

*Proceedings of the Assam Legislative Council assembled
under the provisions of the Government of India Act,
1919.*

The Council met in the Council Chamber at Government House, on Thursday, the 23rd March 1922, at 11 A.M.

PRESENT :

The Hon'ble Mr. J. C. Arbuthnott, C.I.E., *President*, the Hon'ble two Members of the Executive Council, the Hon'ble Minister of Local-Self Government and 36 nominated and elected members.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

(UNSTARRED QUESTIONS.)

SRIJUT DALIM CHANDRA BORAH asked :—

1. (a) Are the Government aware of a note which appeared in the 'Assamia,' a weekly paper of Dibrugarh, dated 15th January 1922, Column 2, headed 'অইনৰ কুটীৰ্ণ,' regarding the illegality of the arrests of non-co-operator political offenders and the sentences passed on them ? Arrest of non-co-operators.

(b) If the answer to question No. (a) is in the affirmative, will the Government be pleased to call for all the records of the cases against the non-co-operator political offenders who have been sent to Jail during the last 6 months in Assam for the purpose of examining the legality or otherwise of the procedure in connection with these cases ?

2. Will the Government be pleased to state the number of civil suits and criminal cases instituted in the courts in the Assam and Surma Valleys as detailed below in December 1921 and January and February 1922 and also in the corresponding months in the preceding years, i.e., December 1920 and January and February 1921 ? Number of civil suits and criminal cases.

(1) Provincial Small Cause Courts.

(2) Civil Courts (Munsiff's).

(3) Sub-Judge's Court.

(4) Criminal Courts—

(a) Instituted by private complainants.

(b) Instituted by police.

3. Will the Government be pleased to state the amount of court-fees of all descriptions including the process-fee derived from suits and cases instituted in the courts mentioned in (1), (2), (3) and 4(a) in question No. 2 during the period referred to therein ? Amount of court-fees and process-fees.

THE HON'BLE MR. A. MAJID replied :—

1. (a)—Yes. The note referred to is correct in stating that offence under section 17(i), Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1908, is a non-cognisable offence. If, however, a member of a body declared to be unlawful association under that Act takes part in any unlawful activity constituting a cognisable offence he is of course liable to be arrested without a warrant. If, for instance, five or more members of an unlawful association, in prosecution of a common object, do any of the acts mentioned in section 17(i) of the Act referred to or in section 141 (fifth), Indian Penal Code, they commit a cognisable offence under section 143, Indian Penal Code, and are liable to be arrested without a warrant. It may be subsequently decided to prosecute under section 17(i) of the Criminal Law Amendment Act rather than under section 143, Indian Penal Code, or any other section.

(b)—Government do not propose to take the action suggested.

2 and 3.—The information asked for is not available as the statistics furnished to Government deal with the whole calendar year and not with separate months. Government do not consider it necessary in the public interest to undertake a special enquiry to obtain the figures.

REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY asked :—

Chhatak
Magazine.

1. (a) Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table a list of all the names of purchasers of explosives from the Chhatak Magazine, and the amount of explosives purchased against each name from July 1921 to the end of November 1921?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state (i) how many officers are there in the staff of the Chhatak Magazine for which an amount of Rs. 50 a month is paid according to statement of expenditure of the Sylhet Lime Company, Limited, ending November 1921? (ii) Whether these officers are whole-time officers or whether they are employed in some other work or offices of the Company? (iii) Whether these officers are fully or partly paid from the proceeds of the Magazine?

(c) Will the Government be pleased to state (i) the name of the Manager of the Chhatak Magazine who is paid Rs. 150 per month? (ii) Whether this officer is a whole-time officer or does some other work also in connection with the Sylhet Lime Company, Limited; (iii) whether he gets any extra pay for other work done with the Sylhet Lime Company, Limited, not connected with the said Magazine; (iv) whether he holds any other responsible position in the Sylhet Lime Company, Limited, not connected with the Magazine; and what that position is? (v) Whether this special duty in managing the Magazine is only his side or his main duty?

(d) Will the Government be pleased to state (i) whether it is a fact that some persons have applied to the Deputy Commissioner of Sylhet to transfer the Chhatak Magazine to their charge, and they have promised to supply explosives at a cheaper rate to the public? (ii) If so, will they be pleased to state the names of such persons together with addresses and the reply given to their application?

(e) Do the Government know (i) that there is now a great depression in the lime trade—the price of lime which was about Rs. 75 last

year being now about Rs. 45 only? (ii) That this will mean a great reduction in the price of limestone next summer? (iii) That this will mean a great reduction in the amount of limestone sale and hence a reduction in the revenue?

(f) Will the Government be pleased to state what losses they incurred or what evils there were in granting licenses to the people of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills district to buy explosives from Calcutta and from other places, before their agreement with the Sylhet Lime Company, Limited, to prevent purchasers of explosives from purchasing them from any other place than the Chhatak Magazine? And to state the nature of such losses and such evils?

(g) Will the Government be pleased to state whether in any other provinces in India or any other district in Assam, such a step has been taken? And if any, to state the names of those districts and provinces?

(h) Will the Government be pleased to state whether licenses will be granted to applicants for purchasing detonators from the Chhatak Magazine for use in lime quarries in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills?

THE HON'BLE MR. A. MAJID replied :—

1. (a), (b) and (c)—The information is not available.

(d)—Government have no information but will enquire.

(e)—Government have no reliable information.

(f)—Grave irregularities in connection with the transport, possession and sale of explosives, especially of dynamite, in the Sylhet district necessitated the initiation of the present system and render its continuance essential. The establishment of the Chhatak Magazine was not due to any loss of Government revenue.

(g)—Not in Assam. As regards other Provinces Government have no information.

(h)—Yes. Provided the application is *bona fide* and the purchaser complies with the rules framed under the Explosives Act (1914).

MAULAVI RUKUNUDDIN AHMAD asked :—

1. Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table a comparative statement showing separately in each of the two valleys the number of institutions for Islamic learning (Mukhtabs and Madrassas) and the amount of expenditure on them from the provincial revenues? Mukhtabs
and Mad-
rassas.

MR. A. R. EDWARDS replied :—

1.—The last completed returns showed 35 re-organized institutions for Islamic learning in the Surma Valley and 9 in the Assam Valley.

As the tables do not provide for special returns of the expenditure on Madrassas Government regret that they are not in a position to supply the further particulars asked for.

MUNSHI SAFIUR RAHMAN asked :—

Primary
and Indus-
trial educa-
tion.

1. Will the Government be pleased to state what arrangements have been made for imparting primary and industrial education to the Muhammadan immigrants who have settled in the different districts of the Assam Valley ?

Renounce-
ment of
Govern-
ment grants
by Muktab
and Mad-
rassas.

2. (a) Is it a fact that several Muktab and Madrassas of the Surma Valley have renounced Government grants in pursuance of the non-co-operation movement ?

(b) If the answer to the above is in the affirmative, will the Government be pleased to lay on the table a statement giving the names of such institutions and grant in each case and to state how these renounced grants have been utilised ?

MR. A. R. EDWARDS replied :—

1.—The attention of the Hon'ble Member is invited to the reply given to his question No. 5 asked at the September meeting of the Council.

2. (a)—No Muktab or Madrassa has, so far as is known to Government formally renounced its grant-in-aid. Nine of these institutions have however, probably for political reasons, ceased to send in bills for their monthly grants.

(b)—The Government see no reason to give publicity to the particular institutions whose bills have not been received.

The savings were employed as follows :—

- (1) In giving a grant of Rs. 723—for a Muhammadan hostel for the Goalpara Madrassa.
- (2) In giving a grant of Rs. 500—for Sanskrit tols to the Srihatta Brahman Parisad.
- (3) In meeting a deficit in the budget provision under the head "Direct Grants to non-Government Special Schools."

SRIJIT BEPIN CHANDRA GHOSE asked :—

Filling up
of vacancy
of Assist-
ant Head-
mastership
in the
Assam
Valley.

1. Is it a fact that whenever any vacancy of Assistant Head-mastership occurs in the Subordinate Educational Service in the Assam Valley High Schools, it is filled up either by a recruit from Bengal or from the Surma Valley although equally qualified Assamese graduates are already in the service ?

If so, will the Government be pleased to state why the claim of the Assamese graduates of the Assam Valley is so overlooked and why they are thus superseded by new recruits from other Provinces and Valleys ?

MR. A. R. EDWARDS replied :—

1.—The answer to the first part of the question is 'No'. The second part therefore does not arise.

Demands for Grants.

SRIJUT DALIM CHANDRA BORA :—Sir, an identical motion standing in the name of Babu Krishna Sundar Dam, No. 3, was disposed of yesterday, so with the permission of the Council I beg to withdraw it. I beg leave to withdraw the second motion also.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—Sir, the motion is worded differently but it is the same as the last motion that the Council disposed of yesterday.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—The first motion is withdrawn automatically under Standing Rule 32. The second is withdrawn with the permission of the Council.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—Then, Sir, the substantive motion, the demand for the grant, may be put to the Council.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—The question is that a sum not exceeding Rs. 9,68,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923, for the administration of the Forest Department.

The motion was put and adopted.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I beg to move, Sir, that a sum not exceeding Rs. 38,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923, for the administration of the head "7.—Stamps." There are no notices of motions.

The motion was put and adopted.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I beg to move, Sir, that a sum not exceeding Rs. 2,32,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923, for the administration of the Excise Department. There are sundry motions, Sir, for reduction.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, as there are other motions for the entire omission of the grant I submit that they should be moved first as a part is involved in the whole.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—Very well. I will call on Srijut Dalim Chandra Bora to move his resolution.

SRIJUT DALIM CHANDRA BORA :—Sir, I find that Maulavi Munawwarali's resolution is more reasonable than mine, so I withdraw my resolution in his favour. I am sure that he will make out a good case.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—There is yet another motion, Sir, for the omission of the entire grant. Does the Hon'ble Member wish to move his motion or will he follow the lead of Srijut Dalim Chandra Bora?

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—Sir, the motion standing in my name is as follows :—That the lump provision of Rs. 28,000 for the revision of the pay of Excise Inspectors be omitted.

I beg, Sir, to tell you that the argument put forward by my friend Babu Krishna Sundar Dam about a part being included in the whole does not hold. Of course a part may come in the whole and yet the Council may be prepared to allot the part and not the whole. Whatever that may be I should put the whole first and see if the House be prepared to accept the whole.

In this connection, I beg Sir, to refer to page 39 of the Budget, but before I enter into a discussion I would ask the Hon'ble Member in charge to tell me if, and if so when, increment was last given, if at all, to the Excise Inspectors?

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I am in some difficulty, Sir, in this matter. I think that this resolution has been moved under a misapprehension. If the Hon'ble Member will formally move his resolution I shall reply to it, and if after hearing my reply he is not satisfied and wishes to argue we shall be glad to listen to him.

I think, Sir, that the whole thing is a misunderstanding. I frankly admit that there is a mistake in the budget figure which has probably led to the moving of these motions for reduction.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—Sir, I should like to hear the Hon'ble Finance Member.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—Well, Sir, I would ask the Council to refer to our proceedings of last September. An explanatory note was laid before the Council with a supplementary demand for revising the pay of the Subordinate Excise Service. I have the note here. It begins—"The case of the Subordinate Excise Service was not considered in the general revision of pay of last year as the rates of pay of members of that department had been fixed in 1918. These rates were fixed with regard to conditions that obtained in 1913-14 and since then circumstances have greatly changed, etc." We asked, Sir, that we should be given a sum of Rs. 15,000 to enable us to introduce a time-scale pay for Excise Inspectors, and this proposal was accepted by the Council. Unfortunately by some oversight the fact that this Rs. 15,000 had been added was not regularly communicated to the Comptroller, and this is why we see a striking difference between the figure of the current year and the budget figure for next year. There ought to have been another sum of Rs. 15,000 added to the Revised under the minor head.

Well, Sir, all that we have done is to carry out the proposals which the Council sanctioned. We introduced the time-scale of pay, but when the budget was framed the Excise Commissioner had not worked out the precise effect of the time-scale on every one. Initial pay varies according to length of service and other considerations. It was not till the middle of January that we got final figures from the Excise Commissioner. I have here a statement showing the pay which will now be drawn under the time-scale by every single officer in the department. I can assure the Council that we have not employed a single new man and that we have not given a single rupee as pay beyond what was approved by the Council. I much regret the mistake in the figures.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—I think, Sir, that we should be consistent. After hearing the explanation of the Hon'ble the Finance Member I think the House should agree not to press this motion, and in that view of the case I think I should withdraw my motion.

MAULAVI MUNAWWAR ALI :—Sir, may I ask the Hon'ble the Finance Member whether he requires only Rs. 15,000 for giving effect to the scheme or the entire amount of Rs. 28,000 ?

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—We require the entire amount, Sir. The scale was introduced only from September last when the Council sanctioned it. Next year it will be in force throughout the year.

MAULAVI MUNAWWAR ALI :—In that case, Sir, I should have no option but to withdraw.

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

REWARDS IN EXCISE CASES.

SRIJUT DALIM CHANDRA BORA :—The motion that stands in my name runs thus :—“ That the sum of Rs. 13,000 provided for rewards in excise cases should be omitted. ”

This is not entirely a new motion, Sir. A similar one was moved last year but without success. I again venture to bring this subject for discussion on principle. This year I have some additional grounds on which I will urge the entire omission of this sum.

It is admitted that there is a considerable fall off in excise revenue and further depression is anticipated from year to year. Under such circumstances the policy should be to make gradual curtailment of our expenditure as far as practicable.

It is a well known fact that this sort of reward is only peculiar to the Excise Department. The servants of the other departments of the Government are rendering not less service than the officers of this department but no consideration whatever is made in this respect for them. The Gurkhas, the Civil and Military Police are rendering greater services to the State than the excise officers but not a farthing is provided for their reward. This may justly be called a partiality.

Again we must not lose sight of the fact that the excise officers have been favoured with an abnormal increase in their pay. This is sufficient incentive to encourage them to do their ordinary work faithfully and energetically and to detect every sort of offence under the Excise Act. It may be contended that the reward goes to the informant of excise offences and not to the excise officers who send up the cases. I leave it to the decision of the Council how far this is true. As far as my knowledge goes everything that is given as reward in excise cases goes to the pocket of the prosecutor and not to the informant. If anything is ever given to the informant at the mercy of the prosecutor it is simply nominal. Admitting that the reward is wholly and invariably given to the informant in excise cases I should like to call it a system of bribery which in the case of a private individual is a crime of heinous type. Such a system must at any cost be avoided. Under such system of allurement people are prone to commit mischief and dishonesty. The innocent persons might be hauled up before the court and really guilty persons might escape. In consideration of the abnormal fall in the excise revenue and the increment of the scale of pay of the excise officers and above all the general deficit in our provincial revenue it is wise that we should follow economic principle as far as practicable. There is no justification for making special

provision for the Excise Department. We will not be justified in giving preference to this department by making provision for their rewards for detecting crimes which is part of their legitimate duty.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—I beg, Sir, to accord my whole-hearted support to this motion. With your permission, Sir, I would refer you to another item under the same head of which I have proposed for an altogether omission.....

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I protest, Sir, against any other item being discussed on this motion.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—The Hon'ble Member should confine himself to the motion now before the House.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—I said for the sake of elucidating the matter, that is under the same head, "Secret Service expenditure—Rs. 500." Well, Sir, considering this along with Excise cases, it would be found.....

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I object, Sir, to these being considered together. They are two entirely separate matters.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—I want to hear how the Hon'ble Member proposes to connect them.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—They are, Sir, very intimately connected and there can be no harm if one is referred to while discussing the other.

It will appear that these are the mutual rewards one being invariably connected with the other—that is the Excise Inspectors are to be rewarded as also the persons giving information. *Secret Service expenditure*. It means this item. The stimulus, Sir, is on both the sides. I mean to say that it will be the lookout of the Excise Inspectors to procure cases and it will also be the lookout of the "Secret servants," to provide information secretly so as to be able to get rewards. I think, Sir, that in that view, both the sides are stimulated for rewards. It is for this reason that Secret Service expenditure I have objected to. As far as the present motion is concerned I think that rewards in connection with excise cases should not be given on principle. Because this will serve concoction. Here again, Sir, they charge a man merely for having certain excisable articles in his possession. Just a person might throw in something actuated by bad or malicious motive into the possession of a man in order to get rewards and procure his punishment. Sir, the onus is on the man in whose possession the excisable article is found. A very difficult task, indeed. The mere fact of being in possession of an excisable article compels him to discharge the heavy onus that he was in possession of that *bona fide*. How difficult a matter it is ! I think, Sir, that you will fancy that persons of vindictive character will find an easy prey in his enemies. It is for this reason that this item appears to me to be undesirable. It has been pointed out by the Hon'ble Mover himself that other departments also discharge their duties as best as they can and are not rewarded. Perhaps there are other Departments that would discharge their duties under more trying circumstances and these Excise Inspectors are not to perform so

very heavy task as to entitle them to further remuneration. I think their works are light enough—much lighter than their pay should entitle them to remuneration. To-day there is an item before us which has been granted by the Council by way of increment to their salary and I do not think there is any room for giving them any other amount by way of remuneration. I therefore heartily support the motion.

THE HON'BLE MR. W J. REID :—This is the same motion, Sir, or practically the same that was moved last year by the Hon'ble Mover. I then told the Council that we felt some difficulty as to whether this item should be classed as voted or non-voted. The reason is that the giving of rewards is done on the authority of two laws which govern our Excise administration. I mean the Opium Act which is an all-India measure and the Excise Act which is a provincial one. We decided however to give the benefit of the doubt to the Council and submit the item to its vote.

I was in some doubt, Sir, when I received notice of this motion whether the objection was to the principle of giving these rewards or to the amount provided. I take it that the objection is as to the principle and not to the actual figure in the budget. The reason why we have to make budget provision is this. These rewards are given entirely or almost entirely from the fines imposed in cases of conviction and from the sale-proceeds of excisable articles confiscated. But fines received in this way have to be credited to the ordinary head of judicial fines. The Magistrate who realises the fines may not hand it over to the prosecuting officer or to the informant or to whomsoever he gives the reward. He credits the reward as a judicial fine and therefore we must have a corresponding provision from which to make payments. As I said our figure cannot be exact. We might not require it all or we might require more. So much so for the actual budget provision.

The reasons why the law provides for these rewards are I think sufficiently obvious. Offences against the Excise laws are on a different footing from offences against the ordinary law. I purposely use the word offence. Smuggling may or may not be a crime. But as I said last year these offences if successful are most remunerative. The profits are very great and the people who commit the offences are very clever. Also as I have said more than once the stricter our excise control, the more we increase our restrictions, the greater the temptation to indulge in such offences for the profits. Therefore we have to use unusual methods to fight them. We have to make use of informants. We as most people do dislike the very name, but the fact remains that we should never get successful prosecutions or we should get only a comparatively small number unless we adopted these methods. We have to appeal to the mercenary instincts of people to help us. It has been suggested that it is only to officers of the Excise Department that rewards are given for the discharge of their ordinary duties. Well, Sir, have the Council never heard of rewards for the recapture of prisoners who escape from prison? Have the Council never heard of rewards in Police cases? If the Hon'ble Member will turn to page 84 of the Estimates he will find a definite entry in the budget—"Police rewards including rewards to outsiders"—Rs. 4,000.

As I told the Council last year the rules enjoin that a fair proportion of rewards should be given to the informants. This is frequently done openly. But it also frequently happens that the prosecuting officer does not desire to disclose the name of the informer. If he did, the utility of the informer might be gone. Therefore it frequently happens that the

reward is nominally given to the prosecuting officer but in actual fact a considerable proportion goes to the informant. I have figures here showing for three years the actual sums paid as rewards. In 1918-19 Rs. 12,000 was realised by way of fine of which Rs. 11,800 was distributed as rewards. In 1919-20 Rs. 11,000 was realised of which Rs. 10,000 was distributed. In 1920-21 we received Rs. 14,000 as fines and distributed Rs. 12,600 as rewards.

There is one other point, Sir. The Hon'ble Mover lays stress on the likelihood that the giving of these rewards will uncourage the bringing of false cases, that people will get into trouble unjustly, trouble which they would have avoided if there had not been this additional inducement to bring these cases. Well, Sir, as I said before as a rule it is only when a conviction has been obtained and a fine has been imposed that rewards are given, and I confess that I do not see why a court should be more likely to go wrong in dealing with an offence of this nature than in dealing with an offence against the ordinary law.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, I was at first doubtful as to the justice or otherwise of this motion for reduction, but after hearing the Hon'ble Finance Member I think, on a question of principle, the Council should support this motion. The Hon'ble Finance Member has first of all told us that he is in doubt as to whether these items should have been placed in the voted or non-voted column, that there is a question as to whether this item is a matter within the jurisdiction of the Government of India or of the Provincial Government. But, Sir, on this point the serious question arises when we are talking so much of the financial autonomy of the province whether in matters like this we should still continue under the control of the Government of India.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I do not understand in the least what the Hon'ble Member means. Excise is purely a provincial subject. We administer it entirely, we receive the entire receipts, we pay the entire expenses. The Government of India exercise no control.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—I only enquire whether the expenditure is such that this province can control without any reference.....

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I have said, Sir, the Government of India exercise no control. Excise is purely a provincial subject.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—I presume it is an altogether votable amount and if the Council thinks fit it may press the motion.....

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—The point, Sir, if I may explain it, is this. We have decided to allow the Council to vote as to whether the amounts we have provided are suitable or not. I submit that when as I told the Council the principle of giving rewards is laid down in Acts, one of the central legislature and one of the provincial legislature, this Council cannot by its vote destroy that principle.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Then as to what has been said next by the Hon'ble Finance Member that the amount budgetted may not be actually spent. On this point also I think that it will not be prudent for the Council in the ordinary course of things to budget for expenditure and then leave the whole thing to the discretion and good sense of the Department, particularly when the expenditure leads to something not altogether so very palatable. The informers it has been suggested are getting a larger portion of the money budgetted. I do not know how far this will give any consolation to my Hon'ble friend the Mover as he sees his own countrymen to have some prospect of getting a portion of the money so budgetted by helping the Administration. But I think it is a poor consolation to us, having regard to the general policy of the Administration which has been so long known to us that the Government are really anxious to bring about a fall in the opium revenue by all means in their power.

Now, Sir, I do not know whether the rewards which have been budgetted here are meant to bring about a diminution of the Excise revenues or to help them to increase it. As I have already stated, and many of my colleagues have also noticed during the budget discussion during the coming year the opium revenue has been budgetted as Rs. 80,000 more than that of the current year. So it seems—and of course there has been a corresponding increase of expenditure. Well, Sir, here the question of principle arises. If the Government is really anxious to see the disappearance of the opium revenue or a reduction of the opium revenue, I think what they should do is this: They should go on gradually budgetting in every year for the opium revenue in a descending figures and if there is a surplus accruing to the department this should be applied to the purpose of non-recurring expenditure for Schools, Industry, and Agriculture, but here we still find Government committed to the policy of budgetting for higher and higher figures of excise revenue. Take for instance here, Sir, the item under Supplies and Services against which.....

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I submit, Sir, that this has nothing to do with the item on which the Council are asked to vote.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—I was just mentioning the question of principle as to how far the Council would be justified.....

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—I should like to hear what the Hon'ble Member has got to say.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, this is an item which appears under Supplies and Services. The major head is 'Excise' and the minor head 'Supplies and Services' and then there are several other items. It appears that in 1920-21 the actual expenditure was Rs. 16,473. In the current year it is Rs. 16,412 whereas in the coming year it is Rs. 20,180 so that there has been practically an increase of 25 per cent. Of course there is no such compulsion placed on the Finance Department arising from such facts as sanctioned time-scales and so on; and here there is a pretty good scope for a reduction and curtailment. So I submit, Sir, considering this particular item of expenditure in relation to other items of this Department as well as taking a broad view of the matter I think the Council should insist upon the reduction of the budgetted expenditure with a view to this amount of reduction being diverted to purposes which will more effectively help to bring about a reduction of the opium revenue desired so much by the people and the Government.

MAULAVI RASHID ALI LASKAR :—Mine has been a peculiar position in connection with this motion, Sir. I had come to support it, but after hearing the explanation of the Hon'ble the Finance Member I confess that I must have to oppose it. I have so to say undertaken a sort of somersault like those who come to scoff but remain to pray. First of all I had a mind to show how these excise officials occupied a very enviable position and were trebly rewarded. The first reward just made mention of has been one by way of an increase in their salaries. The second reward is direct, *viz.*, the subject matter of the motion, and the third a portion of the fines and such an enviable position in the face of decreasing revenue and lesser work lessened by co-operators and non-co-operators together. But after hearing the explanation from the Hon'ble the Finance Member all my doubts about this item have vanished. I think the main point for doubt about this matter centres here as if this amount is budgetted and given for rewards independent of the rewards made mention of in cases, but exactly it is not so. Therefore there cannot be any question of giving here as these sums are given by the Courts and those are fixed in their judgments and these particular sums are decided by the Courts. If the entire amount of fines were not credited then I think this amount would not find a place in the budget, because the entire amount of fines are entered on the credit side, and the amounts given by way of rewards are credited here on the debit side in the budget. There lies the difficulty. If it be a question why the Courts should give any rewards at all, in that case I do not think we can discuss the point until and unless we can amend the Act made mention of by the Hon'ble Finance Member. We cannot question the procedure now followed by the Courts. So I think we should not have any cause for supporting this motion, rather the Hon'ble Mover should withdraw it.

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN :—Sir, as a matter of principle which has been so clearly enunciated just now by the Hon'ble the Finance Member, I opposed a similar motion for reduction moved last year. I again oppose it on the same ground now. Of course in the Excise Department we want the officers not only to do their cold duties, but also to be very zealous so that there might not be any smuggling or any illicit possession anywhere. This is the clear policy of the Excise Department and if out of jealousy these Excise officers go beyond their limit, there is the judicial Court to intervene. And, again, if some vindictive officers abuse their power to satisfy the spirit of vindictiveness they will not wait for the additional reward. So, as this reward follows the judicial decision, I think we cannot reasonably object to this amount being given as rewards to the Excise officers.

SRIJUT LOHIT CHANDRA NAYAK :—After hearing the explanation offered by the Hon'ble the Finance Member I am of opinion that the expression "Rewards in Excise cases" is somewhat misleading. From this expression I gather that this provision is for the distribution by the Magistrates of judicial fines to informers and informants. If that be the case, Sir, "Rewards in excise cases", this expression does not tell us exactly what is being done. Now, Sir, as it stands I see no reason to support this resolution, but the expression is to be changed in future. With these remarks I oppose this resolution.

RAI SAHIB BEPIN CHANDRA DEB LASKAR :—Sir, regarding the sum of Rs. 13,000 provided for the reward in Excise cases, I think this amount has been provided for the rewards for the detection of opium smuggling and manufacture of country spirit, etc. I think this sort of detection is meant for the good of the people and the evil doers will be checked thereby. On the other hand so long as the Excise officers are in the service they should be rewarded for their good work. If the whole amount provided for the purpose be not spent the remaining sum will be included in the closing balance of the province. I therefore oppose the amendment.

SRIJUT DALIM CHANDRA BORA :—Sir, a word or two in reply will suffice to meet the arguments advanced by the Hon'ble Members in opposing my motion. The Hon'ble the Finance Member is not quite sure whether this item falls under votable or non-votable head. Had it been a non-voted subject we would be gagged and all our troubles in haggling over the matter would end. Since the Government is in doubt, I think we should get the benefit of the doubt and freely handle the subject. It is highly spoken of that the Government on principle has made this particular provision for rewards in Excise cases. The Excise cases no doubt bring some revenue in shape of fine and thus in view of the Government some expenditure need be incurred under this head in giving rewards to the informant or prosecutor whoever he might be. But I should like to point out with equal justification and propriety that all other criminal cases also bring certain profits in the shape of fine and forfeiture. But no provision is made in rewarding the prosecutor or the informant who is made also to give evidence in such criminal cases.

The Excise Act or the rules thereunder need not be amended in order to stop this system of reward. I am sorry that even my pleader friends have made a blunder in this respect. The giving of rewards in all criminal cases is discretionary with the trying Magistrates. Some of the Hon'ble Members are anxious that their countrymen will suffer if this system of reward be stopped as the majority of informants or prosecutors are their own men. I beg, Sir, to say that I care very little for such profit. The trade in excise is universally denounced as an immoral business. I am fully alive to the fact that what is ill-got is ill-spent. I certainly cannot advise my countrymen to aspire after such a sort of profit. It is said that the amount provided under this head might not be spent. If we are doubtful as to the utility of the amount for the purpose for which it is vaguely provided it might profitably be spent for some other purpose instead of keeping it detained here. At any rate the allurements of such a sort is likely to cause contrary effect and it must be discontinued.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I have received so much support, Sir, which I gratefully acknowledge, that there is very little for me to say. Maulavi Rashid Ali Laskar put the case very clearly. I only want to repeat that the reason why we have Excise prosecutions, the reasons why we give rewards are two—for the carrying out of our Excise policy which is the furtherance of sane temperance and also for the protection of our Excise revenue. This Council, Sir, is committed to a policy of steady reduction of Excise receipts and I am sure that those members who most frequently advocate temperance measures are the very last to wish that greater facilities should be given for illegal practices, for obtaining illicit supplies of excisable articles. The issue is a plain one. We are certain to have some prosecutions under the Excise

Act. It is practically certain that some of these prosecutions will end in conviction. It is then discretionary with the magistrate to award the whole or a part of the fine as a reward. Whatever sums are realised as fines have to be credited into the treasury. To enable rewards to be paid we must have budget provision. If the Council thinks that the provision made here is too large I should not object to a reduction. As I said in such matters no man can foretell with any accuracy the exact figure required.

One Hon'ble Member suggested that the heading is a misleading one. Well, Sir, we are not responsible for these headings. They are fixed for us and are common to the whole of India. We have no say in the matter. But I suggest that the expression "Rewards in Excise cases" is not really a misleading one. The reward is given after there has been an Excise case and after this has been decided, and it comes from the fine which has been imposed in the case.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT:—The question is that the sum of Rs. 13,000 for rewards in Excise cases be omitted.

The motion was put and negatived.

SRIJUT DALIM CHANDRA BORA:—This motion runs thus:—That the sum of Rs. 4,500 for rewards for opium confiscation be omitted.

This resolution stands on the same footing as the one which has been just now lost and with the sad experience in my first attempt I do not venture to appear before the Hon'ble Members for asking them to make a reduction. So I think it is better for me to withdraw it.

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

SRIJUT DALIM CHANDRA BORA:—The last item for omission which I propose under this head is the sum of Rs. 5,136 for temporary establishment.

This, Sir, is provided for a temporary establishment, but from the budget figures it does not appear that it is provided on a temporary basis. We had expenditure under this head in 1920-21, in the current year and also in the next year and I do not know how long it will continue, this temporary state of affairs. At the same time I do not quite understand what is the object of providing such a temporary establishment. The other day we asked for a provision for introduction of a pass book system for the detection of crimes and offences in the consumption of opium but it was denied and I want to know definitely what this amount is for. As a matter of fact the receipts from Excise are decreasing and decreasing and we should see our way to curtail our expenditure as far as practicable, and if we can curtail it without any detriment to the public interest or to the department concerned then I think the Hon'ble Members will not hesitate to have this amount expunged. Of course if they say that the majority of our people in our country are opium-eaters and that this Excise staff is required, for rousing them in the morning then it may be retained. But if it is not so then it is better that it should be struck off. However I want to hear an explanation from the Hon'ble Finance Member. If the answer is satisfactory then probably I may not press this.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I hope, Sir, to be able to satisfy the Hon'ble Member. The item which he mentions consists of three separate items. First of all for the Sadiya Frontier Tract in connection with the registration of opium-eaters and the restrictions on consumption we employ an Inspector on Rs. 120 a month and two peons on Rs. 14 each a month. This was first done in the year 1920 at the suggestion of the Political Officer who said that he could not possibly enforce the measures without this staff. The appointments were naturally made temporary to begin with. I may say that the Political Officer is pretty certain to press for their being made permanent. This is an interesting item, Sir, because it gives the Council some slight indication of how the cost of administering the Excise Department must go up as our restrictions become closer. The second item is the cost of what is known as the Jaintia patrol party. It consists of one Jemadar and four peons. This party was sanctioned in 1919 and is employed to prevent the smuggling of liquor from these hills to Sylhet. If we abolished this staff it would only mean that great facilities for taking cheap and strong liquor down from the hills to the plains would be afforded. Then we have three patrol parties in the Sylhet district on the borders of the Tripura State and these are maintained for exactly the same reason. We have been for several years negotiating with the Tripura State authorities. We wished to come to an understanding by which we could establish on the border a zone within which there will be no shops. We have come to a temporary arrangement with the State but we have not yet come to a permanent arrangement. That is the reason why these parties are classed as temporary. I do not know if the Council desire that any of these parties should be abolished.

SRIJUT DALIM CHANDRA BORA :—Sir, after hearing the explanation of the Hon'ble Finance Member I have no objection in withdrawing my motion. I beg the leave of the Council to withdraw it.

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

MAULAVI MUNAWWAR ALI :—Sir, the motion standing in my name is that the provision of Rs. 500 for secret service expenditure be omitted.

Another motion, *viz.*, rewards in Excise cases involving exactly the same principle has been negatived just now by the Council by a majority and I Sir, do not see why I should hope for success. Yet, I must tell you that I have not been convinced by the arguments put forward by the House that the principle involved is a sound principle for allowing the expenditure. I must ask the House, does the House realise that in Excise cases the accused has the onus of proving his innocence? I invited the very keenest attention of the House to this very important point to realise how very difficult it is for an accused to discharge this heavy onus and how easy it is for an enemy of the accused to get him entangled in criminal cases of this kind and procure punishment for him. This is a principle, Sir, which is not unmixed with good and evil but to my mind the evil outweighs the good. It is for this reason, that on a matter of principle I proposed the omission of this item and while reiterating my opinion that I still consider such a principle being altogether wrong I with due deference to the opinion of the majority of the House beg leave of it to withdraw the motion.

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

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—The question is that a sum not exceeding Rs. 2,32,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on 31st March 1923 for the administration of the Excise Department.

The motion was put and adopted.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I beg to move, Sir, that a sum not exceeding Rs. 7,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923, for the administration of the head "37.—Miscellaneous Departments."

The motion was put and adopted.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I beg to move Sir, that a sum not exceeding Rs. 1,77,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923, for the administration of the head "47.—Miscellaneous."

The motion was put and adopted.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I beg to move Sir, that a sum not exceeding Rs. 3,68,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923, for the administration of the head "46.—Stationery and Printing."

The motion was put and adopted.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 29,56,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923, for the administration of the head "41.—Civil Works." There are several motions, Sir.

RAI SAHIB MANOMOHAN LAHIRI :—Sir, since giving the notice of omission I have come to know that there has been a mistake in the figure in the budget, so with the permission of the Council I beg to withdraw it.

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

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, the motion which stands in my name is that the sum of Rs. 6,000 provided for the salary of the Registrar in the Public Works Secretariat be omitted.

I move this motion for reduction both on the strength of its merits as well as on a question of principle. In the first place, Sir, as regards the merits of the case, I submit that there is no necessity for continuing this office of the Registrar considering the nature and quantity of the works done compared with that done by the Registrar of the General Secretariat. The Registrar of the Public Works Department Secretariat has to deal with only about a dozen or a little more clerks—(I speak open to correction) whereas the Registrar of the General Secretariat has to deal with more than a hundred clerks and he has to serve the Executive Councillors, Ministers and other Heads of Departments about 12 or so in number. Now, Sir, as to the actual nature of the works done

by the Registrar of the Public Works Department Secretariat, I think the Councillors are aware of what is said in the Report of the Retrenchment Committee which unfortunately I have not now with me—there it is stated clearly that the duties of the Registrar are simply to pass on papers from the Heads of Departments to the clerks or Head Assistants dealing with the same. In other words he has not to deal with any case himself but simply to transmit files from one hand to another. Of course I say so from what I read in the Retrenchment Committee's Report. At all events the Registrar in the Public Works Department is a similar agency who does not require any professional or expert knowledge for doing his work in the Public Works Department. What I propose to suggest is the abolition of this post of the Registrar, Public Works Department Secretariat, his office being placed under the Registrar of the General Secretariat. Those who have read the Report of the Retrenchment Committee are aware that there is admittedly room for economy and there have also been specific suggestions for economy—for instance it has been suggested that the post of the Superintending Engineer ought to be abolished. Now, Sir, I am stating my case on what I say is a question of principle. What are the Government going to do for giving effect to the recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee? We have not yet got any definite statement from Government. Of course we have heard only so far that Government are going to do what they can with regard to their recommendations. What we would have been glad to hear from the Government side is that within a definite time whatever time it may be—one year or two years or even three years—Government are going to give effect to the recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee; but nothing of the kind has been stated and we are left to surmise and guess. Sir, may we request the Hon'ble Finance Member to tell us whether within a year or two the proposed retrenchments in this Department will be given effect? Of course in that case the present motion may be withdrawn in order to give time to arrange matters without inconvenience, etc., but of course if Government go on indefinitely keeping superfluous officers without sufficient work and without giving us any idea as to when we may expect to see the recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee giving effect to? I think the Council have a right to press for this motion. I should also like to remind the Council what has been said by Mr. Desenne, the Superintending Engineer, about the post of the Registrar. He wrote in reply to questions submitted to him by members of the Retrenchment Committee a note and that note is appended to the Report of the Committee.....

Therein he also said that the post of the Registrar may be abolished; it will be found at the end of the Retrenchment Report and I agree with him on this point. I should also tell the Council that some of them may be under the erroneous impression that because there was no recommendation about retrenchment touching this particular officer therefore we should not interfere with this. They will remember that although this Council in their resolution for the Retrenchment Committee asked for a Committee to examine the whole machinery of the Government for the purpose of retrenchment, the Government were not pleased to give them such large powers, and they limited their investigations only to particular posts and that has been a matter of complaint in the note of Rai Bahadur Promode Chandra Datta. Although they were conscious that there were other posts about which they might recommend economy, unfortunately they were prevented from doing so on account of limitations imposed on their powers; the Council should not think that besides

what has been recommended by the Retrenchment Committee members, there is no other direction in which retrenchment can be effected. This is one instance. As I have already said, agreeing with Mr. Desenne, the Superintending Engineer, and also on a matter of principle, this motion should be accepted by the Council.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—The Hon'ble Member, Sir, has hung a long sermon on the slenderest of texts. His motion is for the reduction of the post of the Registrar in the Public Works Department Secretariat but his speech dealt almost entirely with the recommendations of the Committee on Retrenchments and the failure of the Government to act on these.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—I think he wanted to explain why this particular post had escaped the eye of the Committee.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I am sorry, Sir, if I have misunderstood the Hon'ble Member. As for the Report of the Retrenchment Committee surely he does not expect to get from me any decision. For one thing as I told the Council the other day we have not yet come to any decision. We cannot decide with such lightning speed. We have promised to consider very carefully all the recommendations of the Committee. More I cannot say. I do not know, Sir, where the Hon'ble Member got his information as to the duties of the Registrar. I gather from his speech that he thinks there are only twelve clerks in the Public Works Department Secretariat. The actual number is thirty-five in addition to *daftiris* and *chaprassis* and there is no Personal Assistant in charge. He said I think that the only duty of the Registrar is to transmit files from one hand to another. Well, Sir, I should like to ask the Member of the Retrenchment Committee sitting opposite me if that has been his experience with regard to the Registrar of any Secretariat. The facts are very different. In every office where there is a large number of clerks there must be a ministerial head. The Registrar is this ministerial head and has definite duties assigned to him. He deals with some routine cases which do not go to the Under-Secretary. He is responsible for any delay that occurs in handling cases and for the distribution of work. He maintains the discipline in the office and sees that the clerks attend punctually. He is himself promoted from the ministerial ranks to be their head, and is therefore in the best position to know what they can or cannot do and to make allowance for them when allowance ought to be made. The proposal, Sir, that the Public Works Department Secretariat and the General Secretariat be amalgamated is an entirely new one. I think it is an impossible one, but am hardly called upon to express an opinion offhand like this.

As for Mr. Desenne's note, Sir, of which the Hon'ble Member has made so much I should like to ask him—he says that Mr. Desenne in his note suggested the abolition of the Registrar—does this mean that he accepts the whole of Mr. Desenne's note?

RAI SAHIB PADMANATH GOHAIN BARUA :—Sir, I for one do not attach much importance to the post of Registrar in the Public Works Department and I think that it is an unnecessary link to that Department. So if it does not fall in the list of posts the abolition of which might go beyond the power of this Government, as indicated by the Hon'ble the Finance Member in his introductory speech on presentation of the budget estimate for the next year, I recommend that this post be abolished with advantage; and with these remarks, I have the pleasure to support the resolution.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—I do not think, Sir, anybody is going to speak, so I, with all respects to the Hon'ble the Finance Member, should like to reply to two things. There is a regrettable difference as to the number of men employed in both the offices. My information was 12, while according to the Hon'ble the Finance Member which is more reliable, the number is 35. But that I think does not affect the weight of all that I have said. The question is whether the Registrar of the General Secretariat can do the works which are at present done by the Registrar of the Public Works Department. I cannot forget, Sir, that the Registrar of the General Secretariat does often officiate as Under-Secretary and I submit that if he could find time to do the duties of the Under-Secretary for a good portion of the year, why should he not be able to do the duties which are now done by the Public Works Department Registrar. And as the Hon'ble the Finance Member has already told us that the Registrar has hardly to do any original work, he is only to deal with some routine works. That being so, there is no likelihood of any unusual strain; unusual intellectual or physical labour, by the proposed additional works by placing another 35 clerks under him. As regards the duties and other menials, I do not think they would give much trouble either of the bodily or mental character in managing them. As to overwork, Sir, I appeal to the Members of the Government to say whether they have, during their long and varied experience, ever come across any of their subordinates who have not complained that they were over-worked and who said that they had sufficient time or leisure; I do not believe that the present Registrar of the General Secretariat will be over-worked or that he will not find enough time to do both the works; in these matters we cannot go into minute details at present.

The Hon'ble the Finance Member has asked me whether I am going to accept the recommendations of Mr. Desenne in their entirety. Of course, Sir, Mr. Desenne also said that unless the whole of my recommendations are accepted, there is no use accepting them in part. But whatever Mr. Desenne might have written he agreed that so far as the professional experts of the Department are concerned, namely, the Superintending Engineer and the Under-Secretary, there might have been some difference between himself and the members of the Retrenchment Committee; but so far as this non-expert Registrar of the Department is concerned he has nothing to say against abolition of his office. He viewed the question from two standpoints—how many officers are necessary from a consideration of the necessary expert and professional knowledge and how many are necessary from the standpoint of non-professional knowledge. The Registrar, as I have already said, is a non-professional officer with no expert knowledge and so I think whatever Mr. Desenne might have said, that does not affect my motion.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I am afraid, Sir, the Hon'ble Member misunderstood one or two things that I said. I did not say that the Registrar did no original work and that he only deals with routine cases. All cases come through his hands. What I said was that some routine cases are finally disposed of by him and do not even go to the Under-Secretary.

The Hon'ble Member asked again, Sir, whether the Registrar of the General Secretariat cannot take over these duties. He suggested that the Registrar of the Assam Secretariat was not overworked. Well, Sir, I know that the Hon'ble Member spoke in ignorance. I say without hesitation that

there is no officer of my acquaintance in the whole administration of the province who works so hard, who is so consistently overworked as is our Registrar.

One other argument against the proposal is perhaps unknown to the Hon'ble Member. Our Civil Secretariat is situated on Secre'ariat Hill. The Public Works Department Secretariat occupies a large block of buildings at a considerable distance. It would be physically impossible for one Registrar to look after both offices, and I take it the Hon'ble Member hardly suggests that in order to save the pay of the Registrar we ought to construct a new Public Works Department office in co tiguity to the Civil Secretariat. I am content to leave the matter to the Council.

The motion was put and negatived.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, I beg to move "That the sum of Rs. 7,500 provided for travelling allowance of the Superintending Engineer be reduced by Rs. 3,000.

This is one of the offices, Sir, for the abolition of which the Retrenchment Committee have recommended and as we have already heard from the Hon'ble the Finance Member the Government cannot according to him proceed with lightning speed to give effect to the Committee's recommendations, they are not also going to make any statement before the Council as to whether they are going to give any effect.....

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I said, Sir, that we had not come to any decision. We clearly can make no statement until we have come to a decision.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, it was hoped that when the Retrenchment Committee was appointed by the Council or rather the resolution for the appointment of the Retrenchment Committee was accepted by the Government with some modifications, it was hoped then that the recommendations put forward by them would be accepted without any undue delay by the Government but what strikes me, Sir, is this that the Government seem not to be yet able to see eye to eye with the Members of the Retrenchment Committee who.....

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I must again say, Sir, that we have come to no decision. The Hon'ble Member is not entitled to say that we see eye to eye or do not see eye to eye.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, the Council would have been satisfied if the Government side had only declared that within such and such a period they would give out their opinion one way or the other. This is all I aimed at principally in moving for some motions for reduction under these heads, but I regret to have, to say, Sir, that I failed so long to obtain any clear and intelligible statement from the Government side—I may now give up the point "whether", as is indeed difficult to say whether or not Government will actually give effect to the recommendations—but I would like to know within what time the Government would consider finally the recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee. I think that that is a legitimate request which I can reasonably place before the Finance Member

for our enlightenment and I shall be glad if he will kindly tell us within what time they will give us final decision of the Government. I do not mean to imply that the Government should accept the recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee in their entirety. I simply want to know what time they will take to come to a decision. If we are not to be favoured with any information on this point, I would ask the Council to enter a sort of protest by reductions which would compel the Superintending Engineer to do a less amount of travelling than he has been accustomed to do heretofore. Of course I think this is a very reasonable sort of protest, *viz.*, that he should do half the travelling for which the Government have budgetted this time.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—Sir, the provision made is the average annual cost of the travelling allowance drawn by the Superintending Engineer, the Government Inspector of Boilers and the tour clerk. I confess, Sir, I do not know what the intention of the Hon'ble Mover of the motion is. I cannot for obvious reasons say anything more than I have said about the Report of the Retrenchment Committee. But the officers I have mentioned tour in the interests of efficiency and economy. The Chief Engineer speaking as a professional man tells us he has frequently found that timely inspection results in economy. I fancy that several members of this Council will support him when he says that a threatened bridge or embankment or a bulging boiler cost less to remedy than to replace, that the difference might be far greater than the amount spent in paying the travelling allowance of the inspecting officers. The Superintending Engineer, Sir, as I reminded the Council the other day is essentially an inspecting officer, and I fail to see what gain there would be in efficiency or anything else if his touring was restricted and if he spent at headquarters twice the time that he now spends there.

Does the Hon'ble Member wish to reply, Sir?

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—No, Sir.

The motion was put and negatived.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, I beg to move that the sum of Rs. 4,200 provided for a temporary Engineer under 'Construction' be omitted.

I am not sure, Sir, whether the expenditure has already been incurred or whether things have been arranged in such a way that the expenditure must be incurred in the coming year. If there is yet no compulsion placed by circumstances on the Council, then I think the Council may very well consider whether they can incur this new expenditure, with the risk of its being made recurring, at a time when retrenchment is absolutely necessary. Of course, Sir, I do not know what the explanation of the Government side will be, so I am waiting to hear it.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I think, Sir, that if the Hon'ble Member and one or two other Hon'ble Members had availed themselves of our invitation to come to the Finance Department for an explanation of any items that they could not understand, this motion and a good many others would not have been moved. The facts are very simple. Three of our regular staff of Engineers are employed outside the province, two on Imperial works at Delhi and one elsewhere. During their absence we have been compelled to employ a temporary Engineer and we shall clearly have to do so until they come back. At the present moment the arrangement is not altogether satis-

factory, but the actual financial effect is that after paying for the temporary Engineer and deducting the salaries of those permanent officers who are employed outside, there is a clear saving of over Rs. 1,600 a month.

RAI SAHIB BIPIN CHANDRA DEB LASKAR :—Sir, if there are officers available in the permanent establishment it will be absolutely unnecessary to appoint officers in the temporary establishments. Therefore I oppose this motion.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—I beg to withdraw this motion, Sir.

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

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, I beg to move that the sum of Rs. 18,000 provided for Assam allowance under 'Construction' be omitted.

Sir, on this question I have only to say this that the rules for allowing the Assam allowance were framed before the time-scale of pay came into existence and long before the present enhancement of salaries took place. If so, Sir, then, having regard to the altered circumstances, *viz.*, that the new arrangements for allowing time-scale and enhanced salaries, I think the Council may very well consider whether they should still go on paying what is called the Assam allowance. I have brought forward this motion more with a view to getting a clear idea of the past and the present state of things and with a view to bring to the notice of the Council the question whether what might have been necessary some years ago may not be necessary now, considering the privileges which have been secured by the time-scale and revision of salaries of officers.

SRIJIT LOHIT CHANDRA NAYAK :—Sir, I have a similar motion standing in my name about which I wish to say a few words. Referring to page 108 of the budget we find the entry 'Overseas allowance'—that is entry No. 1. There is a technical allowance which is put down as No. (2). Then coming to the top of page 109, we find allowance No. 3, and then another allowance not yet sanctioned and this is the subject-matter of my motion.

Now, Sir, the Assam allowance used to be given before the revision of the present pay or before the introduction of the time-scale. Now, Sir, no department has been more benefited by the revision of pay than this class of officers and I know of cases where officers were formerly drawing less than Rs. 200 and have now by a single jump risen to above Rs. 500. They have had in my opinion a considerable enhancement of their pay and the further payment of allowance by way of the Assam allowance is therefore absolutely unnecessary. This kind of enhancement of pay by leaps and bounds has eaten to the vitals of our provincial revenue causing taxation necessary. Services primarily exist for the country and it is a fact which ought never to be lost sight of. Therefore during these days of deficit budgets I do not see my way to support this demand for more money. It is not sanctioned as yet. It will be good day for the present if it is not sanctioned at all by the higher authorities and for this reason I wish to support the resolution moved by my Hon'ble Colleague Babu Krishna Sundar Dam.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I should like, Sir, first to ask the indulgence of the Council if my explanations in dealing with these somewhat technical Public Works Department matters are not as convincing as they might be. We miss greatly the assistance of Colonel Taylor in this Council. But I hope that any shortcomings in the advocate will not be taken against the justice of the cause.

Well, Sir, the two Hon'ble Members who have spoken have very rightly called attention to the fact that when these allowances were originally given the scales of pay were very different from what they are now, that there has been a revision resulting in a considerable increase of pay to the Engineering Services. In this motion and in some of the other motions which will come up there is a certain confusion in nomenclature. Nowadays the Engineering Services have been divided into three. The first is known as the Indian Service of Engineers which is an all-India service. We have the Assam Engineering Service, which is a provincial service. And lastly in place of the old Upper and Lower Subordinates mentioned in the budget there will be a Single Subordinate Service. The time-scales have all been sanctioned but in the case of the Single Subordinate Service all the permanent appointments have not yet been made. The question which has now been raised came before us—whether the Assam allowance should continue in view of the fact that conditions of pay and prospects had been materially improved. We went very carefully into the question and finally addressed the Government of India asking that the Secretary of State might be moved to sanction the continuance of the allowance in the case of the two upper services, the Indian Service of Engineers and the Assam Engineering Service. We definitely said that in the case of the Single Subordinate Service the increase of pay given had been fixed after consideration of all local conditions and that we did not think that any local allowance was necessary in their case. This Single Subordinate Service will absorb all the men of the Upper Subordinate establishment and a few of the best of the Lower Subordinate staff. Well, Sir, we were asked to give our reasons for our suggestion more fully and we did so. We took our figures and we found that dealing now with the Indian Service of Engineers, the senior service, unless we gave the Assam allowance men throughout their service, if placed on the new time-scale of pay and deprived of the allowance would be worse off than they were under the old conditions. We pointed out also that the two reasons for which the allowance was originally given still continued. One is the unhealthiness of the province, the other that the class of engineering work which men in Assam are called upon to do is generally uninteresting and that conditions of service here are not such as to attract the best type of officer. We have to give further inducements to get such officers. We said that the same reasons applied in the case of the Assam Engineering Service and we asked that the allowance should be given to them also. For one thing the members of that service come very largely from outside the province. We have not yet been able to fill these posts with suitable candidates from the province. On further consideration however we are not certain that in the case of the second service the allowance is required and if the Council consider that there should be a saving there the Government will accept their decision. The provision is made in lump, but in actual fact the provision for the Indian Service of Engineers is Rs. 8,400, for the Assam Engineering Service Rs. 9,600. I should not, Sir, like the Council to think that there is anything racial in the suggestion I have just made.

The senior service contains a few Indians. The junior service contains a few Europeans. We are guided entirely by the conditions of the services and by the fields of recruitment.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—I have only to say a word in reply, Sir. As in the case of the other motions for reduction the Hon'ble Finance Member has very clearly stated to us how nothing substantially has been done for the benefit of the gentlemen of the Public Works Department and that without the Assam allowance they would be very much worse than their compeers of the other departments. Of course I do not want to criticise in any way what he has said because it is not even possible to go into details and to say whether they are better or worse off because it is not profitable or practicable to do so. It is an arduous task for us to compare the advantages and disadvantages of officers in all the departments of the Government. All that we can say is that the Hon'ble Finance Member has not been pleased to consider the improving or deteriorating lot of the tax-payers during all these times I mean during the period which is covered by his review of the pay and prospects of the Engineering services. If side by side with the case of the Public Works Department which he has laid before us he also shewed to the Council the paying capacity of the tax-payers, I am sure his case for the Engineering services would have been worse than the case which I am now pressing on behalf of the tax-payers. With these words I press the motion.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—The question is that the sum of Rs. 18,000 provided for Assam allowance under "Construction" be omitted.

The motion was then put and a division was taken with the following result :—

Ayes.

Maulavi Abdul Khaliq Chaudhury.
Khan Sahib Alauddin Ahmad Chaudhury.
Rai Sahib Fadmanath Gohain Barua.
Srijut Siva Prosad Barua.
Srijut Bishnu Charan Bora.
Srijut Dalim Chandra Bora.
Srijut Bepin Chandra Ghose.
Babu Krishna Sundar Dam.
Khan Bahadur Muhibuddin Ahmad.
Maulavi Rashid Ali Laskar.
Rai Bahadur Amarnath Ray.
Rai Bahadur Nalini Kanta Ray Dastidar.
Rev. J. J. M. Nichols-Roy.
Munshi Safur Rahman.
Rai Sahib Bepin Chandra Deb Laskar.
Rai Bahadur Promode Chandra Dutta.
Rai Sahib Manomohan Lahiri.
Maulavi Munawwarali.
Haji Muhammad Abdul Ahad Chaudhuri.
Khan Bahadur Muhammad Bakht Majumdar.
Srijut Lohit Chandra Nayak.
Maulavi Rukunuddin Ahmad.
Raj Kumar Chandra Narayan Singh.

Noes.

The Hon'ble Mr. W. J. Reid.
The Hon'ble Mr. A. Majid.
The Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Ghana-yam Barua.
Mr. A. R. Edwards.
Mr. J. R. Cunningham.
Sardar Bahadur Aujab Ali Khan.
Mr. A. J. G. Cresswell.
Mr. E. H. Featherstone.
Mr. W. K. Allies.
Mr. A. Moffat.
Srijut Nilmoni Phukan.
Mr. E. S. Roffey.
Dr. H. G. Roberts.
Mr. W. E. H. Grayburn.

The ayes being 23 and the noes being 14 the motion was adopted.

SRIJUT LOHIT CHANDRA NAYAK :—Sir, there are two motions, Nos. 2 and 3 against my name. There was some mistake in printing these. After sending the motions I consulted office and I am satisfied that there is no case for moving these motions. I beg therefore to withdraw both the motions.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—The question is that the motion that the sum of Rs. 45,732 provided for the salary of Sub-Overseers be reduced to half, *i.e.*, by Rs. 22,866, be withdrawn.

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

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—The other motion is that the sum of Rs. 8,520 and Rs. 5,880 aggregating Rs. 14,400 for two allowances under the Subordinate Establishment be reduced by half, *i.e.*, by Rs. 7,200. The question is that it be withdrawn.

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

KHAN BAHADUR MUHIBUDDIN AHMAD :—There are three motions on the same subject, Sir. I will withdraw mine in favour of Mr. Munawwarali's if he agrees.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—A similar resolution also stands in the name of Srijut Bepin Chandra Ghose. I propose to call on him as he is the next member on the list.

SRIJUT BEPIN CHANDRA GHOSE :—Sir, as an identical motion stands in the name of Maulavi Munawwarali I beg to withdraw my own in his favour, and shall support his motion.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—I beg to move, Sir, that the provision of Rs. 5,656 for the steam launch "Rover" be omitted.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—We are dealing still, Sir, with motions Nos. (3) and (4).

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—The motion is, Sir, that the provision of Rs. 5,880 for allowances at page 109 be omitted.

A similar motion moved by Srijut Lohit Chandra Nayak was I think withdrawn. He has withdrawn it on the ground that there were printing mistakes. At the same time I must say, Sir, that several such resolutions moved by me were with a view to draw pointed attention of the Finance Department to the mistakes that crept into the budget, and I must thank the Hon'ble Finance Member for the good spirit that he showed this morning in the case of another resolution which on an explanation from him I had the pleasure to withdraw. So with these few words I beg to withdraw the motion.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—If I may offer one word of explanation, Sir, in this case there are no mistakes. I do not think that Mr. Nayak said that there were mistakes. He said that the explanations given were satisfactory.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—I meant, Sir, that either there was a mistake or the explanation was satisfactory.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I deny, Sir, that in this case there are any mistakes. There was a mistake for which I expressed regret but I cannot have my Department unjustly accused.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—I meant, Sir, that in some cases there were mistakes and in others the explanations were satisfactory, so I beg leave to withdraw the motions.

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

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—The other motion is "that the provision of Rs. 8,520 for allowances at page 109 be omitted."

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

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—Sir, the motion I have been called upon to move is that the provision of Rs. 5,656 for steam launch "Rover" at page 107 be omitted. Sir, we have already seen that identical motions have been put forward by two other Hon'ble Members of this House. This means that strength has accumulated around this item being omitted, and I think that it is only just and proper that in these days of financial stringency we should do away with this steam launch. Sir, a similar motion, rather the same motion, was also brought forward during the Budget Session last year, to which I will just refer you. It will be found at page 378 of the Assam Gazette of April 27th, 1921, that Rai Sahib (now Rai Bahadur) Amar Nath Ray moved a similar motion, which was however eventually withdrawn as it was seen that another steam launch, *i.e.*, the "Kestrel," or rather the grant for the steam launch "Kestrel" had been voted down, the Council thinking that it would be a drastic step at once to do away with two steam boats. The arguments in favour of the omission of this item put forward by Rai Bahadur Amar Nath Ray stand now exactly as they did, and this year probably with greater emphasis on account of the greater financial difficulties. I am rather tempted to bring to the notice of the Council some of these arguments. Said Rai Bahadur Amar Nath Ray "My second and more substantial reason is that I think the Hon'ble gentleman has to do mostly with roads and buildings and only a little with waterways as the respective demands show, and that he does not require a launch. The only place in the Surma Valley to which he is required to travel by a steam boat is my own subdivision of Sunamganj. There are possibly two or three such places in the other Valley, for instance Barpeta, about which we heard so much the other day. My idea is that high officials should make it a point to visit such places by the ordinary steamers of the line. This will no doubt mean a little discomfort but it will make the steamer services more regular and the grievances of poor Indian passengers will also receive prompter redress, for the gentlemen will be able to see things for themselves."

I have already told you, Sir, that this motion was eventually withdrawn, inasmuch as the steam boat "Kestrel" had not been provided for in the previous year. Now, Sir, I cannot but refer to the revival of the "Kestrel" by the magic wand of our very able Finance Member the day following her demise

The "Kestrel" was dead yesterday and she has been revived to-day, and all credit belongs to our veteran and able Finance Member for that." Now, Sir, I would request the Hon'ble House to consider if they would be willing not to vote for the omission of the amount provided for the "Rover" had they been able to foresee the revival of the "Kestrel"? I think, Sir, in all consistency they would not have, and I request the House consistently with their opinion of last year will be unanimous in giving their votes for the omission of this demand.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—Sir, last year Colonel Taylor explained to the Council that this vessel owing to its draught was unsuited for any other class of work than taking the Head of the Department round hastily in the rains. It belongs to the Public Works Department so far as maintenance is concerned. It is used of course by other Heads of Department and I have myself on one or two occasions this year made use of this vessel. Colonel Taylor made a point of the fact that the possession of this vessel gives the Chief Engineer who tours in both Valleys a sense of security in knowing that even when all other means of carrying out an urgent inspection may fail during times of floods he can rely on being able to visit works which need his presence. The cost of maintenance is not heavy.

There is another item of information which I can give the Council. It may not be news to them, at least to those who study the advertisement columns of the papers. It is that we have been advertising the "Rover" for sale for some time and are now in the midst of negotiations for her sale. If therefore we lay her up, Sir, there is every chance of her deteriorating.

RAI SAHIB PADMANATH GOHAIN BARUA :—Sir, as the conditions under which the steam launch "Rover" was spared last year do not now exist it is in the same spirit in which the Hon'ble Member brought the motion before the Council I would recommend that she should not be retained at a time when we have to practise rigid economy to meet the present financial stringency of the administration. I think it is only advisable and reasonable to omit this item of expenditure from the budget estimate of the next year. I therefore support the motion.

KHAN BAHADUR MUHIBUDDIN AHMAD :—Sir, as one of the Members who supported the retention of this launch in last year's debate I think it is my duty to state that I did so on the ground that we had previously done away with the "Kestrel". As the "Kestrel" was finally retained the necessity for the "Rover" has ceased to exist. So I support this motion.

RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DUTTA :—Sir, may I ask a question? Is it not a fact that the "Rover" is on sale, and is it intended to buy another steamer in its place?

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—Negotiations are going on for her sale. As to replacing her no decision has yet been come to.

REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY :—May I ask another question, Sir? If the "Rover" is for sale, then what is this provision for?

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—Because, Sir, we do not know when she will be sold and we must keep up the crew, etc., until she is sold.

KHAN SAHIB ALAUDDIN AHMAD CHAUDHURI :—Sir, may I enquire if when the "Rover" is sold another steamer will be purchased in its stead? If not, the matter ends here and the amount may be sanctioned, so long as it is not sold.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I can only assure the Council that if we succeed in selling the "Rover" we shall not pay for her maintenance for another day. As to replacing her no decision has been come to.

SRIJUT DALIM CHANDRA BORA :—Sir, as far as I remember last year the understanding was that as long as this launch "Rover" would not be disposed of by sale or otherwise it would be in charge of the Public Works Department and that whenever it will be used by other officers they would pay for her and I want to know how many times the "Rover" has been in course of the last year used and with what profits.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I am at a loss, Sir, to know what the question of paying is. I do not remember having said anything on the subject. If the Hon'ble Member can refer me to anything in the debate I shall be glad to answer him.

SRIJUT DALIM CHANDRA BORA :—Sir, so far as I remember it was said that it has been used by certain officers of the Government. Though the boat is in charge of the Public Works Department certain officers use the "Rover" and they are to pay for its use. I want to know if anything in that shape was paid during the last 12 months.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I cannot help thinking, Sir, that the Hon'ble Member is confusing the "Rover" with the "Kestrel". I can find nothing in last year's debate about the "Rover" to show that I said anything about payment or profits. I cannot charge my memory with having said anything of the kind.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—I have a word to say, Sir, in this connection. The use of the launch "Rover" we have heard is made by the Chief Engineer and by the members of the Government and other officers for the purpose of inspection. It has always been my conviction, Sir, that Government have been anxious rather too much for travelling and inspection more frequent than necessary. I do not think that there will be any loss of efficiency or loss of any sort whatever if the Government are deprived of this boat "Rover" causing thereby the members of the Government who use the same to do a little less travelling and inspection and to travel by the ordinary railways and steamers and other means of communication. Besides as I have said even if there be a little reduction of travelling on account of the removal of the "Rover" I do not think there will be any injury to the future efficiency of administration in many departments. So from that point of view I think we can safely do away with this boat.

SRIJUT BEPIN CHANDRA GHOSE :—Sir, I beg to speak a few words in support of this motion. At present moment, two boats are absolutely unnecessary for the purpose. With the improvement of communications we do not want at all two steam launches—one might safely serve our purpose. Now, Sir, I understand from the Hon'ble the Finance Member that communications for sale of "Rover" are in progress. As the sale of this steam boat "Rover" is in progress I do not understand why a provision is made for its maintenance again. If we make any such provision then it is sure that we won't be in a hurry to see our way for her sale. Therefore, Sir, I am of opinion that no such provision should be made in the budget.

With these few words, Sir, I support the motion.

REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY :—I do not see how the discussion arises regarding this. The Hon'ble the Finance Member has said that the boat is to be sold and while it is lying idle it ought to be kept. If it is not properly taken care of it will go to wreck and ruin. Therefore I do not see why the discussion should arise about this sum of money. If the discussion be about reducing the amount and making the provision smaller for the maintenance of it it will be reasonable. Otherwise it is not reasonable to omit the sum altogether.

MR. W. E. H. GRAYBURN :—I quite agree with the last speaker. I have a good deal of knowledge of machinery and I can assure the Members of the House that if we keep the boat for two years and spend no money on it it won't be worth Rs. 10.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—I quite appreciate what the Hon'ble Rev. gentleman has just now said, but I feel the weight of the opinion expressed by my Hon'ble friend Mr. Bepin Chandra Ghose that if we are going to provide this entire amount Government may not be in a hurry to bring about the disposal of the boat. I do not see, Sir, why if the entire amount is omitted, the boat should be left to the mercy of the wind and sun. I think even without provision, proper care will be taken by the Government and any amount that we may spend in that direction, the Council will be only too glad to provide for later on : that will avoid deterioration of the vessel and that would be doing a thing in a businesslike fashion. I, therefore, am strongly of opinion that the amount be omitted now.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I confess, Sir, that I do not follow the Hon'ble Mover. He agrees that the launch should not be allowed to deteriorate but he refuses any provision which will enable us to keep it going.

There is one other point, Sir. I understood Mr. Dam to say that there was far too much inspection, far too much travelling about by the Heads of Departments, Government officers and members of the Government. I should like to know definitely, Sir, whether that is the view of this Council. Do they consider that we travel about merely for pleasure? There is hardly a month of last year in which I did not travel somewhere although on many occasions it would have been pleasanter to remain up here in Shillong. If this is the view generally held and if the vote to be taken is to be regarded as an indication of this my Hon'ble Colleague and I will both have to reconsider the extent of our touring.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI:—May I be permitted, Sir, to say one or two.....

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID:—I think the Hon'ble Member has already spoken.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT:—The Hon'ble Member is not entitled to make any speech unless by way of a personal explanation.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI:—I simply beg leave, Sir, to make a suggestion.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID:—I do not think, Sir, there is any room for suggestion.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT:—Except in the way of a personal explanation the Hon'ble Member cannot be allowed to make any further remarks or suggestions.

The motion was put and a division was taken with the following results :—

Ayes.

Maulavi Abdul Khaliq Chaudhury.
Rai Sabib Padmanath Gohain Barua.
Srijut Bishnu Charan Bora.
Srijut Dalim Chandra Bora.
Babu Krishna Sundar Dam.
Srijut Bepin Chandra Ghose.
Khan Bahadur Muhibuddin Ahmad.
Munshi Safiur Rahman,
Rai Sahib Bepin Chandra Deb
Laskar.
Rai Bahadur Promode Chandra Datta.
Mr. E. H. Featherstone.
Maulavi Munawwarali.
Haji Muhammad Abdul Ahad Chaudhuri.
Khan Bahadur Muhammad Bakht
Mazumdar.
Srijut Lohit Chandra Nayak.

Noes.

The Hon'ble Mr. W. J. Reid.
The Hon'ble Mr. A. Majid.
The Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Ghana-
syam Barua.
Mr. A. W. Botham.
Mr. A. R. Edwards.
Mr. J. R. Cunningham.
Khan Sahib Alaaddin Ahmad Chau-
dhuri.
Sardar Bahadur Anjab Ali Khan.
Srijut Siva Prosad Barua.
Mr. A. J. G. Cresswell.
Rev. J. J. M. Nichols-Roy.
Mr. A. K. Allies.
Mr. A. Moffat.
Srijut Nilmoni Phukan.
Mr. E. S. Roffey.
Dr. H. G. Roberts.
Mr. W. E. H. Grayburn.

The ayes being 15 and the noes being 17, the motion was declared lost.

The Council was adjourned till 2-30 P.M.

The Council reassembled after lunch at 2-30 P.M.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI:—I have to move, Sir, that the provision of Rs. 5,900 for steam boat "Kestrel" at page 107 be omitted.

Sir, the same question came up before the House last year and the opinion of the House was so very overwhelming that the motion was carried without even a division being pressed for. The reasons that were urged in favour of this motion last year stand with redoubled strength this year. The mover of this motion last year, I mean the Hon'ble Mr. R. N. Chaudhuri, in the course of the debate said:—"Now this steam boat consumes this Rs. 11,031 in spite of the fact that the Commissioner (as it was meant last year and before for the Commissioner alone) can travel by rail." I add, Sir, this year, that if Commissioners can travel by railways, by steamers and by motor cars, I think the members for whom now the "Kestrel" is meant may also travel by railways, by steamers and by motor cars. Now, continuing, says he:—"In these circumstances I cannot understand why this amount should be paid for keeping the steam boat establishment." "I understand", says he "that last year Rs. 7,632 was spent on the steam boat and it was on duty only for 162 days. Considering this fact and also the fact that the Rivers Steam Navigation Company have got plenty of steamers and also seeing that the Commissioner has got his own motor car"..... And as a matter of fact members using this boat can reasonably be expected, I need not say, to have the same conveyance themselves and there are also railway communications. Taking into consideration all these things I do not think it is justifiable that this amount should be spent. "The policy of this House I understand" says he "was for retrenchment"; which policy this year has been enunciated as "*there should be rigorous, nay, ruthless, retrenchment.*" "But" says he "if retrenchment is the policy there are some items which could very well be expunged" and to this item he drew the most pointed attention of the House. He concluded "Under these circumstances all I can say is that the amount entered for the steam boat is not necessary at all. We shall be failing in our duty if we do not curtail expenses which seem to be unnecessary." Then Rai Bahadur Nalini Kanta Ray Dastidar also spoke in favour of the motion. Srijiit Dalim Chandra Bora in supporting the motion said: "Sir, I do not quite understand what earthly motive moves the authorities to maintain this steam launch. We have now both steamer services and railway communications throughout the length and breadth of the Province." Khan Bahadur Muhibuddin Ahmad also supported the resolution. Then several other members of the House also supported this. But, Sir, I have already pointed out in my last speech, how by the magic wand of our very able and veteran Finance Member the "Kestrel" got back her life the day following her demise. The circumstances of the province do not justify the maintenance of this boat. It may be contended that there are certain areas where members would certainly need the help of steam boat. But, Sir, I should remind the House

how often such occasions arise during the year, and I think the difficulties that may come in in the way are not insurmountable. They have always been met and I think having regard to our economic condition we should be prepared to undergo such difficulties and be able to surmount them without very great inconvenience to ourselves or allowing our duty to be.....

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—May I ask, Sir, to whom the Hon'ble Member is referring when he is speaking of "us" and "ourselves"? I was not aware that not having the "Kestrel" would cause him any inconvenience.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—I meant to say, Sir, the officers who use the launch.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—Then, Sir, we who use the "Kestrel" will speak for ourselves even if by so doing we shall not have the eloquence of the Hon'ble Member to advocate our cause.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—It would be better if the Hon'ble Member had put it more plainly.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—And with these remarks, Sir, I should like that the grant be omitted.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I shall put the matter very briefly, Sir. I did not understand last year's proceedings in the same way as the Hon'ble Member. The vote of the Council about the "Kestrel" was that the Commissioner of the Assam Valley Division did not require a steam launch. This view prevailed and the provision was omitted from the demand under which the Commissioner's establishment and expenditure come. A day or two later I told the Council that they had decreed by their recent vote that the Commissioner should not have a launch. I said that we had accepted their decision, but that we did not wish to get rid of the launch altogether, that she was useful for touring officers, and that if the Council would permit us we would take her from the charge of the Commissioner and make her over to the charge of the Public Works Department so that she might be used by the Government, by Members of the Executive Council and Ministers when on tour, and that when none of us was using her the Commissioner might do so. This was accepted by the Council. There was not only no division but there was no discussion. I deserve no credit for the magical powers that the Hon'ble Member has ascribed to me. I thought that mine was a perfectly reasonable proposition and I put it to the Council.

Well, Sir, the "Kestrel" has been used a good deal this year. My Hon'ble Colleague has used her and both the Ministers have done so. I alone have never been able to use her. Well, Sir, as to what is convenient or inconvenient opinions may differ. Speaking for myself I can claim to be a fairly busy man and to tour a good deal. The advantage of touring in the

"Kestrel" is that one takes one's shorthand-writer and one's files with one. In a day spent on the "Kestrel" one can get through a lot of office work that one could not otherwise. I confess that I cannot do files in the train. I am too old to learn to do it.

The suggestion was made this morning that there was too much touring, too much running about. I should like to know whether the Council do not wish us to do any touring? If they expect us to tour I submit that they must allow us to do so in reasonable comfort.

There may have been some misunderstanding on one point which I did not quite appreciate this morning. We are asked whether if the "Rover" was sold we intended to buy another steamer to replace her. I confess that we find the "Kestrel" extremely useful in the Assam Valley, and it would be very useful if it were possible for us to have a similar steamer in the Surma Valley which Members and Ministers could use and which the Commissioner could use when not required by them. But I need hardly say that even if we sell the "Rover" it will be quite impossible for us to get another steamer without the matter coming before the Council, without provision being made for it in the budget and without the Council having a chance of voting on it.

RAI SAHIB BEPIN CHANDRA DEB LASKAR :—Sir, I think that two steam launches are not all necessary, so I do not find any necessity for keeping the "Kestrel" and the amount provided for its upkeep should be omitted. With these few words I support the motion.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—Does the Hon'ble Member wish to say anything more?

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—The Hon'ble Mover has a right of reply.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—I think, Sir, I should not be prepared to abandon my proposal, viz., the omission of the amount inasmuch as we are confronted with a very bad budget this year. I told you, Sir, yesterday that any amount big or small whatever we can lay our hands on we must curtail, and I think it is quite reasonable that we should curtail our next year's budget by this amount.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—It is for the Council, Sir, to decide what is reasonable or not reasonable. It has been suggested that we do not require two launches. As I said this morning we are trying to sell the "Rover" in which case we shall have only one left.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—The question is that the provision of Rs. 5,900 for steam boat "Kestrel" be omitted.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—Sir, I want a division.

(When the division was being taken.)

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—Sir, as the Hon'ble Finance Member has said that they are going to dispose of the "Rover" very shortly, if the Council agrees I shall have no objection if the motion is withdrawn.

MR. A. J. G. CRESSWELL :—I rise to a point of order, Sir. Surely this cannot be allowed.

A division was taken with the following result :—

Noes.

Hon'ble Mr. W. J. Reid, C.S.I.
Hon'ble Mr. A. Majid, C.I.E.
Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Ghanasyam Barua.
Mr. A. W. Botham, C.I.E.
Mr. A. R. Edwards.
Mr. J. R. Cunningham, C.I.E.
Khan Sahib Alauddin Chaudhuri.
Sardar Bahadur Anjab Ali Khan.
Rai Sahib Padmanath Gohain Barua.
Mr. A. J. G. Cresswell.
Mr. E. H. Featherstone.
Mr. W. K. Allies.
Mr. A. Moffat.
Khan Bahadur Muhammad Bakht Majumdar.
Srijut Nilmoni Phukan.
Mr. E. S. Roffey.
Dr. H. G. Roberts.
Mr. W. E. H. Grayburn.

Ayes.

Maulavi Abdul Khalique Chaudhuri.
Srijut Dalim Chandra Borah.
Srijut Bepin Chandra Ghose.
Rai Bahadur Amarnath Ray.
Rai Bahadur Nalini Kanta Ray Das-tidar.
Munshi Safiur Rahman.
Rai Sahib Bipin Chandra Deb Laskar.
Maulavi Munawwarali.

The ayes being 8 and the noes being 20, the motion was declared lost.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—The question is that a sum not exceeding Rs. 29,38,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923, for the administration of the head "41.—Civil Works."

The motion was adopted.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I beg to move, Sir, that a sum not exceeding Rs. 3,11,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923, for the administration of the "Railways."

The motion was put and adopted.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I beg to move, Sir, that a sum not exceeding Rs. 78,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923 for the administration of the head "21.—Ports and Pilotage." There are no motions, Sir.

The motion was put and adopted.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :— I beg to move, Sir, that a sum not exceeding Rs. 80,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923, for the administration of the head "42.—Waterways and Embankments." There are no motions.

The motion was put and adopted.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I beg to move, Sir, that a sum not exceeding Rs. 70,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923, for the administration of the "European Education."

The motion was put and adopted.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 33,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923, for the administration of the "Scientific Departments."

MAULAVI RUKUNNUDIN AHMAD :—At present, I shall be glad to have an explanation of the Hon'ble the Finance Member with regard to this motion.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I take it, Sir, that my Hon'ble friend who asks for an explanation means that he would like to hear what has been done in connection with the Hydro-electric Survey, how matters stand, and what the proposals for the next year amount to. Well, Sir, in this time of financial stringency this provision has been questioned by many Hon'ble Members who took part in the general budget discussion. I say at once that we shall accept the decision of the Council on this vote, we shall accept it however regretfully. But I would ask the Council to consider the question as practical business men, to listen to what I have to say and then to give their decision. The real question is whether we can get anything back from the sums that we already spent or whether it is better to let them go and not throw good money after bad. Last year Colonel Taylor and I both tried to tell the Council what we were doing. We said that the Survey so far as we were concerned would be completed in two years. The Council voted the necessary provision for the current year and they are now asked to vote what is required to complete it. I shall presently read to the Council extracts from a note given me by the engineer in charge of the Surveys. I should like first to say that this year our programme was curtailed because it was impossible to complete the full programme and still keep within the allotment which the Council gave. I gave a definite promise that we would not exceed the allotment and in fulfilment of that promise we have not been able to finish all that we expected to finish this year. I said last year that after providing for the current year we should require Rs. 30,000 to complete the survey. Hon'ble Members will see that Rs. 30,000 is the sum which we have proposed for next year.

Well, Sir, the provision of Rs. 30,000 for 1922-23 is suggested to enable the engineer in charge to complete three Survey projects, the Hukong Valley, the Cherrapunji and Bagmara-Siju-Jankaray projects.

The present state of each of these projects is such that if they cannot be financed to completion for one more year the money already spent will be for all practical purposes wasted.

As regards the Hukong Valley one month more is required to complete the field work that is wanted and to measure the rainfall recorded by the automatic rain-gauge left in position this year. As the whole project depends on the rainfall it will be obvious that it is of the greatest importance that we should know what that is. In the original estimate of the power available here the rainfall was taken at eighty inches but the automatic rain-gauge makes it a hundred and thirty inches which means an enormous increase in the water power available should this water power ultimately be used commercially. Mr. Blenkinsop says:—"I have the authority of the Chief Engineer, Mr. Meares, for stating that this Hydro-electric power scheme should be not only nearly the most powerful but certainly the cheapest in the world. In this present unfinished state with valuable data lacking, no capitalist would consider it as it would necessitate a further special survey on his part." Well, Sir, as I said last year, it is by no means certain that we should be immediately benefited from the completion of this Hukong-Valley Survey. The fact remains that there is ample water power and that a very little additional expense will enable us to complete our registration of the rainfall.

The second project is the Cherrapunji one which is much nearer home. The surveys on the original lines were completed in 1920-21 and did not prove satisfactory. Since then however the Chief Engineer, Mr. Meares, has exhaustively inspected the work. He did so in December last. He worked out a fresh scheme for developing the power which he considered most favourable. The survey for this Cherrapunji scheme is in progress, but owing to financial straits this year it has not been completed. This is what I meant when I said that it was impossible to complete our survey programme this year and keep within our allotment. As matters stand the project is useless, but in a couple of months these surveys could be completed and might transform this project into one likely to attract capitalists. The cost of completing these surveys will not be great and can be met from the budget provision for 1922-23.

The Bagmara-Siju-Jankaray survey is incomplete, but the data collected so far show that it is well worth proceeding with. There are also two very promising projects on the Kopili river near Lumding and on the Subansiri which Mr. Blenkinsop proposes to investigate next year. He holds that these are all projects from which Assam will certainly derive benefit in the near future. He argues that apart from the indirect revenue to be expected especially in the case of the Hukong-Valley project from the birth of new industries the yearly royalty on commercial projects will be very considerable.

Since this matter was last discussed, Sir, I have had the advantage of talking it over with Mr. Meares, the Chief Engineer. He was very enthusiastic, and very anxious that the Cherrapunji project in particular should be further examined and brought to completion. He told me this seems fair enough—that there is no reason why a fair royalty should not be charged for the use of the water power in the province.

Well, Sir, this is the position. The Government of India spent money on these surveys in the early days. We spent this year Rs. 60,000 or Rs. 61,000. We propose now to spend a further sum of Rs. 30,000 to complete

our surveys. If any thing is going to come out of them this can only be, after all these surveys have been done. It is for the Council to judge whether it is better to give up what we have spent or hard pressed as we are to find this Rs. 30,000 in the hope of a return coming from it afterwards. I need hardly say again that if we allow the present opportunity to go, if we allow the engineer in charge to take up other duties, if we allow the survey parties to be broken up now and taken up the project afresh a year or two later it will be much more costly.

I undertake, Sir, if the Council wish the survey to proceed that as was done this year expenditure will be kept strictly within the allotment of Rs. 30,000. We shall be able to finish what we wished to do in the case of these Hydro-electric Surveys. If the investigation and detailed survey of the two new projects on the Kopili river and Subansiri are wanted a sum of Rs. 8,000 for survey work in connection with these two would be required in 1923-24, not next year.

This is a statement of the case, Sir. It is for the Council to decide whether we should carry on or not.

MAULAVI RUKUNUDDIN AHMAD :—Sir, I am fully satisfied with the explanation given by the Hon'ble the Finance Member and as we are going to complete the operation by spending Rs. 30,000 only, I withdraw my motion.

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

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR GHANASYAM BARUA :—I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 8,29,000 be granted to the Governor and his Minister to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923, for the administration of the "Medical Department."

No notice of motion for reduction has been given.

The motion was put and adopted.

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR GHANASYAM BARUA :—I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 4,48,000 be granted to the Governor and his Minister to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923, for the administration of the "Public Health Department."

There is no motion for reduction.

The motion was put and adopted.

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR GHANASYAM BARUA :—I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 23,35,000 be granted to the Governor and his Minister to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923, for the administration of the "Education Department."

• There are two motions, Sir.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—I beg to move, Sir :—

That the lump provision of Rs. 1,000 for increase of pay of officers of the Provincial Educational Service be omitted.

This item Sir, occurs under the minor head—Inspection—at page 143, the major head is 31 E.—Education. As far as I have been able to follow the present policy of the Education Department, and I say this particular with reference to the Director of Public Instruction in the report published last year, it appears that the present policy of the Director is only to look to the process of inspection for all possible efficiency and improvement in the Education Department. Of course I am speaking only on the assumption that this increase is meant only for the inspection staff and not for the teaching staff, in that case I withdraw my resolution. Because it occurs under the minor head and on the assumption that it goes to the benefit of the inspecting staff, I am obliged to put it. Further, Sir, I should like to remind the Council of the recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee. There also we have said a good deal about the unreasonable character of the constant clamour for increasing the inspecting staff and about the doubts of the benefits to be received simply by improving and increasing the inspecting staff. So for the present, with these few words, I wish to conclude to see what the Government have to say.

MR. J. R. CUNNINGHAM :—Sir, there is no question here of increasing the inspecting staff.

In connection with this small, innocent provision, I do not feel myself called upon to enter into a discussion on the subject of general educational policy. I can only say with reference to Babu Krishna Sundar Dam's remarks that I am quite at a loss to understand what he means by suggesting that he discovers from the Education Report that my whole idea of educational administration is concentrated on inspection.

So far as this provision is concerned, a word of explanation is probably required. The provision is for an increase in the pay of the Assistant Inspectress of Schools, the actual sum required being Rs. 840. At the time the Budget was framed it was not possible for me to say exactly what sum would be needed for this purpose as before reorganising our own service we were waiting for the reorganisation of the female Education Service in Bengal. Accordingly in framing my Budget Estimates, I entered in anticipation a provision of Rs. 1,000. The re-organisation in Bengal was duly published afterwards. I then submitted proposals for the administration. The proposals were sanctioned on the Bengal basis. The actual sum required is as I have said Rs. 840.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, I was not also going to enter into the general discussion about the present policy of the Education Department and I wish to tell Mr. Cunningham that what I mean by the growing tendency to bestow more attention on the benefits of inspection will be clear to him only by a reference to what has been said by the Members of the Retrenchment Committee in their Report. As far as I remember the Director of Public Instruction was inclined to ascribe the improved character of the education and the larger outturn of successful candidates at university examinations to the larger and improved inspecting staffs and to that Rai Bahadur P. C. Dutt has given a satisfactory reply by pointing out that it was more and more due to the improvement in the quality of the teaching staff. I think, Sir, many others will also agree to this view that whatever attention there is possible to bestow, financial or otherwise, should be bestowed on the tutorial staff. In that view I brought forward

this motion for reduction for calling attention to a question of principle. My further object was to bring to the notice of the Council that the Retrenchment Committee had recommended for the abolition of present posts of Inspectors of the Imperial service and since the Government have not yet said anything about the effect they are going to give to their recommendations, I hope to know now the views of the Government seeing that they have placed before the Council this provision for the increase of the inspecting staff. However, considering the explanation of the Hon'ble Member in charge and the difficulties which arise in pressing for reduction in the present proposal, I beg to withdraw my motion.

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

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN :—Sir, I beg to move :—

"That the sum of Rs. 1,50,000 for the construction of the Murarichand College building be omitted."

Sir, at the outset, I must say that this motion has come from one who claims some pretension for education. Last year in my budget speech I appreciated the provision for the Murarichand College and I congratulated the Government on this. I must tell the House that personally I should think it sacrilegious on my part to propose any reduction on educational matters, but on certain principles and certain facts, so to say, intervening, I am constrained to move this reduction. I heard recently in this Council some of my friends of the other Valley raising the old cry 'Back to Bengal.' Sir, we know Mr. Nag was feeling his way in the Legislative Assembly on this matter and also using his pen in the "Sylhet Chronicle" raising the cry 'Back to Bengal.' So far as I understand the Government of India also left the matter for the serious consideration of the Provincial Government and the Provincial Council.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, I rise to a point of order. Is it permissible to allow the Hon'ble Member to travel over the subject of Bengal-Sylhet question instead of confining himself to the educational question. He is diverting on an administrative question which concerns the Secretary of State.....

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—It is not for the Hon'ble Member to decide a point of order. I think if the Hon'ble Member is going to argue that the expenditure should not be incurred because of the possibility of Sylhet reverting to Bengal, perhaps he is justified in bringing forward his motion.

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN :—That, Sir, is exactly my point of view. If Sylhet is going to Bengal then it is for the House to consider whether we should be justified in incurring such a large amount of capital expenditure which will not ultimately be to the benefit of the province. There has recently been a widespread rumour that Assam is going to be annexed to Bengal. Sir, we shall never go to Bengal—at least the people of this Valley. And if the Hon'ble Members representing the other Valley are willing to go to Bengal, that question must be decided by them and by the province, not by me. But as the cry has been raised by some of my friends—and if that be the sense of the House also,—then I think I am justified in moving this reduction, though very painfully. At the same time even though this rumour has been afloat for some time, we have not received any communiqué from the Government one way or the other. All these misgivings have there-

fore prompted me to move this reduction as a sort of test case. Sir, I for one, do not see any reason, why—if we actually mean business in this Council, if we actually mean to live as a province, if we actually mean to do something in our own Provincial Council,—why we should have to work under that misgiving. Assam has been treated like a football (laughter) in matters of territorial re-distribution. This must be stopped once for all. I know some of my friends entertain the doubt that Assam, as a small province, cannot stand. I deny this. Smaller provinces than Assam are living as self-governing colonies or countries in other parts of the world. However, I must not enter into the question in any detail, as that may perhaps be looked upon as a digression. But the only point I want the House to consider at this moment is: Let this Council be not in any way considered as the Assam Branch of the Bengal Council. We are a separate entity and we must stand or fall on our own strength or weakness. So, if my friends of the other Valley still entertain the idea that there is no certainty whether they will be still here or going to Bengal, in that case, Sir, I should like, for the time being at least, to postpone this item which will entail about more than a lakh of rupees, though for a very laudable project. I have already said it will be my painful duty to do that. I only want the assurance from my friends of the other Valley that the expressions by certain individual members the other day are not their collective opinion. If I get that assurance—and I hope I will get it—I will most willingly withdraw this resolution.....

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—I think it is not right to ask for any such assurance. He must confine himself to the necessity for reduction.

(Mr. Phukan did not get up to continue his speech.)

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—Do you (Babu Krishna Sundar Dam) still persist on your point of order?

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Mr. Phukan, I think, has closed his speech and so there is no need for me to persist.

REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY :—Sir, it is rather suprising that such a resolution should have come up. To my mind whether Sylhet goes back to Bengal or not Sylhet is now in Assam, and as long as it is in Assam it has the right to claim some portion of the revenues of Assam, because it is still paying revenue to Assam. And I believe there is no reason why we should object to this grant as Sylhet is still in Assam.

MR. J. R. CUNNINGHAM :—Sir, the fear expressed by Mr. Phukan is that Sylhet after dipping its hand deeply and resolutely into the common purse will pass over to Bengal despite with the loot. The emphasis of Mr. Phukan's manner I cannot believe that he is really in earnest in moving this resolution. Is he not rather indulging himself in a jest at the expense of Hon'ble members from the Surma Valley, because they cannot keep King Charles's head out of the memorial. For my part, I do not pretend to be conversant with these political considerations, but when I hear this talk of separation I say to myself—"the Surma Valley is blowing off steam again." I remember, Sir my alarm on the first occasion when I heard the question raised—it was at the first budget meeting of the Legislative Council of reconstituted Assam, this time nine years ago—in one of those interesting irrelevancies which enliven budget debates with a touch of the human and the unexpected, one Hon'ble member, passing straight from arithmetic to

the emotions, described the forlorn condition of Sylhet dissociated from Bengal—like water parted from the sea—and made her cry with the disconsolate child in the poem with which we are all familiar:—

“ Ah! Bring my brother back to me,
I cannot play alone.”

Sir, since that time I have heard the theme repeatedly renewed wherever, it seemed, the world was not wagging entirely to the liking of the southern division. But my alarm has subsided as I have tended to regard it all, as I have said, as the blowing off of steam. At other times I imagine that possibly the Surma Valley tires at intervals of the fever and the fret of public life, its hopes and its disappointments, and seeks to attain a sort of political *nirvana* by absorption in a larger entity—the overwhelming entity of Bengal. But whatever the explanation may be I suggest that it is unreasonable to bring an issue so unreal to bear on the decision of the question of what we are to do here and now in voting grants for present needs. We might as well take into consideration that other, and happier, possibility which was hinted at by one or more Members of the Council in course of the budget debate, namely that land will be added largely unto us, that we shall extend to Rangpur, possibly even swell to the limits of ancient Kamarupa, and run down southward by Chittagong till we reach the sea.

To me, Sir, if I may say so, it seems that the equilibrium of this political system of Assam is slowly growing more not less stable, desperately slowly, I may be mistaken but none the less I hope surely, that the fusion is indeed becoming organic. It will help towards this consummation—so devoutly to be wished—if Hon'ble members from the Assam Valley when dealing with questions which closely affect the interests of the Surma Valley will look at the issues from the Surma Valley point of view. If they do so in the present case I need not say that they will see the imperative need for proceeding with the buildings of the Murarichand College.

Sir, I would only ask before the debate starts—with a view to preventing a debate, if possible, on the subject—that the Hon'ble mover might reconsider the question and decide if it is wise to divide the House on such a question. I do not myself think so.

RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DUTTA :—Sir, the motion before the House seems to be so unreasonable and absurd I hope the Hon'ble member will excuse me for the strong language I use—that I do not think it deserves any serious reply. The Hon'ble Mover perhaps thinks that the Murarichand College is going to be a free gift to Sylhet from the rest of the province but he conveniently forgets that Sylhet contributes a large amount of revenue to the public exchequer of this province and that in the early days of this province it was the revenues of Sylhet that sustained the administration. But perhaps in a motion like this it is too much to expect any thing like reason. I will however say this to the Hon'ble Mover that I for myself will be prepared to support his motion if he and those who think with him will be prepared on their part to give me an undertaking that they will support any resolution that might be brought up in this Council at any time for the transfer of Sylhet back to Bengal. As the Hon'ble Mr. Cunningham has said it is very regrettable that the House should be divided on a question like this and that we should unnecessarily be brought into conflict in deciding whether a grant should be made to the Murarichand College or not. I shall not

go into the question as to whether Sylhet should go to Bengal or not because that question does not arise. I will simply say this that there is a strong feeling in Sylhet for going back to Bengal, and we as the representatives of the Valley are in duty bound to bring it to the notice of the House. That is all that I would like to say now.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, the Hon'ble Mover belongs to the tutorial section of the Education Department, too much given to teaching boys and testing their growing knowledge and I think that the resolution which he has brought forward is also conceived in the same spirit of testing the combined wisdom of this infant Council, and I fully believe that the Councillors will pass successfully out of the test which has been imposed on them by the Hon'ble Mover. Sir, he has not said,—in fact he did not venture to say anything—as to the merits of the case. As far as I could follow him his arguments may be divided into two parts. First it was a threat offered to the people of the Surma Valley for obtaining an assurance that neither themselves nor their successors will ever again clamour to go back to Bengal and in the next place he seemed to me to be anxious to convince us that it was a foolish step to attempt reunion of Sylhet with Bengal and that it is better in the interests of the people of the Surma Valley to stay on here in Assam forgetting all about their connection with Bengal. As to the threat—in fact he has made no secret of the same in launching forth this resolution that he meant only to threaten the people of the Surma Valley—I should like to say one thing. As the Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Promode Chandra Dutta said, the motion is devoid of good sense and reason; my friend should remember that what he speaks here will be heard by a larger audience than those sitting inside this hall and he should also realise that the Hon'ble Members on the Government side take the trouble of standing on their legs and replying to our questions not simply with a view to speaking to the Hon'ble Mr. Phukan or to the Hon'ble Mr. Dam, but that they speak with a view to making their utterances heard by a larger audience, outside through their representatives in this hall. In launching forth this resolution which has been characterised by the Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Promode Chandra Dutta as most unreasonable my Hon'ble friend seems to have forgotten the real responsibility of the position which he has come to occupy in this Council. Well Sir, does he think that the whole of the revenues of Assam belongs to the people of the Brahmaputra Valley? Well, Sir, does he know the history why Sylhet was separated from Bengal and joined to the other Valley? Let him recollect the past history and the contribution made by the Surma Valley for the benefit of the Brahmaputra Valley. Does he know all about our losses after Sylhet was separated from Bengal? Can he say what would be the result if there had been adjustment and settlement of accounts between the preceding generation of the Brahmaputra Valley and the preceding generation of the Surma Valley. I do not know how he has made his calculations. He is a School-master; I do not know whether he proceeded from arithmetical, geographical or historical calculations. I believe he knows what is meant by the direct method of teaching—at least I believe his Department makes it now imperative upon him to teach by the direct method. Well, if he means to teach the people of Sylhet a good lesson he should do so by the direct method. He should proceed to take up the budgets of the two provinces of Assam and Bengal and then he should realise for himself whether

the people of Sylhet have a right and reasonable plea for going back to Bengal. I would put it to the Hon'ble Mover to say if Bengal kick out our students at this moment from the Medical College or the Sibpur Engineering College will the Hon'ble Finance Member of Assam be able to take care of them? He seems to be offended at the idea that we the people of the Surma Valley should think this Government as the Assam branch of the Government of Bengal; this is true to a great extent. He is labouring under exaggerated notions about this Government. Sir, the Hon'ble the Director of Public Instruction has already asked the Mover to look at the question from the Surma Valley point of view but I do not think the appeal has had any effect upon either my friend's head or heart; otherwise I think he would have been generous to withdraw the resolution.

I believe other Members of the Surma Valley also have something to speak on the subject, so I will not take up the time of the Council any longer.

KHAN SAHIB ALAUDDIN AHMED CHAUDHURI:—Sir, I regret I cannot see eye to eye with the Hon'ble Mover as to how the question of Sylhet going to Bengal can have any bearing on the question of reduction of grants of the Murarichand College. If, for the sake of argument, I admit that Sylhet wants to go to Bengal, I do not think that this is a sufficient ground that the building of the College should be left off half-way so long as Sylhet pays revenue to Assam. Sylhet, Sir, is not dependent on the Assam Valley as far as we are aware, and as one of the Hon'ble Members has already said, Sylhet helped the administration of the Assam Valley for a considerable length of time. What we know is that Sylhet was curtailed from Bengal simply to help the administration of Assam at the beginning. Whether we wish to go to Bengal or not we are not prepared to say at this moment. My Hon'ble friend Mr. Phukan seems to think that we would at his pleasure commit ourselves in saying that we do not want to go to Bengal and he would then on our giving him this assurance be very pleased to withdraw his motion for reduction. I say, Sir, only upon this ground that the manner in which he has put forward his reasons are not very much pleasing to us. The reason for establishing the College at Sylhet is based upon the principle of "the greatest good for the greatest number" and not to the largest area. So by this grant we cannot say that the authorities are giving any money of the Assam Valley to the Surma Valley or that any special favour is being shown to the Surma Valley, or that it is a question of a gift. Up to the present moment no Member of this Council has ever expressed any intention of Sylhet's going to Bengal. The "Sylhet Chronicle" may write anything it pleases but no Member up till now has taken the matter up, or any steps have ever been taken, to make this movement a success in the way in which it ought to have been done. So I do not see why the Hon'ble Mover should require an assurance of this kind from us as a condition to his withdrawing his motion. I personally may or may not be in favour of Sylhet's going to Bengal, and even if I wish to remain in Assam I do not think that I should be wise in committing myself in the Council simply to get a grant for the Murarichand College.

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR GHANASYAM BARUA :—Sir, to cut short the discussion I think I should say that I entirely agree with my friend Khan Sahib Alauddin Choudhury that this is not the proper place for discussing the question of the separation of Sylhet from Assam. That is rather a question to be decided by Sylhet herself, but as long as Sylhet remains a part of the province she should receive the same attention as any other part of it. The project of the Murari Chand College buildings has been undertaken deliberately. The work has been commenced and we cannot allow it to make a halt. As we have already undertaken the project we should go on with it and as long as the province remains intact we must diligently continue its progress. The money has been provided by Government after very careful consideration and I do not think it is proper to introduce in the midst of the budget debates the larger question of the separation of the district from this province. If the Hon'ble Member wants to press his point, he may bring it forward in a more concrete form at some other time and have it properly discussed and decided. I do not think that this is the time for the discussion or that the grant can be omitted on the ground put forward.

RAI SAHIB PADMANATH GOHAIN BARUA :—Sir, after hearing what has been said by the Hon'ble Mover and the Hon'ble Members of the other Valley, which I have marked has touched their feelings naturally on a question that the Hon'ble Mover is going to claim his right over the revenue of Sylhet and would not allow it to be used for the benefit of that Valley. But for me as far as I could understand the minds of both parties I see that he moved the resolution with the best of motives. He has done it not out of spite but to my mind out of his love for the friends of the other Valley. (Laughter)! He is so attached to them and he so much likes his friends that he cannot bear the idea of losing them. (Laughter)! So, Sir, it is not a question of spite but of love.

As to revenue, I make no difference in the revenue of this Valley or that Valley. Surma Valley has an equal right upon the revenue of that Valley and the Assam Valley has the same right. I should not make any difference, and to speak the truth I think my Hon'ble friend will agree with me, and he will be only too glad to have the College building completed—(Hear! hear)! and I think that no one will be more pleased than he to have the small amount—(I should say the small amount in consideration of the estimate made for the completion of the building)—provided for the building, but his fear is this, I think—(and it might be the real thing)—that if that portion of our province is going away to a richer province and we the poor people or the poor peasants lay out the money in advance, it would be like something being taken away from the poor. That is the idea and I do not think it should make any difference between this Valley and that Valley. His best motive was to get an assurance either by right or privately that our friends of the other Valley do not desire or intend to leave us and go to a better place, and in that case I think my friends of the other Valley will not have any objection to saying that they are really not going to leave us, and this I think will satisfy my friend and he will gladly withdraw his motion, and he should do it.

MAULAVI RASHID ALI LASKAR :—Sir, may I ask one question? Is he going to move the resolution which he moved (I should say playfully moved but taking a serious appearance) and allow other Members to speak on the subject, or is he going to withdraw his resolution?

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN :—Sir, I have not understood the Hon'ble Member.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—Does the Hon'ble Member wish to withdraw his resolution ?

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN :—Of course, Sir, I have already expressed my wish to do so and I was actually about to withdraw the resolution after hearing what the Hon'ble Mr. Cunningham has said from the Government side but unfortunately the Rai Bahadur started the discussion. However, now I want to make not exactly a reply but an explanation.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—Is it a personal explanation ?

SRIJUT DALIM CHANDRA BORAH :—Sir, if we do not get an assurance from the Hon'ble Mover that he will withdraw his motion, we also wish to say a few words in the matter. It is not good to waste the time of the Council for nothing.

MR. J. R. CUNNINGHAM :—I understand, Sir, that Mr. Phukan wants to withdraw the resolution and at the same time to make a personal explanation.

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN :—Sir, I raised this question as no diplomatic move. Really I was sincere about it. As some of my friends said suppose Sylhet is going to Bengal where is the harm in spending the amount. As a business policy if I am going to sell a house just now I will not further furnish it. That was my idea. Of course I am very sorry that I have offended my friends of the other Valley by raising this question. Let there be no more talk of going to Bengal. That was my idea, and I believe that is the feeling of my friends of the other Valley.....at least those who are representing that Valley and I take it to be their feeling even now.

Shouts..... No, No, no right to say so. (One member only).

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN :—I take it at least, whether I have a right or not.

One of my Hon'ble friends of course levelled many taunts against me as a school master. I bow at those remarks, and I can only reply that I am capable of bearing them. Further, some Members have raised the question whether this Valley is fed by the other Valley. I do not make any reply to that. That is a question to be seen. As regards the full autonomy of the province, one of my Hon'ble friends has entertained some doubt and on that ground I say once for all that we must settle whether we should have a full autonomous province or merge into any other province. That was my motive. If really Sylhet is going to Bengal, why should we spend more,—not because I grudge the money, not because I like that other Valley should go to Bengal—far from that. But I wanted an assurance that they were not taking up this question so frequently. I am serious about that. But before I withdraw this resolution, I only beg the House not to think that I wanted to create a division between the two Valleys. I will never do that. If I am compelled to do that at any other time on a matter of principle, there would be no help. But this is not my present motive and after what I have heard from several Members and the Hon'ble the Minister and Mr. Cunningham, I am quite convinced that the House does not like that such a reduction should be made. And I have already expressed my views that it would pain me the most if I am to do so. That was not my intention and therefore with the leave of the

House I beg to withdraw this resolution. If necessary, the whole question will be taken up afterwards.

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

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT:—The question is that a sum not exceeding Rs. 23,35,000 be granted to the Governor and his Minister to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923, for the administration of the "Education Department."

The motion was put and adopted.

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR GHANASYAM BARUA:—I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 92,000 be granted to the Governor and his Minister to defray the charges that will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923, for the administration of the "Registration Department".

No motion for reduction.

The motion was put and adopted.

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR GHANASYAM BARUA:—I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 4,22,000 be granted to the Governor and his Minister to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923, for the administration of the "Agriculture Department".

MAULAVI RUKUNUDDIN AHMED:—Sir, the motion that stands in my name is "that the sum of Rs. 20,000 allotted for the destruction of water-hyacinth be reduced by Rs. 10,000".

Sir, my reason for moving this motion is not that I do not know the very serious menace this vegetable pest is holding out in the East Bengal districts. But for the last two or three years, we have been providing money and neither the Agricultural Department nor any responsible authority is informing us where and what the volume of attack of this vegetation is in our province and with what measures of success we have been able to ward it off. If I am satisfied that the money already spent has been well spent, and that more money is necessary to combat the evil successfully, I may consider the desirability of withdrawing the motion.

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR GHANASYAM BARUA:—I think, Sir, the Hon'ble Mover wants to have some information on the subject and particularly to know what money has been spent and with what effect and whether this money will be well spent. Is that so?

MAULAVI RUKUNUDDIN AHMED:—Yes, Sir.

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR GHANASYAM BARUA:—The subject is rather a somewhat long one. But I will try to give a very short account of what has taken place with regard to this pest. This weed first made its appearance in the Surma Valley. I think some time about 1913 and since about two years after that, that is about 1915 or 1916, the weed made its existence felt in some places in that Valley. After a certain time about the beginning of 1917 almost a panic was created in some quarters where the weed made its location rather unpleasant and mischievous. That panic gradually found expression in questions in this Council, and the previous Council, in newspaper articles and in direct representations to the Government also. The Agricultural Department was taken to task for not looking to the eradication of this plant. The action taken was to engage the Agricultural Depart-

ment in making experiments as to whether there was any possibility of getting rid of this weed, and if not, whether it could be used to any commercial or profitable purpose, so that the people might be set to work in eradicating it for profit. During the years 1917 to 1920, experiments were made by the Agricultural Department to see what use could be made of the plant and as the Agricultural Department particularly deals with agriculture, manuring etc., their attention was specially devoted to see if the plant could be made useful by being converted into manure. In 1917, 1919 experiments were made by converting the plant to ash and testing it for manuring purposes. The ash had some manuring properties but it was not so rich as the potash manure that began to be supplied from Europe after the close of the war. In 1919-20 experiments were made in preparing potash salt by filtering the ash. This also yielded very poor results. At the end of 1919-20, it was almost definitely demonstrated that the efforts to use the plant or the products of the plant for manuring purposes on commercial lines would be impossible, because the salt and ash that were obtained could be sold only at a loss of 60 to 75 or 80 per cent. The Agricultural Department distributed leaflets describing the dangers from the weed and the uses that could be made of it with a view to induce the villagers to destroy the plant as far as possible and utilise the plant itself as green manure as well as its ash as a substantial manure for some crops. Further than that, the Department could not do much.

As green manure also it was found that it could not be commercially treated as it would not pay for the transport from one place to another at any considerable distance. It could be used as green manure only near the place where the weed was growing. After that the Government were naturally anxious to find other means to help the people who looked upon the weed as a real danger, and real danger it really proved to be in many ways.

With regard to the opinions expressed about its injurious effects, I will quote a few remarks made by high officials of Government including the late Governor Sir Nicholas Beatson Bell while he was Chief Commissioner. In September 1920, inspecting during his tours the places where this plant was growing, he made these remarks :—

"In the course of my tours, I found things worse than ever. I also found that the people were getting genuinely alarmed. It is now recognised that it is not merely a question of blocking waterways and tanks. The wind blows the weed from waterways on to paddy fields, chokes the paddy and does real harm."

Last year, the Hon'ble the Finance Member made a tour in that valley and this is what he said about it :—

"The spread of this pest is becoming a very serious matter. The rivers between Sunamganj and Habiganj are full of it and the Sub-divisional Officer, Habiganj, tells me that things are even worse in the fields and open country away from the main rivers. It is as nearly as possible three years since I did this trip by launch and the way in which the hyacinth has spread is most startling. Three years ago, there was little of it to be seen."

So, within three years he saw that whole tract of the country almost covered by the weed.

At a later stage he frankly said that he was terrified at the spread of the water-hyacinth.

The Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner were also asked to make reports.

It would be a waste of time to read the whole of their inspection notes. But I will quote a few remarks by the Commissioner. In a letter to the

Government he said—"On my way to Banyiachang I found that a waterway had been kept fairly clear, but when polling back, our boat had to make a long detour to avoid the great masses of the weed. In many places the weed was among the rice and we found men in boats busy pushing it off their land, one large grower of paddy told me that he had daily six boats out trying to keep his fields clear of water-hyacinth In many places the villagers do combine to clear the waterways but more frequently each man clears his own land and his own path by pushing the weed on to his neighbour's field or path. Concerted and organised action both for fencing against the weed and for removing it when it intrudes is required but it is difficult to say how this can be secured without giving some authority the right to impress labour."

I myself went to see those places personally, and I was really alarmed to see the way in which these weeds were spread over the paddy fields not to say, waterways.

Well, Sir, this is a pest which has appeared in many parts of the world and particularly its effects have been very severely felt in the States of Louisiana and Florida, in the United State of America, in the Island of Java, in the Straits Settlements, Siam, Ceylon, Burma, Madras and Bengal. All these places are equipped with a large number of experts and greater resources, but still they have found it impossible as yet properly to tackle the question of effectively dealing with the pest or of eradicating it. At the same time although no means of eradication have yet been found, it is a pest which cannot be left entirely uncontrolled. In fact if the villagers do not labour hard on their fields in order to get rid of this weed as much as possible at the time of cultivation and remove what is left when the harvest is reaped, their fields will soon be rendered utterly impossible of cultivation. In this state of things and considering the paucity of our funds, the best course that suggested itself to me was to have a report from our Agricultural officers in that quarter as to the extent of the mischief and the remedies they could suggest. I asked the Deputy Director accordingly to give me a considered report and he made such a report in January last. His report will I hope convince the Council that any amount which could be spent to fight this pest would not be ill-spent.

His report discloses that excluding forest and other high land areas which cannot be affected by the water-hyacinth, there will be some 5 lakhs of acres of waste-land to furnish a breeding ground for this weed and an area of about 10 lakhs of acres of crops will be exposed to the damages by the weed; that at the present moment about 10 per cent. or one lakh acres of cultivated land are already affected. He goes on to say that computing at the modest rate of Rs. 3 per acre for expenses and troubles for fighting the incursions of the weeds and another Rs. 3 per acre for loss through unavoidable damages the total burden on the Sylhet ryot would amount to six lakhs of rupees a year. Perhaps the estimate is too modest. The Commissioner's estimate is that a serious campaign against water-hyacinth would cost at least 12 lacs a year. The amount of Rs. 20,000 that we have provided is therefore simply insignificant and I should have gladly provided ten times that amount or even more if the funds allowed. In our present straitened circumstances any serious campaign against the hyacinth is impossible and the only option left to us is to help the poor cultivator in his own arduous work in fighting this pest for his cultivation. He has to labour hard to keep the plant off his field both for the purpose of ploughing before his paddy is planted and for keeping it safe after it is planted. This small amount has been given simply with a

view to help the ryots in their own labours for getting such things as they have to buy. We are not paying for the labour, we are depending on the ryot's own labour but it is only just that these poor people should be helped with a little money to get such things as bamboos, canes, small implements for collecting or removing the weels and to meet other incidental expenses. The money will be spent through the Local Boards which are the best local bodies to see that it is usefully spent. I hope the Council will not consider this amount too much, but rather that it is very small. If prosperous times come we may try to tackle the question more seriously, but as we cannot do anything more at present we are providing this amount simply as an aid to the ryot to be used for things which require expense, depending on his own labour for dealing with pest as best he can.

KHAN BAHADUR MUHIBUDDIN AHMAD :—Sir, I should like to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Member to the fact that a Committee presided over by Sir Jagadis Bose is sitting in Bengal to deliberate on this very question, and would like to suggest whether it would not be a good thing for us to wait and see the result of that Committee's labours. Can the Hon'ble Member tell us if that Committee has decided upon any remedy?

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR GHANASYAM BARUA :—We are really waiting for the result of that Committee's labours. If any means of destruction of this plant is discovered by that Committee, it will be a discovery of great benefit to the world. Experts are working all over the world. But till now no means of destruction has been discovered and at the present moment we are not looking for destruction either. We are simply trying to control the pest as much as possible in order to keep the fields capable of being cultivated. The treatment is something like that of a malignant sore which cannot be healed. If we cannot cure, we should at least keep it properly dressed to afford as much relief and peace to the sufferer as is possible.

KHAN BAHADUR MUHIBUDDIN AHMAD :—May I ask Sir, whether the Hon'ble Member is aware of what is being done in Bengal in this matter?

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR GHANASYAM BARUA :—We have no definite information, but we know that they are making investigations and have not come to any definite conclusions as yet. We are keeping in close touch and constant correspondence with Bengal in the matter.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I should like only to say, Sir, from the point of view of the Finance Department that if two lakhs or even twenty lakhs would get rid of this pest and we could afford it my Department would raise no objection whatsoever. I think the Hon'ble Minister has made it clear that this Rs. 20,000 is given rather to encourage the people so that they may not yield altogether to despair, than with any idea that so small a sum can really have any effect on this pest.

MAULAVI RUKUNUDDIN AHMED :—I fully realize the difficult situation and after hearing the Hon'ble Minister as well as the Finance Member, I beg to withdraw my motion.

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

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN :—Sir, I beg to move :—

That the sum of Rs. 20,000 allotted for the destruction of water-hyacinth be omitted."

Lest I am misunderstood I want to make my position clear, Sir. I move for the total omission of the sum of Rs. 20,000 on the very arguments which have been put forward by the Khan Bahadur and also by the Hon'ble

Minister for Local Self-Government. I also think that this amount is not at all sufficient for tackling this problem. I have studied the question, though not so fully and I find that in other provinces they have not been able to tackle the problem as yet properly. It was solely on this ground, therefore, that I put in this motion. I also made mention of this item in my budget speech and there I said that it would be like a charity misplaced. But after what I have heard from the Hon'ble Minister and the Hon'ble the Finance Member and also other Members, I find this amount has been allotted not for dealing with the subject scientifically, but only to control the pest as far as possible, and as such I also do not like to press the motion and if the House permits, I want to withdraw it.

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

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT:—The original motion before the House is:—

That a sum not exceeding Rs. 4,22,000 be granted to the Governor and his Minister to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923, for the administration of the "Agriculture Department."

The motion was put and adopted.

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR GHANASYAM BARUA:—I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 1,14,000 be granted to the Governor and his Minister to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923, for the administration of the "Industries Department."

The motion was put and adopted.

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR GHANASYAM BARUA:—I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 3,23,000 be granted to the Governor and his Minister to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923, for the administration of the head, "47.—Miscellaneous" (Transferred).

The motion was put and adopted.

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR GHANASYAM BARUA:—I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 4,68,000 be granted to the Governor and his Minister to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923, for the administration of the head, "41.—Civil Works" (Transferred).

The motion was put and adopted.

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR GHANASYAM BARUA:—I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 18,000 be granted to the Governor and his Minister to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923, for the administration of the head, "37.—Miscellaneous Departments" (Transferred).

The motion was put and adopted.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT:—To-morrow being Friday, for the convenience of the Hon'ble Muhammadan Members there will be no morning session of the Council.

The Council was then adjourned to Friday, the 24th March at 2 P. M.

SHILLONG:

S. E. STINTON,

The 12th April 1922.

Offg. Secretary to the Legislative Council, Assam.

