Wacha** asked :—

6. "Will Government be pleased to state whether, in view of the growing dearness, during the last few months, of the necessaries of life and house-rent, more or less, in the different Provinces of India, any legal or other measures are about to be taken soon to regulate and control such food prices and rentals so as to ameliorate to a reasonable extent the prevailing economic condition?"

Government control over food prices and rentals

**The Hon'ble Sir George Barnes** replied :—

"The answer which I gave on the 6th February last to the question by the Hon'ble Mr. K. K. Chanda answers that part of the Hon'ble Member's question which relates to the necessaries of life.

The regulation of house-rents, where necessary, is properly a matter for legislation in the Legislative Council of the Province where the need occurs. The Bombay Government have, however, represented to the Government of India that the matter is of pressing urgency in the City of Bombay, and that their Legislative Council is not sitting. The Government of India have accordingly, to meet this emergency, taken powers by a new rule under the Defence of India Act to control and regulate the housing of artizans and labourers and their families in any defended harbour notified in the Gazette of India by the Governor General in Council. Bombay is one of the defended harbours, and has been duly notified. The rule gives the Government of Bombay power to fix maximum rents in respect of houses which, in the opinion of the Local Government, were in the year 1914 let, or capable of being let, at rents not exceeding Rs. 10 a month."

**The Hon'ble Sir Dinshaw Wacha** asked :—

7. (a) Is a world shortage of cereals apprehended during the next three years?

Increased cultivation of food-crops.

(b) Will Government be pleased to state (i) whether it is intended to stimulate in all the Indian Provinces greater cultivation of food crops for consumption and export? (ii) if so, how far prospects of such production can be realised, assuming normal rains; and (iii) whether, under the circumstances, it may not be necessary to construct by State or private enterprise light railways in those areas whence at present it is found difficult to convey food grains to the nearest towns for marketing?"

**The Hon'ble Sir Claude Hill** replied :—

"(a) The Government are not prepared to offer an opinion in regard to the world's supply of, and demand for, cereals over as long a period as the next three years.

(b) (i) As I informed the Hon'ble Member in reply to a similar question which he asked on the 12th September last, the Local Governments of the chief wheat-growing provinces were asked to take special steps to stimulate the cultivation of wheat and other food grains during the current season.

(ii) I cannot prophesy what the result will be at the time of the harvesting, but the Hon'ble Member has no doubt observed that in the first published forecast of the coming wheat crop the estimate of the area sown exceeds the final estimate of last year by 972,000 acres.

(iii) In view of the difficulty of obtaining railway materials, no large extension of light railways can be undertaken at present. But in considering

\* Not included in these Proceedings.

[*Sir Claude Hill; Sir Dinshaw Wacha; Sir [20TH FEBRUARY, 1918.] George Barnes; Rai Sita Nath Ray Bahadur.*]

any projects that may be put forward due weight will be attached to the desirability of facilitating the transport of food-grains from areas which could add to the supply available for consumption and export."

**The Hon'ble Sir Dinshaw Wacha asked :—**

8. "Will Government be pleased to state what has been the net surplus of postal revenue in the different provinces of Bombay for the three years ending 31st March, 1917?"

**The Hon'ble Sir George Barnes replied :—**

"The information asked for by the Hon'ble Member cannot be furnished by circles or provinces separately. For the whole of India, however, the net surplus of postal revenue for the three years in question was as follows :—

	Rs. .
1914-15 . . . . .	29,78,847
1915-16 . . . . .	32,11,264
1916-17 . . . . .	56,39,292"

**The Hon'ble Rai Sita Nath Ray Bahadur asked :—**

9. "(a) Will Government be pleased to state the result of the experiments for the production of pulp in India for the manufacture of paper?"

(b) Is it a fact that there has been an increase in the price of paper due to the war, and will Government take any steps to help the paper industry in India?"

(c) Are Government aware that in the publication named 'The work of the Forest Department in India' it has been stated that 'the enormous available supplies of bamboos and elephant grasses could be utilised for the manufacture of the 50,000 tons of paper and paste boards which India now imports annually'? Will Government take steps to utilise this forest product in the country?"

**The Hon'ble Sir Claude Hill replied :—**

"(a) The results of the experiments referred to are given in some of the Indian Forest Records. These publications are too lengthy for me to summarise, but I shall be glad to show them to the Hon'ble Member.

(b) The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. As I said in reply to a similar question asked by the Hon'ble Mr. S. N. Banerjee on 9th March 1916, the possibility of fostering the paper pulp industry in India has formed the subject of detailed inquiry both by the Government of India and by Local Governments for some years past, and concessions for the manufacture of pulp from wood, bamboos and Savannah grasses have been given in several Provinces. Progress with these schemes is hampered by the difficulty of obtaining machinery during the war; and in the case of several raw materials further investigation is still necessary before they can be utilised for pulp on a commercial scale.

(c) The answer to the first part is in the affirmative. The question of the utilization of the raw materials available is being considered by the Industrial Commission, and the Government of India are awaiting the recommendations of the Commission."

**The Hon'ble Rai Sita Nath Ray Bahadur asked :—**

10. "(a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to the report of the Northern India Salt Department for 1914-15, which states that it would not be difficult to bring about an increase in the output of salt in India?"

(b) With a view to facilitate the transport of salt into other Provinces at cheap rates, will Government be pleased to take necessary steps to reduce the cost of transit by rail from the salt-producing localities which are mostly in Northern India?"

Postal revenue in the different provinces of Bombay.

The paper industry in India.

Report of the Northern India Salt Department for 1914-15.

[20TH FEBRUARY, 1918.] [Sir George Barnes; Sir Gangadhar Chitnavis; His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief.]

**The Hon'ble Sir George Barnes** replied :—

"(a) With regard to the first part, I think that the Hon'ble Member is mistaken in his quotation. I do not think that the opinion he quotes is to be found in the Report of the Northern India Salt Revenue Department for the year 1914-15. However that may be, every effort has been and is being made to increase the production of salt from the Khewra Mines.

(b) The present rates for the carriage of salt are very moderate. It is not, I think, advisable that Railways should carry traffic at a loss, and if this is admitted, no reduction could be effected which would confer any appreciable benefit on the consumer. The Government of India do not at present propose to take action in the direction suggested."

**The Hon'ble Sir Gangadhar Chitnavis** asked :—

11. "(a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to an article on <sup>Indian Army Reforms.</sup> Indian Army Reforms in the December issue of the *Hindustan Review*, contributed by Mr. K. C. Roy?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state the constitution and function of the Advisory Council mentioned in the article and given in the Indian Army List?

(c) Has the attention of Government been drawn to the suggestion for adoption of a system of modified conscription applicable to all Provinces, and will Government be pleased to state whether such proposals have been or are under consideration?"

**His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief** replied :—

"(a) The article in question has been seen, but as it adds nothing to our present knowledge of the position, the attention of Government has not been drawn specially thereto.

(b) The constitution of the Advisory Council is as follows :—

*President.*

His Excellency the Army Member.

*Members.*

The Chief of the General Staff.

The Adjutant General.

The Quartermaster General.

The Army Secretary.

The Financial Adviser.

and such other members as may be invited to attend a particular discussion.

The Council meets as a rule weekly. Its functions are to discuss such questions as His Excellency the Army Member may consider of sufficient importance, affecting :—

(a) improvements proposed in the Army,

(b) preparation for war,

(c) fixed defences and military operations in progress,

(d) military organisation,

(e) conditions of service or customs affecting the Indian Army.

(c) The article referred to contains no definite proposals in regard to the adoption of modified conscription applicable to all Provinces. The question of conscription and compulsion has, however, been considered by the Government of India and rejected as impracticable in present circumstances."

[*Maharaja Sir Manindra Chandra Nandi; Sir C. Sankaran Nair; Sir Robert Gillan.*] [20TH FEBRUARY, 1918.]

**The Hon'ble Maharaja Sir Manindra Chandra Nandi** asked :—

Free and compulsory elementary education.

12. "(a) In view of the sporadic attempts made in some Provinces to introduce some sort of free and compulsory elementary education within the jurisdiction of certain Municipalities and District Boards, will Government be pleased to state if they have any intention to co-ordinate these efforts and introduce into this Council an all-India measure on the lines of the late Mr. Gokhale's Education Bill ?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state the sums of money spent in 1916-17 in the different Provinces of India on (a) high education, (b) secondary education, and (c) primary education, respectively ?"

**The Hon'ble Sir C. Sankaran Nair** replied :—

"(a) It is not the intention of the Government of India to introduce into this Council an all-India Bill on the lines of Mr. Gokhale's Education Bill ; but I would invite attention to the passage in the speech of His Excellency the Viceroy in this Council on the 6th February which dealt with primary education, from which it will be seen that the Government of India hope before long to be able to indicate the lines on which they propose to deal with the extension of primary education. In the meantime it is open to such local legislatures as desire to introduce legislation on the lines recently adopted in Bombay and proposed for Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, and the Punjab, to do so.

(b) A statement\* is laid on the table."

**The Hon'ble Maharaja Sir Manindra Chandra Nandi** asked :—

State versus Company management of Railways.

13. "(a) Have opinions been received from Local Governments and public bodies on the question of State versus Company management of Indian Railways? If so, will Government be pleased to lay all such opinions on the table ?

(b) Is it a fact that in America, Japan and several countries of Europe, the present policy of the State is to nationalise all railways and bring them under the control of the State so far as possible ?

(c) Have Government any intention to nationalise all railways in this country ?"

**The Hon'ble Sir Robert Gillan** replied :—

"(a) In reply to a question asked by the Hon'ble Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola in this Council on the 7th March 1917, the opinions of the Local Governments and mercantile associations which then had been received were placed on the table. The opinions of the Madras and Bombay Governments which have since been received are now placed on the table.

(b) Speaking generally, one-third of the railways of the world are owned by the countries in which they are situated, and the remaining two-thirds are in private ownership. In Germany and Belgium and also in Japan nearly all the railways are owned and managed by the State. In the United States and England practically all the railways are in private ownership. In France the State owns a comparatively small proportion of the railways, but it has large financial responsibilities and a correspondingly large control over the lines owned by private companies. So far as I am aware, there is no present policy in the United States, England or France in favour of nationalising all railways, but in every country of the world the State exercises some control over the railways.

\* Vide Appendix A.

† Not included in these Proceedings.

[ 20TH FEBRUARY, 1918. ] [ *Sir Robert Gillan; Maharaja Sir Manindra Chandra Nandi.* ]

(c) The policy in this country has in the past been in favour of State ownership of railways, and the contract with every Company contains a clause giving the Government the option of purchase on a date which of course varies in the case of each railway. The question of State management, as apart from the question of State ownership, is at present being discussed with the Secretary of State in connection with the contract with the East Indian Railway, which is determinable on 31st December 1919, and notice to determine which has been given by the Secretary of State."

**The Hon'ble Maharaja Sir Manindra Chandra Nandi**  
asked:—

14. "(a) Are Government aware that there is a sense of great dissatisfaction in the mind of the Indian community regarding the present management of the East Indian Railway Company in the matter of— Management of the East Indian Railway.

(i) the treatment and accommodation of third class passengers, particularly of women ;

(ii) the schedule of freight for goods and the inadequate supply of wagons for goods traffic ;

(iii) the practical exclusion of qualified Indians from the higher services of the Company ; and

(iv) the rude treatment occasionally extended to respectable Indians, such as the treatment of Mr. Higman towards Babu Probodh Chandra Banerjee, to which attention was drawn by me in a question in this Council in September last ?

(b) Have Government served the East Indian Railway Company with a notice regarding the termination of its present lease in December 1919 ? If so, will Government be pleased to lay this notice on the table, and express their intention in regard to the management of this Railway after 1919 ?"

**The Hon'ble Sir Robert Gillan** replied :—

"As regards the first portion of the Hon'ble Member's question, I may say in general that the Government have no reason to believe that the Indian community are dissatisfied with the present management of the East Indian Railway Company.

To deal with the specific points mentioned in this part of the question, no complaints have been received against the East Indian Railway as regards—

(i) the treatment and accommodation of third class passengers, particularly of women, or

(ii) their schedule of rates for goods traffic.

Undoubtedly there are complaints about the shortage of wagons, but these are general and are due to war conditions.

(iii) It is the policy of the East Indian Railway to encourage the employment of Indians in the superior appointments, and the Company have actually a number of qualified Indians serving in the higher grades of their Audit, Engineering and Traffic Departments. The Company have, moreover, led the way by framing a scheme for the training of Indians as mechanical engineers for officers' appointments in the Locomotive and Carriage and Wagon Departments, which scheme is now under the consideration of Government.

(iv) From the reply which I gave to a question asked by the Hon'ble Member in Council last September, it will be understood that the Company require their staff to be polite to all, whether passengers or fellow employes. Neither from the incident referred to by the Hon'ble Member nor from any other information have the Government reason to suppose that Indians are rudely treated on the East Indian Railway system.

As regards the second part of the question formal notice of the intention to determine the contract with the East Indian Railway Company was served

[*Sir Robert Gillan; Maharaja Sir Manindra Chandra Nandi; Sir George Barnes.*] [10TH FEBRUARY, 1918.]

on the 26th October 1917. A copy of this notice\* is placed on the table. The question of the future management of the East Indian Railway is under the consideration of His Majesty's Secretary of State for India."

**The Hon'ble Maharaja Sir Manindra Chandra Nandi** asked:—

The Indian  
Telegraph  
Depart-  
ment.

15. "(a) Is there any colour bar or racial distinction in the Indian Telegraph Department? If so, do Government intend to remove this?"

(b) Is it a fact that while Parsis and Portuguese telegraphists are admitted into the General scale of service, other Indian telegraphists of equal qualifications (and doing exactly the same kind of work) are denied admittance into this branch of the service?"

(c) Will Government be pleased to state the steps that have been taken since last year to increase the number of Indians in the General scale of service?"

(d) Will Government be pleased to stop direct recruitment to the General scale of service and transfer Local scale Indians to the General scale as the vacancies in that service occur from time to time?"

(e) Will Government be pleased to make a statement showing separately the number of Indians as well as Anglo-Indians in the following grades of the service:—

- (i) Superior Traffic Branch.
- (ii) Deputy Superintendents (Traffic).
- (iii) Deputy Superintendents (Engineering).
- (iv) Inspecting Telegraphists.

(f) What is the object of giving free quarters or house-rent allowances in lieu thereof to the General scale telegraphists?"

(g) Will Government be pleased to exempt from night duties Local scale telegraphists who neither get free quarters nor are in receipt of house-rent allowance?"

**The Hon'ble Sir George Barnes** replied:—

"(a) The Hon'ble Member's attention is invited to the reply given to his question at the meeting of the Legislative Council on 20th March, 1917. Proposals for decreasing the proportion of non-Indians to be employed in departmental telegraph offices have since been submitted to the Secretary of State.

(b) The Hon'ble Member's second question represents the old practice, and changes in the direction he desires have been introduced during the past four years.

(c) Direct recruitment to the General Service is still confined mainly to Europeans and Anglo-Indians, but transfers from the Local Service to the General Service are made irrespective of nationality. 28 Indians (including 14 Telegraph Masters) were transferred from the Local Service to the General Service with effect from the 1st February 1917, and 31 Indians (including 8 Telegraph Masters) were transferred from the Local Service to the General Service with effect from the 1st January 1918.

(d) The Government of India have decided that a certain proportion of non-Indians must be employed in departmental telegraph offices and suitable non-Indians willing to accept appointments in the Local Service are not forthcoming. Proposals for the restriction of direct recruitment to the General Service in order to provide for the regular transfer of a certain number of men from the Local Service to the General Service are included in the scheme submitted to the Secretary of State.

(e) The statement† for which the Hon'ble Member asks in the fourth part of the question is laid upon the table.

\* *Vide Appendix B.*

† *Vide Appendix C.*

[20TH FEBRUARY, 1918.]

[*Sir George Barnes; Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda; Sir William Vincent; Rao Bahadur B. N. Sarma; Sir Robert Gillan.*]

(f) The reasons for giving free quarters or house rent allowances to the General Scale telegraphists are that these men are liable to service throughout India. They may therefore be transferred to distant provinces and are thus called upon to dismantle and set up house again at short notice, usually in expensive places, while, unlike the Local Service men, they seldom have the opportunity of residing with their relatives or friends.

(g) With regard to the last part it would not be possible to exempt Local Service telegraphists from night duty without a considerable increase in the proportion of General Service telegraphists or a reduction in the working hours of telegraph offices, and neither course appears to be desirable or necessary."

**The Hon'ble Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda asked :—**

16. "Will Government be pleased to state how many, if any, State prisoners or detenus have committed suicide or gone mad or have otherwise broken down in health, specifying where practicable the names and descriptions of the prisoners, and whether any inquiry was made in each case and the nature of such inquiries?"

Suicides, etc., by State prisoners.

**The Hon'ble Sir William Vincent replied :—**

"Inquiries have been made from the Local Governments, and when they are complete the information will be laid upon the table."

**The Hon'ble Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda asked :—**

17. "Do Government intend to consider the expediency of appointing non-official visitors from among responsible persons for visiting all State prisoners and detenus and reporting direct to Government all cases of sickness and harsh and improper treatment?"

Appointment of non-official visitors to visit State prisoners

**The Hon'ble Sir William Vincent replied :—**

"The Government of India will consult Local Governments in regard to the Hon'ble Member's suggestion."

**The Hon'ble Rao Bahadur B. N. Sarma asked :—**

18. "(a) Will Government be pleased to state the relative increase or decrease in the total passenger and goods traffic on Railways since the rates have been raised, with the corresponding periods before the war?"

Passenger and Goods Traffic on Railways.

(b) The total receipts during such periods under passenger and goods traffic;

(c) How much of the said increase can be said to be due to the curtailment of the coastal shipping trade?"

**The Hon'ble Sir Robert Gillan replied :—**

"(a) and (b) The increase in passenger fares was introduced from 1st January, 1917. The figures of coaching earnings compare as follows with the corresponding period before the war :—

January to November, 1913—Rs. 19,24,25,697.

January to November, 1917—Rs. 23,59,73,593.

The number of passengers who travelled is not available from the monthly accounts and would have to be specially collected.

There has been no general increase in goods rates, but certain competitive rates to and from Calcutta, Bombay and Karachi were enhanced from 1st October, 1916. Information in regard to the actual tonnage carried is not available, but the figures of earnings for 12 months following the increase compared with the corresponding period before the war are as below :—

October, 1913, to September, 1914—Rs. 33,79,84,525.

October, 1916, to September, 1917—Rs. 40,50,40,051.

[*Sir Robert Gillan; Rao Bahadur B. N. Sarma; [20TH FEBRUARY, 1918. His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief; Sir George Barnes; Sir William Meyer.]*

(c) It is impossible to say how much of the difference is due to cessation of coastal trade and how much to fluctuation of traffic and general development of the line. In regard to goods, however, the principal item affected is coal, and the figures available show that under this head the tonnage carried has increased from 17,168,409 tons in 1913-14 to 22,387,117 tons in 1916-17."

**The Hon'ble Rao Bahadur B. N. Sarma asked :—**

19. "Will Government be pleased to state :—

- (a) the total strength of the Indian Labour Corps working outside India;
- (b) what arrangements have been made for housing them, and
- (c) for their treatment during sickness, and
- (d) whether any English-knowing persons of the community to which the labourers belong have accompanied them ? "

**His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief replied :—**

(a) "The total strength of Indian Labour Corps working outside India cannot be given without disclosing facts which might prove of use to the enemy.

(b) & (c) From reports received from the several theatres the men are suitably accommodated, and receive medical attendance in our Indian Hospitals as is accorded to Indian troops.

(d) Special interpreters have been appointed whenever considered necessary, and in all corps there are persons who know English and the language spoken by the men in the corps."

**The Hon'ble Rao Bahadur B. N. Sarma asked :—**

20. "With reference to the question of increase in the proportion of Indians in the Telegraph Department, both in the General scale and among the operative telegraphists, will Government be pleased to state whether they have arrived at any conclusions and, if so, what they are ?"

**The Hon'ble Sir George Barnes replied :—**

"The question of increasing the proportion of Indians in the Telegraph Department has received the careful consideration of the Government of India, and they are addressing the Secretary of State on the subject."

**The Hon'ble Rao Bahadur B. N. Sarma asked :—**

21. "Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) the causes which led to the increase in Grant 14, Military Estimates miscellaneous; and

(b) whether India is paying the cost of the troops of the Indian Expeditionary Forces as it would have been if they had been in India, or as it actually is in the several theatres to which they were sent ?"

**The Hon'ble Sir William Meyer replied :—**

(a) "The Hon'ble Member's question does not indicate to what year he refers, but presumably it relates to the expenditure shown under Miscellaneous Services at page 251 of the Budget of the Government of India for 1917-18, which was laid upon the table in March 1917. The explanation of this increase will be found under the appropriate heading in the Finance and Revenue accounts of the Government of India. Briefly stated, the increase is due principally to the record under this head of the Government of India's contribution to the cost of the war, represented by the ordinary maintenance

Indian  
Labour  
Corps.

Increase in  
the propor-  
tion of  
Indians in  
the Tele-  
graph  
Department.

Increase in  
Grant 14,  
Military  
Estimates  
miscella-  
neous.

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charges of the Indian Expeditionary Forces. It is also partly due to higher expenditure on Special Services connected with the war, as for example, port defences, coastal patrol services, measures for the defence of the North-West Frontier, a moiety of the cost of operations at Aden, and certain savings which are credited to His Majesty's Government on account of the civil pay charges of officers who have joined the Indian Army Reserve and whose military pay is debited to His Majesty's Government.

(b) India is paying only the normal cost of the Indian Expeditionary Forces, that is, so much of the expenditure on their pay and maintenance as would have been incurred if the troops had not left India."

**The Hon'ble Rao Bahadur B. N. Sarma** asked :—

22. "Will Government be pleased to state whether any *pardanashin* women have been proceeded against under the Defence of India Act in Bengal or elsewhere, and the circumstances which led to their internment?"

Proceedings against *Pardanashin* women under the Defence of India Act.

**The Hon'ble Sir William Vincent** replied :—

"The Government of India have seen references in the Press to the alleged arrest, under the Defence of India Act, of two *pardanashin* ladies at Bankura. They have not heard of similar arrests of ladies elsewhere. The facts of this case are not in the possession of the Government of India, and I suggest to the Hon'ble Member that if he wishes to elicit them, he should do so by having a question put in the Bengal Legislative Council."

**The Hon'ble Captain Ajab Khan** asked :—

23. "Will Government be pleased to state what are the scope and functions of the Army Advisory Council in India?"

The Army Advisory Council.

**His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief** replied :—

"I would refer the Hon'ble Member to part (b) of my reply to the Hon'ble Sir Gangadhar Chitnavis."

**The Hon'ble Captain Ajab Khan** asked :—

24. "(a) What is the scale of clothing and bedding provided for Indian soldiers when proceeding on field service to—

(i) Europe.

(ii) Mesopotamia.

(iii) East Africa, Egypt and Palestine.

(b) What are the rules regarding the renewal of these articles?"

Scale of clothing and bedding provided for Indian soldiers.

**His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief** replied :—

"(a) The scales of clothing and blankets for Indian soldiers proceeding on field service to all Forces are detailed in Special India Army Order of 5th February, 1918.

"(b) Stocks of articles are maintained at bases of field forces. From these stocks renewals are made in the field, as required, to maintain the soldier's kit up to the authorised scale.

"Having answered the question that has been put to me by the Hon'ble and Gallant Member, I think it is as well to remind the Council that he has served in two of the theatres of war under reference and, therefore, it is pretty obvious that he is already aware of the answers to the questions which he has put. I therefore leave it to Hon'ble Members to decide the motives which cause him to waste the time of a considerable number of officials who are busy enough without having to answer questions which can be ascertained from books, or which are common knowledge."

[*Sir James DuBoulay; Sir William Vincent.*] [20TH FEBRUARY, 1918.]**THE CINEMATOGRAPH BILL.**

11-29 A.M.

**The Hon'ble Sir James DuBoulay** :—" Sir, as the Hon'ble Sir William Vincent has resumed his seat in this Council, I beg to move that he be added to the Select Committee appointed to report on the Bill to make provision for regulating exhibitions by means of Cinematographs."

The motion was put and agreed to.

**THE USURIOUS LOANS BILL.**

11-26 A.M.

**The Hon'ble Sir William Vincent** :—" Sir, I explained the main features of the Bill in regard to which I shall shortly move when I introduced it during the last Sessions in September. The Bill met with a very favourable reception, if I may say so, from the Members of this Council. It has since been circulated for opinion, and, speaking generally, I think that most of the opinions received, particularly the more weighty ones, approve of the Bill. I do not for a moment mean to suggest that there is no discordant note, for there are persons who are opposed to the principle of the Bill, but the great bulk of the opinions that we have received are in favour of the measure. There are, of course, many criticisms of detail, to which I do not propose to advert at this stage, because they can be better examined, and ought to be considered in Select Committee; but there are a few matters of importance to which perhaps I should make some reference. In the first place, a point of general importance has been raised by some authorities, notably, I think, by some Judges of the Punjab Chief Court—namely that the enactment of this measure should be accompanied by some modification of the Provincial Insolvency Act. It is believed by various authorities that the present insolvency law places creditors in an unfair position and favours dishonest debtors, and it is therefore argued that if we propose to protect debtors from extortionate creditors, it is right that at the same time we should protect creditors against dishonest debtors. There is much, in my opinion, to be said for this position, and the Government of India had not overlooked it. About the time that this Bill was introduced we had indeed convened a Conference to sit at Simla to consider this question. That Conference included the Hon'ble the Law Member and judicial officers of great weight and authority. The Conference framed certain recommendations for the amendment of the insolvency law which have been embodied in a Despatch which has, I believe, now gone to the Secretary of State. If those proposals are approved by him, I hope shortly to be able to introduce a Bill to amend the Insolvency Act on those lines. I trust, therefore, that this statement will meet the views of those who think that the enactment of the Bill now under consideration should synchronise with some amendment of the Insolvency Act.

"Turning to the Bill itself, I think I ought to tell the Council that when we circulated it for opinion we drew particular attention to certain points upon which the opinions of Local Governments and others were specially invited. The first of these questions was whether proceedings arising out of a settlement of accounts which did not amount to an agreement should be included within the purview of the Bill. Well we have received a number of opinions on this, and they vary, some authorities thinking that such settlements should come within the Act, others thinking that they should not, and the matter will have to be discussed further in Select Committee.

"It will indeed need careful detailed examination which I do not think this Council can effectively make. Then the attention of Local Governments was drawn to the provisions in the law which empower a Court to order a creditor to refund any sums paid to him in excess of what was reasonably due—in other words, to discharge moneys unjustly received. Well, on that matter too there is a variety of opinions, and it will be again for the Select Committee to consider carefully the pros and cons. Similarly, we invited opinion as

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to the desirability of protecting creditors against decrees for interest at unreasonably low rates by fixing a minimum rate below which no Court should go. The intention of this suggestion, which, I admit, I myself was inclined to favour, was to make it clear that in no circumstances would interest at unreasonably low rates be awarded to money-lenders; and I thought that something might be done on those lines to reassure money-lenders—honest men who would not extort unreasonable rates—that we were in no way anxious to interfere with their trade. Some authorities have favoured this proposal, but I must say that the general weight of opinion is distinctly against it, and that the authorities who do not approve of this proposal are such that their views must carry very great weight. The matter will, however, be discussed in Select Committee.

“The last point to which we drew specific attention was the question of including grain loans in the purview of the Bill. The replies show that general opinion distinctly favours inclusion of such loans, and many persons indeed go further and would include all loans in kind. That again is a matter to which the Select Committee will have, I think, to give very careful attention, because there are details of considerable difficulty in connection with it. There are a great many other points of detail which have been raised in the various opinions received, but I do not think it necessary to advert to them at present. It is our practice on this day to discuss only the main principles of the Bill, and those were, as I said, generally approved at the last meeting.

“Before, however, I conclude, Sir, I should like to say that with your permission I propose to add to the list of persons on the Select Committee the name of the Hon'ble Mr. Kesteven. His legal knowledge and experience of affairs generally have been of great use to this Council on previous occasions, and I think his assistance in the examination of this Bill will be of great value. Have I your permission to add his name, Sir?”

**The Hon'ble the Vice-President:—**“Yes.”

**The Hon'ble Sir William Vincent:—**“Thank you, Sir. I beg to move then that the Bill to give additional powers to Courts to deal in certain cases with usurious loans of money or grain be referred to a Select Committee consisting of the Hon'ble Sir George Lowndes, the Hon'ble Rai Sitanath Ray Bahadur, the Hon'ble Sir James Walker, the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Mian Muhammad Shafi, the Hon'ble Mr. A. P. Muddiman, the Hon'ble Mr. R. A. Mant, the Hon'ble Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru, the Hon'ble Raja Sir Rampal Singh, the Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Bishan Dutt Shukul, the Hon'ble Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjee, the Hon'ble Sir Robert Legg, the Hon'ble Mr. A. W. Botham, the Hon'ble Mr. Kesteven and myself.”

The motion was put and agreed to.

## THE INDIGO CESS BILL.

**The Hon'ble Sir Claude Hill:—**“Sir, in moving for permission to introduce a Bill to provide for the levy of a cess on Indigo exported from British India, I do not think I need detain the Council very long. The history of the circumstances leading up to the drafting of this Bill is well known to this Council, since I have in the two previous years explained how events were developing. In 1916, I was able to indicate how the circumstance of a resuscitated demand for natural indigo justified the hope that it might be possible to replace natural indigo in effective competition with the synthetic product; and I indicated at that time that the problem was, in its main essentials, a chemical problem, inasmuch as the chief advantage claimed by consumers for the synthetic over the natural product lay in the fact that the synthetic dyes were prepared in the form of standardised paste which was far

11-35 A.M.

[ *Sir Claude Hill; Sir William Meyer.* ] [ 20TH FEBRUARY, 1918. ]

more convenient for consumers. However, owing to the restricted supply of the synthetic product, a considerable demand for the natural indigo had arisen, and it seemed to the Government of India worthwhile at once to take steps to see whether by chemical improvements or otherwise, it might not be possible to restore natural indigo to the place of prosperity which it occupied before synthetic indigo threatened to kill it.

"In 1917, I was able to inform the Council that Mr. Davis, the Indigo Chemist, whose services had been secured by the Government, had arrived and had already started work at Pusa, and that the results achieved by him till then were full of hope for the future.

"Simultaneously the Planters' Association, who are the only corporate body representing the indigo interests, had awakened to the fact that the opportunity was one which ought to be grappled with seriously, and they suggested that, in order to finance the further investigations of a scientific character which were necessary if natural indigo were ever to be re-established, an export duty on the raw product should be imposed. That proposal of the Planters' Association was referred to all the Local Governments concerned, and it has been endorsed by all of them. At the same time it is necessary to explain that the problem, though chiefly chemical, is not solely a chemical one, and that it may be necessary—probably will be necessary—to associate with the chemical expert also an indigo botanist. That, however, is a matter which has at present not come to fruition; but it explains why not only the chemist's investigations, but why the collateral investigation by a botanist, if one can be secured, will have to be spread over a considerable number of years. It is for this reason that, on the analogy of the steps taken in 1908 in imposing the Indian Tea cess the Government of India, agreeing with the recommendations of the Planters' Association as corroborated by the Local Governments concerned, have decided to frame a Bill providing for the levy of a cess on indigo exported from British India.

"The Bill is a perfectly simple one and the rate of cess, as will be seen from clause 2 of the Bill, will be Re. 1 per maund of 82½ pounds avoirdupois. I need not detain the Council any longer, and I move for leave to introduce the Bill."

The motion was put and agreed to.

**The Hon'ble Sir Claude Hill** :—"Sir, I beg to introduce the Bill, and to move that the Bill, together with the Statement of Objects and Reasons relating thereto, be published in the Gazette of India in English."

The motion was put and agreed to.

## THE INDIAN COINAGE BILL.

1-40 A.M.

**The Hon'ble Sir William Meyer** :—"Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Indian Coinage Act, 1906. The Bill which I desire to introduce is a simple measure providing for the substitution of a nickel two-anna piece for the silver two-anna piece at present current. The silver two-anna piece has always, I think, been looked upon as a troublesome little coin; it is easily lost and wears very rapidly. The possibility of replacing it by a nickel coin was first discussed as long ago as 1904 when the introduction of the nickel one-anna piece was under consideration, but it was decided to wait and see how the one-anna nickel was received by the public before embarking on any further innovations. The marked popularity which the latter coin has now gained for itself augurs well for the success of a nickel two-anna piece, and we have, therefore, decided to introduce such a coin, and to coin no more silver two-annas. This course has the advantage, which cannot be overlooked at the present time, of economising to some extent our supplies of silver for coinage into rupees.

"The design which we propose for the coin has been prepared for us by Colonel McCormick, the Master of the Calcutta Mint. In order that it

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may not be liable to be confused with our silver eight-anna coins, it will have a distinctive shape, namely, square with rounded corners, and it will have a weight of 90 grains and a diameter of 21 millimeters. The King's head and the date of issue will appear on the obverse, and on the reverse the value in English and in four vernaculars. I have procured a few specimens of the coin, and I now place them on the table for inspection in case Hon'ble Members may wish to see them.

"We expect to be in a position to issue the new coin before very long, and our Mints are already engaged on its production. But in case any slight hitch should occur in the arrangements for manufacture, we provide in clause 1 (2) of the Bill that the Act shall only come into force on such date as the Governor General in Council may direct by notification in the Gazette of India. This will enable us to postpone the issue of the two-anna nickel piece until we have sufficient stocks of it in hand, without any risk of a temporary shortage of small currency.

"I need only add that, as explained in the Statement of Objects and Reasons, silver two-anna pieces issued from the Mints before the Bill is brought into force will continue to be legal tender to the extent to which they are legal tender at present, that is—in payment of sums of one rupee and under. But when we publish a notification under clause 1 (2) of the Bill, the Mints will not issue any more of these pieces. I now move for leave to introduce the Bill."

The motion was put and agreed to.

**The Hon'ble Sir William Meyer:**—"Sir, I beg to introduce the Bill which, as will be seen, consists in the main of amendments to the existing Indian Coinage Act, and I move that the Bill, together with the Statement of Objects and Reasons relating thereto, be published in the Gazette of India in English."

The motion was put and agreed to.

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**RESOLUTION *RE* INCLUSION OF QUALIFIED  
INDIANS AMONG THE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD  
OF SCIENTIFIC ADVICE.**

**The Hon'ble Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda:**—"Sir, I beg leave 11-46 A.M.  
to withdraw the Resolution which stands in my name, namely:—

'This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that the constitution of the Board of Scientific Advice be so extended as to include qualified Indians among its members.'

The Resolution was by leave withdrawn.

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**RESOLUTION *RE* TOTAL PROHIBITION OF THE USE  
OF LIQUORS AND DRUGS.**

**The Hon'ble Rao Bahadur N. Sarma:**—"Sir, I beg to 11-46 A.M.  
move the Resolution standing against my name which reads thus:—

'This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that the Government may be pleased to accept and declare total prohibition of the use of all alcoholic and intoxicating liquors and drugs to be the aim and object of its policy, and to so direct its administrative methods as to achieve the end in view at an early date.'

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“ It is not without some diffidence that I rise to move this Resolution ; but I hope to be able to show to the Council that the changes I am asking the Council to adopt are not of any catastrophic character, that they would not dislocate the finances of the country, and that they would not introduce vital administrative changes in the immediate future, but that they are changes which are of immediate practical importance, and that consequently it is necessary that the Government should consider as to whether it can see its way to adopt a change in its ideals with regard to excise administration. I ask in this Resolution that the ultimate goal of the excise policy of the Government of India should be total prohibition, but I do not ask that it should be done within any definite period. I realise that the circumstances of this country and the circumstances of the Government would not permit of any immediate drastic changes. I am no visionary and I understand the difficulties of the situation. I do not, therefore, set any limit to the Government of India wherein they can introduce total prohibition, and no one here or elsewhere need be uncomfortable as to whether any drastic changes would be immediately introduced. I do not think the question of immediate total prohibition need alarm anybody. I am sure that during this Session and for several Sessions to come no dinner party will be seriously dislocated, and I am also sure that no community will be seriously prejudiced in its habits. Then you may ask me, Sir, as to whether, if I guarantee such a wide limit, a discussion now would not be merely academic. I hope to be able to show that it is not, that unless and until the Government adopts a change in its past policy on this question, the question of temperance itself will not receive an adequate and proper solution, and that it would be absolutely impossible for the Government to check the increase of the cursed evil of drink, and the history of the past amply justifies the prediction that that will be so. The Government in the past have said :—

‘ The Government of India have no desire to interfere with the habits of those who use alcohol in moderation, and it may be necessary to make due provision for the needs of such persons. But their settled policy is to minimise temptation to those who do not drink and to discourage excess among those who do. ’

“ And as late as 1915 the Government of Bengal have stated :—

‘ The time is not far distant when the number of shops will have to be reduced to the absolute minimum compatible with the principle of making due provision for the needs of those who use alcohol in moderation. In the interests of the moderate consumer the Governor in Council is not prepared to invest the Advisory Council with more direct powers of veto. ’

“ From 1888, if not earlier, up to the present moment, the Government have declared that they have a duty incumbent upon them, through their being monopolists, to provide for the needs of the drinker in moderation. I realise that the questions how far excise methods will be effectual, whether the peace of any particular part of the country would be endangered, whether we shall be introducing worse evils by prohibiting drink would still remain. There would be a change in the angle of vision from which we have to look at the problem ; we shall have to dismiss one idea from our minds, and that is that there is a duty incumbent on the State to provide for the moderate drinker ; because I feel that so long as the Government think it is their duty to make such provision, it would not be possible to make any changes adequate to the occasion. Supposing in a village consisting of 1,000 people there are 80 or 40 who are moderate drinkers—as moderate as those of any other place and who are keen on having a small shop—the Government would have no answer to make to them because they have pledged their word that they would not interfere with the habits of the moderate drinker. The 960 might protest against the shop on the ground that it would be opening the door to temptation, that the weaker minded persons would not be able to resist the temptation, but so long as this policy stands, the Government would find it absolutely impossible to prevent the opening of the shop ; the shop may be subjected to restrictions, it may be subjected to limitations, but still they would have to open that shop when there is a demand ; that has been the history of the past. The Government have contented themselves with questions of averages, with such questions as to whether

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12 square miles or 15 square miles were supplied with a shop, and what was the average consumption per hundred of the population, but so far as I have been able to elicit from the questions put by me, they are not in a position to give information as to how many towns and villages, or how many with a definite population, have a shop, how many have had new shops opened in them, and how many new villages have been infected owing to this theory, which is at the bottom of the mischief, namely, that the moderate drinker must be provided for. The question of local option would receive a different treatment if the ideal for which I am contending is accepted as an ideal. It would not be a question of the majority tyrannising over the minority, it would be a question of the minority bringing infection to the doors of the majority. It is said that if Councils are to have their way, if non-drinkers are to have their way, the poor consumer, the pariah, the member of the depressed classes would have their solace taken away. At present the depressed classes, poor chiefly owing to drink, would have it in their power to infect a healthy community by bringing in a grog shop, an arrak shop, a toddy shop. Therefore the question whether the minority is tyrannising over the majority or the majority is tyrannising over the minority would receive a different solution according to the standpoint from which you look at the question. Then the question of customs duty would receive a different treatment if Government makes up its mind that the ultimate goal is to be total prohibition of drink. The whole Government policy rests on the assumption that drink in moderation is not injurious to health. I know that Government can quote medical authorities in support of that fact. I hope to be able to convince the Council that, notwithstanding the fact that a few eminent authorities are still of opinion that drink in moderation, which necessarily varies according to the individual, may not be absolutely harmful, still from the communal point of view, it has been found to be disastrous. Many eminent medical men and scientists are of opinion that, so far as India is concerned, drink is absolutely unnecessary. The mental horizon has been considerably enlarged since the war, and many military men, for instance, Lord Wolseley, Lord Roberts, were of the opinion that the soldiers who do not drink are far more efficient than those who do; thanks to the efforts of the temperance advocates, it has been found that in the Army sickness, suffering and crime have been considerably reduced since temperance habits have spread. Military experts state that alcohol slows the power to see signals, confuses prompt judgment, spoils accurate shooting, hastens fatigue, lessens resistance to disease and exposure, and increases the shock from wounds. Surgeon-General Evatt, Mr. Pearce, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of London, Professor Saleeby, Sir F. Treves, Sergeant Surgeon in Ordinary to the King, Professor Woodhead, Professor of Pathology at Cambridge University, Chuni Lal Bose, the Chemical Examiner, Sir Bal Krishna Krishna and 50 to 60 prominent medical men in India have issued a manifesto calling upon the people of India to desist from drink. They say, 'It has been proved by careful scientific experiments and confirmed by experience that—

- (1) Alcohol, cocaine, opium and intoxicating drugs (such as bhang, ganja and charas) are poisons ;
- (2) Even moderate use of these is harmful, especially in tropical countries like India. They are of no avail permanently to relieve physical and mental strain ;
- (3) Those who confine themselves to non-alcoholic drinks and who avoid the use of intoxicating drugs are capable of more endurance, and are better able to resist infection and disease ;
- (4) Alcohol is in many cases injurious to the next generation, especially through its favouring influence upon venereal disease ;
- (5) Alcohol aggravates the evils of famine ;
- (6) Alcohol is useless as a preventive of plague ;

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(7) Alcohol lowers the resisting power of the body against the parasites of malaria and the microbes of tuberculosis'.

They ask the people to resist this evil with all their might. Lastly, the All-India Temperance Conference has passed a Resolution to the effect that total prohibition should be the goal of Government policy. Sir, it is absolutely impossible for the Government in the abstract to determine what is moderate and what is harmful. When we consider the past history of Europe and of England, and when we compare it with India, when we note the different ideals which have prevailed with differing results of a radically different character, I think I am right in saying that the ideal proposed by me should be adopted by the Government. Nobody can say that England is not advanced; the people are highly civilised, elementary, secondary and university education have spread; temperance associations are very powerful, but what has been the result? The theory of independence, the freedom of man to judge for himself how to drink in moderation has resulted in an average consumption of 27 gallons per head and of 69 in spirits as against 0.46 in India. The ideals which have been preached in India since ancient times both by the Rishis in their Scriptural writings and by the law-givers of the Hindus and the Muhammedans alike, have produced the desired result, the temperate habits of the people, and the general condemnation by society of intemperance. Temperance reformers find it difficult notwithstanding a Resolution passed by a large section of the population to make any impression upon the House of Commons because of the vested interests at stake and the difference in ideals. During this cruel war notwithstanding the absence of a large male population from England the total consumption of liquors in terms of pure alcohol was in 1915 92 per cent., that of 1914, and 90 per cent. of 1913, the percentages as per value being 110½ and 109, this has been partly the result of an increase in the wages of workmen in England, and that will be the result of an increase of wages of the workmen in India. Therefore, it is no use telling us that it is the weakness of the temperance reformers that is responsible for the result, and that if the temperance cause is to be won they should perform their duty more efficaciously. No doubt, they have a duty to perform, and they will perform it, but without Government aid the results will be as disastrous in India in the future as they have been in the past. And, Sir, notwithstanding the temperance policy of the Government, the excise revenue has been increasing considerably. What has been the result? The impoverishment of the working classes. The Government have themselves been obliged to confess that there has been an increase of 5.5 per cent. in consumption between 1905 and 1912. You may say it is a small increase, but that is the result of including a number of outstill areas with a population of about 40 million in the distillery areas. But if you confine yourself to the areas which have always been distillery areas, what has been the result? You find that in Madras there was an increase of 11 per cent. in the population of the distillery areas, and an increase of 46 per cent. in the arrack consumption; that is an increase of 35 per cent. net. Similarly, in Bombay, you find an increase of 27 per cent. So these averages of 5 per cent. with which the Secretary of State was satisfied are not the real averages obtaining in provinces where the Abkari administration has been at work for some years, but it is the averages for the whole of India as the result of the conversion of outstill to distillery areas.

"I have already said that a vast number of the people of India do not touch drink—thanks to their past ideals; and therefore the problem is much easier of solution here than in England, where the people are with you and there is no vested interest to fight the Government as in the United Kingdom where 160 million pounds are spent in liquors, and where the interests of the brewers resist successfully all reforms in the English Parliament. It is the State here that is in charge, and perhaps it may be more difficult to induce the State to give up the revenue here. But I do not despair that the Government, which has in the past chosen to abandon the opium revenue in the interests

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of another country, China, will not do the same if it is convinced that that is the only right way. The changes that I am suggesting do not necessitate any vital departure from the existing policy, except in certain essential particulars, and would not reduce the revenue to any appreciable extent in the immediate future; and perhaps the same revenue could be secured by an increase in the rate in certain parts of India. I have been convinced, after reading Mr. Lloyd George's speech once again, of the soundness of my view, the result of my experience in this country of the lower classes with whom I had to deal in an administrative capacity. Now what has been the experience in England? You find that the Admiralty, the Director of Naval equipment, the Director of Transport, those who are in charge of the Munition Works, those who are in charge of manufactories, those who are in charge as Inspectors, have all with one voice urged the absolute necessity of stopping liquor altogether in certain areas if the war is to be won. They say that the loss of efficiency of the workmen is not due merely to fatigue; after a holiday it is worse. You give a half-holiday on Saturday and Sunday is a full holiday, and this results in increased drink under the freedom principle, and on Monday the work would be worse than before and a longer holiday makes the position still worse. The net result is a loss of nearly 40 per cent. efficiency on account of the habits of a certain class of workmen. In India, too, the case is the same. The food problem also comes in. A large quantity of food is being wasted in the preparation of liquors, and in India which is a poor country, we cannot afford to waste any of her food upon this pernicious habit. Therefore, Sir, if the results of the past policy of the Government have not resulted in any reduction, if they have resulted in an appreciable increase, if they have resulted in the introduction of this evil into new villages, all on account of the doctrine that the moderate drinker has to be provided for, I respectfully ask whether the time has not come when the opinions of the vast majority of medical men and economists should be acted upon, even if there is a small minority the other way, having regard to the fact that you cannot, taking large communities into consideration, expect people to be sufficiently strong, when exposed to the temptation, to desist from drink, or drink in moderation without injury to the public.

"Then I come to a more important question, and that is this. Who are the men who are suffering by this excise policy? You will find, on an analysis of the figures, that the revenue derived from those who consume liquor imported from England is almost stationary, if it is not declining. For the moment I dismiss that class of consumer. At one time it was considered to be fashionable amongst English educated Indians to drink a little. There was a feeling that the old mediæval doctrines of Hinduism and Mahomedanism on this subject should be defied as inconsistent with civilization. But there has been a change since in the right direction, so we need not think at present of those classes. But we find that during the last ten years between 1903-04 to 1913-14, the increase in the revenue derived from the poorest classes owing to an increase either in the consumption or in the rate of liquor has been no less than 8 million pounds, that is 4½ crores of rupees. The total increase has been 3·9 millions. It is an increase larger than under any other head. The increase has been under Excise 3·9 million; under Stamps 1·8; under Salt and Opium reduction; Land-revenue 2·1 million, Customs 3·6; Forest ·7, and Assessed Taxes ·75. That is, you wring from the poorer classes comparatively small in numbers a larger revenue than from any other community or all the other communities put together under the other heads of taxation. Under arrack alone you get 2·3 million pounds and under toddy you get about 58 lakhs of rupees. The total has risen from 3·2 to 6·2 million pounds. Who is assisting the depressed classes, Sir? Is it the Government of India or is it the ancient ideal of Hindustan and the upper classes who have been agitating for the adoption of the ancient ideal? I humbly beg to submit that a persistence in the present ideas would make the Government of India unwittingly, unknowingly but none the less certainly, the greatest enemy of the poorest classes in this country. The depressed classes

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deserve protection at the hands of the legislature, and there is no use in telling them that they have got increased wages, that they are given the freedom to think and to choose for themselves as to whether they should resort to drink or not. They are denied freedom for other purposes, and I do not see why they should be given freedom in this particular alone when it is no true freedom, but only because to poison oneself and his neighbours. When we find that these poor ignorant people cannot resist the temptation of drink, it is your duty to say that you will not expose them to the temptation.

"Then again with regard to the location of shops. If you read the instructions in the Manual nothing more can be desired in it. The Manual says that a shop should not be on the road to a bazar, at the entrance to a town, in the neighbourhood of a public place, market, educational building and so on. I have collected statistics with regard to Madras and have, when a Member in the Council of Madras, shown that almost everywhere the rule has been violated, and the only result was a confession that the rules are unworkable in practice and the needs of the moderate drinker have to be provided for, and that consequently nothing substantial can be done.

"Then there is the remedy suggested by a reduction of shops. I have faith in that, but there is no use pinning our faith in it too much. It has been seen that Bombay with a population half that of Madras and with 2,000 and odd shops against 8,000 in Madras has sold  $2\frac{1}{2}$  million gallons against two-thirds of that quantity in Madras; so a mere reduction will not solve the problem and is a mere palliative; and the question of opening new shops should be looked at from a new standpoint, the ideal of absolute prohibition by progressive stages.

"Have we no precedents in this direction? The United States are solving the problem and certain States have prohibited the sale or manufacture of intoxicants. In some cases they have succeeded and in others they have only been partially successful, because the people did not wholly support the Government. But here in India, notwithstanding the fact that the people have tried to satisfy the Secretary of State that the vast masses of the people do not drink, the Government are sceptical on the subject. The people who drink are ashamed of the practice except among very limited communities, and even they indulged in it only on specific occasions, and the figures I have quoted show that we are comparatively free as a nation. Therefore, popular opinion is in your favour. There would be no danger of any rebellion; there would be no danger of mutiny, and it would be easier to enforce checks in India than elsewhere. Public opinion in European countries is veering round in the same direction. Resolutions have been passed in Scotland asking for prohibition. The Glasgow Corporation have asked for its complete prohibition during the war. And the larger boroughs in Scotland have met and passed similar resolutions. In the speeches in the House of Commons we find there is a growing feeling in the same direction. Of course it is rather dangerous to quote the example of Russia owing to recent events, but still for the time being they succeeded in the introduction of this reform at any rate. I may state, however, for the sake of those who are in fear of their rights being in jeopardy, that the upper classes were exempt for a time from this prohibition; the high class clubs were exempt, but later on they came into line with the others. Therefore, if necessary, for the time being similar exemptions may be made here. France has done the same.

"I hope, Sir, that I have been able to show that, if you wish to attack the temperance problem really there is no alternative but to accept as your ideal total prohibition, that even assuming that drink in moderation in certain countries is not injurious to health, taking communities in the aggregate, the only wise policy law-givers can adopt would be one of prohibition, subject to the restrictions I have mentioned, in that they do not thereby introduce worse evils, and that they do not endanger the peace of the country. The danger of adopting the present policy of providing for the moderate drinker I have already pointed out. And the past of this country I

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have quoted as a justification for my view. Although the ancient law-givers did not succeed in rooting out this habit altogether, and though it was prevalent in certain wild tracts, this day to day poisoning by bringing drink to the door of every one did not exist, and the upper classes effectually succeeded in keeping the evil at the low minimum at which it exists at present. With all these advantages am I wrong in asking that the Government should reconsider their policy, should reconsider this question from the scientific point of view, as well as the point of view of safety, especially when there is no great danger of their financial equilibrium being rudely or suddenly disturbed? I think the Indian members owe a duty to their country, and they should not be false to their past ideals. Modern scientific doctrine has established the wisdom of the ancient law-givers in this particular at any rate. The better thought of England is with us, the Anglo-Indian Temperance Federation has passed substantially the same resolution. They are fighting for the cause of temperance in England and their sympathy is with us. I am sure that a large body of the Englishmen in India are also actuated by the same ideals. A heavier duty and greater responsibility rests upon them because there is not the slightest doubt that, unable to understand and appreciate the needs of the Westerner and imitating him, the Easterner has come to think that indulgence in moderation in defiance of their ancient ideals is not calculated to promote evils in the communities to which they belong. But latterly there has been a healthy change. We come round to this that though Britishers may have to make personal sacrifices and these personal sacrifices, as I have shown, are not in the immediate present, still I feel sure that they will rise to the occasion and the sacrifices they have cheerfully made in England would be undertaken here. I have not the slightest doubt that if people disabuse their minds of the idea that this is a mere academic discussion, if they disabuse their minds of the idea that this is likely to be accompanied by any danger to peace, or the rude disturbance of finance, I am sure they will see their way to accepting my proposition that we should revert to the ancient ideas.

“I commend this Resolution to your acceptance.”

**The Hon'ble Sir Hamilton Grant** :—“I venture, Sir, to intervene 12-17 P. M.  
in this debate on behalf of the silent and inarticulate community of moderate drinkers and moderate tobacco smokers to which I myself belong, and whose interests are seriously menaced by the Resolution which Mr. Sarma has put before Council to-day. I do not think there is a single member of this Council who does not admire, while at times he may wearily deplore, the pachydermatous persistence which Mr. Sarma manifests in his multifarious, various and generally uncalled for Resolutions. I myself believe that Mr. Sarma is actuated by a burning passion for reform, though I have heard it maliciously suggested that he is actuated by a passion for the auto-intoxication by his own voice. But in many ways I sympathise with Mr. Sarma's desire for catastrophic, nebulous and iconoclastic change. There is something attractive about sweeping reform, and I sometimes dream of myself sitting somewhere in Utopia with Mr. Sarma on one side and the Government of India on the other playing Jigsaw with the Provincial boundaries of India and purging India of the pernicious effects of intoxicants; but these dreams are Utopian and this Council is not Utopia. This Council is a business concern, and we are here to talk business and deal promptly and practically with business problems, and I do not think there is one of us who does not at times get a little tired of these perennial nebulous schemes and these never-ending counsels of perfection.

“I am well aware, Sir, that there are many here present who, for reasons of conscience or religion, are total abstainers from intoxicants, and I trust that these gentlemen will believe me that in what I am about to say I wish to give no offence whatever, nor do I wish in any way to question or criticise the correctness of their principles. All I ask is, that in this as in other questions which touch conscience and religion, we should have mutual tolerance; that

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we should in this matter pursue the path which we pursue in other matters of this kind and 'live and let live,' and that there should be no State interference with individuals—who are doing no harm to the State.

"The Hon'ble Mr. Sarma has poured a great deal of vitriol diluted with midnight oil on the use and abuse of alcohol. I do not think there is a single member of this Council who is unaware of the horrible results of the abuse and the excessive use of intoxicants. We all know the economic, the hygienic and the moral evils involved in excess, and the policy of the Government of India, as I understood it from the Hon'ble Mr. Sarma, has been directed firmly and faithfully to the prevention of such excess. It seems to me that, if the Hon'ble Mr. Sarma wants to propose anything, he should show that the excise law as it works at present is tempting to excess and should propose amendments in that excise law, not that he should come before us with a sweeping resolution of this kind affecting private interests and affecting private individuals.

"As regards alcohol, I do not know whether the Hon'ble Mr. Sarma himself has ever been addicted to the use of intoxicants, but I presume not. If so, he lacks the necessary experience to speak with weight on this subject, and, furthermore, his Resolution is the less praiseworthy in that it involves no sacrifice or self-abnegation on his part. As regards the moderate use of alcohol, I myself can speak with some experience having been a drinker—I trust a very moderate drinker—for some quarter of a century. I never found that it affected my purse to such a degree that I become insolvent; I never found that it affected my health in any way whatever, and I have never found that, owing to it, I have lost such moral sense as I had before; and I believe that that is an experience which will be endorsed by my fellows in the moderate drinking community.

"As regards tobacco, which, I presume from the wording of the Resolution is included, I do not propose to go into an exhaustive defence of this harmless intoxicant, because, I think, its detractors are few. If a defence is required, I would refer the Hon'ble Mr. Sarma to Calverley's 'Ode to Tobacco,' which he doubtless knows. I think I have said enough to convince Mr. Sarma that his Resolution is unnecessary, is Utopian, is calculated to cause inconvenience and personal discomfort to a harmless class, and is further calculated to make a sad world for many of us even sadder."

12.24 P. M.

**The Hon'ble Pandit M. M. Malaviya:**—"But wiser," I should have added these two words to the last sentence of my Hon'ble friend who spoke last on this question. The Resolution, if adopted, might leave the world a bit sadder; but it will certainly leave it wiser. Sir Hamilton Grant has talked of no self-sacrifice being involved in the Hon'ble Mr. Sarma's Resolution. I would ask him to look at the question in a more serious light. The policy which the Resolution advocates is one which ought to receive more serious consideration than it seems to have received from the last speaker. I quite realise that it is not practicable—no one expects it—that the Government will be able to abandon the excise revenue to-day. That is not what the Hon'ble Mr. Sarma has advocated. I wish all Hon'ble Members, even those who are moderate drinkers—and I have nothing but respect for them—to fully understand what the proposition before the Council means, and then to vote for or against it. Before I come to discuss the Resolution, however, I should like to say a word to my friend the moderate drinker. I have known, Sir, and I may say many others have known, or read, of cases in which the moderate drinker has come to grief. I am reminded by *the specious pleading of the moderate drinker* of Silas Marner who fondly imagined that no trouble would come because it had not come for so many years. Let me tell my Hon'ble friend that a quarter of a century is not a sufficiently long period to protect even a moderate drinker such as he is, from the peril to which he is daily exposing himself with all his sound sense and judgment. I remember the case of a Judge of a High Court, one of the ablest Englishmen I ever came across, which was a warning

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to moderate drinkers. I do not wish to describe the fate which befell him after he had indulged in moderate drink for more than thirty years. He was quite as confident as any moderate drinker is that he would not fall a victim to the evil habit; and yet he did. I know of another instance, of another Judge of a High Court, and he was an Indian. He was one of the strongest minded men I ever knew, a man with a constitution such as few men possess; and he too came to a miserable end because he had indulged in a peg for many years, and thought he had established a mastery over the demon of drink.

"I see no reference to tobacco in this Resolution; and I fear my Hon'ble friend's reference to it is traceable to the fact that he has not looked at the problem in that same sober view in which he ought to have looked at it.

"Now, Sir, seriously, this question of prohibition is one which deeply affects the vast mass of the poor people who largely contribute the revenue from liquor. I very well understand many of my European friends objecting to totalism as a whole, but we should remember that there is a large body of opinion even in England—and that opinion is growing—which is asking for the abolition of the liquor traffic. We have also the knowledge of what has been achieved in this direction in Russia, of what has been achieved in the United States of America, and in other countries. In view of all these the Resolution of my friend the Hon'ble Mr. Sarma is by no means a wild proposition. The Hon'ble Sir Hamilton Grant said that Mr. Sarma was suffering from the auto-intoxication of his own voice. I am sorry to say, Sir, that I have heard to-day two observations from Hon'ble Members in relation to other Hon'ble Members which I think ought not to have been made in this Council; but I will pass them over for the present.

"Confining myself to the Resolution before us, I wish to point out that, so far as this country is concerned, the proposition which is now before the Council is one of very vital importance. In 1874-75, the revenue from intoxicants was £1,561,000; in 1915-16, it had risen to £8,498,000, that is to say, it had more than quintupled in 40 years. This country, Sir, is not a cold country like England; it is a country where indulgence in liquor was confined to a very small fraction of the people. The Hindus, Muhammadans and other communities inhabiting this country are by their religious injunctions, by their national habit, abstainers from drink. I do not claim—it is not true,—that drink was unknown to India under previous Governments. The evil habit always existed here to a certain extent; but I do say, and I say it with regret that, in spite of the best intentions of the British Indian Government—nobody doubts that the intentions of the Government have been good—this evil has gone on rapidly increasing, it has developed like galloping phthisis, and to-day a very much larger number of people are exposed to it than were exposed to it at any previous time. Now I submit, Sir, that, while we recognise all that the Government have done in the past few years to put down the consumption of liquor, while we recognise that Government do intend to use all legitimate means to check the evil of drink, we urge, and I join my friend the Hon'ble Mr. Sarma entirely in urging, that prohibition is the only policy which will effectively combat this growing evil.

"It is not suggested that prohibition should be resorted to all at once; if it is adopted as the ideal to be aimed at by Government, it may take 20 years, it may take 30 years, it may take 40 years to realise it. To my European friends who have been used to indulging in liquor in moderation, the adoption of this principle may appear to be very objectionable. There can be exceptions laid down to meet their case. If the principle is accepted, it can be so worked as to let people live without offending them, without giving them any possible cause for objection. But I ask all sober minded men, all who love humanity to consider whether the cruel infliction which this great and growing evil of drink inflicts upon a growing number of our poor people,—for they are the persons who contribute the largest portion of the excise revenue—does not justify the proposal which my Hon'ble friend has put forward. Following the principle of the maximum of revenue from the minimum of consumption, the Government has for years gone on raising the

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excise revenue, but notwithstanding this, consumption has in many places increased, even though it has not so increased in other places. I fear the revenue will continue to grow so long as this wretched habit of drink is allowed to grow. Some poor people may to some extent abstain from buying liquor because its price is raised, others who are better off will go in for it. Like my Hon'ble friend, Mr. Sarma, I am happy to say that I have no experience of alcohol, but I am not for that reason disqualified to speak on the subject. A reverend Englishman, who is now in Australia, once told me that he knew that a man who once became addicted to drink, always had a craving for it, and that though he might give it up for a time, the moment he had a smell of liquor again, the temptation would be too strong for him to resist. So I fear that the mass of these poor people, mostly labourers and artisans, who have once learnt to indulge in drink, will not abstain from it simply because its cost is somewhat raised. The question then is: Is it right that the Government should expose them to this temptation? I fully understand the Government's desire to check the growth of the habit of drink. I understand that the Government have desired to impose restrictions on the multiplication of liquor shops. But, on the whole, these shops have gone on multiplying till they are to be found now all over the country. I submit that so long as the Government will adhere to the policy of checking the consumption of liquor merely by raising the maximum of revenue from it, their policy will fail to meet the situation. The right policy is to aim at total prohibition, to encourage local option more and more,—to proceed cautiously no doubt, as cautiously as circumstances may require, because the revenue cannot be sacrificed in one year or in a few years; but for the sake of humanity to adopt total prohibition as the end and aim of British excise policy in India. If India were a country as cold as England, things might be different; but we have the opinions to which the Hon'ble Mr. Sarma has referred and which Hon'ble Members will find quoted in the January number of the '*Abkari*,' opinions of prominent medical men, European and Indian, to the effect that alcohol is a poison and that even a moderate use of it is harmful especially in a tropical country like India. We have also the example of some of the United States of America, which have succeeded in carrying out a policy of total prohibition.

"As a writer in the January number of *Abkari* points out,

'The State of Maine has the honour of being the pioneer in the adoption of this policy and for many years carried it on amidst great difficulties. As the years passed the success of prohibition in dealing with the evils of drink became more and more evident to the Americans, and now it has been adopted by twenty-seven States and the territory of Alaska. Many other States have, through local option, adopted this policy in parts of their area, so that now more than two-thirds of the population of the United States are completely emancipated from the evils of drink. The Canadians have profited by the political experiments of their neighbours, but the decisive argument which moved them to vote for prohibition throughout their vast provinces was that by so doing they would conserve their strength for the war.'

"Concluding his great speech, when introducing the Ontario Prohibition Bill, the Hon'ble W. H. Hearst said,

'If I should neglect to take every action that, in my judgment, will help to conserve the financial strength and power and manhood of this province for the great struggle in which we are engaged, I would be a traitor to my own conscience, and unworthy of the brave sons of Canada that are fighting, bleeding and dying for freedom and for us.'

"We all know that His Majesty, the King-Emperor set a noble example to the whole Empire in the early days of the war by banishing liquor of every description from his palaces. In view of these facts, I appeal to the Government—and I hope I shall appeal not in vain to the Hon'ble Member who is going to deal with this matter—to deal with the Resolution in a very serious spirit: The great bulk of the people, Hindus, Muhammadans, Christians and Parsis, living in this country are not addicted to drink. It is only a very small fraction of the population that indulges in it. But the great bulk of the community is opposed to the present policy of Government. If the Government will consider the magnitude of the evil, it must acknowledge that the recommendation which has been put forward by my Hon'ble friend is one which ought to receive its most serious consideration. The Government of India sacrificed the opium revenue to save our Chinese brethren from the evils of opium. Will the Government of

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India hesitate on grounds of revenue to prohibit the manufacture of liquor if it once comes to the conclusion that it ought to do so? I hope not. I hope and trust that if the Government should come to the conclusion that, in all the other circumstances of this country, it is the duty of the Government to aim at the total prohibition of drink, the question of revenue will not be allowed to stand in the way of their doing so. The opium revenue was not sacrificed in one day; it was a large item—eight crores and more; and the excise revenue which will have to be sacrificed eventually, if the Resolution is accepted, will also be a large one. But it will not be too heavy a price to pay to secure immunity to our people from the accursed evil of drink. This revenue is being derived from the poorest people. It is the poorer classes who contribute largely to the revenue from liquor. I, therefore, submit that the principle of the recommendation ought to be accepted, and a policy should be formulated which will in course of years result in the manufacture and sale of alcoholic liquor being totally prohibited. There will always be some people who will try to evade any law that may be passed, but other Governments have successfully put down the illicit manufacture of drink, and I hope the Government of India will be able to do so too. I most earnestly commend the principle of the Resolution to the consideration of Government. No one can imagine that the Hon'ble Mr. Sarma proposes that total prohibition should be introduced at once. If the principle is accepted, it may take 20 years or even a longer period to bring that about, but the principle ought to be adopted, and I hope that, for the sake of the humanity represented by the vast masses of the people who indulge in drink or fall victims to it, the Government will see its way to adopt it."

**The Hon'ble Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjea:**—“Sir, in 19-20 P.M.  
rising to speak to this Resolution, I desire to say at once that I am a bit of a partisan in this matter. I am a teetotalter; but I take it that in this Council a partisan is not debarred from the right of speaking on behalf of the interest of his party or on behalf of the creed to which he belongs. Sir, I am a partisan through conviction and not through association. I belong to an older generation that is rapidly passing away. I was in my younger days, when I was a student, and under-graduate and a graduate, in close touch with the leading spirits of Bengal in the early sixties and in the early seventies; and I know the atmosphere that prevailed then. I know the horrors that were created in the midst of our society by excessive drink. Some of our best, some of our most illustrious, men fell victims to intemperance, to the vice of drink; and Peary Charan Mitter in the early sixties established a temperance association for the protection of the youth of the country from this evil. I was one of the earliest members of that association, and I rejoice that I joined the standard of temperance at that time. That movement saved Bengal; that movement still endures. Its spirit is permanent and abiding; it still inspires us in the campaign that we are waging at the present moment against intemperance amongst the masses of our people. We are teetotalters, and we are anxious that the masses of our people should abstain from indulgence in liquor. Some 25 years ago the out-still system was introduced in Bengal. Bengal civilians are here; the Hon'ble the Home Member knows all about it. The out-still system was a source of mischief, of desolation and ruin to thousands and tens of thousands of the people in the districts of Hooghly and Burdwan. I had the honour of leading the agitation against it and that agitation was triumphant, the out-still system was abolished. Therefore, I say that we in Bengal are teetotalters (I am speaking of the educated community) from conviction and I desire whole-heartedly to associate myself with the Resolution which the Hon'ble Mr. Sarma has moved. Sir, it is an ideal; yes; it is an ideal. But it is these ideals of the right type which elevate man, elevate society. Lord Acton, the greatest historian of his generation, has told us that ideals of the right sort appeal to the imagination, stir the enthusiasm and spur us on to work, and Mr. Sarma has presented such an ideal to the

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Government of India. I admit, and Mr. Sarma has himself pointed out, the limitations of his ideal; he does not say that the ideal is to be given effect to at once. It is to be the goal of British policy in respect of the abkari system, and it is to be attained through progressive stages. One of the speakers who preceded me was pleased to say that Mr. Sarma was somewhat nebulous. I do not see that he was so; a clear goal has been laid down by him, namely, utter prohibition, the end and aim of the abkari policy of Government. If Mr. Sarma has been nebulous at all, it is in respect of the methods to be employed; he leaves these methods to be decided by the administration. He is quite right in doing so. But the administration has already made a start in that direction, and I wish Mr. Sarma had emphasized the methods which have been adopted by the Government. Take, for instance, local option. This has been definitely recognised by the Government. In Bengal in the city of Calcutta itself, we have got a committee appointed for the purpose, the local option committee. That committee fixes the sites every year. In the mofussil the sub-divisional officer every year holds a conference of the leading men and invites them to fix places in which the shops are to be located. I think there ought to be a progressive movement and an advance in this direction, and it strikes me that Mr. Sarma might have pointed out to the Government that here was work for them, work initiated by them, work which they might amplify and carry on. A great deal has to be done, I admit, before we can think of total prohibition. Opinion has to be educated; but before we come to the complete education of public opinion, there is spade work which has to be done, and the Government might apply themselves to it. If the Government lays down definitely the goal which is to be attained in the matter of the abkari system, it will be a sort of guide to collectors and to officers connected with revenue as to the policy that they are to follow. That is all that Mr. Sarma wants, namely, that the policy should be laid down and when this has been done, public opinion will see that it is carried out. It would be a direction and instruction to the officers of Government who, I am sure, will carry out that policy with loyalty, fidelity and devotion as they have always done. I desire thoroughly to associate myself with Mr. Sarma's motion. It is not academical; it will have far-reaching consequences, and I trust it will be accepted in that spirit by the Government."

12-45 P.M.

**The Hon'ble Mr. P. J. Fagan:**—"Sir, the Resolution moved by the Hon'ble Member is not only very far-reaching in the results which it seeks to secure, but it is also, as it seems to me, based on certain assumptions of a very debatable nature. The Hon'ble Member has, I think, scarcely placed the implications involved in his Resolution in the clearest light; but the line of argument on which it is based may, I think, fairly be compressed into a syllogism, something of the following kind: firstly, the use of alcohol and intoxicating liquors and drugs is morally indefensible; secondly, it is the duty of Government to prohibit all that is morally indefensible; therefore it is the duty of Government to prohibit the use of intoxicating liquors and drugs. I do not propose to enter into any lengthy argument on the first of these premises. It has been the theme of abundant discussion and disagreement on the part of moralists, and though the better moral sense of mankind has condemned the abuse of alcohol and intoxicants, I know not how it can be held that their moderate and reasonable use has been placed on the same level. We have had arguments addressed to us here to-day on this point, and I do not think that it is necessary for me to trouble the Council further on it. The Hon'ble Member has referred to the cases of Russia and America and England. But I venture to urge, that such degree of prohibition as it has been possible to secure in those countries is the result of the unique conditions entailed by a world-war without parallel in the world's history; and I would add further that from that degree of prohibition no argument which is really relevant to normal conditions can be drawn, and no valid reasoning can be based on it. The Hon'ble Member has suggested that the moral sense of India has in the

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past regarded and still regards the use of alcohol and intoxicants as wrong. Historically, at all events, this scarcely seems to be the case. Vedic literature, for instance, has much to tell us about the sacred Soma plant and its intoxicating juice, of the complicated ceremonial appropriate to its extraction and about its vivifying effects both on ministrants and on worshippers. Coming to more modern times, there is no lack of evidence to show that in pre-British days the use of alcohol and intoxicants was not only practised, but that it was also a source of revenue to the State; indeed, our existing excise systems are they not developments and improvements which have been evolved from the crude systems of farm and of out-still inherited from indigenous rule, and in which considerations in favour of restriction and regulation of the use of liquor and intoxicants have to a large extent replaced considerations of pure fiscal gain?

“Coming to the present, it is not difficult to quote instances where the use of liquor and intoxicants is a social practice definitely recognised and to which no moral stigma attaches. Will any one who knows the Sikhs of the Punjab, fine, manly and on the whole temperate community as they are, say that among them public opinion is yet ripe for total prohibition? In Central India there are, I believe, aboriginal tribes among whom the use of intoxicating liquor is even yet a necessary adjunct to certain of their religious ceremonies. It is needless to quote other analogous instances. And what of opium? That drug, I presume, is included in the purview of the Hon'ble Member's Resolution. I am sure that he will be ready to admit that its use, if not universal, is at all events very widespread in this country, much of it for medicinal purposes. Is he prepared to contend that the use of opium is condemned by public opinion, and that public opinion is prepared for total prohibition? I would urge, therefore, that the first premise involved in the Hon'ble Member's Resolution rests on a somewhat shaky foundation. As regards the second, that it is the duty of Government to prohibit that which is ethically forbidden, how far is he prepared to press this wide extension of the functions of the State? He knows as well as I do and better that the scope of these functions has been the theme of lengthy, of endless discussions among jurists, among ethical and political thinkers of opposing schools. If any conclusion emerges from these debates and discussions, is it not this, that in the enforcement of moral and ethical ideals it behoves the State to keep well in touch with current moral perception and opinion, and that to advance too far and too fast in front of them is not only useless but ultimately harmful? And so, it is quite possible that in a small compact political community, socially, racially and religiously united, where a fairly widespread demand for total prohibition exists, it may be both desirable and practicable; in India no such conditions prevail; on the contrary the conditions are at present far different, and we may safely anticipate that for a long time to come they will continue to be so. Though we may recognise with deep satisfaction the growing solicitude, the rising enthusiasm on behalf of temperance among certain sections of the educated classes, nevertheless for total prohibition of the kind advocated by the Hon'ble Member, there appears to be no general demand whatever on moral grounds. But, Sir, a narrower, a more practical, perhaps a more sordid view of the bearings of the Hon'ble Member's Resolution presents itself. I will make him a present of the two highly debatable assumptions on which his arguments appear to be based. Let us assume that in the abstract it is the duty of the Indian Government to prohibit the use of alcoholic and other intoxicants; by what means is that policy to be practically carried out under the social conditions which prevail in India? The charge is not infrequently formulated, more or less definitely, against Indian administration that it employs too large a number of lowly paid agents. In my humble opinion the criticism is not entirely devoid of foundation. How far and by what means that defect can be remedied is not a question with which we are concerned at present; but one point seems to me to be beyond possibility of contradiction, and that is that the effective enforcement of the policy advocated by the Hon'ble

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Member must involve an immense addition to the army of underlings. Our existing establishment for the prevention and detection of excise offences is of no mean proportions; but to me it is little short of appalling to think of the swarm of petty officials armed with profitable powers of annoyance which it would be necessary to let loose on the country if the policy advocated by the Hon'ble Member is to be effectively enforced. The toddy-drinker of Madras, the aboriginal of Central India, the lugri-drinkers of Kulu, Kangra and other hill tracts, the stalwart Jat of the Punjab, the consumer of opium throughout the length and breadth of India, and hosts of others which it is not necessary to name, would all fall within the meshes of a network of espionage and annoyance for which it would perhaps be difficult to find a parallel in the annals of civilised government. Sir, the Resolution of the Hon'ble Member seems to be one based on no secure foundation of moral desirability, it meets no public or general demand, while from the point of view of satisfactory enforcement it is, I think, wholly and entirely impracticable. For these reasons, I think that the Council will be well advised to reject decisively the Resolution of the Hon'ble Member."

1 P.M. **The Hon'ble Sir Dinshaw Wacha** :—" Sir, I am one of those who have been for the last forty years severely criticising the excise policy of the Government of India. Ever since the introduction of the Excise Act in 1878, I have been the critic of Government. But I became a severer critic in the year 1885 when the Archbishop of Canterbury along with a number of Parliamentarians presented a respectable and well reasoned address to the Government of India through the House of Commons that the excise policy of the Indian Government should be modified. At that time, Sir, my own experience told me that we had in the Bombay Presidency a Member of the Government in the Revenue Department who was afterwards known as Sir Charles Pritchard, a great authority on excise matters whose policy demanded challenge. With him, therefore, I had many bouts, and once he abused me for lack of arguments to answer my charges in the open Council by saying that Mr. Wacha held a brief on behalf of the toddy sellers of Bombay! But, as a matter of fact, those toddy sellers I have not known for the last thirty years either by name or by face or in person! But that is the story. Whenever the question of excise policy has been brought forward in any assembly or in the press or on the congress platform, it has been the practice more or less with those connected with the Excise Department to throw red herrings across the trail and actually mislead the public by, of course, misrepresenting the real issues at the bottom of their excise policy. But, Sir, this is such a large question and the problems involved in it are so many, that it is impossible for one, in the 25 or 30 minutes allowed in this place, to expatiate on it at great length; for, if one were to make an attempt to do so he may never finish it. Historians and philosophers, scholars and statesmen, and, even social and temperance reformers have for years past said so much on this subject as to fill volumes. I know what a great many economists have said on the subject, and I know that as a matter of fact even in India, as in America and elsewhere, there are always two sides to the question, one section always advocating the use of alcohol and the other condemning its use. The whole question of alcohol from the scientific point of view I will not pretend to discuss, because I am not an expert on the subject. But it seems to me always this, that in alcohol as in medicine, there are two sides. Years ago there was in the latter case the allopathic side and the homoeopathic side, and I remember that in the seventies the allopaths and the homoeopaths fought like Kilkeny cats, one side saying that their system was right and the other saying that their system was right; so in the same way here too one side holds that the use of alcohol should be prohibited totally, and the other holds that its use in small or large doses does not affect the whole population, and if it does affect at all it is only a very small fraction of humanity that abuses the habit of drink and so on. Therefore, Sir, even here there are two sides to the question, and of course in the excise policy of the Government of India it is not only the moral part

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of the question that is involved, but the economic and the revenue point is also involved, and where revenue, specially excise, is concerned we know, Sir, as a matter of fact, that the Government of India is inexorable and incorrigible. It is incurable and irredeemable. And as far as excise is concerned, I will say so emphatically because I have said so years and years ago on many a platform and I have also repeated my views in my pamphlet. The pamphlet is there, anybody can read it. The fact is this, that the Government of India is right so far as it says that their objects are simply to have a minimum of consumption and a maximum of revenue, and that is the only way to diminish insobriety. That is a policy laid down for years together. They have never changed it.

“The fact is that the Excise Act came into operation in 1878. It is now 40 years. May I ask the Government itself what has been the result of that policy of maximum of revenue and minimum of consumption? This only, that while the revenue has increased from perhaps 2 crores to 18 crores, the consumption has also increased. Nobody can deny it. There are ample statistics in the different provinces to confirm this. Even the Government of India will admit that that has been the case. Now, a policy is always, of course, tested by its results, and the question is, taking this policy of excise, what has been the result? Can any one on behalf of the Government of India, who represents the Excise Department here, say that that policy has been successful in the way that is wanted? Maximum of revenue there is; but where is the minimum of consumption? Insobriety is increasing and extending. Where there were no drink shops before, new ones have been created. The Government pretends to say that already they are curtailing the number of shops. That is no criterion. Does the mere number of shops curtailed mean that there is a curtailment in consumption? Nothing of the kind. One shop itself may sell ten thousand gallons or more, while six shops might not sell more than a thousand gallons altogether; so the number of shops is no criterion. Even the great historian, Leakey, having gone into this great question has said so. Therefore the curtailment in the number of shops is no criterion of the actual diminution of consumption. The only criterion is consumption by itself; and none can deny that consumption is increasing. As far as Bombay is concerned, I have been a close student of the subject for the last 40 years, and many a time I have had discussions with Government on the subject before I brought out the pamphlet to which I have alluded. I have also stated facts in my letters to the press and on the platform, and I have come to the conclusion that the revenue under this head has increased, and side by side insobriety too has increased. That is the whole test and in Bombay, I believe, I am only speaking from memory, that the total amount of country spirits consumed has gone to such an enormous length that it brings in a revenue of something very near 2 crores.

“My friend here, Mr. Sarma, said something about the Madras toddy and the people taking to it. Now, the difference between Madras and Bombay is this. In the Bombay Presidency there are large quantities of mhowra flowers which are distilled into mhowra spirit. On the Madras side there is the toddy spirit made out of the palm. In Madras, as Government says, people drink too much of raw toddy and therefore they get insober. There is also a good deal of illicit distillation going on in toddy spirit, and that is the reason why the people are so insober. In Madras the raw toddy revenue is eight times larger than in Bombay. In Bombay two mhowra Bills have been passed since 1880; greater stringencies placed, and a large number of excise rules have been in operation, and yet what is the result? The result is increased consumption and insobriety. Nothing more. As I said more than two years ago in the Press, Bombay is the most bibulous province of the whole Empire, because there you see the people drink country spirits very hard; and speaking of Bombay I do say that perhaps nowhere have drink and drinkshops been pushed here and there and in every corner so largely. I see my friend Sir Claude Hill sitting there and laughing.

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I suppose he knows better as a late Member of the Government of Bombay what is the state of drink in Bombay. But I dare say, Sir, that members from the different provinces will tell the same tale of increased consumption. There is no question about it. Perhaps three times Government have appointed Excise Commissiona. There was a Bengal Excise Commission to which my friend Mr. Surendra Nath has just alluded. We had some Excise Committees in Bombay and other places and so on, and once a very big Excise Commission some years ago went round the whole country and, like all other Commissions, made a voluminous report. But what has been the result? I say absolutely none. The whole excise policy of the Government which has been repeated over and over again is misconceived. The Government lays down in the abstract a policy of temperance, while the Government action in the concrete is a policy of growing intemperance. That is the long and short of it. One of the causes, I believe, why the excise revenue has increased very considerably is this. In former years the Anti-Opium Society in England, which is a very powerful Society, I think, under the leadership of the late Sir Wilfred Lawson said that the opium revenue was immoral, it ought to be stopped, and that the Government was deriving so many crores of rupees from that immoral traffic; and that that immoral traffic was killing so many millions of Chinese people. That is why the opium traffic should be abolished. Years together the agitation went on and eventually the Government of India was obliged, under the pressure of the House of Commons and the temperance advocates there, to abolish the opium traffic till at last we all know the result is, that under the treaty with China, during the last ten years, the opium revenue is now brought almost to zero, from 9 or 10 crores it has declined to one and a half crore. But the Government of India was shrewd enough to foresee that if the opium revenue was to be gradually diminished they would have to go on with other sources of revenue. Those sources of revenue are very inelastic in India, and the only revenue which could bring to the State Treasury many crores of rupees would be that from the drink traffic. So on one side the opium revenue was steadily diminished year by year by half a crore or so till the Chinese treaty ended, and on the other side the drink traffic was pushed. Students of statistics may see side by side in parallel columns how, as the opium revenue was decreasing, the excise revenue was increasing. I do not think it has yet reached what I may call the maximum or boiling point of excise. Possibly it may go down if Mr. Sarma's proposition is passed, which I doubt. However, this is the position. Tested by results, the Government policy of excise has failed and is bound to fail, and I should never be sorry. Mr. Sarma's proposition is considered 'Utopian,' I think, as an Hon'ble Member on the opposite side said. It is considered both 'Utopian' and 'revolutionary.' Utopian it may be, because it is an ideal which is put forward. My friend, Mr. Banerjee, said the same thing. Ideas are very useful, that is ideas involving a high moral standard. We can go on stage by stage cherishing them until we reach that standard. Ideas develop. They educate public opinion and, therefore, the idea, though an ideal one, will take shape by and by. In the same way I may say that though Mr. Sarma may be only putting this idea before you to-day, I am quite sure that 50 years hence that idea will fructify, and India will be a temperance country altogether, and that the policy of prohibition will be completely accepted. It was also said it was 'revolutionary,' the same gentleman said so, I think—I may be corrected if I am wrong. What is revolutionary that Mr. Sarma has put forward? Nothing whatever; he himself admits it is an ideal. He knows very well the excise policy of the Government for years together and that his ideal therefore cannot be carried out, but that the people should be therein educated and the Government also should be educated. Therefore it is rather a proposition of an evolutionary character. It is the evolution of excise; there is no revolution. Mr. Sarma does not say that with one stroke of the pen the revenue should be abolished as Russia is said to have abolished 90 millions of Vodka revenue. An abolition of that character would be deemed 'revolutionary.' We all know as practical

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men that that was not intended. I would, however, advise Mr. Sarma not to look to Government for his total prohibition policy. The Government of India at any rate, I think, will not listen to his proposal for years to come. But we ourselves may do a great deal in this respect. Reform, they say, is always from within. Therefore it depends on ourselves, non-official Members of this Council, to go out of this Council hall and try, wherever there is a drink shop, to have side by side a palatial and attractive non-alcoholic shop, to supply tea, coffee and good non-alcoholic stimulants. If you have these tea shops, I am quite sure that by and by people will be weaned from the habit of drinking liquor and greatly encouraged to resort to tea and coffee and other non-alcoholic beverages. That is the way the reform should take place. Government may or may not do anything, but my advice to Mr. Sarma, as to all my other non-official friends, is that where there is to-day one drink shop in a locality they should have two tea shops to-morrow. Have tea and cakes but not cakes and ale, and I think, Sir, we shall in that way institute a better reform in temperance, and by such means eventually reform the Government itself. Because the more that tea shops are established and the alcoholic shops reduced, the more will Government revenue decline, and the eyes of Government will be opened. In that way intemperance will diminish; that is the only way it can diminish. All the same I believe that in Mr. Sarma's Resolution there are germs of good, and because there are such germs of good that my sympathies are with it. With these remarks I take my seat."

**The Hon'ble Sir Claude Hill:**—"Sir, I had no intention to <sup>1-16 P.M.</sup> intervene in this debate at all, but I think I owe the Council, after my old friend Sir Dinshaw's remarks, a personal explanation. Sir Dinshaw has most generously, but I think exaggeratedly, represented me as occupying, or implied that I occupy, a position of undeserved (if evil) eminence, namely, that of an expert in alcoholism. I should like to explain to the Council, if it interests them at all, that I am in point of fact what I may term a practising teetotaler. At the same time I am in no position to stand up for or protect the official morality of the Bombay Government. That is for my Hon'ble friend Mr. Kincaid to do if he feels able to. I should, however, like to answer the Hon'ble Sir Dinshaw Wacha in respect of one point, and that is this; that the growth of licit consumption of alcohol by no means implies that there is a growth in the *aggregate* consumption of alcohol. It is within my personal experience in one of the districts of Gujerat that there followed a very considerable decrease in drunkenness in consequence of providing facilities for retailing licit liquor within that area. I merely offer this as an independent observation on my Hon'ble friend's remarks, not as an authorized advocate of the Bombay Government, with which I am not at present connected."

**The Hon'ble Nawab Ali Chaudhri:**—"Sir, I fully sympathize <sup>1-17 P.M.</sup> with the aim in view of the Hon'ble Member the Mover. I can well understand what motive prompted the Hon'ble Mr. Sarma to bring the Resolution in this Council. Perhaps Hon'ble Members remember a similar measure was brought last year with the object of checking the evil of intemperance in India.

"Sir, I submit that the recommendations which my Hon'ble friend Mr. Sarma has put forward before the Council might seem revolutionary in character, but not with certain modifications impracticable. The principle at least could be put into practice without much difficulty.

"The scope of the Excise Department in British India covers a considerable area, the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquor, hemp drugs and opium, all of them commodities whose use must in the interest of the people be controlled."

"Sir, I was for a considerable period under the impression that the theory propounded in certain text books of political economy that the proper way to

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deal with intoxicants is to levy a high duty with the aim of restricting its consumption is correct. It was my delusion that if the price of the intoxicants was raised beyond the capacity of poor consumers a large number of people would be saved from a terrible fate. But as one gets old and acquires experience in practical life the theories so jealously guarded in youth become delusions, and I have come to the clear though rather painful conclusion that the raising of the price of intoxicants—without doing anything to reduce the facilities for obtaining them—does not decrease consumption. The proper way of dealing with these intoxicants with the object of rescuing the victims of its vice from its clutches is not to make them dearer, but to make them less procurable.

“Sir, I for one would gladly support a policy of total prohibition in these matters, as that I think is the most effective way of dealing with the problem. Failing the first expedient I respectfully beg to urge that the next best policy is to make them rare and out of reach. It is superfluous to urge the fearful hold which these intoxicants come to acquire over their victims.

“Sir, I am sure the Council will agree with me that the principal religions of India prohibit the drinking of intoxicants and, if the Government agrees to accept the Resolution of the Mover, it will receive the sturdy support of the people.

“The evil has grown enormously and is still growing. The revenues of the Excise Department are conclusive evidence of my assertion. This curse is chiefly confined to the poorer classes. The educated classes have fortunately escaped from its clutches. The first after-effects of Western education had in its train both vices and virtues. It was at one time thought fashionable and in keeping with the newly-acquired culture to drink; but, thank God, our present rising generation is getting further and further from this evil. It is really the people of the lower classes who are falling victims to it and, on behalf of these people, I appeal to the Government, as well as to the people of this country, to take active steps in this matter. The evil of drink is working havoc among the humble labourers, the wage-earners who earn their wages by the sweat of their brows in mills, in factories, and in workshops situated in modern big cities where a concourse of labouring classes are huddled together without regard to sanitation and moral laws. To these hard-worked people the temptation of drowning their misery in intoxicants is great, and it becomes still more so by the present excise policy by which liquor has been brought to the very doors of these poor people by the establishment of a number of grog shops in the *bastis* populated by these people.

“Sir, I can give instances without number where the practice of smoking narcotic drugs ruined brilliant careers and resulted in reducing men to the level of beasts and of happy homes destroyed by this vice.

Sir, the total prohibition of intoxicating drugs (except for medicinal purposes) would be more conducive to the public good. The habit of taking intoxicating drugs in moderation always leads to disastrous results, and it is an open secret that this habit cannot be kept within limits. It imperceptibly creeps upon a man and ultimately makes him a slave of a dangerous vice over which he has no control.

“Sir, in urging the Council to accept the Resolution, I would like to mention similar difficulties recently solved in some countries of Europe. Russia had been slowly decaying from the evil effects of Vodka drinking, but the recent war brought the people to their senses and the use of Vodka was made criminal, although it is probable that the recent revolution has changed the habits of the people again. Similarly, the Government of France has taken drastic action by prohibiting the importation of spirits into that country. The Government of Denmark, after prohibiting the use of Danish corn and potatoes in the manufacture of alcoholic liquors, have now prohibited the manufacture of all intoxicants throughout the whole country in order to preserve the food

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of the people. The Chinese people are making a tremendous effort in shaking off their opium habit, and have made marvellous progress in that direction already.

"Sir, I cannot foresee what blessing the peace will bring, but this much I can see that the cause of temperance will be championed by the great nations of the world after the war. There are already signs of world-wide temperance, and, Sir, if India lags behind in the great effort to shake off the evil, then let the blame lie not on her people.

"With these words I support the Resolution."

**The Hon'ble Sir J. Donald** :—"Sir, take these two concrete cases. The Sikhs do not smoke, but they drink alcoholic liquors. Yet they make splendid citizens and fine soldiers among the nations of India. On the other hand, the Muhammadans by their religion are not allowed to drink, but they smoke. Yet there is nothing wrong with the Muhammadans of India as a body.

1-25 P.M.

"Now, is it intended by this Council to interfere with the ancient customs of the Sikhs with regard to the use of alcoholic liquors or with the desires of the Muhammadans with regard to their smoking by this policy of total prohibition of alcoholic liquors and intoxicating drugs? The Sikh and Muhammadan communities are quite capable of looking after themselves, and there is no need for these spoon-feeding methods."

**The Hon'ble Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru** :—"Sir, I think it is very necessary to bear in mind the scope of the Hon'ble Mr. Sarma's Resolution in the discussion of this subject. As one previous speaker has pointed out, the Hon'ble Mr. Sarma does not want the Government of India by a stroke of the pen to undo the excise policy which they have followed during the last many, many, years. He wants a definite ideal and principle to be recognised and to be worked up to in future; and I do not think that, so far as that ideal is concerned, the Government of India need expect that any Indian would differ from it. I regret that some side issues have been raised during the discussion. One Hon'ble Member wanted us to go into the intricate question of the duty of the State to look after the morals of the people. He referred to juristic views of the duty of the State. May I remind the Hon'ble Member that, so far as modern jurisprudence in the West is concerned, it takes a very different view of the duties of the State to that which was accepted by the English nation in the time of Austin, and on which the English nation has not been able to make any improvement during the last 60 years. The conception of the State accepted by continental writers is absolutely different to what was advocated by Austin. I must however, refuse to go into this juristic question at the present moment. It is enough for me to remind the Hon'ble Member that the State, has in India, too, arrogated to itself certain duties which it was unwilling and which it would have been unwilling to arrogate to itself 50 years ago, whenever it has found that the individual or society stood in need of protection against himself or itself.

1-26 P.M.

"Then again, one Hon'ble Member has shown a particular keenness for the protection of the usages of certain classes of people in this country. Well, as an Indian, I should be very much interested to know whether there is any system of religion as opposed to practice which inculcates the necessity or the desirability of drinking as a part of religious life. It was news to me, Sir, this morning to hear that any interference by the State in a matter like this would be looked upon by the great Sikh community as an interference with their religious tenets or practices.

"Now, Sir, the fact of the matter is that all these issues are raised, as the Hon'ble Mr. Banerjea said, in a spirit of partianship. I think that, while I am prepared to extend my unqualified sympathy to the principle for which the

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Hon'ble Mr. Sarma has stood up to-day, I ought not to conceal from myself or from the Council that Mr. Sarma would have been well-advised if he had worded his Resolution a little more cautiously. It will be within the recollection of this Council that the Hon'ble Mr. Sarma had a great deal to say upon the same subject last year, and I should have expected him to have pursued his Resolution a step further to-day, and to have asked for a more liberal extension of the principle of local option, as a material step towards the recognition of that principle with which I am in deep sympathy and which he has put before us.

"Again, we live in hard times when everything ultimately resolves itself to pound, shilling and pence; and I think the Hon'ble Mr. Sarma would have been well-advised in dealing with that aspect of the question, and also in pointing out to the Government and the Council the sources from which he would contribute to the general revenue of the country to make up the deficit that would naturally arise from the total prohibition of drink in course of time. I regret therefore that the Hon'ble Mr. Sarma's Resolution should have been worded as it is worded, although I can assure him that so far as the principle which he wants the recognition of to-day is concerned, I am in deep sympathy with that.

"With these few words I support the Resolution."

1-30 P.M.

**The Hon'ble Sir George Barnes:**—"Sir, I listened with great interest to the Hon'ble Mover's speech and the speeches of those who followed him on the same side. I listened, too, with great respect for I know how deeply they all feel what they have said. The Hon'ble Mover tells us that he wishes to uproot the policy of the Government of India with regard to temperance. This policy was laid down as far back as 1905, and I should like to read to the Council the whole of the Resolution which contains that policy including the last two lines which the Hon'ble Mover for some reason or other, omitted. The Resolution runs as follows:—

'The Government of India have no desire to interfere with the habits of those who use alcohol in moderation. This is regarded by them as outside the duty of the Government, and it is necessary, in their opinion, to make due provision for the needs of such persons. Their settled policy, however, is to minimise temptation to those who do not drink and to discourage excess among those who do, and, in furtherance of this policy, all considerations of revenue must be absolutely subordinated.....'

**The Hon'ble Sir Dinshaw Wacha:**—"They are not.

**The Hon'ble Sir George Barnes:**—"Now I would ask each Member of this Council whether the policy laid down in this Resolution is not a sound one, making allowance as it does for the different views and different tastes of the different sections of the community. The acceptance of my Hon'ble friend's Resolution will mean the acceptance of a policy of autocratic interference with the liberty of the subject. The use of alcohol is by the religion of some of us forbidden, and for the observance of that prohibition by those whom it affects we all have a deep respect. To others of us there is nothing inherently wrong in the use of alcohol. It is not the thing itself which is an evil, but the excess of it. Taken in moderation it is to some people one of the luxuries and one of the pleasures of life, and to some again a moderate use of it is a real benefit to health. I remember that on one occasion Dr. Johnson said 'Not to drink wine is a great reduction from life.'

**The Hon'ble Sir Dinshaw Wacha:**—"He drank 17 cups of tea at a time."

**The Hon'ble Sir George Barnes:**—"In quoting Dr. Johnson I do not wish to be understood as suggesting that his example is one that we should in all respects follow. I would, however, ask my Hon'ble friend why he has stopped short at alcohol and drugs. Why has he not included tobacco

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in his Resolution? Do not exactly the same arguments apply to both? Both tobacco and alcohol must be classed as intoxicants; taken in moderation each gives pleasure to some persons; the use of each is from time to time recommended by the Medical faculty; and both tobacco and alcohol when taken in excess have bad results on health. Perhaps, however, I am anticipating the Hon'ble Member's intentions. Perhaps he is saving the case of tobacco for another Resolution.

"There might, I think, have been more to be said for the policy which the Hon'ble Mover would have us adopt if he had been able to show that the drink evil is really of extreme seriousness, and one which is eating into the vitals of the people. But this is certainly not the case. In the papers relating to Excise Administration in India, which were published in 1914, it was shown that the consumption of country spirit per hundred of the population had, between the years 1905-06 and 1912-13, increased by only 5 per cent. This, in spite of the fact that the conversion of outstills into distillery shops—a process which has been continuously going on—exaggerates the figures representing the recorded consumption; and in spite further of the general rise in wages and increased prosperity of the lower classes. The Hon'ble Sir Dinshaw Wacha said just now that the policy must be judged by its results, and I think that he implied, though he did not quite say, that I should find that the figures were entirely against me. I should like to give him the figures for the past three years. The proof gallons consumed in 1913-14 were 10,432,000. That is the total for all India and to that total Bombay contributed 2,675,000 gallons. The total for 1914-15 was 9,468,000—a fall of a million gallons, and the Bombay total fell from 2,675,000 to 2,524,000 gallons. The total for 1915-16 was 8,538,000—again a fall of nearly a million, and Bombay fell from 2,524,000 to 2,325,000. Consequently Bombay, during the past three years, that is, the last years for which I have got figures, has fallen in consumption to the extent of 300,000 gallons a year. . . .

**The Hon'ble Sir Dinshaw Wacha** :—"Have the conditions of the war been taken into account for all the different provinces?"

**The Hon'ble the Vice-President** :—"I must ask the Hon'ble Member to address his remarks to the Chair."

**The Hon'ble Sir George Barnes** :—"I should also like to point out to the Hon'ble Mr. Sarma that he omitted the figures for 1914-15 and 1915-16 altogether. He does not seem to have got later figures than those for 1913-14.

"I think that my Hon'ble friend takes an exaggerated view of the danger which undoubtedly exists in this as in every other country. He makes the same over-estimate as an old acquaintance of mine with, however, very different results. The acquaintance of whom I speak invested his all in vine-growing because he argued that if people are up in the world they always drink freely, and if they are down on their luck, they drink all the more to drown care. Though in this way he seemed to be sure to get the best of both worlds, the vine-growing did not turn out a commercial success.

"I come now to the more practical side of the question. I have tried to urge that it would not be right to prohibit the use of alcohol to the large number of people who use it in moderation merely for the sake of preventing excess among the comparatively few who take it in excess. But even if this view were controverted and it were held to be desirable to effect this drastic interference with the habits of normal people, who are capable of self-restraint, and who after all are in the large majority, would the effect desired be attained? I say emphatically 'No'. It seems to me that in common with many other earnest temperance reformers the Hon'ble Mover of this Resolution has wholly minimised the danger of illicit practices. After all, the very first duty of Government in all questions of Excise Administration is

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the suppression of illicit manufacture and sale. This is of even greater importance than the reduction of licit consumption. I cannot do better than repeat what was said in the Despatch of the Government of India of the 26th February 1914, printed in the papers relating to Excise Administration, to which I have already referred. The Government of India then used these words:—

‘We desire to dissociate ourselves entirely from the theory that if the licit supply were completely stopped consumption would diminish. It is difficult under present conditions to guard against illicit manufacture. If licit supplies were stopped, the task, hard as it is, would become impossible, and the result would be completely to defeat the ideals to which both the deputation (they were referring to the Temperance Deputation that waited on the Secretary of State) and we ourselves aspire. Possibly, the immediate result of such a course might be a reduction in the total number of consumers; but intemperance would certainly increase, as a result of lower retail prices, and we have no doubt that ultimately consumption would rise considerably beyond the level which it has now attained. Nor could any moral principles justify the demoralising effect on large sections of the population of the evasion of laws which it would be impossible to enforce. In these circumstances, we do not consider that we should be justified in prohibiting moderate consumption even with a view to check occasional abuse. We are only justified in expecting, by the measures already indicated, to secure the enhancement of retail prices and thereby to impose an artificial check on the increase of consumption, which would otherwise occur as a result of natural tendencies.’

This is really the crux of the whole question, namely, how to prevent illicit practices.

“If total prohibition were the law of the land, it would be impossible to prevent the certain consequence of a great increase in illicit consumption, which, to use Lord Hardinge’s words, ‘would be a far more serious evil in its effect on the health and morals of the people.’ What I have said with regard to alcohol applies with equal force to drugs such as opium. The use of cocaine, as my Hon’ble friend knows, is already entirely prohibited except for medical purposes.

“Let me here refer to another aspect of the matter. If all consumption of liquor and drugs were rendered illegal you would have, as my Hon’ble friend Mr. Fagan said to ‘have an army of Excise Inspectors to prevent illicit practices probably a much larger number than you have at present.’ To this, there are two obvious objections; firstly, without casting any imputation whatsoever on the good sense and integrity of the Excise staff, which I should be the first to acknowledge, I think that a considerable amount of increased harassment and petty interference would be bound to result. I cannot but believe that a measure of this sort would provoke mistrust and uneasiness among that major portion of the poorer classes who are at present entirely moderate consumers of intoxicating liquors and drugs. Secondly, where are you going to get the money to pay for this Excise staff when your Excise revenue has been abolished? Your expenditure would rapidly increase; your revenue would disappear. Indeed, knowing and appreciating the interest which the Hon’ble Mover takes in Excise revenue, for I seem to recollect an occasion last year when he moved with his accustomed eloquence in this Council a Resolution in favour of increasing the Provincial share in the Excise revenue of Madras, I am somewhat surprised to find that he is now urging a policy which would reduce that revenue to *nil*.

“I do not wish to detain the Council longer except to remind you that our Excise policy has been built up by slow and steady steps. If I may repeat the often-expressed principles on which that policy is based, they are: firstly, that any extension of the habit of drinking is to be discouraged; secondly, that taxation is to be as high as possible without encouraging illicit manufacture and sale; and thirdly, that, subject to these considerations, a maximum revenue is to be raised from a minimum consumption, and we claim to have the cause of temperance as much at heart as the Hon’ble Mover, but we differ from him in his belief that our mutual object can be secured by the simple short cut which

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he suggests. I regret, therefore, that I am unable, on behalf of Government, to accept the Hon'ble Mover's Resolution."

**The Hon'ble Rao Bahadur, B. N. Sarma:**—"I am glad, Sir, 1-46 P.M.  
that most of the non-official Indian Members have been able to see eye to eye with me as regards the principle which I have tried to get enunciated for the acceptance of Government. I cannot help regretting that the real point that I have urged in support of my Resolution has somehow escaped the attention of the Hon'ble Sir A. H. Grant and the Hon'ble Mr. Fagan and the Hon'ble Member in charge of the portfolio. That was, not that on the principles which have been laid down by the Government of India during the past thirty years they have not tried to do their best to promote temperance, but that on the basis of that policy it would be impossible for them to achieve the object they and I have, namely, promoting temperance in the land. The question that I put to Members was this, that if the Government undertakes the responsibility of providing for the drinker in moderation whether it would not logically follow that they cannot decline to extend the drinking shops to the 700,000 villages if it should so unfortunately happen that a small minority in those villages required a drink shop; and whether the evil which at present is in an incipient stage is not bound to extend so far as to make the worst of the evils of Europe appear light in comparison with the evils which may be in store for us. The Hon'ble Sir A. H. Grant, not really addressing himself to the excise problem, has probably never understood it or tried to grasp it and has characterised my attempt to interest the Government of India in grappling with the policy at issue as useless and the problem as one of mere academic and nebulous interest. Well, I always understood that the question whether a liquor shop should be opened here or there is for the local bodies, that the somewhat larger questions affecting the provinces were for the Provincial Councils, but that the larger ideals and principles which have to shape the Government policy and the larger policy of the whole country have to be enunciated here; and if in my own humble way I thought that the basic principles on which that policy is based would defeat the object which the policy has at heart and tried to interest the Council and show how the Resolution has an immediate practical application on the every day administration, not of thirty years hence, but of to-morrow and the present day, how this happens to be a mere question of academic or nebulous interest, unfit for discussion in this Council, passes my understanding.

"To persons who are accustomed to mere routine work of a particular character these large questions may seem to be irrelevant, but in the Legislative Council and in the Government of India I still hope to indulge in the belief that there will be statesmen who will think and fight for the correction of false or wrong ideals. To that extent I plead guilty to the charge. The Hon'ble Sir A. H. Grant has somewhat to my surprise referred to the question of the re-distribution of provincial areas. May I remind him that on that question I adhere to the view that the question is one of immediate practical application though he may differ from me, and having regard to his remarks I regret to state, though it is a personal matter, that I brought forward the Resolution though the Andhra districts to which I belong may economically suffer by separation on the lines which I have urged; from that point of view it was an act of self-sacrifice to move the Resolution and I was not seeking popularity thereby. With regard to the Hon'ble Mr. Fagan's remarks, I am afraid he has not understood me correctly; he brings in questions of morality, doubtful juristic doctrines as to whether it is in the province of the State to promote mere academical doctrines unconnected with the welfare of the community. I do not recollect having brought in the question of morality. My contention was that national efficiency and national well-being would suffer industrially, economically and otherwise; and in view of the larger issues at stake the individual is of small concern. I may have been wrong or I may have been right, but there is no question of doubtful doctrines of morality at this particular stage of the discussion. I do not know whether the Hon'ble

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Member is aware that Mr. Lloyd-George the responsible Minister of Great Britain believes that drink is doing much more damage in the war than all the German submarines put together. Facts and figures were quoted which ought to convince anyone that although there may be moderate drinkers there is a very large number of immoderate drinkers and that the excise system of Great Britain tends to paralyse national efficiency and renders drastic action necessary. I wish to avoid a similar catastrophe in India. If there is no question of morality brought in, then the only other question is whether national efficiency is impaired or not. I do not think that question anybody has attempted to meet here and I do not think it would admit of any argument whatever. Sir A. H. Grant said that he was none the worse for having taken liquor in moderation, I agree, but I venture to tell him that he would have been better now if he had taken no drink during the last 40 years. However, these are questions of relativity, and I do not think we should discuss these personal questions of what is good for one or bad for another individual. As to whether the question is academic I did not ask the Hon'ble Sir G. Barnes to change the whole of the abkari policy immediately or violently, but what I said was, that though several other difficulties would still remain in the pursuit of our ideals a change of policy would relieve the Government of a certain responsibility they have undertaken, and they would by declining to open more shops promote national efficiency; unless this is done, questions of local option and of the minority oppressing the majority or the majority oppressing the minority will not receive proper attention, unless the policy of Government is changed, there is no chance for local option. Then a reference has been made by Mr. Fagan to Sikhs and to aboriginal tribes. I am sorry he should have grouped them together, and I think my Hon'ble friend Sardar Sundar Singh Majithia would have resented this if he had been here. What I said was, that there should be limitations subject to meeting the sentiments of particular communities, and that there should be a gradual evolution. The mere fact that I quoted the total average for India as 0.16 against 27 for England proves that though particular classes may indulge in this practice occasionally as an every-day habit it is unknown to the vast masses of this country. It was said that figures of recent years show clearly that there has been a decline, and that therefore Hon'ble Members need not be so sceptical as to the efficacy of the system. Sir George Barnes said that there had been a decline from 10 to 8. There have been abnormal conditions during the war and certain industries have been hard hit; and the figures do not therefore permit any correct data for judgment, but I have accepted the explanation of the Government usually given in such cases that prosperity increases the drink traffic, and that the increase of wages causes a greater indulgence in drink. It was easy in England during the war through the machinery which has been devised by Government to meet the situation partially, and it is very necessary to safeguard the nation against such vices. This much at all events will be achieved by the acceptance of the principle. I urge that no one will venture to open a new shop in uncontaminated villages unless it be for the purpose of checking illicit distillation and not on the ground that a section of the people desire it; to that extent it will be an effective check.

"Then with regard to the ancient Hindus indulging in the vedic times in Soma juice, well that is a very hopeful feature that has been brought to light in the course of this discussion. The ancient Hindus have outgrown that habit and have effectually prevented other classes, as far as it lay in their power from taking to that habit by hitting upon the right doctrine several generations ago and have solved to the world the possibility of introducing total prohibition by law making and by religious ordinances. Consequently it is a most hopeful feature, and the past history of the Hindus has an immediate bearing upon the question as to whether the Government of India will be equally successful as the sages in the past. I therefore ask that the Government of India should take their courage in their hands as the ancient sages did and immediately think as to whether a declaration of policy cannot be made on the lines I have suggested.

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The motion was put and the Council divided as follows :—

<i>Ayes—20.</i>	<i>Noes—33.</i>
The Hon'ble Mr. S. Sastri.	The Hon'ble Sir Claude Hill.
„ Mr. B. Ayyangar.	„ Sir C. Sankaran Nair.
„ Rao Bahadur B. N. Sarma.	„ Sir George Lowndes.
„ Mir Asad Ali, Khan Bahadur.	„ Sir George Barnes.
„ Sir Dinshaw Wacha.	„ Sir William Vincent.
„ Maharaja Sir M. C. Nandi, of Kasimbazar.	„ Sir Robert Gillan.
„ Nawab Ali Chaudhuri, Khan Bahadur.	„ Sir John Campbell.
„ Rai Krishna Sahay Bahadur.	„ Sir John Wood.
„ Raja of Kanika.	„ Sir James DuBoulay.
„ Mr. Mazharul Haque.	„ Mr. A. H. Ley.
„ Khan Bahadur Mian Muham- mad Shafi.	„ Mr. H. Sharp.
„ Khan Zulfikar Ali Khan.	„ Sir Edward Maclagan.
„ Captain Ajab Khan.	„ Mr. R. A. Mant.
„ Mr. G. S. Khaparde.	„ Mr. H. F. Howard.
„ Mr. K. K. Chanda.	„ Major-General A. H. Bingley.
„ Sir Gangadhar Chitnavis.	„ Mr. G. B. H. Fell.
„ Mr. S. N. Banerjee.	„ Sir William Maxwell.
„ Raja of Mahmudabad.	„ Mr. F. C. Rose.
„ Dr. T. B. Sapru.	„ Sir Hamilton Grant.
„ Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya.	„ Mr. C. H. Kesteven.
	„ Surgeon General W. R. Edwards.
	„ Mr. S. B. Hignell.
	„ Mr. W. M. Hailey.
	„ Sir Robert Olegg.
	„ Mr. M. N. Hogg.
	„ F. J. Monahan.
	„ Mr. C. A. Kincaid.
	„ Sir J. S. Donald.
	„ Mr. P. J. Fagan.
	„ Sir James Walker.
	„ Mr. A. W. Botham.
	„ Lieutenant-Colonel S. L. Aplin
	„ Maung Bah Too.

The motion was accordingly negatived.

The Council then adjourned to Wednesday, the 27th February, 1918.

A. P. MUDDIMAN,

*Secretary to the Government of India,  
Legislative Department.*

DELHI:

*The 27th February, 1918.*

## APPENDIX A.

(Referred to in answer to Question No. 12.)

*Total direct expenditure from all sources on different classes of Public Schools in 1916-17.*

Provinces.	Higher education.	Secondary Schools.	Primary Schools.	Special Schools.	Total direct expenditure.
	R	R	R	R	R
Madras . . . . .	20,06,587	47,30,243	70,12,439	16,22,977	1,53,78,496
Bombay . . . . .	12,62,002	25,27,522	62,47,529	11,92,952	1,26,01,149
Bengal . . . . .	22,90,722	26,30,772	44,52,425	14,92,220	1,74,75,149
United Provinces . . . . .	19,01,292	29,20,222	22,79,922	8,62,452	96,30,724
Punjab . . . . .	11,15,522	22,79,620	19,04,569	4,62,204	69,43,075
Burma . . . . .	2,12,124	20,02,222	10,22,224	2,11,122	45,62,221
Bihar and Orissa . . . . .	4,55,222	17,12,017	27,61,742	9,24,642	52,65,006
Central Provinces and Berar.	2,00,422	12,59,701	16,14,702	2,42,222	24,02,420
Assam . . . . .	1,07,221	7,22,024	7,50,222	1,04,422	17,51,222
North-West Frontier Province.	21,222	2,10,222	1,97,222	17,022	6,17,422
Coorg . . . . .	...	22,124	42,224	6,222	22,422
Delhi . . . . .	1,07,222	1,62,179	27,222	10,442	2,74,041
Ajmer-Merwara . . . . .	22,222	1,42,722	22,222	10,797	2,49,102
Bangalore . . . . .	60,224	1,27,222	62,222	22,224	2,44,272
Baluchistan . . . . .	...	54,122	22,422	...	24,224
INDIA . . . . .	1,07,02,122	2,19,29,122	2,22,12,222	72,40,222	7,92,22,219

*Note:*—The total expenditure on public instruction both (*direct and indirect*) amounted to Rs 11,22,22,022 in 1916-17, but details for the distribution of this sum over higher, secondary and primary schools are not available.

**APPENDIX B.**

*(Referred to in answer to Question No. 14.)*

India Office,  
26th October, 1917.

The Secretary of State in Council of India, in pursuance of the power conferred on him by clause 60 of the Contract, dated the 22nd December 1879, between the Secretary of State in Council of India of the one part, and the East Indian Railway Company of the other part, for the maintenance, management and working of the East Indian Railway, hereby gives notice of his intention to determine the said Contract on the 31st day of December 1919.

(Sd). T. W. HOLDERNESS,  
*Under Secretary of State for India.*

## APPENDIX C.

*(Referred to in answer to Question No. 15.)**Statement showing the number of Indians and Anglo-Indians in the different grades of the Indian Telegraph Service.*

Grades.	Indians.	Anglo-Indians including Europeans.
(i) Superior Traffic Branch . . . . .	6	34
(ii) Deputy Superintendents (Traffic) . . . . .	4	47
(iii) Deputy Superintendents (Engineering) . . . . .	4	54
(iv) Inspecting Telegraphists (including Indian Inspecting Telegraphists) . . . . .	29	91