



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 Monday, the 11th September 1922 at 11 A.M.

P R E S E N T :

The Hon'ble Mr. J. C. Arbuthnott, C.I.E., President, the Hon'ble the two Members of the Executive Council, the Hon'ble the two Ministers and 41 nominated and elected members.

OATH OF OFFICE.

Mr. O. H. Desenne before taking his seat made the prescribed affirmation of allegiance to the Crown.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

(UNSTARRED QUESTIONS.)

KHAN BAHADUR MUHAMMAD BAKHT MAZUMDAR asked :—

1. (a) Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table the following figures—(a) The total number of candidates with their qualifications both Muhammadans and non-Muhammadans of this province, year by year, for the stipendiary studentship at the Calcutta Medical College, for the last 5 years?

(b) The total number of stipends awarded to the candidates both Muhammadans and non-Muhammadans, year by year, with their educational qualifications for the last 5 years. (c) The total number of stipends awarded to the Muhammadan candidates in the current year. (d) If the reply to (c) is in the negative, will the Government be pleased to state the reasons?

2. Will the Government be pleased to state whether any representation was given by the Shillong Moslem Union about the stipendiary studentship for the Muhammadan candidates at the Calcutta Medical College during the current year; if so, will the Government be pleased to state what action has been taken by the Government on the said representation or propose to take?

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DUTTA replied :—

1. (a) and (b)—The Hon'ble Member is referred to the lists laid on the table in reply to question No. 12 of Maulavi Rukunuddin Ahmad in the Council meeting of 19th September 1921. Information for 1922 will be found in the statement which is laid on the table.

(c) and (d)—Nil. Because the scholarships were awarded according to merit.

2.—The reply to first part of the question is in the affirmative. The matter is under the consideration of Government.

Surma Valley Candidates, 1922.

Serial No.	Name.	Educational qualifications.	Remarks.
1	2	3	4
1	Bhagaban Gati Mazumdar.	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination with Physics and Chemistry.	Wants scholarship or seat.
2	Surendra Kumar Raha.	Appeared at the B. Sc. Examination with Physics and Chemistry.	Wants scholarship.
3	Mrinal Kanti Biswas.	Student of B. Sc. class. Passed I. Sc. in the 1st Division.	Ditto.
4	Mahomed Abdul Gafur.	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination from Murarichand College.	Ditto.
5	Satya Ranjan Mitra.	4th year B. Sc. Class with Physics and Chemistry, Mathematics and Botany.	Ditto.
6	Narendra Krishna De.	Appeared at I. Sc. Examination with Physics and Chemistry.	Ditto.
7	Gagan Chandra Das.	Appeared at I. Sc. Examination from Murarichand College.	Ditto.
8	Munindra Mohan Chaudhuri.	Appeared at I. Sc. Examination with Physics and Chemistry.	Wants scholarship or seat.
9	Nani Gopal Kar ...	Reading in 4th year B. Sc.	Ditto.

Surma Valley Candidates, 1922—contd.

Serial No.	Name.	Educational qualifications.	Remarks.
1	2	3	4
10	Digindra Chandra Endaw.	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination with Physics and Chemistry.	Wants scholarship or seat.
11	Kshitindra Nath De.	Ditto ditto ...	Seat only.
12	Dhirendra Kumar De Chaudhuri.	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination from Murarichand College.	Wants a scholarship.
13	Jatindra Chandra Bhattacharya.	Appeared at the B. Sc. Examination with Physics and Chemistry.	Wants scholarship only.
14	Aparna Charan Das	...	Seat only.
15	Pramode Kumar Dhupi.	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination with Physics and Chemistry.	Scholarship.
16	Phanindra Mohan Datta, son of Deputy Inspector of Schools, Sylhet.	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination.	Wants scholarship or seat.
17	Parimal Kumar Kar.	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination with Physics and Chemistry.	Ditto.
18	Rabindra Chandra Das Purkayastha.	Ditto ditto ...	Ditto.
19	Mahomed Taiyab Ali.	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination from Murarichand College.	Scholarship only.
20	Prafulla Chandra Nag.	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination with Physics and Chemistry.	Ditto.

Surma Valley Candidates, 1922—contd.

Serial No.	Name.	Educational qualifications.	Remarks.
1	2	3	4
21	Mahamed Abdul Latiff.	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination from Murarichand College.	Scholarship only.
22	Abdul Majid ...	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination with Physics and Chemistry.	Ditto.
*23	Brajendra Nath Bhattacharya.	Reading in the 4th year B. Sc. class with Physics and Chemistry.	Ditto.
24	Ram Kumar Sarma Chaudhuri.	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination with Physics and Chemistry.	Scholarship or seat.
25	Sailesh Chandra Sen Gupta.	Third year B. Sc. class	Scholarship only.
26	Hirendra Chandra Sen.	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination with Physics and Chemistry.	Scholarship or seat.
27	U-Ober Roy ...	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination.	Scholarship only.
28	Abani Mohan Dam	Ditto ditto	Scholarship or seat.
29	Rabindra Nath Sarma Chaudhuri.	Ditto ditto	Scholarship.
30	Narendra Nath Datta.	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination with Physics and Chemistry.	Scholarship or seat.

* No. 23 of the Surma Valley list was granted scholarship.

Surma Valley Candidates, 1922—contd.

Serial No.	Name.	Educational qualifications.	Remarks.
1	2	3	4
31	Dines Chandra Das	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination with Physics and Chemistry.	Scholarship or seat.
32	Ganendra Nath Chaudhuri.	Ditto ditto	Ditto.
33	Sures Chandra De...	Passed B. Sc. with Physics and Chemistry. Reading for M. Sc.	Scholarship only.

Assam Valley Candidates, 1922.

1	Syed Mahamad Abdul Maunas.	Appeared at the last I. Sc. Examination.	Wants scholarship or a seat.
2	Dandi Datta Laskar.	Ditto ditto	Scholarship only.
3	Baradakanta Sarma	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination with Physics and Chemistry.	Ditto.
4	Hem Chandra Konwar (Ahom).	Appeared at the last B. Sc. Examination. Passed I. Sc. in the 1st Division.	Ditto.
5	Panchu Lal De, son of Professor Chuni Lal De of Gauhati.	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination.	Scholarship and a seat.
6	Manindra Prasad Sanyal.	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination with Physics and Chemistry.	Ditto.
7	Anil Kumar Mukhopadhyaya.	Ditto ditto	Ditto.

Assam Valley Candidates, 1922—contd.

Serial No.	Name.	Educational qualifications.	Remarks.
1	2	3	4
8	Kanak Chandra Sarma.	Passed B. Sc. Examination, 1920, with Physics and Chemistry.	Scholarship only.
9	Surendra Nath Das	Appeared at the B. Sc. Examination with Physics and Chemistry.	Ditto.
10	Sourindra Mohan Sen Gupta, son of Sub-Assistant Surgeon Anukul Chandra Sen Gupta.	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination.	Scholarship or a seat.
11	Padmanath Hazarika.	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination with Physics and Chemistry.	Ditto.
12	Benoy Bhusan Mazumdar.	Ditto ditto ...	Ditto.
13	Hari Prasad Das...	Ditto ditto ...	Ditto.
14	Sibnath Sarma ...	Appeared at the B. Sc. Examination with Honours in Chemistry.	Scholarship only.
15	Nripendra Nath Sen Gupta.	Appeared at the B. Sc. Examination.	Wants scholarship or a seat.
16	Birendra Mohan Das.	Reads for B. Sc. ...	Scholarship only.
17	Krishna Datta Hazarika.	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination.	Scholarship or a seat.

Assam Valley candidates, 1922—concl'd.

Serial No.	Name.	Educational qualifications.	Remarks.
1	2	3	4
18	Jagat Chandra Barooah.	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination.	Scholarship only.
19	Surendra Mohan Goswami.	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination with Physics and Chemistry.	Scholarship or a seat.
20	Phani Bhusan Mukherjee.	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination.	Ditto.
21	Girdhari Lal Kapur	Appeared at the B. A. Examination.	Scholarship only.
22	Umacharan Baruya	Appeared at the I. Sc. Examination with Physics and Chemistry.	Scholarship or a seat.
23	Jatindra Ram Khaund.	Appeared at the B. Sc. Examination.	Ditto.

No. 9 of the Assam Valley list was granted scholarship.

SRIJUT BEPIN CHANDRA GHOSE asked :—

1. Are the Government aware that many experienced classical teachers (pandits and moulvis) who have been in the educational service for a long time, have not still been raised to the graded service only because they could not pass the departmental examination in English? Departmental examination of classical teachers.

Will the Government be pleased under the circumstances to exempt these experienced classical teachers from the obligation of appearing at the departmental examination in view of long and good services done by them?

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DUTTA replied :—

1.—The answer to the first part of the question is generally in the affirmative.

The answer to the second part of the question is in the negative. It has for many years been open to classical masters outside the Subordinate Educational Service to win promotion to that service by qualifying themselves fully for their work. It is still open to them to do so.

SRIJUT BEPIN CHANDRA GHOSE asked :—

Filling up the post of Education Minister. 2. Now that Khan Bahadur Syed Abdul Majid, C.I.E., the late lamented Education Minister of Assam, has unfortunately passed away, will the Government be pleased to consider the desirability of having only one Minister for a poor province like Assam ?

MR. A. W. BOTHAM replied :—

2.—The question was very carefully considered by His Excellency the Governor with whom the decision rests. He decided that so long as there were two Members of Council there ought to be two Ministers : but the possibility of reducing the strength of both Executive Councillors and Ministers will not be lost sight of.

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN asked :—

Assam Engineering Scholarships. 1. (a) Is it a fact that Assam Engineering Scholarships are tenable at Sibpur Engineering College only ?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state how many appointments in the Public Works Department were given to candidates trained in Sibpur Engineering College during the last 12 years and how many recruited from Roorkee and other colleges ?

(c) Will the Government be pleased to consider the desirability and justice of recruiting only from colleges where the scholarships are unable ?

Inspection Bungalows and subordinate quarters. 2. (a) Will the Government be pleased to state whether a beginning is likely to be made to provide gradually District and Subdivisional Headquarters with Inspection Bungalows and quarters for subordinates ?

(b) If not, so long as funds do not permit, will the Government be pleased to make some arrangement for touring subordinate officers not entitled to occupy Circuit Houses ?

(c) Is it a fact that some rooms of Dâk Bungalows at Tinsukia Dimapur, Badarpur, etc., are now being used as Inspection Bungalows ? Will not this arrangement give free accommodation at all stations to officers of superior grades only ?

(d) Will the Government be pleased to make such temporary arrangements in District and Subdivisional Headquarters as well, as has been done at Sylhet, in which case difficulties of subordinate touring officers who are not entitled to occupy Circuit House will also be removed ?

Krittal-Baniya and Balvarta Communities. 3. (a) Will the Government be pleased to state what communities of Assam are being recognised as separate communal units for the purposes of recruitment to Government service and enjoyment of other privileges ?

(b) Are there any communities considered 'backward' for the above-named purposes?

(c) Are the Government aware of the complaint of the members of Britthial-Baniya and Kaivarta communities that their communal interests have not been specially recognised by the Government and that not a single qualified candidate of their communities has been appointed to any higher grade post of the Government during at least the last ten years?

(d) Will the Government be pleased to treat them henceforth as separate communal units for those purposes?

4. (a) Has the attention of the Government been drawn to the fact that Assamese has not been included in the syllabus of optional subjects prescribed for Indian Civil Service examination?

Indian Civil
Service
Examina-
tion.

(b) Will the Government be pleased to move in this matter?

MR. A. W. BOTHAM replied :—

1. (a)—The higher Engineering scholarships are tenable at the Sibpur Engineering College and the lower Engineering scholarships at Dacca.

(b)—The number of appointments held by former students of the Sibpur Engineering College during the last 12 years, is 12 and the corresponding number from Roorki and other Indian Colleges is 49. These appointments are not all held by winners of scholarships.

(c)—The aim of Government is in every case to secure the best men irrespective of the college from which they happen to have received their training. Every endeavour is made to secure appointments for scholarship holders when there are vacancies and when the candidates are suitable.

2. (a) and (b)—Under the existing rules non-gazetted officers of Government drawing Rs. 100 per mensem and upwards are permitted to occupy Inspection Bungalows at District and Subdivisional headquarters in places where such bungalows are in existence. These places are :—Tura, Kohima, Jowai, Goalpara and Sunamganj. The occupation of Circuit Houses is governed by different rules. The general view hitherto held is that it is not necessary to provide touring accommodation for non-gazetted officers of Government at District and Subdivisional headquarters because the great majority of such officers consists of Indians who are touring in civilised towns in their own country and amongst their own people. No such accommodation is ever provided in similar cases in other civilised countries for Government servants.

(c)—The reply to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. The reply to the second part of the question is that this arrangement will secure accommodation for Government servants drawing from Rs. 100 and above at these places.

(d)—A reference is invited to the first portion of the reply. The general principle laid down therein has been lost sight of in the case of Sylhet which is the only instance where accommodation has been provided for non-gazetted officers at a headquarters station in the plains and Government is not prepared to copy this precedent.

3. (a), (b), (c), and (d)—As regards recruitment to Government service the following are recognized as separate communities :—

1. Europeans and Anglo-Indians.
2. Bengalis of Sylhet and Cachar.
3. Assamese (other than Ahoms and Muhammadans) but including Bengali-speaking population of Goalpara less residents of Goalpara born in Bengal.
4. Ahoms.
5. Muhammadans.
6. Khasis (including Syntengs).
7. Bengalis other than Bengalis of Sylhet and Cachar who are domiciled.
8. Bengalis other than Bengalis of Sylhet and Cachar who are not domiciled.
9. Others.

The reference to other privileges is not understood. The backwardness of a community is not by itself considered to be sufficient reason for according to it special treatment in the matter of appointment to Government service. Government are not prepared to treat the Brittil-Banias and Kaivartas as separate communal units in this matter, since such action would inevitably lead to claims on the part of other sections of the population which would render the general principle of proportionate representation unworkable in practice.

Figures are not available to show how many Brittil-Banias or Kaivartas have been appointed to higher grade posts during the last ten years.

4. (a)—The statement of fact is not quite correct. "Vernacular language" forms a compulsory subject, and Assamese is one of the alternatives offered. "Vernacular literature" is an optional subject, and Assamese literature is not included in the literatures which can be taken.

(b)—Government do not propose to move in the matter at least until Assamese is included in the list of principal vernaculars for the M. A. Examination of the Calcutta University.

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN asked :—

Number of
Civil
Surgeon-
cies open
to Civil
Assistant
Surgeons.

5. (a) Will the Government be pleased to state what proposals have been submitted to the Government of India to increase the number of Civil Surgeoncies open to Civil Assistant Surgeons and what reply has been received?

(b) In case of such recruitment from Civil and Military Assistant Surgeoncies, will the Government be pleased to maintain the proportion as recommended by the Public Services Commission?

(c) In view of the recommendations of the Public Services Commission, will the Government be pleased to stop direct recruitment to Civil Surgeoncies from amongst the uncovenanted officers and throw open the posts reserved for them to members of Assam Medical Service (Senior) which was under consideration ?

6. Will the Government be pleased to state how many qualified candidates applied this year for admission into Berry-White Medical School at Dibrugarh and how many of them were admitted ?

Admission
into Berry-
White
Medical
School.

Also how many of the admitted candidates applied for hostel seats and how many provided with them ?

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DUTTA replied :—

5.—The Government are not now in a position to make any statement in the matter.

6.—Three hundred qualified candidates applied for admission into the Berry-White Medical School, Dibrugarh, this year, of whom 42 were admitted. Thirty-five newly admitted students applied for seats in the hostel of whom 32 were accommodated.

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN asked :—

7. Will the Government be pleased to state whether they have considered the Report of the Retrenchment Committee as a whole, and whether they have decided to give effect to all or any of their recommendations ?

Report of
the Re-
trenchment
Committee.

8. Will the Government be pleased to state who succeeded to Bijni Estate in the district of Goalpara ?

Bijni
Estate.

Is it now under the Court of Wards ?

Is it a fact that several claimants have already instituted suits to establish their claims to it ?

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID replied :—

7.—The Report of the Retrenchment Committee has been and is still being considered by the Government. As regards the specific posts about which the Committee made recommendations—

Commissioners.—The question is one for the ultimate decision of the Secretary of State and is now under consideration.

Secretaries and Under-Secretaries.—The Government have decided that no radical change is possible, but are prepared, as they have always been, to try a suitable member of the Assam Civil Service in the post of Under-Secretary.

Inspectors and Assistant Inspectors of Schools.—His Excellency has accepted the advice of the late Minister for Education not to abolish any of these posts.

Deputy Superintendents of Police.—The Government have decided that these posts cannot be abolished at once. They have decided however to abolish immediately one post and they also undertake that as vacancies occur in future they will consider the feasibility of employing the Inspectors in the posts now held by Deputy Superintendents.

Conservators of Forests.—The Government of India have agreed to the abolition of one post of Conservator, and effect will be given to the decision when a vacancy occurs.

Superintending Engineer.—The question is still under examination.

8.—Raja Jogendra Narayan Bhup succeeded to the Bijni Estate on the death of Rani Abhoyeswari Debi.

Yes.

Yes.

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN asked : —

B. Borooh
Endow-
ment
Funds.

9. Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table a copy of the deed of gift of B. Borooh Endowment Funds recently given by Mr. B. Borooh for technical education?

Dibrugarh
Municipa-
lity.

10. Will the Government be pleased to state whether the Dibrugarh Municipality has entered into an agreement with the Electric Company, recently formed there, for supply of energy for Municipal lamps under the provision of the Indian Electricity Act?

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR GHANASYAM BARUA replied :—

9.—No deed of gift was executed by Mr. B. Borooh. The Hon'ble Member is referred to Notification No. 985L.S.-G., dated the 12th August 1922, published in the *Assam Gazette* of the 16th idem on the subject.

10.—Government have no information whether the Dibrugarh Municipality has entered into any agreement with the Electric Company or its promoters.

RESOLUTIONS.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A GOVERNMENT JUNIOR MADRASSA IN
SIBSAGAR DISTRICT.

MAULAVI RUKUNUDDIN AHMAD :—Sir, the resolution that stands against my name is as follows :—

This Council recommends that funds be provided in the next Budget estimate to establish a Government Junior Madrassa (but not an aided Madrassa) at a suitable place in the Sibsagar district.

Sir, I need not state at length the necessity of an institution capable of teaching a little advanced course of Persian and Arabic for each Muhammadan centre. The knowledge of Persian and Arabic is indispensable to every Muhammadan who wants to lead the life enjoined by the Prophet Mahomed—glory be to him ! But unfortunately this knowledge has fallen low in our midst. My Sylhet brothers are comparatively fortunate in this respect, for there are a good number of Junior Madrassas all over the district headed by the Government Senior Madrassa at the headquarters of the district. The districts of Kamrup, Goalpara and Lakhimpur have also their own respective Madrassas, but it is unfortunate that the district of Sibsagar alone has not up till now been able to have a Madrassa for itself. The district of Sibsagar is important and perhaps the most important in the Assam Valley from the Muhammadan point of view. But the villages of real Muhammadan importance are not fortunately centrally situated. It has not therefore been possible to start as yet a Junior Madrassa on an aided basis. And so far as I can judge, we shall have to go without one for a long time to come if we are given the option of having an aided institution or to have none.

This is the greater reason why I am urging for a purely provincial institution. If we were able enough to found a school by ourselves with supplementary aid from the Government, we would have done that long ago. But we are not. The reason is not that we do not care, or that we are loath to pay, but because the Muhammadan centres are so widely situated that all the Muhammadan people cannot join together to start a Madrassa of this type. I therefore request that my resolution be sympathetically considered by the Council.

My project is not a very ambitious one. What I want is a Middle English School which in addition to teaching English and the Vernacular will also afford certain amount of advanced teaching in Arabic and Persian. I believe a staff of one English teacher, one Vernacular master and a Maulavi will be sufficient to start with. For service and contingency Rs. 20 will be more than enough. Thus at a monthly cost of Rs. 130 to Rs. 140 we should be able to get what will satisfy our ambition for Muhammadan education at least for the present. Against this expenditure I might

reasonably expect a fee income of about Rs. 40 a month; so that Government will not have to pay more than Rs. 90 or Rs. 100 per month. I am fully alive to the difficulties of finance at present and yet realising the utmost importance and necessity of a Junior Madrassa in the Sibsagar district, I place this resolution before the House and commend it to the Hon'ble Members present here for their acceptance. The establishment of such a Madrassa, in my opinion, should not stand over to suit the exigencies of a flourishing budget. Ways and means can be derived from the current budget. At the same time it should be remembered that this question (*viz.*, the establishment of a Junior Madrassa) is very important for the moral and spiritual well-being of the children. With these few words I place my resolution before the House and trust that my Hon'ble colleagues will unanimously support it.

Mr. J. R. CUNNINGHAM :—Sir, I am instructed to oppose this resolution on behalf of Government.

The first objection is the objection which has been brought forward so often during this session, namely, the want of funds. That objection acquires particular force in the present case inasmuch as what is proposed to us is the establishment of a new provincial institution. Now, already we have a programme of provincialisation which was introduced 8 or 9 years ago, namely the provincialisation of high schools at subdivisinal headquarters, and there are two items of that programme which still remain to be completed. I refer to the provincialisation of the schools at Hailakandi and at Sunamganj. I venture to think that this work should be taken up first before the establishment of new provincial institutions is undertaken. Mr. Dam suggested in an earlier debate that this particular need was unreal, that it had been excogitated by myself merely as an objection to be set up against another resolution, *viz.*, that in regard to the pay of the Subordinate Educational Service. In this connection I would refer him to the members of this House from Sunamganj who will, I am sure, be ready to inform him of the urgent need for the provincialisation of the high school at Sunamganj.

Another point for note in this connection is that we have not as a matter of fact overtaken the full amount of the expenditure involved in that part of the programme of provincialisation which has already been accomplished. Again I refer to what I said in the previous debate informing you that we still had certain obligations to meet to provide for the development of the pay of the new members of the service who were brought in at the bottom of the grades.

Now these are preliminary objections, but there are objections also on the merits. I should think it very doubtful, even if funds were available, that Government would be able to accept this resolution. The Hon'ble Members who took part in the proceedings of the Muhammadan Educational Conference some years ago, will remember that one of their recommendations, incidental to the establishment of a central Muhammadan institution for the whole province at Sylhet, was that a certain number of Junior Madrasas or feeder institutions should be established by Government at various centres in the province. The proposal was that six should be established in the Surma Valley and two in the Assam Valley, the numbers corresponding to the proportion of Muhammadan inhabitants in the two Valleys. Now, for want of funds we have not been able to make a beginning with that recommendation which has been accepted in principle, and I suggest to the house that Sibsagar is possibly the last district in the province which could claim preferential

consideration when the question of the establishment of the Junior Madrassas comes up. It is merely a question of population. Of all districts, but one, in the province, Sibsagar has the fewest Muhammadans. Nowgong for instance has twice as many, Kamrup three times and Goalpara ten times as many Muhammadans as Sibsagar. And in the other valley the Muhammadan population of subdivisions is many times the Muhammadan population of the whole district of Sibsagar. The Hon'ble Member has pointed out that there are already Junior Madrassas at Gauhati for Kamrup, at Goalpara for Dhubri and at Lakhimpur, but their existence is due solely to the enterprise of the local Muhammadans. The fact that Sibsagar has not a Junior Madrassa for itself is due to the fact that the people there have not really been sufficiently interested to maintain one. An attempt was made at Jorhat, but for want of funds, for want of pupils and for want of interest it had to be given up.

I have no hesitation in asking the Council to refuse its assent to this resolution.

KHAN SAHIB ALAUDDIN AHMAD CHAUDHURI :— Sir, I have full sympathy with the mover of the resolution, but I would like that measures should be taken only if finances justify. In view of the paucity of funds I would enquire of the mover of the resolution how we can find money in the next budget for the Madrassa. I would therefore enquire if he is prepared to modify his resolution to the effect that the Madrassa should be started as soon as funds are available.

MAULAVI RUKUNUDDIN AHMAD :— Sir, in view of what has been suggested I have no objection to accept my friend's amendment.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :— I did not catch what the Hon'ble Member said.

MAULAVI RUKUNUDDIN AHMAD :— Sir, the Hon'ble Khan Sahib has asked me whether I have any objection to modifying my resolution by substituting the phrase "as soon as funds are available" in place of "be provided in the next budget estimate."

I accept this amendment.

Maulavi Safiur Rahman speaking in Bengali, supported the resolution stating that it was desirable to have a Junior Madrassa school in the Sibsagar district. Although the resident Muhammadan population of the district was small, there was a constant influx of Muhammadans from outside, and this fact alone justified the establishment of a Madrassa in the district.

MR. J. R. CUNNINGHAM :— Sir, if no body else wishes to speak on the subject, may I say a few words by way of final reply ?

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :— Yes, you may.

MR. J. R. CUNNINGHAM :— The Resolution has now been amended to say that as soon as funds are available.....

KHAN SAHIB ALAUDDIN AHMAD CHAUDHURI :— No, when funds are available.....

MR. J. R. CUNNINGHAM :—Sir, I venture to say that this converts the resolution merely into a pious hope. It seems to me that the resolution has no longer any force at all. That being so I can see no reason for asking the House to accept it.

There are two points of detail I wanted to add to what I said previously. The first is—having experience of Junior Madrassas I am quite sure that the estimate of cost put forward by the Hon'ble Member falls far short of what is really required for an institution of the kind. The second is that I wish to bring before the House the figures of the enrolment of such Islamic institutions as exist in the district of Sibsagar. There are two headquarter institutions, one at Sibsagar and the other at Jorhat ; in the highest class of the first there are six pupils ; in the highest class of the second, there are three. I venture to think we have not here material for the foundation of an institution of a higher standing.

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN :—Sir, I think the resolution as amended.....

MR. J. R. CUNNINGHAM :—Sir, is the Hon'ble Member in order in speaking now ?

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN :—May I speak, Sir ?

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—I do not think you are in order in speaking now.

The question before the house is :—

That this Council recommends when funds are available to establish a Government Junior Madrassa (but not an aided Madrassa) at a suitable place in the Sibsagar district.

The Resolution, as amended, was then put and a division taken with the following results :—

Ayes.	Noes.
1. Maulavi Abdul Khaliq Chaudhuri.	1. Hon'ble Mr. W. J. Reid.
2. Khan Shahib Muhammad Abdul Latif.	2. Hon'ble Mr. A. Majid.
3. Maulavi Abdul Rahim Chaudhuri	3. Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Ghanasyam Barua.
4. Khan Sahib Alauddin Ahmad Chaudhuri.	4. Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Promode Chandra Dutta.
5. Sardar Bahadur Anjab Ali Khan	5. Mr. A. W. Botham.
6. Srijut Bishnu Charan Bora.	6. Mr. A. J. Lainé.
7. Srijut Bepin Chandra Ghose.	7. Mr. J. R. Cunningham.
8. Rai Bahadur Bepin Chandra Deb Lasker.	8. Mr. O. H. Desenne.
9. Maulavi Akmal Hussain.	9. Babu Hiralal Bose.
10. Maulavi Munawwar Ali.	10. Rai Bahadur Krishna Chandra Chaudhuri.
11. Khan Bahadur Muhammad Bakht Majumdar.	11. Mr. R. N. Chaudhuri.
12. Maulavi Saiyid Nurur Rahman.	12. Srijut Lohit Chandra Nayak.
13. Srijut Nilmoni Phukan.	13. Mr. E. S. Roffey.
14. Maulavi Rashid Ali Laskar.	14. Rai Bahadur Amarnath Ray.
15. Maulavi Rukunuddin Ahmad.	15. Rai Bahadur Nalini Kanta Rai Dastidar.
16. Munshi Safur Rahman.	16. Mr. W. E. H. Grayburn.
17. Raj Kumar Chandra Narayan Singh.	

The Ayes being 17 and the Noes 16 the resolution was carried.

THE ASSAM TENANCY BILL.

RAI BAHADUR BEPIN CHANDRA DEB LASKAR :—Sir, the motion that stands in my name runs as follows :—

That this Council recommends to the Government of Assam that the consideration of the Assam Tenancy Bill be postponed till land revenue becomes a transferred subject under the control of a Minister.

1. The Bill as it stands is a copy of the Bengal Tenancy Act in its main substance and principle. In order to consider its applicability on the temporarily-settled area of Assam the first and the most important thing for consideration is to notice the different conditions under which the lands in Assam stand. To speak the truth almost the whole of the temporarily-settled part of the country has been divided into small pieces of holdings and distributed among the actual cultivators. Therefore there is no landlord in Assam who can bear comparison with even the smallest zamindar of Bengal. So the question of protecting the tenants against the landlord does not arise here in Assam.

(a) Moreover in Bengal the interest of the landlord on his land is permanent with a fixed Government demand. Therefore it is just that Government should also ensure the raiyats or actual cultivators some permanent interest on land cultivated by them, as it has been granted to the landlords. But the Assam Government has not granted permanent interest on the land to the settlement-holder, so it should not create any permanent interest of the sub-tenants.

(b) In Bengal the zemindars eject one tenant only to give the land to some other tenants because they never cultivate the land for themselves. Therefore it is just and proper that the landlord in Bengal should be restrained by law from injuring one for the benefit of some other. Whereas in Assam the holders of land are actual cultivators so it will be improper and unjust to deprive one cultivator who has received settlement from Government or has become owner by purchase of possession of a portion of his holding only because for some inconvenience or other he could not cultivate that portion for a particular period and allow some other fellow tenant of his to cultivate the land.

(c) It should also be noted that in Bengal there is no land available for an ejected raiyat to go to. Whereas in Assam vast area of waste land is still awaiting settlers, and people from Bengal are coming to occupy these areas. Therefore if by tenancy law the people of Assam are tied to their respective villages the waste land of our province will be peopled by colonisers from Bengal and other provinces which perhaps is not a desirable state of things for the people of Assam, because this law will discourage the tenants from reclaiming land from jungle and from becoming land-owners themselves. This law will make the already lazy tenants of ours more lazy and in fact the raiyats will be more injured than benefited.

2. I oppose the Tenancy Bill because it is unwise of the Government to introduce such a Bill now when the relations between people and the Government has already been much strained.....

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—May I say, Sir, that no Tenancy Bill has been introduced.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—The Hon'ble the Finance Member has stated that no Tenancy Bill has been introduced.

RAI BAHADUR BEPIN CHANDRA DEB LASKAR :—If the Tenancy Bill has not been introduced then I beg to withdraw it. (Laughter).

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—I understand that the Hon'ble Member wishes to withdraw his resolution.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I do not know, Sir, whether the Hon'ble Member thinks that I have given an undertaking. I have given no undertaking. I have merely said that no Tenancy Bill has been introduced in this Council.

RAI BAHADUR BEPIN CHANDRA DEB LASKAR :— Then I wish to withdraw, Sir.

RAI BAHADUR BEPIN CHANDRA DEB LASKAR :—I oppose the Tenancy Bill because it is unwise on the part of the Government to introduce such a Bill now when the relation between people and the Government has already been much strained. In Assam the land-owning class forms the great middle class of the people and the Tenancy Bill if it is passed into law.....

RAI BAHADUR BEPIN CHANDRA DEB LASKAR :—Sir, whether I should go on with this resolution ?

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—I think it rests with the Hon'ble Member whether he wishes to proceed or not.

RAI BAHADUR BEPIN CHANDRA DEB LASKAR :—If the Tenancy Bill has not been introduced then I wish to withdraw it.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I can only repeat, Sir, that the Bill has not been introduced. I have not said what may or may not be done in the future.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—I understand that the Hon'ble Member wishes to withdraw his resolution.

RAI BAHADUR BEPIN CHANDRA DEB LASKAR :—Yes.

The resolution, was then, by leave of the Council, withdrawn.

ENGINEERING SCHOLARSHIPS.

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN :—Sir, the resolution that stands in my name runs thus :—*That this Council recommends to the Government of Assam that the scholarships now granted to Assam students for training at Engineering Schools in lower and upper subordinate classes be amalgamated and made available in the upper subordinate class only.* With your permission may I propose a little amendment at the end of the resolution. I want to make this amendment—*“And the Bengal Government be approached to reserve these seats in the Upper Subordinate class only.”*

MR. J. R. CUNNINGHAM :—Sir, there is no objection on the part of the Government.

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN :—Sir, then may I add that ?

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—No objection has been raised on the part of the Government.

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN :—Then, Sir, my resolution runs thus :—*That this Council recommends to the Government of Assam that the scholarships now granted to Assam students for training at Engineering Schools in lower and upper subordinate classes be amalgamated and made available in the upper subordinate class only, and the Government of Bengal be approached to reserve these seats in the upper subordinate class only.*

We have no engineering schools in our province. The practice has been to send out our boys with scholarships to qualify themselves in the engineering line. Now they generally go to Ahsanulla Dacca Engineering School. There the practice used to be that they had to undergo a two years' course in lower subordinate class, and if the boys after passing the lower subordinate class examination intended to go higher they were allowed to continue for three years more in the upper subordinate class, and if they could pass that examination they were considered to have passed the upper subordinate class examination. But recently I understand that rule has been changed. Boys intending to join the institution are to decide first whether they would join the lower subordinate class or the upper subordinate class before admission is granted. Accordingly in the case of our boys there is a difficulty in getting seats in the upper subordinate class. They have to express their desire from the beginning, and if they desire to join it on passing the lower subordinate class examination, they will have no chance, and that has been actually the case this year. Qualified candidates are generally required by the Local Boards and Public Works Department, but they have also decided, so to say,—so far as it appears from advertisements now-a-days,—that they will no longer entertain lower subordinate class men. They now want upper subordinate men in their service. So practically these lower subordinate men have either to enter into some private service or be independent contractors or whatever they like. Now they have very little chance of getting into the service of Local Boards of the Public Works Department. But, Sir, it is a well known fact that there are no openings in this province for an independent career and the few scholarships that are given to our young men to qualify themselves for engineering are mainly intended for Government service. At least that is my impression, because I have not found a single student who qualified him-

self in such institutions now holding any independent profession. So from this point of view I beg to move this resolution and I believe the Government has already made up their mind in this direction to some extent, if I am correctly informed, and if this resolution is carried our boys will be able to find seats from the very beginning and will be able to go up for higher examination in upper subordinate class and that will give them some chance in after life for entering in public or private service. And even if there be qualified men available in excess of the demand in the province that will do no harm. Because even now Government do not give any undertaking that after qualifying they will have any claim for Government service. So this is a harmless resolution and I am sure this will be acceptable to the House as well as to the Government.

MR. J. R. CUNNINGHAM :—Sir, I have been instructed to deal with this resolution on behalf of Government.

I confess I cannot understand what the advantage of passing this resolution will be. Government is sympathetic towards its intention, *viz.*, the training of a sufficiency of local men to qualify them for service in connection with the public works of the province—and I have informed the Hon'ble Mover accordingly—but Government cannot undertake to secure the necessary number of seats in the extra-provincial institutions which train men for the work. As regards the wording of the resolution it is impossible to accept it in the present form as it commits us to action which does not lie within our competence. We cannot grant a certain number of scholarships for public works training without in the first place assuring ourselves that we can find places for the scholars. The only practical result, of passing the resolution, as far as I can see, will be to abolish the sub-overseer scholarships. I cannot myself see what advantage the Hon'ble Member proposes to the community by moving for the abolition of these sub-overseer scholarships as there seems to be a certain demand outside Government service for men with the sub-overseer qualification. Government is ready to approach the Government of Bengal on the subject and enquire if it can grant additional seats in the overseer department of the Engineering School at Dacca or the apprentice department at Sibpur, and, if so, to grant a sufficient number of upper subordinate scholarships for the purpose in view.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—The question is :—

That this Council recommends to the Government of Assam that the scholarships now granted to Assam students for training at Engineering schools in lower and upper subordinate classes be amalgamated and made available in the upper subordinate class only, and the Bengal Government be approached to reserve these seats in the upper subordinate class only.

The resolution, as amended, was negatived.

MEDICAL SCHOLARSHIPS.

MAULAVI RUKUNUDDIN AHMAD :—Sir, the resolution that stands against my name is :—

That this Council recommends to the Government of Assam that funds be provided in the next Budget estimate to increase the number of scholarships tenable by Assam students in the Calcutta Medical College.

Sir, this is a subject on which very little need be said, for it must be the wish of everybody present here as well as of the larger outside public to see that many more of our young men take to the medical profession. For a long time past our country has been a hot bed of many infectious and deadly diseases. Throughout the year the people are either having influenza, cholera or malaria or small-pox or some such disease. Take for instance the present season. My home happens to be at Jorhat which has the reputation of being a fairly healthy place in the province. This applies not only to the town but to the whole subdivision as well. But what do I find there. In last July and August there was hardly a family in the town in which there was not sickness. And the town people live in much more hygienic circumstances and know how to take preventive measures much better than the village folk. The tale from the village as was to be expected was much worse. And during all these times there was not sufficient medical aid available. In most places the only medical aid available is from the Government Assistant and Sub-Assistant Surgeons; and you all know, Sir, how hard-worked people they are—specially during a season when any particular disease happens to be prevalent. They have to attend at hospitals and see the Government servants. This leaves them little time which they can devote to the general public. This is the state of affairs in the towns. In the villages the situation is much worse. For miles and miles you can travel and you hardly see a doctor, except the very limited number of Sub-Assistant Surgeons in charge of village dispensaries, which as you know, are few and far between. And the diseases from which the people suffer are almost all of them more or less preventible ones. With the modern knowledge of hygiene, sanitation and medical science the western countries have been able to eradicate many of these diseases from their midst. Cholera which was once a scourge in many countries of the continent of Europe is unknown now, so is malaria which had its origin in Italy from the language of which country it derives its name. It is I believe needless to multiply these instances. My contention is that with a little knowledge of modern hygiene and sanitation it would have been possible to prevent many of the diseases which infest the country or at least to minimise their disastrous effects. And this knowledge would have been available if there were at least a sprinkling of medical men in our villages and towns. These facts, Sir, are quite well known to all the Hon'ble Members of this Council. I can therefore confidently look up to the acceptance of my resolution.

I know that a few seats have been reserved in the Calcutta Medical College and the Carmichael Medical College for Assam students. But only two scholarships are provided. Medical education is a costly affair and I know of many deserving students who for want of necessary assistance and in spite of their strong inclination for the profession were obliged to take to law or teaching or some other profession. I need not dwell at length on this point, for I believe the whole Council is agreed that there is a very great demand for medical education of our youths and that the provision of two scholarships is not sufficient to meet their demand. Of course a time may come when we shall get a medical college of our own, and let us hope that that day is not distant. The situation will then be different and then possibly we might altogether abolish the scholarships. But till then I earnestly pray a liberal number of scholarships be provided for this purpose.

With these words I commend my resolution before the House for its unanimous acceptance.

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DUTTA :—Sir, I have one or two preliminary remarks to make with respect to this resolution. In the first place I must respectfully protest against the attempt that has been made in this Council to tie the hands of the Government in advance of the budget. Now, what this resolution seeks to do is to bind the Government to find funds for a certain number of medical scholarships. Now, as the House is aware, there may be projects which are more important, more urgent and more imperative and if our hands are tied in advance it might quite possibly be that we might not be able to attend to these more urgent and important needs. I would therefore put it to the House to say whether it is fair to ask for definite assurances for particular items without reference to more urgent and imperative needs.

The second remark that I would make is that the resolution is vague in so far as it fails to specify the number of scholarships that is wanted in excess of the number of scholarships tenable by Assam students. I am entirely in sympathy with the Hon'ble Member in his desire for having increased medical help but I am afraid the increase of one or two scholarships won't help much. The matter would rather be helped by providing more schools in the province itself, and as the Hon'ble Member is aware there is already a project for having a Medical School at Sylhet which is hanging fire for want of funds.

On the merits, Government think that no case has been made out for increasing the number of scholarships for higher medical education for the students of this province. I will presently tell the House how matters stand. There are at present two scholarships tenable at the Calcutta Medical College where six seats are reserved for the students of this province. Besides this, the Government contributes Rs. 7,500 annually to the Carmichael Medical College in return for the reservation of five seats for the students of this province. It will thus be seen that for higher medical education alone the Government is spending annually over Rs. 9,000. Then there is another fact. There are, as I have already told the House, 11 seats reserved in the two Bengal colleges for the students of this province. Now, for these eleven seats there were in this year as many as 33 applicants one and all of whom were prepared to pay for their own education. It is thus clear that students would be forthcoming in any number to take advantage of the education that is given in the Calcutta colleges without looking to Government for help. That being the case it is not clear where the necessity for increasing the number of scholarships arises.

Secondly, there is urgent need for extending the facilities for education of Sub-Assistant Surgeons. As the Hon'ble Members are aware there is only one medical school in this province. There were in this year about 300 applications for admission, out of which only 40 could be entertained; so that the more urgent thing to do would be to provide a medical school instead of increasing the number of medical scholarships tenable at the Medical Colleges.

In this view of the matter the Government are unable to accept the resolution as it stands.

MAULAVI MUNAWWAR ALI :—I beg, Sir, to make a few remarks. I shall simply confine myself to the preliminaries, preliminary observation just now made by the Hon'ble the Minister of Education. It has been said Sir, that it is not fair on the part of this Council to tie the hands of Government in advance with regard to provision of money. I respectfully differ from the Hon'ble Minister in this respect. We as representatives of the people are expected to know the conditions of the people, their wants, and their feelings, and if we can agree, at least by a majority to prefer one thing to another, I think that must not be lightly treated, and I think we are perfectly justified in thinking so. If we were here only to vote on the demands as they are placed before the House by the Government I think our utility would not have been what it is to be and what the Government of India Act strives after. We are here not to be passive voters. We have our clear duties. We must represent the feelings of the people and take the initiative. I again emphatically say that it is perfectly legitimate for the House to propose a measure to the Government whether it be in advance or it be that the measure be immediately taken up. We are perfectly justified in doing so and it is not at all unfair on the part of the House to do so.

On the merits of the resolution, I do not like to enter into any discussion whatsoever, but if it can be shown to the House, if the House can be convinced, that the particular measure proposed is not a measure that ought to be taken up just now or in advance I think it will be the discretion of the House to accept it or not. If the House agrees by a majority of votes to take to this measure I think it will be a perfectly legitimate step even though it be in advance.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, I am sorry I do not agree with all that has been said by Maulavi Munawwarali.

MAULAVI MUNAWWAR ALI :—Sir, I beg to explain that I did not speak anything in regard to the acceptance of this resolution.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, if I heard him aright he said that he had a right to force particular items of expenditure upon the Finance Member by particular resolutions of this kind. I believe this will not be businesslike. The utmost we can do is to suggest and press for principles and leave the details to the Government, unless of course there is some urgent necessity for having a particular scheme, according to our own choice.

As to the merits of the resolution, I am sorry I cannot agree to accept the same. I would ask this Council to consider seriously what should be the financial policy of the Government in the matter of higher and primary education,—whether they should spend more and more money for the spread of primary education among the villagers and for rural sanitation and so forth or whether they should grant large sums of money for higher education, technical education and so on. I am afraid the mover of this resolution has little idea of the expenditure that is necessary to give a training in a Medical College in Calcutta. It requires not less than Rs. 80 a month. Well, I believe for this Rs. 80 half a dozen primary schools can be started or aided by the Government. Besides in a matter of considering the question.

of the necessity of doctors the question is whether we require doctors of the sort coming out from our Medical School or of the sort coming out from the Medical Colleges at Calcutta. We know that the M.Bs. are not employed in charges of villages. We want doctors who will be posted to the rural areas. So, what we require is rather a medical school at Sylhet. If doctors are turned out from such a school, I believe the purpose that is suggested to be attained will be attained.

BABU RAMANI MOHAN DAS :—Sir, I do not understand what Mr. Dam means by his estimate and how he estimates Rs. 80 per month for these scholarships, because I find there is no mention of the number of scholarships in the resolution. That is a mistake in the resolution which has been pointed out by the Hon'ble Minister. I think he has estimated that two scholarships will be required, one for each valley. Of course the amount calculated is not very much, and I have no hesitation that this small amount of money will be forthcoming if the House agrees, and the Hon'ble Minister agrees, to give two more scholarships. In that case, it is necessary that the Hon'ble mover should amend his resolution. In that case I wish to give my sympathy and support to his resolution.

REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY :—Sir, I want to speak a few words on this subject. As to the preliminary remark of the Hon'ble Minister of Education that we are trying to bind the hands of the Government by introducing such resolutions, I agree with what Maulavi Munawwar Ali has already said. I think we, as the representatives of the people, have a perfect right to voice the feelings of the people as to the urgent matters that ought to be entered into the budget and that ought to be provided for. But whether the Council will recommend that or not, that is a different question altogether.

Now, as to the merits of the resolution I do not see that there is a necessity for a few more scholarships, when the Hon'ble Minister of Education himself has already said,—I hope the House has heard what he said—that there are now more applications from the students to enter into the medical profession than there are seats in the schools and colleges. It appears that the medical profession is a very paying profession, and, therefore, many people want to enter into that profession without any encouragement given by Government in the way of scholarship. And if what the Hon'ble Minister of Education has said is true, then there is no necessity at all for providing any more scholarships for this education, and therefore I think it would be better if the Hon'ble Mover withdrew the resolution.

MAULAVI RUKUNUDDIN AHMAD :—Sir, I have the full knowledge that there is a proposal for the establishment of a medical school at Sylhet, I want to increase the number of scholarships at least till the proposed medical school is established at Sylhet. The Hon'ble Minister says that the wording of my resolution is very vague, but in my opinion the question of vagueness would have been easily solved if he had accepted my resolution. However, for the present I beg leave of the Council to withdraw my resolution.

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

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR THE STUDY OF COMMERCE.

MAULAVI RUKUNUDDIN AHMAD :—Sir, the resolution that stands against my name is :—

That this Council recommends to the Government of Assam that funds be provided in the next budget estimate for a few scholarships of suitable value to be provided annually to enable young men of Assam to study 'Commerce in any advanced Commercial Institution in India'.

Sir, if I remember aright, a resolution of this nature was once moved before this House, but I am not sure whether the resolution was lost or withdrawn. At any rate, it remains a painful fact that no steps have yet been taken by the Government to promote the Commercial instincts of the poor Assamese youths nor to give them any scope for commercial education either in the province itself or outside it. Having no other alternative, there is a headlong rush to the Universities by our young men, and after graduation they are still in the same helpless state, and drift from place to place. The Hon'ble Members I believe are already aware that the importance of commerce as a subject for education has of late received its meet attention everywhere in India, and last year, if I am correct in my information, in the Calcutta University the Faculty of Commerce was newly created. Youths of India are every day hankering after fresh fields and commerce has, as it ought to, now absorbed the best attention of the thinking youths of the day. The study of commerce as a profitable concern need not be dilated on by me as its utility has become a byword with the people of India. The only problem that sternly stares in the face to-day is the problem of commerce. The solution of the problem, however, is meshed in the angles of complexity and has for that reason alone escaped the grasp of many. I do not therefore press for any big and ambitious scheme of commercial education in Assam. My proposal is very modest and simple. Sir, I fully believe at the same time that the institution of a few commercial scholarships will not to any appreciable extent solve the situation. But I am fully confident of the fact that by providing a few such scholarships, the youths of the province will get an encouragement to an honourable avenue of livelihood. Apart from this, it needs no argument from me that if we are to march with other provinces, not to speak of their people, in the path of progress it is most urgently necessary that we should have some of our young men trained in this subject. There is no commercial institution, even of an elementary kind, in our own province, and for any education in this subject, we have either to look to Calcutta or Bombay. Even Calcutta cannot boast of a commercial college of the very first class; and if we wish our young men to have some sound instruction in this branch of knowledge probably the best place to send them would be to the Sydenham College in Bombay. I only want that a small sum be set apart from the education grant for the current year for the foundation of a few scholarships outside the province to be granted to youths going in for commercial education. This resolution, if adopted, will be the stepping stone for affording larger facilities in commercial education to the youths of Assam in the near future.

With these few words I beg to submit that the resolution be unanimously accepted by the Council.

resolution the principle of which has already been accepted in the last September Session and now I am only pointing out a means how best to give effect to it. To-day I do not propose to take up the larger question of all sorts of aid to all kinds of schools. That will have to be done at some other time. My present resolution, in effect, is not a new proposition. It is a definite scheme asking the Government to give some effect to our last unopposed and unanimously accepted resolution on the subject. I stand by that alone and I beseech the House not to make an attempt to dislodge me from that position and render the whole question more complex and therefore more ineffectual.

Now, Sir, I beg leave of the House to enter into the subject in some details. In moving the resolution for increase of grants-in-aid in the last September Session of the Council I have shown in how many ways the aided institutions are helpful to Government in imparting education to the children of the soil. There I have shown from the last quinquennial report that "the average cost of educating a boy in an aided high school is three-fourths of what it costs in a Government High School. The total cost to provincial revenues in maintaining an aided high school is one-fourth of what the Education Department spends on a Government high school. Again the average pay of a teacher in subordinate service in Government schools in Assam is Rs. 70 (this figure will now go up higher under the re-organization scheme). But the average pay of a teacher in a private school is Rs. 28 only." Does this state of affairs tend towards "less disparity between the private and the Government school" which the University Commission so wisely recommended?

At present we have 18 Government and 12 aided high schools in the province. The number of pupils in these schools is 6,300 and 2,665, respectively. The average cost of educating a pupil in a Government high school is Rs. 64 and in an aided High School Rs. 45 approximately. So it will appear nearly half a lakh is saved for educating these boys in aided high schools. But the demand on management of aided high schools has greatly increased. If we take the figures for the last three years it will appear the average enrolment in these schools has decreased by nearly 25 per cent. and cost per pupil increased by nearly the same percentage. So the fee income on which the managements have mainly to depend being thus affected, grants-in-aid not increasing, and the cost per pupil increasing by 25 per cent., it can be easily imagined how these institutions are struggling for existence at this moment. Can Government sincerely demand of these institutions an educational tone?

It will disgust the House if I multiply the picture. Bare justice denied to these institutions is so patent that the cause requires no further advocacy. Now my resolution proposes a very modest scheme. At present aided high schools of the province receive annual recurring grants of Rs. 31,200. So my scheme will entail a further expenditure of Rs. 15,600. This amount might be found out in already budgetted expenditure. Difficulties of aided high schools at this moment are very great, the demand now made is very small. The relief which this amount may give to them will be only a consolation allowance. If the increase proposed is granted the aided high schools will be enabled to increase the salaries of the teacher perhaps by 15 to 20

per cent. only. Do not the House remember that 20 per cent. allowance was already contemplated during the war for these teachers? It has been shelved again. Indifference has its own limit. These institutions can no longer be neglected if they are meant to live. They should now be either helped to live decently or openly throttled to death. Again I repeat the House will not consider my resolution a fresh one. It is only a demand to give effect to our last resolution passed unanimously in the September session of the Council. When there was a re-organization in Government High Schools and another reorganization proposal has been accepted by the House the other day for which I am not sorry, may I not now stand before the House in behalf of the starving teachers of aided High Schools as well, to give them some relief? I leave the matter here.

MR. J. R. CUNNINGHAM:—Sir, may I ask the Hon'ble Member whether it is intended that the increase should be provided for during the current year?

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN:—Yes, during the current year.

MR. J. R. CUNNINGHAM:—Well, Sir, I confess to some unhappiness in opposing a resolution which proposes increased help to schools at present on the aided list. They are undoubtedly in need of it and the only objection is that this year we have no funds. The increase of grants-in-aid to aided schools and the extension of the list to unaided schools, whose needs are even greater, are matters of considerable urgency. Government is however so placed at present as to be forced to consider the possibility of retrenchment rather than the possibility of giving immediate effect to new proposals involving fresh expenditure, however desirable they may be.

To the resolution as it stands there are other objections. What Mr. Phukan has said with regard to high schools is equally applicable to other schools, and possibly more applicable to middle schools many of which are in such a position that it is doubtful if they can survive.

If money were placed in my hands to alleviate the situation of schools on the aided list I should prefer that the benefit were not reserved for one particular class of institution, *viz.*—high schools.

The needs of grant-in-aid, I suggest, should be considered as a whole. If any considerable amount can be found for the purpose we should have to consider the apportionment of it between aided and unaided schools, according to their needs. Many unaided schools are doing very useful work and are sorely in need of Government help, more so, indeed than schools on the aided list.

The increase of grants-in-aid is a matter in which Government and the Education Department are deeply interested but it must wait until funds are more freely forthcoming.

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

Ayes.	Noes.
1. Srijut Bepin Chandra Ghose.	1. Hon'ble Mr. W. J. Reid.
2. Rai Bahadur Bepin Chandra Deb Laskar.	2. Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Promode Chandra Dutta.
3. Babu Biraj Mohan Dutta.	3. Mr. A. W. Botham.
4. Maulavi Akmal Hussain.	4. Mr. A. J. Lainé.
5. Srijut Lohit Chandra Nayak.	5. Mr. J. R. Cunningham.
6. Maulavi Saiyid Nurur Rahman.	6. Mr. O. H. Desenne.
7. Srijut Nilmoni Phukan.	7. Maulavi Abdul Rahim Chaudhuri.
8. Maulavi Rashid Ali Laskar.	8. Khan Sahib Alauddin Ahmad Chaudhuri.
9. Rai Bahadur Amarnath Ray.	9. Sardar Bahadur Anjab Ali Khan.
10. Rai Bahadur Nalini Kanta Ray Dastidar.	10. Rai Sahib Padmanath Gohain Barua.
11. Maulavi Rukunuddin Ahmad.	11. Babu Hiralal Bose.
12. Munshi Safiur Rahman.	12. Babu Har Kishore Chakrabatti.
13. Raj Kumar Chandra Narayan Singh.	13. Rai Bahadur Krishna Chandra Chaudhuri.
14. Babu Ramani Mohan Das.	14. Mr. R. N. Chaudhuri.
	15. Khan Bahadur Muhammad Bakht Majumdar.
	16. Mr. E. S. Roffey.
	17. Dr. H. G. Roberts.
	18. Mr. W. E. H. Grayburn.

The Ayes being 14 and the Noes 18 the resolution was negatived.

LEGISLATION AGAINST SMOKING OF OPIUM.

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN :—Sir, the resolution that stands against my name is :—

That this Council recommends to the Government of Assam that a small committee of official and non-official members be appointed to consider the feasibility or otherwise of a legislation against smoking of opium on the evidence collected for the purpose.

Sir, I have again stood before the House in connection with the question of opium and I hope I shall not be misunderstood this time, inasmuch as I move this resolution only to know whether such a step is feasible or not at this present moment. About this time last year while moving a resolution on smoking of opium I remember the Hon'ble the Finance Member to have said (and I make no apology in quoting him now) in the debate of March last when the whole question of opium consumption came up, thus: The Hon'ble the Finance Member said "There was one other proposal made by Mr. Botham's Committee in 1913. It had been suggested by the Government of India that it should be made a penal offence for three or more persons to

smoke opium in company. The Committee recommended that legislation should be introduced making it penal for two or more persons to smoke opium together, an exception being made only in the case of husband and wife. They also advised that the legislation should include a provision for binding over persons who habitually smoke in company. This measure was actually recommended to the Government of India by the Local Administration but no orders were passed and there the matter remains. I am merely placing the suggestion before the Council. The objects of it are clear. The Committee recommended it because they held that if each smoker had to smoke alone it was not possible for an experienced smoker to initiate a beginner. They held that the law if passed should be enforced not by the police but with the aid of a special Excise staff. The difficulties in the way of enforcing it are obvious. There is the danger that the law if passed would become a dead letter. There is the danger that any attempt to enforce it might cause a degree of interference with private life which would be intolerable. I only ask the Council to consider the suggestion." Later, the Hon'ble Finance Member repeated the offer he had previously made and said that the offer was still open. Subsequently after hearing the Hon'ble Finance Member and knowing the feelings of the House on this point I withdrew this resolution. But the Hon'ble the Finance Member was very kind to say "we shall give the very fullest consideration to the arguments that he has put forward to-day." Perhaps he was true to his promise.

So far as I understand he made enquiries throughout the province, and now I understand the opinions of the Deputy Commissioners and other responsible persons are in his hands. I move this resolution only with a view to this,—that if such a small committee be now appointed to weigh the evidence now before him, perhaps they will be in a position to advise the Government whether such a measure would be feasible or not at this moment. My proposal was perhaps more drastic. But what Mr. Botham's Committee had already recommended in 1913 was likely to be given effect to if the Government of India had replied to that at that time. I think, Sir, at that point we can start; and this is my idea. I do not want to embarrass the Government on this point in any way, but at the same time I do not want to have any spasmodic effort in this matter of opium. And I am bound to acknowledge before the House that recently Government have also made an effort in this matter. They are also moving steadily. The only point I now press before the House is this—let us not stop there. But let us in all earnestness,—both the Government and the people—combine in this matter, to eradicate this evil from the country. With that end in view I propose this measure. If a small committee be appointed now, perhaps the committee will be in a position to challenge many of the statements made by the responsible persons, public bodies, or even district officers. In that case the Government will be better advised through the Council or through their representatives in the committee whether the proposal which has actually been made by the Botham Committee long before, might not be taken in hand just now. It is only with this motive that I have made this proposal.

MR. R. N. CHAUDHURI :—Sir, before anything is done in this matter I should like to know the exact position in which we are. The Mover asked for a Committee to be appointed. He said further on that a Committee be appointed for taking legislation against the smoking of opium on the evidence

collected for the purpose. But that evidence has not been forthcoming. And how can we judge the situation, whether a Committee should be appointed or not unless this evidence is forthcoming. In such a case I do not know how we can exercise our discretion in voting. If there had been any evidence collected a copy of the same was not given to the members of the Council. For myself, I can vouch that it was not given. If anybody can challenge me he may say that he has got a copy. But so far as I am concerned I can say that I have not got it and in the circumstances, in this concealed state, if any attempt is made for a committee to be appointed I am the last person to support the resolution. It can be passed if the members think so but I shall be the last person to support it. I have got to know and to fully understand the exact position as it stands at present.

The main question is whether a committee should be appointed or not. On the subject-matter of opium smoking I have very little to say. But so far as I was concerned in my speeches I was sometimes for it and sometimes against it. The matter has been hanging on now for a long time. It was being agitated from the very inception of this House. Of course to a certain class of people or to certain individuals it might be objectionable but for some it might be good. However, without committing myself to any kind of opinion whatsoever I shall simply ask whether the Government has got any objection to supplying us first of all the evidence; or will the Hon'ble Mover be able to supply us copies of this evidence if he has got it, so that we can understand our position?

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID:—Sir, we are grateful to the Mover of this resolution for the way in which he has introduced it and for the indication which he has given of his intentions. We are also grateful to him for his acknowledgment of the fact that we as a Government are making efforts to restrict the opium habit. The Mover has correctly quoted what I said in this Council on a former occasion, and I need not go into the past history of the subject of the resolution. This is stated to be the feasibility or otherwise of legislation against the smoking of opium in company. In fulfilment of our promise we circulated extracts from the proceedings of the debates in this Council on the subject and invited the widest expression of opinion. We have received replies not only from Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners but from public bodies and from private individuals throughout the province. We propose, instead of accepting the suggestion for the appointment of a committee to make this evidence with our letter of reference exactly as they stand available to each member of this Council. This will enable each individual member of this Council to examine the evidence and consider whether our provisional conclusions—these I shall presently state to the Council—are or are not correct. I am glad that in so doing we seem to have met in advance the demand of the last speaker. Copies will be available—I think they are available now—for every member of the Council.

Well, Sir, the conclusions, and I repeat that these are purely provisional conclusions, that we came to on this evidence—we are concealing nothing—are that while a large body of opinion undoubtedly favours the introduction of a Bill such as that outlined by Mr. Botham's Committee we can find hardly any practical suggestions for the enforcement of such a measure. Numerous people recognise the difficulties. Apprehensions are expressed about the hardship that may be caused. Opinions differ most markedly about the

agency to work the Bill, to detect breaches of the law, to bring offenders to trial, even to try and punish them. At the moment we hardly see how a Bill of this kind could be made operative in the province. As I said our conclusions are provisional. We are perfectly willing to consider the matter further when the Council have had the opportunity of examining the situation for themselves.

I acknowledge gratefully, Sir, the tribute that the Hon'ble Mover paid to us. He believes that we are in earnest in trying to bring the opium habit within the very narrowest limits. He is only anxious that we should not stand still. I assure him again publicly that we have no intention of standing still. The figures which I laid before the Council in March last during the debate on the opium question show what we have done and are doing. The latest figures will be available very shortly in the Annual Report and the Government Resolution on the working of the Excise Department in Assam during the past year. I repeat that we have clearly outlined our policy, and along this line we are determined to proceed without wavering.

REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY :—Sir, as the evidence will be circulated among the members of the Council I think we should wait till we have enough time to study it before we proceed any further. And for that reason I think the appointment of a Committee may be deferred for a time. If it be found necessary after we have studied the evidence that such a committee should be proposed, we can do so later on.

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN :—Sir, after hearing the Hon'ble the Finance Member and some other speakers I think it is better on my part to withdraw this resolution for the present, and actually my intention was only to make the point clear. Now, when we know that the Hon'ble Member is circulating the opinions already received on this point and again when he has given the assurance that the matter will again be considered, then I think I should for the time being withdraw this resolution.

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

The Council then adjourned to Wednesday the 13th September, 1922, at 11 A. M.

SHILLONG :
The 15th September 1922. }

S. E. STINTON,
Offg. Secretary to the Legislative
Council, Assam.