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 Wednesday, the 13th September 1922, at 11 A.M.

PRESENT:

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 40 nominated and elected Members.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

(UNSTARRED QUESTIONS.)

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM asked :—

1. Will the Government be pleased to state—

Petition of Sajjad Ali and others.

(*a*) If the attention of the Government has been drawn to a petition signed by Sajjad Ali and others of village Girdha, Post Office Churkhai, in the district of Sylhet, addressed to the Superintendent of Police and the Deputy Commissioner of Sylhet, containing some allegations against the additional Police and the ordinary Police of the Jaldhup Police station, which was published in the *Sylhet Chronicle* of the 29th May 1922, under the heading "The Additional Police."

(*b*) If any enquiry was made persuant to the aforesaid petition' and if so, by whom and with what results ?

THE HON'BLE MR. A. MAJID replied :—

1. (*a*)—Yes.

(*b*)—Enquiry was made by an Inspector of Police. It was alleged that a chaukidar had been demanding money in the name of the Assistant Sub-Inspector in charge of the additional Police, but it was not proved that he had done more than warn the villagers that they would be required to pay the cost of the additional Police. No money was actually realised, and although the circumstances were suspicious it was not possible to take action against either the chaukidar or the Assistant Sub-Inspector. Immediate steps were taken to warn the villagers to pay nothing except to the Magistrate deputed for the purpose. The other allegations were found to be substantially untrue.

REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY asked :—

Retrenchment Committee.

1. (*a*) Will the Government be pleased to furnish a statement showing the cost to the State of the Committee on retrenchment in the payment of deputation or travelling allowances and the amount so paid to each member thereof?

(*b*) What has been the amount of saving effected up to date as a result of the labours of this Committee?

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID replied —

1. (*a*)—The following amounts were drawn as travelling allowance by the members of the Retrenchment Committee. There was no other expenditure :—

	Rs.	a.	p.
Mr. J. E. Webster, C.I.E. ...	140	12	0
Rai Bahadur P. C. Dutta, M.L.C. ...	414	14	0
Total	555	10	0

The late Khan Bahadur Muhibuddin Ahmad does not appear to have drawn any travelling allowance.

(*b*)—The Hon'ble Member is referred to the reply given to question No. 7* asked by Srijut Nilmoni Phukan, M.L.C.

REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY asked :—

2. (1) Will the Government be pleased to say whether the under-mentioned concessions, which have been granted to Civil Assistant Surgeons in Bengal who were in Military employ during the war and were permitted to retain their military rank on reversion to civil duty, will be extended to Civil Assistant Surgeons in Assam who were similarly employed and reverted to civil duty retaining their military rank, namely :— Civil Assistant Surgeons.

(*a*) Exemption from post Graduate course ?

(*b*) The benefit of counting as double the period of Oversea service ?

(2) If not, will Government please state why there should be a distinction in this matter between officers serving in the two provinces having similar claims ?

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

1. (*a*)—The question is under the consideration of Government.

(*b*)—The reply is in the negative. Government do not see any special grounds for granting this concession.

BABU RAMANI MOHAN DAS asked :—

1. (*a*) Will the Government be pleased to state the number of thefts and burglaries committed in the Municipal towns of the province during the past two years and up to the end of July of the current year ? Thefts and burglaries in Municipal towns.

(*b*) How many cases have been detected and culprits punished ?

2. (*a*) Will the Government be pleased to state the number of Police forces appointed by the Government to guard the Municipal areas in the province showing the number in each Municipality and the expenditure incurred on that account in each ? Number of Police force appointed to guard Municipal areas.

(*b*) What are the rules, if any, for appointment and maintenance of such Police forces for Municipalities ?

(*c*) Will the Government be pleased to state the specified duties to be discharged by such Police ?

(*d*) Will the Government be pleased also to state what "relations" the said Police forces hold with the municipal authorities ?

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* Published in the proceedings of the 11th September 1922.

THE HON'BLE MR. A. MAJID replied :—

1. (*a*) and (*b*)—Separate figures are not available for municipal areas and Government do not consider it worth while collecting them. They will however be glad to obtain and to supply to the Hon'ble Member figures for any particular Municipality.

2. (*a*)—Two statements showing the sanctioned strength and cost of the police force employed in municipal areas are laid on the table.

(*b*)—The town police forms a part of the Provincial police force and its members are enrolled and maintained in exactly the same way as those of other branches.

(*c*)—The duties of town police are :—

(1) Watch and ward,

(2) Prevention and detection of crime,

(3) Maintenance of order including traffic regulation.

(*d*)—The town police enforces the municipal bye-laws but is not under the executive control of the municipal authorities.

Statement showing the Police Force employed in the Municipalities in Assam and monthly expenditure incurred on that account in each.

Districts.	Municipalities.	Sub-Inspectors.	Head Constables.	Constables.	Expenditure per mensem.		
					Sub-Inspectors.	Head Constables.	Constables.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
					Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
Cachar	Silchar	...	7	35	...	282 14 8	740 4 7
Sylhet	Sylhet	1	4	36	150 0 0	161 10 8	761 7 0
	Habiganj	...	2	12	...	80 13 4	253 13 0
	Sunamganj	...	2	12	...	80 13 4	253 13 0
	Karimganj	...	2	12	...	80 13 4	253 13 0
Khasi and Jaintia Hills ...	Shillong	1	2	30	150 0 0	81 10 8	647 0 6
Kamrup	Gauhati	...	4	46	...	161 10 8	972 15 2
	Barpeta	...	2	14	...	80 13 4	296 1 10
Darrang	Tezpur	...	2	14	...	80 13 4	296 1 10
Nowgong	Nowgong	...	1	12	...	40 6 8	253 13 0
Sibsagar	Jorhat	...	2	14	...	80 13 4	296 1 10
	Sibsagar	...	...	6	...	...	126 14 6
	Golaghat	...	...	6	...	...	126 14 6
Lakhimpur	Dibrugarh	...	4	28	...	161 10 8	592 3 8
Goalpara	Dhubri	...	2	14	...	80 13 4	296 1 10
	Goalpara	...	2	10	...	80 13 4	211 8 2
		2	38	301	300 0 0	1,536 10 8	6,378 15 5

N.B.—The statements of cost include pay, conveyance allowance, maintenance allowance of kit and house rent allowance at the maximum rates for all ranks, including constables.

Statement showing the Police Force employed in the Unions in Assam and monthly expenditure incurred on that account.

Districts.	Unions.	Sub-Inspectors.	Head Constables.	Constables.	Expenditure per mensem.		
					Sub-Inspectors.	Head Constables.	Constables.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
					Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
Cachar	Hailakandi	...	1	6	...	40 6 8	126 14 6
Sylhet	Maulvi Bazar... ...	...	2	12	...	80 13 4	253 13 0
Goalpara	Gauripur	...	1	4	...	40 6 8	84 9 8
Kamrup	Palasbari	No separate force sanctioned for Town Police.					
Darrang	Mangaldai	...	1	5	...	40 6 8	105 12 1
Sibsagar	Nazira	...	1	4	...	40 6 8	84 9 8
Lakhimpur	Doom-Dooma... ...	No separate force sanctioned for Town Police.					
	Tinsukia						
	North Lakhimpur ...						
	Total	...	6	31	...	242 8 0	655 10 11
	For Municipalities ...	2	38	301	300 0 0	1,536 10 8	6,378 15 5
	Grand total ...	2	44	332	300 0 0	1,779 2 8	7,034 10 4

N.B.—The statements of cost include pay, conveyance allowance, maintenance allowance of kit and house rent allowance at the maximum rates for all ranks including constables.

BABU RAMANI MOHAN DAS asked :—

3. (*a*) Is it a fact that a representation signed by the subjects of the Bijni Raj State has been submitted to His Excellency the Governor of the Province ? Bijni Raj Estate.

If so, will the Government be pleased to lay a copy of the same on the table ?

(*b*) Have the Government caused an enquiry to be made to ascertain the truth of the facts mentioned in the representation ?

If not, will the Government be pleased to direct the formation of a committee to enquire into the matter narrated in the representation and to report them to the Government for their consideration ?

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID replied :—

3. (*a*)—An advance copy of a representation on the subject of the claim of Bhairabendra Narayan Deb to the Bijni Estate has been received by Government, and a copy is laid on the table.

(*b*)—The original representation has not yet been received through the Deputy Commissioner and the Commissioner and no action has been taken. The facts and claims alleged in the representation form, however, the subject-matter of judicial proceedings which are now pending, and it is unlikely that Government will be in a position to take any action in the matter until the decision of the court has been pronounced.

"To

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR OF ASSAM,
SHILLONG.

Dated the 12th June 1921.

The humble petition of Joy Ram Pathak and others, *Lakherajdars*, *Mourashidars*, *Jotdars* and other tenants of the Bijni Raj in the district of Goalpara.

MOST RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH :—

I. That the present Bijni Raj Estate in the district of Goalpara was in ancient times the vast independent Koch Kingdom which in course of time dwindled into the present state and the decendants of the former Koch Kings are still holding the same. The said Estate is an inalienable and impartible Raj.

II. That the Rajas of this Estate are Koches or Rajbansis (Hindu Khatriya) by caste and are governed by the Daybhaga system of Hindu law. The majority of the tenants being of that caste, due to the social ties of marriage and the like and other reasons, Rajas lived in peace and amity from before with the tenants who helped them with their good will and hearty co-operation and thus contributing to the peace and prosperity of the Estate.

III. That the last holder of the Raj, Raja Kumud Narayan, having died in 1883 his widows possessed the Estate for some time. They being Pardanashin Hindu ladies did neither see the tenants nor hear and far less, redress their grievances.

IV. That for the absence of a good administrator for a length of time in the Estate, discontent and disaffection among the tenants have grown intense and the happy relationship that existed before, between the ruler and the ruled, has almost disappeared.

V. That on the death of the junior Rani Abhoyeswari Debi, the Government of Assam installed in the Bijni Guddy Kumar Jogendra Narayan the lunatic son of late Kumar Kirti Narayan Deb, who was the elder brother of the late Raja. The said Kumar (present alleged Raja) for the last 15 or 16 years from before the death of the said Rani, suffering from a severe mental derangement became a confirmed lunatic and has been continuing still in that state. On the death of Raja Amrit Narayan, Kumud Narayan succeeded him as the nearest agnate. The aforesaid Kumar Kirti Narayan could not succeed as he was disqualified under Hindu law and custom obtaining in the family, by reason of his being an idiot, lunatic and imbecile although he was the elder brother of Raja Kumud Narayan and survived him. The allegation of Raja Kumud Narayan ascending Guddi as the adopted son is entirely without any foundation. The lunacy of the present alleged Raja who is about 37 years old, is inherited from his father and as such he has no chance of recovery at all. The medical men deputed by the Government confirmed the same after examining him. Consequently therefore neither in law nor by custom obtaining in the family he is qualified for the Guddy and, if he continue as Raja, there is no chance for the tenants to get their grievances redressed after laying them personally before the Raja as in former times.

VI. That your memorialists learn with regret that Kumar Bhairabendra Narayan Deb, the eldest son of late Kumar Chandra Narayan Deb, "Subha" the nearest and eldest agnate of the late Raja being deprived of his right to and possession of the Bijni Estate has been forced to file a suit which he did with Srijut Udai Narayan Deb in the first Court of the Subordinate Judge at Alipore for the recovery of the Estate. According to our view the said Srijut Udai Narayan, even if he canbe a member of the Bijni family, is unfit by law and custom obtaining in the family to become Raja inasmuch as he is an idiot, uneducated man of undeveloped intellect, besides there are other reasons for his disqualification.

VII. That your memorialists are alarmed to learn further—

(*a*) That Srijut Samarendra Narayan Singha Chowdhury, the alleged adopted son of the late holder of the three-annas share of the Parbut Jowar Estate, filed another suit in the Dhubri Court claiming the Estate although no cognatic relations did ever succeed to the Bijni Estate which is impartible and cannot be transferred out and out.

(*b*) That Prince Victor Nityendra Narayan, a brother of His Highness the Maharaja of Cooch-Behar, has bought the imaginary right of one Srijut Aswani Narayan of Bijni a fictitious Bijni-kinsman and established his office in very many places in the Estate and in the Goalpara district in contemplation of such suit.

(*c*) That the Kumars of Darrang and Beltola are making similar preparations with the same end in view.

It is needless to say that the claims of Srijut Udai Narayan, spoken of in the 6th paragraph and the claims mentioned in clauses (*a*), (*b*) and (*c*) of this paragraph are wholly speculative and without foundation.

VIII. That the suit or suits either pending or contemplated if actualised will not only be protracted for a number of years but will also be highly expensive on both sides and will, in all probability, completely annihilate the estate and untold misery will be caused to the tenants.

IX. That according to the custom of the family, on the death of a Raja his son or brother or, in their absence, the nearest and eldest male agnate fit and qualified under Hindu law and custom obtaining in the family succeed him and the heir next to him is selected and made "Subha" (Heir apparent). On Raja Kumud Narayan ascending the Guddy as the nearest agnate, Kumar Chandra Narayan Deb was made "Subha" and as such he was acknowledged and honoured in befitting manner by late Raja Kumud Narayan, his widows, the relations and connections of the Raja and the local and neighbouring Rajas and Zemindars and respected and paid nazarana by the officers and the tenants of the Raj. The said "Subha" Sahib survived the Rani Abhoyeswari Debi and inherited the state and, on his death, his eldest son the aforesaid Kumar Bhairabendra Narayan Deb succeeded him.

X. That to prevent the ruin, due to the protracted and costly litigation, of the Bijni Estate the remnant of the independent Koch Kingdom of old and to rehabilitate therein the happy and peaceful state formerly prevailing your humble memorialists most respectfully pray that the benign Government would be pleased—

(*a*) to put Kumar Bhairabendra Narayan Deb, the nearest agnate of the late Raja, on the Guddy in place of the present lunatic alleged Raja and to place the management on his behalf under the Court of Wards and to make proper arrangements for his education so that in time the said Kumar Bhairabendra Narayan Deb who is known to some of your memorialists and is handsome, amiable and intelligent boy may make a popular Raja as he will undoubtedly do under proper training ;

(*b*) to put the said Kumar Bhairabendra Narayan Deb under a local educated, trust-worthy *bona fide* relative to protect his person, to guide him in the right path, to maintain his right and to give him proper advice towards the up-keep of good feeling between the Raja and the tenants ;

(*c*) and, if the Government be so kind as to grant your memorialists' prayer in (*a*), to make suitable arrangements to enable the present lunatic incumbent to live comfortably for his life.

And your memorialists, as in duty bound, shall ever pray."

MAULAVI ABDUL KHALIQUE CHAUDHURY asked :—

1. (*a*) Have the Government ever received any memorial from the clerks of Shillong for granting them lands for building purposes ? **Memorial from Shillong Clerks for lands.**

(*b*) Is there a committee formed for the above purposes ?

If the answer to (*a*) and (*b*) be in the affirmative, will the Government please give an elaborate progress report of the matter ?

2. (*a*) When do the Government of Assam intend to give effect to the recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee ? **Retrenchment Committee.**

(*b*) Did the Government of Assam forward the recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee to the proper authority for the abolition of some Indian Civil Service posts ?

(*i*) If so, when ? (*ii*) If not, why ?

(*c*) What amount of money had Government to expend in connection with the Retrenchment Committee ?

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID replied :—

1. (*a*) and (*b*)—Yes.

Memorials were received in March and April 1921. A Committee of six members was appointed to examine the question, and their report was received by Government in November 1921. None of the three sites on which they reported were however found to be suitable. Another site has recently been examined, but found to be not available. The matter is still under consideration.

2. (*a*), (*b*) and (*c*)—The Hon'ble Member is referred to the answers given to questions Nos. 17 and 6(*a*) asked by Srijut Nilmoni Phukan, M.L.C., and the Rev. J. J. M. Nichols-Roy, M.L.C., respectively.

MAULAVI ABDUL KHALIQUE CHAUDHURY asked :—

Assistant Inspector for Muhammadan Education.

3. Will the Government please state :—

(*a*) The amount of travelling allowances drawn by the Assistant Inspector for Muhammadan Education during the years 1920-21 ?

(*b*) The amount of money spent in giving grant to aided Madrasas for the years 1920-21 ?

(*c*) The number of such Madrasas inspected by the said Assistant Inspector during the years 1920-21 ?

(*d*) Whether the Assistant Inspector for Muhammadan Education has any special inspection work at Shillong ?

(*e*) If not, will the Government state the necessity for retaining his headquarters at Shillong and paying heavy travelling allowance from there to the plains ?

Headqurters of Assistant Inspectors for Muhammadan Education.

4. Is it a fact that headquarters of all the Assistant Inspectors for Muhammadan Education in Bengal are attached to the office of the Inspector of Schools ?

If so, will the Government fix the headquarters of the Assistant Inspector of Schools for Muhammadan Education of Assam either at Jorhat or at Silchar ?

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

3. (*a*)—Rs. 1,405-14-0.

(*b*)—In the year 1920-21, the amount was Rs. 6,552.

(*c*)—The number of aided Madrasas inspected by the Assistant Inspector in the year 1920-21 was 12.

(*d*)—The only inspection work the Assistant Inspector has in Shillong is in connection with the Islamic language classes in Shillong High School.

(*e*)—It is administratively convenient that the Assistant Inspector who is a Provincial officer should have his office at the headquarters of the province.

4.—Government are not informed as to arrangements for the posting of Assistant Inspectors for Muhammadan Education in Bengal. The analogy is not however with divisional officers in Bengal but with the Assistant Director of Muhammadan Education whose office, it is understood, is attached to the office of the Director of Public Instruction Bengal. Government are not disposed to change the headquarters of

the Muhammadan Assistant Inspector either to Silchar or Jorhat. They are not persuaded that this is desired or that it would be either economical or convenient.

MAULAVI ABDUL KHALIQUE CHAUDHURY asked :—

5. Is it a fact that the tenants of Bijni Raj Estate in the district of Goalpara have submitted a memorial to the Government for redressing their grievances ? **Bijni State.**

If so, will the Government be pleased to state what steps Government have undertaken in the matter ?

6. Will the Government be pleased to state how many posts of clerks are there in the offices of Divisional Forests in Assam and how many of them are held by Muhammadans and how many they are entitled to according to their number ? **Divisional Forest Offices.**

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID replied :—

5.—In the absence of further particulars Government are unable to trace the memorial which the Hon'ble Member has in mind.

6.—In the Divisional Forest offices in Assam there are 33 clerks, of whom one is a Muhammadan. On the basis of population there should be nine Muhammadan clerks.

MAULAVI ABDUL KHALIQUE CHAUDHURY asked :—

7. Will the Government be pleased to state :—

(*a*) Whether the length of service in each of the old grades was counted when the Subordinate Educational Service was last organised ? **Subordinate Educational Service.**

(*b*) Whether Government sanctioned the accrual of the first increment of the said organised service with effect from the date following that on which an officer would have completed another year of service in his old grade, if the reorganisation had not taken place ?

If so, why the Comptroller has ordered for the retrenchment for such increments allowed to officers under the instructions of the Local Government ?

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

7. (*a*)—The answer is in the negative. Any service in the grade in which the officer was placed at the time of reorganisation was reckoned for increments.

(*b*)—The answer is in the affirmative.

In the first place the initial pay of officers in the reorganised service was reckoned with reference to his grade pay and the number of years of service *completed* in the grade in which he was placed at the time of reorganisation, no reckoning being taken of parts of a year. Accordingly, so that officers might have benefit for broken years, it was decided that increments in the new service should in the case of each officer accrue from the dates following that on which he would have completed another year of service in his old grade.

This was found to be inequitable. Many complaints were received Government therefore decided to fix the initial pay on reorganisation with reference to (1) grade pay as before, (2) instead of the number of completed years, the full period of years, months and days, services in the grade. It followed that services having been allowed for right up to the date of admission to the new service, increments should accrue annually from that date as provided by the scale.

At the same time it was ordered that any sums which had been properly drawn under the old orders in excess of the amount which would have been due had the new rule been applied *ab initio* should not be retrenched. It is understood that the Comptroller has not issued instructions for retrenchment which conflict with this order.

MAULAVI ABDUL KHALIQUE CHAUDHURY asked :—

Inspector of Co-operative Societies.

8. Is it in the contemplation of the Government to revise and increase the pay of the Inspectors of Co-operative Societies ?

If so, when can they expect the revision and on what scale ?

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR GHANASYAM BARUA replied :—

8.—The answer to the question is in the negative.

SRIJUT BISHNU CHARAN BORA asked :—

Duties of certain Officers of Co-operative Societies.

1. (*a*) Will the Government please state what are the duties of the Assistant Registrar, the Auditor, the Inspector, the District Auditor and Supervisor of Co-operative Societies ?

(*b*) If the duties are practically the same, will the Government please state why 5 different classes of officers with five different scales of pay have been maintained ?

(*c*) Will the Government be pleased to enquire into and reorganise, if necessary, these services with a view to avoid the overlapping of duties ?

(*d*) Is it a fact that the Sub-Deputy Collector-Inspectors who are even junior in service draw more than double the pay of the ordinary Inspectors of Co-operative Societies ?

(*e*) Will the Government consider the advisability of replacing those highly paid Sub-Deputy Collector officers by ordinary Inspectors in view of the present financial condition of the Province ?

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR GHANASYAM BARUA replied :—

1. (*a*)—The duties of the subordinate staff of the Co-operative Department, Assam, are briefly stated below :—

Assistant to the Registrar, Co-operative Societies.—Generally supervises the working of all classes of Co-operative Societies throughout the Province on behalf of the Registrar. According to instructions issued in 1920, when the province was divided into 4 circles, he is to inspect at least 30 per cent. of the societies in each Inspector's circle and to super-audit at least 10 per cent. of them annually. He exercises supervisional powers over the Inspectors and other subordinate officers of the Department.

Auditor, Co-operative Societies, Assam.—He does original audit of all Central Banks and non-credit societies having complex accounts and scrutinizes the audit notes and statements submitted by Inspectors and District Auditors. He supervises the compilation of annual statements.

Inspectors of Co-operative Societies.—They are primarily responsible for organisation and supervision of all societies in their circles. All agricultural and non-agricultural credit societies except Central Banks are to be inspected and audited by them at least once a year. They are to perform the duties of liquidators of dissolved societies within their circles. It is their duty to improve the condition of degenerated societies by continual nursing and close supervision.

District Auditors of Co-operative Societies.—They are paid from audit fees levied and are at present required to assist the Inspectors in the audit of rural societies only. As the charges of Inspectors are heavy such assistance is necessary.

Supervisors.—The supervisors who are whole-time servants of Central Banks are mainly employed by them in assessing credit of affiliated societies, in helping to maintain the accounts of such societies and in securing punctual repayments from such societies. They do a lot of clerical work for societies in which literate members are rare. They submit monthly diaries to the Assistant Registrar through the respective Chairmen.

(*b*)—It will be seen from reply to (*a*) that the duties of all the subordinate officers are not quite identical.

(*c*)—In view of reply to (*b*) the question does not arise.

(*d*)—The Sub-Deputy Collector-Inspectors get a duty allowance of Rs. 50 each per mensem in addition to their grade pay whereas the scale fixed for the ordinary Inspectors is Rs. 100—5—200. The two Sub-Deputy Collector-Inspectors, who are not junior to the ordinary Inspectors in service, at present, get Rs. 250 each per mensem including the duty allowance.

(*e*)—It is desirable to have Co-operative Inspectors with experience in revenue work and also to have some revenue officers experienced in co-operative work which gives an insight into the real economic condition of the people. The question of effecting possible economies however is already engaging the attention of the Government.

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN asked :—

1. (*a*) Are the Government aware that drainage and water-works schemes have been long urged upon Dibrugarh Municipality by the Sanitary Commissioner (now Director of Public Health) ? **Dibrugarh Municipality.**

(*b*) Is it not usual "to borrow or seek grants-in-aid from Government" in such cases ?

(*c*) If so, will the Government be pleased to state whether they are prepared to make necessary grants and to give loans towards these schemes, if undertaken by Dibrugarh Municipality ?

(*d*) What grants were made by the Government in the past to other Municipalities for water-works schemes in relation to total expenditure in the schemes ?

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR GHANASYAM BARUA replied :—

1. (*a*)—Yes.

(*b*)—Grants-in-aid have been made by Government for purposes of water-works.

(*c*)—It is open to the Municipality to make an application which will be considered on its merits with due reference to the prevailing financial conditions ; but so long as the present financial stringency subsists, it is quite clear that no such grant can be sanctioned.

(*d*)—The following statement shows the total cost of the water-works schemes and the grants made by Government to the Municipalities concerned :—

Name of water-works.	Total cost.	Government grant.	Remarks.
1	2	3	4
	Rs.	Rs.	
Silchar ...	1,16,658	76,658	
Sylhet ...	2,00,000	1,10,000	
Shillong ...	58,692	47,692	
Dhubri ...	1,63,555	1,09,610	
Gauhati ...	38,214	38,214	The amount was recovered from the Municipality by withholding their annual recurring grant for a series of years.
Tezpur ...	1,00,000	66,666	
Jorhat ...	1,20,586	1,20,586	

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN asked :—

Realisation of income-tax.

2. Will the Government be pleased to state what are the terms for a settlement offered by the Government of Bengal on the question of realisations of income-tax, and has any definite understanding been arrived at?

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID replied :—

2.—The question is still under discussion with the Government of Bengal.

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN asked :—

Dibrugarh Model Girls' High School.

3. (*a*) Are the Government aware that there is no arrangement for pure drinking water, hostel accommodation and Mistresses' quarters in the Model Girls' High School at Dibrugarh ? Are they also aware of the great inconvenience experienced by the staff and the students on this account ?

(*b*) Are the Government aware that a few girls from outside district resided with some mistresses of that school in a rented house and that their mess will be dissolved on some of the mistresses leaving Dibrugarh on order of transfer ?

(*c*) Is it a fact that those girls are now thinking of shifting to some other High Schools outside the Province ?

(*d*) Are the Government aware of some Resolutions passed recently by the Managing Committee of that School suggesting some practical schemes for accommodation and drinking water ?

(*e*) If so, will the Government be pleased to consider their practicability and give effect to them ?

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

3. (*a*)—The answer is in the affirmative.

Government are aware that inconvenience is experienced by certain members of the staff and by a number of actual and intending pupils for want of hostel accommodation and Mistresses' quarters.

As regards water-supply it is understood that it would be convenient to have a well in the compound. But the need cannot be looked on as either urgent or important. The school has no difficulty in arranging to obtain good water from a neighbouring well. The question is not one of providing pure drinking water but of sparing the chaukidar the trouble of fetching it.

(*b*)—The answer is in the affirmative.

(*c*)—Government have no information.

(*d*)—The Director of Public Instruction advises that a Resolution has reached him on the subject of digging a well in the school compound for the supply of drinking water, if Government will give a grant of Rs. 250 for the purpose. The resolution does not touch on the question of accommodation.

(*e*)—The Inspectress of Schools will be instructed to obtain a plan of the proposed well with a specification. If the Public Works Department then advise that the proposal is practicable, it will be considered when the financial situation improves.

RAI BAHADUR BEPIN CHANDRA DEB LASKAR asked :—

Amount allotted for improvement and maintenance of tols in Assam.

1. Will the Government be pleased to state :—

(*a*) What portion of the amount allotted to the province of Assam from the Educational grant given by His Majesty the King Emperor on the occasion of the Coronation at Delhi in 1911, has been spent from that year up till now for the maintenance and improvement of *tols* in Assam, in addition to the annual expenditure incurred by Government for that purpose from Provincial revenues ?

(*b*) If no portion of the said Imperial recurring grant was allotted for the purpose, will the Government be pleased to state the reasons for depriving the *tols* of their share on the said Imperial recurring grants ?

(*c*) The qualifications a Pandit for Mahamahopadhyayaship and a member of the Executive Council of the Calcutta Sanskrit Association and of the Surma Valley Sanskrit Examination Board should possess ?

(*d*) The procedure of nomination of a member from the Surma Valley Division for the Calcutta Sanskrit Association and of appointing a member for the Surma Valley Sanskrit Examination Board ?

(*e*) The number of members of the Surma Valley Sanskrit Examination Board and the number of Adhyapakas of *tols* among them with their names and addresses ?

Surma Valley Sanskrit Examination Board.

2. Are the Government aware that the Surma Valley Sanskrit Examination Board has been without a single *tol* Adhyapaka for a long time ?

3. Are the Government aware of the fact that the Adhyapakas of *tols* are not supplied, even on their making applications for it, with information as to the rules and regulations of the Surma Valley Sanskrit Examination Board and the additions and alterations made thereon from time to time ? Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table a copy of the rules and regulations of the Surma Valley Sanskrit Examination Board ?

Silchar Chatuspathi.

4. Will the Government be pleased to state the number of students who left the Silchar Chatuspathi and the number of students who were refused admission for want of accommodation in 1922 ?

5. (*a*) Has the attention of the Government been drawn to the inspection notes on the Silchar Chatuspathi, particularly on the insufficiency of the pay of the Head Adhyapaka, recorded by the Hon'ble the Minister of Education on 5th August 1921, a copy of which was duly submitted to Government for favour of consideration and some extracts from which were read by me in the Council in the September Session of 1921 ?

(*b*) Will the Government be pleased to refer to my question 1 (*a*) and (*b*) headed "Silchar Chatuspathi" asked in the last March Session of the Assam Legislative Council and printed on page 512 of the *Assam Gazette*, dated April 19, 1922, and to give a clear and definite reply to the said questions ?

6. Will the Government be pleased to state, with reference to question (*f*) about the Silchar Chatuspathi asked by me in the last March Session of the Council and to its reply, whether the recommendations of the Special Officer who gave stress upon the needs of the Chatuspathi for immediate attention, have reached them and if so, what action has been taken upon the recommendation ?

7. Are the Government aware that the houses of the Boarding attached to the Silchar Chatuspathi, being out of repairs, have fallen down and the Chatuspathi building is also in a dilapidated condition ?

8. Are the Government aware that the Hindu people of Cachar gave as contribution Rs. 553 towards the construction of the Chatuspathi building, materials valued Rs. 300 for the boarding houses and subscriptions of more than one thousand rupees for the maintenance of the institution ? If so, will the Government be pleased to state whether so much public help in money and in other ways has been received by any other Sanskrit institution of its kind in this division ?

9. Are the Government aware that the Hindu public of Cachar have promised, even in these hard times, in respectful compliance with the request from Government, to extend more support towards this Chatuspathi if Government be pleased to sanction the scheme for improvement of the Chatuspathi proposed by the Managing Committee ?

10. Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table copy of the proceedings of a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Silchar Chatuspathi held on 3rd January 1922 proposing a slight modification and some absolutely necessary additions to the recommendations of the Special Officer (for reorganisation of Sanskrit education) and also copy of the Special Officer's inspection report of the Chatuspathi, one copy of which proceedings with a copy of the Special Officer's report was sent to the Secretary to the Government of Assam, Education Department, on 5th March 1922 ?

11. In view of the present critical condition of the Silchar Chatuspathi owing to want of funds and in view of the fact that general reorganisation of *tols* in the usual course may take time, will the Government be pleased to adopt measures as a special case without the least possible delay for the stability and improvement of the Silchar Chatuspathi ?

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

1. (*a*)—The Hon'ble Member presumably refers to what have been called the Coronation grants of 1912.

No part of these grants has been spent on the improvement of *tols* in Assam.

(*b*)—The recurring grants referred to were given by the Government of India for specific purposes amongst which *tol* education was not included.

(*c*)—There are no standard qualifications for the grant of the title of Mahamahopadhya. Eminence in Sanskrit learning is of course essential.

For membership of the Calcutta Sanskrit Association and unofficial membership of the Surma Valley Board no specific qualifications are laid down. The Convocation of the Calcutta body consists however exclusively or almost exclusively of representative *tol* pandits, the Council of leaders in Sanskrit learning. As regards the Surma Valley Board the Hon'ble Member will find full particulars in section 59 of the Education Department's Rules and Orders (provisional issue, 1922).

(*d*)—Members of the Surma Valley Board are nominated and appointed by the Director of Public Instruction.

As regards the Calcutta Association, the Council of that body nominates and the Government of Bengal appoint members of the Convocation. Assam Members of the Council are nominated by the Local Government and appointed by the Government of Bengal.

Except as stated above there is no prescribed procedure for nomination and appointment. But Government or the Director of Public Instruction, as the case may be, ordinarily, before taking action, consults authorities who are likely to be able to advise usefully in the matter.

(*e*)—Five, of whom one ought to be a non-official pandit. The seat reserved for such a pandit is at present vacant. There is no Adhyapak on the Board.

2.—Government are informed that there has been no Adhyapak on the Board since the death of Mahamahopadhyaya Ram Nath Vidyaratna.

3.—Government have no information on the subject.

Such rules and regulations as there are are public. They will be found in sections 59 and 60 of the Rules and Orders.

4.—Government have no information on the subject.

5. (*a*)—The answer is in the affirmative.

(*b*)—The answers already given are both clear and definite.

6.—The answer is in the negative.

7.—Government have no information on the subject other than that conveyed by the questions.

8.—Government are informed that the public contributed some Rs. 500 towards the cost of the Chatuspathi building. They have no information in regard to the value of the materials referred to or the total amount of the subscriptions. The rate of the monthly subscription in cash is, it is understood, Rs 5.

9.—The only information Government have on this subject is that the Committee of the Chatuspathi stated in course of a Resolution which was duly communicated to the Director of Public Instruction that the public had "expressed their willingness to subscribe Rs. 300 towards the improvement of the hostel." Since that Resolution was passed however Government are informed that the hostel has been allowed to become uninhabitable for want of the small sums required to keep it in repair.

10.—A copy of the proceedings is laid on the table.

11.—Government are not prepared to take action as indicated. The case of the Silchar Chatuspathi will be considered along with the case of other *tols* on the receipt of the report of the Special Officer with the recommendations of the Director of Public Instruction thereon. Government cannot refrain from pointing out that the *tol* could be at once put in a prosperous condition if the subscription of Rs. 500 previously referred to were realized and the contribution for maintenance were raised from Rs. 5 to say Rs. 25 to Rs. 30 in the month. This would involve no heavy tax on the members who are interested in its welfare.

ENCLOSURE I.

Proceedings of a meeting of the Executive Council of the Silchar Chatuspathi held on the 3rd January 1922, under the presidency of Babu Bihari Lal Dhar, B.L., Pleader, Judge's Court, Silchar.

RESOLUTION I.

Read and discussed Rai Sahib Bepin Chandra Deb Laskar, M.L.C.'s speech in support of a resolution about the Silchar Chatuspathi moved by the Hon'ble Member in the last September Session of the Assam Council.

Resolved that the members of the managing body of the Chatuspathi assembled here to-day fully endorse Rai Sahib's learned speech referred to above and place on record their gratitude, for this laudable and important motion, to Rai Sahib Bepin Chadra Deb Laskar, an eminently patriotic and leading gentleman of the district, who is expected to continue in his earnest efforts for the long desired improvement of this institution.

RESOLUTION II.

Read and considered the inspection remarks recently made by the Special Officer, for reorganisation of Sanskrit Education in Assam, deputed by the Government to enquire into the condition and urgent needs of the Silchar Chatuspathi, agreeably to the assurance kindly given by His Excellency the Governor of Assam in his reply to an address presented by the Silchar Chatuspathi on the occasion of his first visit to Silchar.

Resolved that the Committee accept with thanks the Special Officer's recommendations on the construction of a new hostel, the pay of the teaching staff, the improvement of the library and the grant of stipends to deserving students ; but they feel constrained, under the following special circumstances, to propose a slight modification on the pay of teachers and also some additions thereto.

RESOLUTION III.

Considered particularly the vast erudition of, and the exceptionally good work done for, the Silchar Chatuspathi and for the advancement of Sanskrit learning in the Surma Valley Division at a considerable self-sacrifice in the midst of hard struggle for existence by, Panditprabar Surjya Kumar Tarkasarasvati, Head Adhyapaka of the Chatuspathi and the most valuable and coveted opinions of Government and the public, which are known to all and for which a reference may be made to the pamphlet entitled "The Silchar Chatuspathi"—Record of its success and the special merit of the Adhyapaka, published by the authorities of the institution. It appears that his learning and work deserve special recognition for the benefit of society; but nothing has yet been done for him. As the Head Adhyapaka of the Silchar Chatuspathi, which, having turned out many "Tirthas" and other title-holders within a few years and competing on equal terms with Sanskrit colleges and thus maintaining the glory of the Pandit Samaj of the locality and giving an impetus to the dying Sanskrit language, has been declared to be the best and ideal institution of its kind in this Valley, nay in the Province, he is practically doing the work of a Principal of a Sanskrit College, his work rather being heavier as he has to devote a teacher's full time to teaching work. But his remuneration is too small, which has also been admitted by the Hon'ble the Minister of Education. It is much to be regretted that the very Government which refused, probably on the ground of financial stress, to increase his very poor pay even only by Rs. 10 per month in the year before last, are spending money with a liberal hand for education in other directions. In this state of things it is but natural for an eminent scholar and an earnest worker of his type to be discouraged and discontented; nay he may be forced to seek his fortunes elsewhere or in other ways, which will certainly result in the decline and eventually in the collapse of the Chatuspathi which is still on a very weak financial basis, if nothing be done immediately to encourage and enable him to maintain his family peacefully in a manner befitting his position.

Having regard to the above the Committee is of opinion that justice may be met if the present Head Adhyapaka of the Silchar Chatuspathi be given the same scale of pay as has been sanctioned for the Head Pandit of the Sylhet Sanskrit College. If that be not possible in view of the Chatuspathi being on an aided basis, his pay should be Rs. 50—$\frac{5}{1}$—100—$\frac{10}{1}$—150 with length of service counted; or in consideration of his learning, length of service and value of his work, *he must be allowed to start at least on Rs. 100 (one hundred) per month, the maximum amount of the scale recommended by the Special Officer.*

RESOLUTION IV.

In view of the fact that living in a town is far more costly than in a *muffasil* village and also of the present high prices of food-stuff.

This meeting considers that the pay of the Second Adhyapaka should be Rs. 30—$\frac{2}{1}$—50—$\frac{3}{1}$—75 (which may be revised if funds permit).

RESOLUTION V.

Considered the statement of expenditure required for the proposed improvement of the Chatuspathi, put up before the meeting by the Secretary, and the Committee is of opinion that the statement has been prepared on a most economical basis and with due regard to the Special Officer's recommendations and that the scheme proposed, if given effect to, will cost the Government probably even less than half of the recurring expenditure and an insiginificantly small amount under the head "Capital Expenditure" as compared with the Sylhet Sanskrit College; but it is reasonably believed that this Chatuspathi, if improved agreeably to the proposed scheme, will, in no way, prove less useful than the Sylhet Sanskrit College.

Resolved that the said statement be approved.

RESOLUTION VI.

Considered carefully the remarks made by the Special Officer about the duty of the public towards this Chatuspathi. It may be sufficient to say that the continued existence of an institution like this Chatuspathi in a locality like Cachar with a too small grant from Government, is the best and unquestionable proof of the people's love and sympathy for it. It may also be added here without meaning any offence that what the people of Cachar have done and are still prepared to do for the resuscitation of the dying Sanskrit language by way of helping the Silchar Chatuspathi with subcriptions and in other ways, can hardly be expected even from many other districts apparently more advanced in this direction.

However, in deference to the appeals from high officials, the Committee promise to pay 5 per cent. of the monthly recurring expenditure and 10 per cent. of the recurring annual expenditure (besides the public subcriptions of Rs. 500 already promised towards the construction of a hostel) provided the suggestions of the Committee be kindly accepted by the benign Government.

RESOLUTION VII.

Read the remarks of the late Chief Commissioners and their Excellencies the Governors of Assam, the Hon'ble the Minister of Education, the Director of Public Instruction and some other high officials, testifying to the marked success of the Chatuspathi. It is gratifying to find that they all have been so kind to appreciate and strongly commend the work of the Chatuspathi. But it is to be regretted that few of them seem to have thought it necessary to take any active step to put the institution on a firm and decent basis to enable it to continue its work to the satisfaction of all. Local authorities may have reported to Government that the financial help given to this Chatuspathi is unprecedented in the province; but the Committee has reason to suspect that the said report was not prompted by purest of motives. This ground might hold good if the Silchar Chatuspathi were an ordinary village *tol*. Certainly respectful thanks of the people are due to

Government for their kind help towards the Chatuspathi, but it has all along been too insufficient. Considered also that there are strong reasons for apprehension that this important and premier Chatuspathi of the locality may soon come to a critical position or there may be serious blow even to its very existence in the near future which is not probably desirable to anybody, unless immediate action is taken for its improvement and stability. *The needs and requirements of the Chatuspathi cannot await consideration in due course which is also supported by the Special Officer's remarks.*

Under the circumstances it is unanimously resolved that the benign Government be requested to be graciously pleased to give their best consideration to the Inspection Note of the Hon'ble the Minister of Education and to the recommendations of the Special Officer (for reorganisation of Sanskrit Education) for the Silchar Chatuspathi and the proceedings of this meeting of the Executive Committee of the Chatuspathi and to be so kind as to sanction, without the least possible delay, a capital grant of Rs. 2,500, a recurring annual grant of Rs. 135 and a recurring monthly grant of Rs. 209 to be increased annually in proportion to the increase of the pay of teachers proposed by the Committee, which grants can very easily be given by Government only if they please even during the present financial stringency.

RESOLUTION VIII.

Read the opinions of Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda, M.A., B.L., Vakil, High Court, Rai Nalini Kanta Dastidar Bahadur of Sylhet, Rai Sahib Bepin Chandra Deb Laskar and of some other very respectable and leading gentlemen of the country on the work of the Chatuspathi. Sanskrit Education with which the past glories of India are closely associated and which instils into the minds of the pupils, the principles of true wisdom, self-control and many other virtues which make life sublime, is undoubtedly one of the most beneficent measures that affect the real well-being of the Hindus. So far, therefore, this education is concerned, all are expected to merge their political and social differences in its advancement. The Silchar Chatuspathi so long successfully helping the cause of Sanskrit Education may, therefore, claim the sympathy and support of the Hindu community as a whole and the public in general.

In view of the above the managing body of the Silchar Chatuspathi fervently appeal to the Hindus having due regard for the holy *Shastras* and other patrons and lovers of Sanskrit learning to extend their helping hands towards this institution and to support its cause. As the Chatuspathi is located at Silchar, the people of the district and the residents of the locality are requested to take special interest in its welfare and move the Government to take immediate steps for the improvement of the Chatuspathi.

BIHARI LAL DHAR,

President.

ENCLOSURE II.

TRUE COPY.

Extract from the Inspection Note of the Special Officer, Sanskrit Education, Assam, on the condition and urgent needs of the Silchar Chatuspathi.

The Silchar Chatuspathi is doing excellent work. What strikes me most is the number of students of different sub-castes and localities. It is an affair of the whole Valley and of all sections of the Hindu community.

The needs of the Chatuspathi requiring immediate attention are :—

I. *A boarding house* for which Rs. 2,600 is said to be required.

II. *A Library.*—The present library is a most poor collection of books. A starting grant of Rs. 300 and a recurring annual grant of Rs. 50 is the minimum, which the Managing Committee must secure if the institution is to do really good work.

III. *Increase in the salary of teachers.*—The Second Pandit gets only Rs. 10. This shows that our Pandits have a genuine love of learning and will often work for almost nothing. But modern society can hardly depend upon such learned poverty to work for its advancement. The minimum pay that I could think of is Rs. 30, *i.e.*, an increase of Rs. 20 per month. The cost of living has increased everywhere and it would be but fair to give at least Rs. 55 per month to the Head Pandit, *i.e.*, an increase of Rs. 15 per month being 37·5 per cent. increment on his present salary. It is not suggested that this is anything like fair remuneration; it is the irreducible minimum. Rupees 60—5—100 might be something like fair remuneration considering that the institution is under private management and that in private educational institution the salary is always less than that in Government institutions.

IV. *Stipend to poor students of the* tol.—The minimum number of stipends ought to be 8 (eight), of which 5 (five) should be reserved for Cachar students. The monthly value of these stipends might be Rs. 9 as at Sylhet.

These are the minimum requirements of the Chatuspathi. I have ventured to enumerate them so nakedly in order to draw the attention of the Managing Committee and through them of the larger public for which I apologise to them for undoubtedly these things are already known to them more or less clearly. From the Inspection Note of the Hon'ble the Education Minister it appears that Government might sympathetically consider the case, but certainly the gentry of the district and of the town also have a clear duty in the matter.

* * * * *

Sd. V. CHAKRABARTY,

Officer for Reorganisation of Sanskrit Education in Assam.

15*th December* 1921.

ENCLOSURE III.

Statement of expenditure required for the proposed improvement of the Silchar Chatuspathi.

Capital Expenditure.

	Rs.
Hostel	2,600
Library	300
Furniture	100
Total	3,000

Rupees three thousand, of which the public will pay rupees five hundred.

Recurring Expenditure.

Monthly :—

	Rs.
Pay of the Head Adhyapaka...	100
Pay of the Second Adhyapaka	30
Stipends to eight students at Rs. 9 per head ...	72
Two menials (to do the work of mali, chowkidar, peon and hostel servant).	18
Total	220

Rupees two hundred and twenty, of which the public will pay rupees eleven, *i.e.*, 5 per cent.

Annual :—

	Rs.
Library	50
Contingency, repairs, prizes, etc.	100
Total	150

Rupees one hundred and fifty, of which the public will pay rupees fifteen, *i.e.*, 10 per cent.

BIHARI LAL DHAR,

President of the meeting of the Committee held on 3rd January 1922.

SURJA KUMAR TARKASARASVATI,

Secretary, Silchar Chatuspathi.

RAI BAHADUR BEPIN CHANDRA DEB LASKAR asked :—

12. (*a*) Will the Government be pleased to state the year in which the Excise Department was established ? Excise Department.

(*b*) Who investigated the excise cases before establishment of the Excise Department ?

(*c*) Is it a fact that the police are now required to help the excise staff in house searches ?

(*d*) What are the duties of Excise Superintendents ?

(*e*) Do they get first class travelling allowance ?

(*f*) How many days the Excise Superintendent of Silchar spent on tour during the last two years, *i.e.*, 1920 to 1922 ?

(*g*) How many excise cases have been detected by the Excise Department during the last 5 years in the Cachar district ?

(*h*) What are the excise staff entertained for Cachar ?

(*i*) Will the Government be pleased to place on the table the tour diaries of the Excise Superintendent for the years 1920 to 1922 ?

(*j*) What is the annual cost of the Excise Department in the province ?

THE HON'BLE MR. A. MAJID replied :—

12. (*a*)—It is difficult to say exactly. There was an Excise Department of some sort as far back as 1877.

(*b*)- The earliest records available show that excise cases were investigated by both police officers and officers of the Excise Department.

(*c*)—Yes.

(*d*)—The following description of the duties of Excise Superintendents is taken from the Excise Handbook.

The Superintendent of Excise is in immediate charge of the excise of the Sadr subdivision and is responsible to the Deputy Commissioner for the smooth working of the Sadr Excise Office. He is, in addition, the expert adviser of the Deputy Commissioner and Subdivisional Officers in all matters relating to excise and is responsible to those officers for the efficient working of the subordinate, preventive and distillery staffs.

Whole-time Superintendents of excise are required to spend 200 days on tour in each year. * * *

* * * *

In the course of their tours special attention should be directed to the inspection and preventive work of the subordinate staff, to the investigation of offences under the excise and opium laws, and to the sites and management of licensed premises and the observance of the conditions of licenses, more especially in the case of country spirit shops in tea garden and industrial areas. Fluctuations in the consumption and retail selling prices of opium and excisable articles should be enquired into, and in the last three-quarters of the year a rough estimate of the

financial results of each shop inspected should be made. The above matters and any others of interest should be briefly noticed in the monthly diaries.

Superintendents are required to inspect all licensed premises within the district at least once in each year and the Sadr and subdivisional excise offices and *ganja* warehouses once in each half-year, verifying the stock of *ganja* in the latter. They are also required to inspect distilleries and spirit warehouses within their charges once a quarter, and if they should be prevented from carrying out the quarterly stock-taking of spirit in such warehouses prescribed by Boards' rule No. 59, they should as soon afterwards as possible verify the stock-taking carried out by the officer in charge.

(*e*)—Yes.

(*f*)—The Government have no information of the actual number of days spent on tour by the Superintendent of Excise, Cachar, during the years 1920-21 and 1921-22. The Excise Administration Reports for these years show that the Superintendent did the prescribed amount of touring two hundred days in each year.

(*g*)—Complete information is not available. Figures of the more important offences under the Excise and Opium Acts are as follows:—

1917-18	51	cases.
1918-19	32	"
1919-20	45	"
1920-21	40	"
1921-22	30	"

(*h*)—The following Excise staff is employed in the Cachar district:—

(*i*) One Superintendent of Excise.
(*ii*) Two Inspectors of Excise.
(*iii*) One warehouse Inspector.
(*iv*) One Jemadar and nine peons.

(*i*)—The diaries have hitherto been submitted to the Commissioner of Excise and did not reach the Government.

(*j*)—Expenditure on the Excise Department for each of the last five years is given below:—

	Rs.	
1917-18	1,19,964	
1918-19	2,37,087	(Includes Rs. 1,19,399 paid to the contractor under the terms of the contract on the abolition of the Jorhat Distillery).
1919-20	1,38,029	
1920-21 ...	1,54,246	
1921-22 ...	1,90,779	

SRIJUT BEPIN CHANDRA GHOSE asked :—

1. Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table a tabular statement showing year by year for the last five years the number of documents presented for registration and registration actually completed ?

Number of documents presented for registration.

Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table figures on the same subject for the current year up to August ?

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

1.—It is not possible to give the number of documents presented for registration without detailed enquiries. Roughly speaking, however, the number presented for any given period is much the same as the number registered.

The following are the number of documents registered for last five years and up to 1st August this year :—

1917	89,113
1918	73,136
1919	101,706
1920	117,059
1921	104,678
Up to 1st August 1922	68,141

RAJ KUMAR CHANDRA NARAYAN SINGH asked :—

1. (*a*) Will the Government be pleased to state the difference between a periodic *patta* for ordinary cultivation and for cultivation of tea in the Nambor Colonisation area ?

Periodic patta for ordinary and Special cultivation in Nambor Forest.

(*b*) Will the Government be pleased to state the rate of revenue of waste land in each case ?

(*c*) Is not the rate of revenue higher in the case of special cultivation of tea ? If so, will the Government be pleased to state the principle underlying the assessment in the Nambor area ?

2. Is the rate of revenue at annas 8 per bigha for land lying on either side of the Assam-Bengal Railway from Bokajan to Jamuguri still in force ? If not, by what Notification has this been cancelled and why ?

Land revenue and land lying on either side of Assam-Bengal Railway from Bokajan to Jamuguri.

3. Will the Government be pleased to state whether a *patta* for special cultivation of tea according to the recent rules in the place of 30 years' rules grant is issued for 20 years or till the termination of the present settlement in 1925-26 ?

Patta for special cultivation of tea.

Revenue on waste land.

4. In the latter case will the Government be pleased to state whether they contemplate any increase in the rate of revenue on waste land taken up under section II of the Settlement Rules ?

Assam Land and Revenue Manual.

5. Will Government be pleased to state what was the object of Government Notification No. 962R., dated the 25th March 1897, inserted as correction slip 33 at page 77 of the Assam Land and Revenue Manual, 1896 ?

Removal of timber.

6. Is the Government aware that the Deputy Conservator of Forests, Sibsagar Division, has prohibited the removal of timber from one's garden or *patta* land for his own *bona fide* use outside it although he has paid the forest valuation according to rules ? Will the Government be pleased to issue clear orders on the point in view of the Council discussion on the subject in 1918 ?

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID replied :—

1. (*a*)—The same form of patta is employed in both cases except that a provision requiring the maintenance of boundary marks is inserted in leases for more than 100 acres for special cultivation.

(*b*)—The rates of revenue in force are as follows :—

Ordinary cultivation	...	Revenue free for 3 years and thereafter at 3 annas per bigha.
Special cultivation	...	At 10 annas per bigha.

(*c*)—Yes. A specially favourable rate was introduced for ordinary cultivation in the hope of attracting cultivators to this undeveloped locality. Sanction to settlement for special cultivation was given later and it was not considered necessary to offer equally favourable terms.

2.—The question appears to relate to an earlier offer of settlement made in 1897. Advantage was not taken of the offer, which is no longer available.

3.—Until the termination of the present settlement.

4.—The question has not yet been taken up.

5.—The Assam-Bengal Railway was at that time being carried through the Nambor Forest, and favourable terms were offered to settlers in the hope of opening out the country which was exceedingly malarious and improving the conditions of residence of the Company's employés at work on the line.

6.—The intention of the question is not understood.

The rules governing the removal of timber from settled land and the payment of royalty thereon are Rules 15 and 15 A of the Settlement Rules under the Assam Land and Revenue Regulation—in the case of land taken up for special cultivation and Rule 50 in the case of land taken up for ordinary cultivation.

The rules are clear and the Government are not aware that the Forest Department have disregarded their provisions.

BABU BIRAJ MOHAN DATTA asked :—

1. Will the Government be pleased to state whether the reserved forest portions in the Dhubri subdivision are excluded from the civil jurisdiction of that subdivision?

Reserved Forest in the Dhubri subdivision.

2. Will the Government be pleased to state the realisation made by the Forest Department of the Dhubri subdivision during the past three years under the following heads :—

(a) Land revenue?

(b) Local rates?

Realisation made by Forest Department of Land Revenue and Local Rates.

3. Will the Government be pleased to state :—

(a) Whether the local rates realised by the Forest Department of the Dhubri subdivision have been credited in favour of the Dhubri Local Fund as required by section 23(2) (b) of the Assam Local Self-Government Act?

Local rates of Dhubri subdivision.

(b) The reasons if the local rates have not been credited in favour of the Dhubri Local Fund?

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID replied :—

1.—No.

2.—The following sums have been realised from the inhabitants of forest villages in the Dhubri subdivision, and classified as land revenue and local rate, though the strict accuracy of the classification is perhaps open to question :—

	Land revenue.	Local rates.
	R.	Rs.
1919-20	8,560	547
1920-21	10,556	677
1921-22	7,147	461

3.—The proceeds of the so-called local rate in forest villages have hitherto been credited to the Forest Department under the belief that it was levied under the Assam Forest Regulation, and expended by that Department for the benefit of the villagers on roads, bazars, schools, wells, dispensaries and medical staff, to all of which purposes the Dhubri Local Board have, it is understood, hitherto made no contribution. Government have now directed that the so-called local rate should be made over to the Local Board, and are confident that that body will undertake the responsibilities entailed.

*RESEARCH REPORT OF THE FOREST DEPARTMENT, 1921-22.

MR. A. J. LAINÉ :—Sir, I beg to invite the attention of the members of the Council to the Research Report of the Assam Forest Department for the year 1921-22, a copy of which, illustrated by excellent photographs, has been placed on the Council table to-day.

STATEMENT ON THE FINANCIAL SITUATION.

The HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—Sir, before we proceed to the business of the day I should like, with your permission, to say a word or two about the two* notes which each Hon'ble Member will find on his table. We have tried to make these self-explanatory, but if there are any points on which any Member would like to have further information Mr. Lainé or I will be only too glad to furnish this.

The first note, as the heading indicates, deals with the present financial situation. The first part of the note shows how the finances of the past year ended and how far our expectations were realised or falsified. Paragraph 4 deals with conditions in the current year so far as we are able at present to appreciate these. I shall not weary the Council by giving again the explanation which I gave last year of the meaning of budget figures, revised figures and actual figures.

Well, Sir, I told the Council in February last that conditions in a province left their mark on the provincial finances and that unrest and disorder led to increased charges. If proof was needed of the truth of my statement the figures in the note furnish it. I would call attention to the short receipts and the increased expenditure. Under Land Revenue, though we hope that the deficit will yet be made up there was a shortage at the end of the year. Under Excise and Stamps there was a marked shortage. There has on the other hand been considerably increased expenditure against Police and Assam Rifles. Also as regards Excise receipts there is reason to fear that the falling off is not due solely to the preaching and practice of temperance, that there has been an increase in the illicit manufacture and the illicit sale of exciseable articles. All these difficulties are the fruits of the movement which has caused so much trouble to this province. They are in these figures made apparent for all men to see.

The two main reasons apart from those I have given of the difference between the actual closing balance of last year and the estimated one are the additional expenditure, as the note shows, on Education and on Public Health. We are confident that to this expenditure no objection will be taken in this Council.

To turn now to paragraph 4 of the note, it will be observed that our chief excesses are expected to be against the Murarichand College building and the Council Chamber. These are both projects to which the Council are committed, and expenditure on the former, we are confident, no one will grudge. As regards the Council Chamber we must admit frankly that the cost has turned out to be considerably greater than we anticipated. But we trust also that the Council will agree that they must be provided with a worthy meeting place, suitable not only for present conditions but for such enlarged numbers and increased duties as may come in the future.

* Not published with the Proceedings.

It is not unlikely, Sir, that some disappointment may be felt because the Government have not proceeded further on the lines recommended by the Retrenchment Committee. We have endeavoured to show what has already been done, first in answer to a question which has been put and secondly in this note, and I would not have the Council think that our last word on the subject has been spoken. We are still anxiously examining every possibility of retrenchment, but I repeat that whatever retrenchments may be effected the results must be ultimate rather than immediate. And in saying this I desire to pay a tribute to one department which has been much criticised in this Council, the Forest Department. As the note shows the proposals of the Retrenchment Committee have been accepted. In fact we have gone further. We are not able to show immediate economies. The Members of the Retrenchment Committee themselves did not, I am sure, contemplate that we should dismiss officers at present actually in service. In addition to accepting a reduction of staff the Forest Department have made very marked progress. It is too early to give details, but I am confident that when the working of the year is summed up the Council will readily acknowledge that the officers of the Forest Department, without in any way impairing the value of the great property that they manage for us, have, by improved methods of business, greatly increased their contribution to the provincial coffers.

The note mentions certain claims and expectations, and I would ask the Council only to remember that these have not yet been all realised. The improvement in the political situation hardly requires mention from me. It is our earnest hope that the improvement will last, and if so, and if no natural calamities befall us, it is my personal belief—and in saying this I run the risk of being again called a confident optimist—that the outlook though still gloomy is less gloomy than it was a year ago. There is a possibility of our finances ultimately recovering, but if this is to come about the Council must realise that we have to go through a period of the sternest economy and that our activities in every direction must be restricted.

The second note, Sir, deals with one particular transaction. We have endeavoured to make it clear why we could not lay our proposals before the Council. This we should have preferred to do, but if we were to get the rails and railway materials available we had to close with the offer at once. We believe that this transaction will prove a profitable investment, and from speeches made on different occasions in the Council I feel that our action in borrowing to finance the project instead of financing it from current revenues will have the approval of the Council. It is our confident expectation that before many years are over this project will not only have paid for itself but will add materially to our annual income. And I suggest, Sir, that this will yet prove to be another reason why the gratitude of the Council should be given to the Forest Department, and in this particular instance to the Senior Conservator Mr. Trafford.

The Hon'ble Mr. W. J. REID :—I beg, Sir, to move :—

"*That an additional sum of Rs. 1,80,050 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray certain charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923 for the administration of the head '5.—Land Revenue'.*"

The motion was put and adopted.

The HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I beg, Sir, to move :—

"That an additional sum of Rs. 1,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray certain charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923 for the administration of the head '6.—Excise'."

The motion was put and adopted.

The HO'NBLE MR. W. J. REID :—I beg, Sir, to move :—

"That an additional sum af Rs. 2,52,162 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray certain charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923 for the administration of the head '22.—General Administration'."

The motion was put and adopted.

The HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I beg, Sir, to move :—

"That an additional sum of Rs. 75,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray certain charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923 for the administration of the head '26.—Police (Assam Rifles)'."

We have received notice of a motion for reduction, Sir.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM.—Sir, this supplementary demand of Rs. 75,000 for the Assam Rifles raises important questions of policy and economy, and by the motion which stands in my name I propose the reduction of the demand by Rs. 31,000. In doing so I propose to place on record the emphatic protest of this Council against the manner in which the assurance given by the Government during the last budget discussion on this subject has been broken, their military spirit and spirit of extravagance indicated by this supplementary demand. As a matter of fact—to be consistent with what I am going to say—I should have asked for the total omission of this demand, but I have not gone so far for fear of being misunderstood as one inspired by unholy motives of obstructing the Government in their pious attempts and undertakings in the interest of peace and order. Besides I do not care so much for the actual amount of money spent or to be spent under this head as for the character of the policy which seems now to have been adopted by the Government. Although the question of economy is also a matter to be seriously considered by this Council having regard to the fact that Government is reduced almost to bankruptcy, still I for myself think that the question of policy is more important than the question of economy. Bankruptcy is always bad, Managers of bankrupt companies are known to commit suicide, so also a bankrupt Government may also commit suicidal errors.....

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—Sir, I find it extremely difficult to hear the Hon'ble Member and I am anxious to do justice to the Council when I reply.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT: —Would the Hon'ble Member kindly come forward? I think there is a vacant seat in the first or second row.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM: —In moving this motion, Sir, I wish to ask the Council to consider carefully the question of policy, and not so much the actual amount of money involved in this demand. In March last when the demand for Rs. 1,74,000 was made for the additional police, the Hon'ble the Judicial Member by an elaborate argument which will be found recorded in the proceedings of the Council, tried to convince this Council that although there was nothing to prevent the Government from employing the Assam Rifles for the purpose of maintaining internal peace and order, still because of the fact that these people were not trained to do such works and because they were only meant for services of a particular kind, although their number was sufficiently large and although there has been a sufficient increase in the strength of the Rifles of late still the Government never contemplated to employ these persons for the purpose of maintaining internal peace and order. The Hon'ble Members will also remember that a similar note was appended also in the explanatory statement submitted by the Hon'ble Finance Member. It was evidently on this understanding that the Council gave their consent to the grant of Rs. 87,000 for the additional Armed Police. I should like here to quote for the recollection of the Members the portions of the speech of the Hon'ble Judicial Member dealing with the subject. He says :

"To use them for ordinary police work is to use them for a purpose for which they are not trained, and moreover if such use extends over a long period it interferes seriously with their training for their proper duties." .....And again "to judge by the views which have found expression in several quarters, the employment of Military Police on ordinary civil police work is disliked by the public as much as it is by themselves. The view taken by the Government is that the civil police should be strong enough to deal promptly and effectually with ordinary everyday disorder, and that it should be necessary to call in the help of the Assam Rifles only in the case of widespread disturbances."

These are some of the arguments which were used in favour of not employing the Assam Rifles for the purpose of maintaining internal peace and the sanction of the Council was asked for financing the existing armed police. It was on the 21st March last. Now, Sir, we find that the Assam Rifles were actually employed for the purpose of maintaining internal peace and we are asked to give our assent to a supplementary demand for Rs. 75,000. I do not know what extraordinary circumstances have made the Government depart from their assurance and from the spirit which is evidenced by the portions of the speech which I have just read to the Council. But I for myself find it difficult to see what was the particular urgency which induced the Government to employ the Assam Rifles in spite of their previous assurances. Perhaps we shall be told of many dangers scented by the Government which were not visible to the people in general and for that I shall reserve my reply afterwards on hearing the Government side. Here the Hon'ble Members will find from a perusal of the notes appended in explanation of the demands under Additional Police as well as under the demand for Assam Rifles that both are required for the purpose of maintaining peace. The only difference in the explanations which I have been able to observe is that in the explanatory note on the Supplementary Demand for Assam Rifles it is said :

"Owing to the disturbed political atmosphere it was found necessary to employ a number of the Assam Rifles in the plains for the maintenance of order"; whereas in the explanatory note in the Supplentary Demand No. 8 it is said "the increases proposed are indispensable for the discharge of their responsibility for the ordinary preservation of law and order." One is inclined to think, Sir, from this statement that the Assam Rifles were employed to maintain order without law whereas the Additional Armed Police were intended for maintaining law and order. Of course we are not unfamiliar with Government actions where order was maintained irrespective of ordinary law, as where martial law was declared, where civil law was suspended and the military were employed for the maintenance of order. Of course I do not say that there was actually anything here of the kind although there was an approach to something of the martial law administration. Beyond this difference I find nothing stated in the notes in justification of these two supplementary demands for the same purpose and both the demands referred to rest their justification on the term "disturbed political atmosphere." Whatever the words "disturbed political atmosphere" may mean, Sir, I believe the Hon'ble Members will agree with me when I say that the people here were not engaged in building shell factories or powder magazines or bombs. Certainly nothing of the kind is or can be meant. If it means anything it means only the non-co-operation movement, and its meaning was made sufficiently clear in the speech of the Hon'ble Judicial Member in March last. It is necessary now to submit my view of this non-co-operation movement with reference to what was stated by the Hon'ble Judicial Member. It was said that "where peace and order reigned there the followers and supporters of the non-co-operation movement introduced disorder and disturbance and interfered with our people in our towns and villages living their own life and pursuing their lawful occupation. The non-co-operation movement after failing to attain this object amongst the vast majority of the educated section of the community deliberately aimed at fomenting unrest, race and class hatred and disaffection towards Government amongst the masses." It is alleged that they were responsible for creating race hatred, that they had induced officers of the Government particularly police constables to abandon Government service, etc. These were some of the worst allegations which were brought against the non-co-operators and which was called by Government "the disturbed political atmosphere." Well, Sir, it is an admitted fact that non-co-operation created a good deal of discontent and unrest. There was discontent, there was hatred towards Government and their officials, nobody would deny this. But the difference of the present movement from other movements which have preceded them lies in this that the present non-co-operators make no secret of their works and plans and programme. If they induced Government officers to give up Government service they did so by moral persuasion, if they induced young people to picket excise shops and foreign cloth shops they did so by moral persuasion. There was no secrecy in their programme. Rather than calling it political disturbance I should like to say that it was an intellectual disturbance created by a discontented intelligensia against which the Government had no justification for using bayonets. If the non-co-operators succeeded, it was by their character and moral persuasion—certainly it cannot be said seriously that the non-co-operators by force or exercise of undue influence brought the entire masses to obey them. What they did we should not misrepresent. What they did they did by persuasion and

openly; exactly following the same principle which has been followed by the Hon'ble Finance Member here in persuading the Councillors to give th ir sanction to grants by the force of his arguments such as sanction to grants for enforcing violent co-operation on non-violent non-co-operators.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—May I point out, Sir, that I have only pleaded for the co-operation of the Council, that I have never endeavoured to non-co-operate with them.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—My standpoint is that the non-co-operation movement being more of an intellectual nature started by the discontented and intellectual middle class, it ought to have been met not by military force but by other measures designed to improve the intellectual and moral position of the country and appeal to their reason.

Now, Sir, as to the actual performances of the Assam Rifles, I think I should ask the Council to recall to their mind what these men of the Assam Rifles did in the name of preserving law and order. It is not necessary I think for me to cite specific and concrete instances of the way in which they preserved law and order in our villages. The Hon'ble Finance Member knows many things about this just as many other members also have knowledge of the meritorious discharge of duties by the Assam Rifles. So, Sir, if we are to voice the feelings of our countrymen whose representatives we are in this Council, and if we are to be sincere advisers of Government, we must tell them that they should resort less and less to military force, to conciliate the country agitated by the present non-co-operation movement.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I must admit, Sir, that the speech of the Hon'ble Mover has put an entirely new complexion on his motion. When we first received notice of this motion for reduction I was quite unable to understand how the figure of Rs. 31,000 had been arrived at. The Hon'ble Mover was good enough to explain this to me outside the Council, but I am not sure if the Council fully understand it even now. His method of calculation I believe was this. We have asked in this demand for a grant of Rs. 75,000 for the Assam Rifles and we shall ask in Demand No. 8 for Rs. 43,000 for the Additional Armed Reserve. These sums total Rs. 1,18,000. From this figure the Hon'ble Mover has deducted the sum of Rs. 87,000 by which our original demand for additional Armed Police was reduced by the Council. I acknowledge gratefully that he allows us the Rs. 43,000 for which we now ask. Having done this we arrive at his figure of Rs. 31,000.

Well, Sir, I hope the Hon'ble Member will not mind my suggesting that he has confused two entirely separate matters. The present demand relates to certain charges rendered necessary by an emergency which arose last year and which we earnestly hope will not again arise. The other demand of which we shall hear more concerns what we regard as a necessary standing addition to our charges for the maintenance of law and order. I came prepared to give the Council the fullest details of the charges covered by the present grant. I have here information showing district by district, month by month, the number and size of the parties of the Assam Rifles that we were compelled to depute for duty to every plains districts in the province.

I had not intended, and I do not intend now to go in detail into the reasons which led the Government to take this step. The Hon'ble Mover found it "difficult to see what extraordinary happenings had made the Government resolve to employ the Assam Rifles." If he, Sir, is unaware of the prevailing conditions which led Government to take the course that they did I venture to think that he is alone in this Council in being ignorant. The last thing which I wish to do, which any of us in the Government wish to do, is to rake up what we hope to be ancient history. We readily admit the enormous improvement that has been brought about in conditions in the province. At one time I thought that one object in moving the reduction might have been to suggest that Government had incurred this expenditure without taking the Council into its confidence, without asking the Council in advance to vote a grant. To that, Sir, I think our defence is complete. We had not the slightest desire to ignore the Council. It is true that the Council was sitting in March when the parties of the Assam Rifles were being employed throughout the province, but at that time we had no idea how long the operations would last or how much they would cost. Some charges have since been taken against the cost of the Additional Police and these will be recovered from the inhabitants of the areas which have been notified under the Police Act. But it was in March not only impossible to say how long the operations would continue, but impossible to say how much of the cost could be adjusted against the budget of last year and how much must be left over for payment in the current year. To give an instance, the demonstration marches were carried out in the Sibsagar district in February and in the Sylhet district in March. Passage warrants, which represent the largest part of the concentration charges for these demonstration marches have to be audited before they are paid. Bills for local supplies were not received from Deputy Commissioners in time to be settled last year. For in spite of all the accusations which have been brought against the Assam Rifles I do not think any one has accused them of living on the country and not paying for their supplies. All supplies were most scrupulously signed for and ultimately paid for.

Well, Sir the Hon'ble Member, if I understood him aright, said that he moved this reduction more as a matter of policy than with any regard to economy. I have considered it my duty to the Council to deal in some little detail with the cost of the operations, and I need hardly assure them that the Finance Department most anxiously questioned all expenditure of this nature, that while agreeing that it was necessary we urged that at the very earliest possible moment the operations should come to an end and that all parties of Assam Rifles should return to their proper stations.

The Hon'ble Mover quoted from a speech of my Hon'ble Colleague, and said that the Hon'ble Mr. Majid had argued that if the Council voted the demand for the additional Armed Reserve for which we asked last March we should no longer require to employ the Assam Rifles in the plains districts. He talked of our having broken the assurance which we gave. Does the Hon'ble Member think, Sir, that by the Council voting a demand of Rs. 87,000 a force of Armed Police Reserve immediately comes into existence? To use his own figurative style of speech does he think that rupees can immediately take the place of riflemen? He then went on to say that both demands, the present one and the one which we are about to discuss, base their justification on the disturbed political atmosphere. I have tried

to explain, as the Hon'ble Mr. Majid tried to explain in March, that this is not the case so far as the second demand is concerned. I have said that this demand is to meet the cost of dealing with an emergency which arose and which I will not insult the intelligence of the Council by attempting to describe in detail.

And then Sir, as it seemed to me the Hon'ble Member indulged in an eloquent defence of the non-co-operation movement. I do not wish to be unfair, but after what he said about his being concerned with policy and not economy one might almost think that he asked the Council to vote for or against the non-co-operation movement.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—I presume, Sir, that no one else will speak in defence of this motion, and I wish to conclude by saying a few words in reply to the Hon'ble Finance Member. He has been kind enough to explain the strange figure, Rs. 31,000 which I forgot to explain to the Council. This Rs. 31,000 as the Hon'ble Finance Member has said represents the excess of the sum of Rs. 87,000 granted in the original budget and Rs. 43,000 now demanded under the head Police and Rs. 75,000 demanded under Assam Rifles over the original demand of Rs. 1,74,000. Thereby I do not mean to say or suggest as the Hon'ble Finance Member has interpreted me, that I have given my full sanction to the grant of expenditure of this sum asked under the head "Armed Police." The Finance Member has drawn the attention of the Council to the charges for which this money is demanded. He mentioned travelling allowances, compensatory allowances and the pay of Assistant Commandants. From the nature of expenditure the Council will be well able to realise how far they were really intended for the purposes of maintaining internal peace or whether they were really intended for the purpose of showing to the people, the unthinking and the unknowing people, the military strength of the Government. This I leave to this Council to decide. If this was meant to be merely an exhibition I think, Sir, such an exhibition of strength ought to have been postponed for better years instead of having selected this year of adversity for it. Besides, Sir, I should tell the Hon'ble Finance Member that the people of this country have sufficient good sense to know all about the strength and resources of this Government. It may be, the coolies working in the gardens of planters who may be in need of the exhibition of the military strength of the Government, but so far as the other people are concerned, they do not require any such demonstration at all ; and if it was at all necessary in the interests of the coolies employed in the gardens the planters ought to have been called upon to pay for such demonstration instead of asking us poor people, and our provincial revenues, to pay for the same. The Hon'ble Finance Member, Sir, has been pleased to compliment me for an eloquent speech in defence of the non-co-operation movement. I should say, Sir, that I did not deserve this compliment and that nothing was further from my mind than such defence. What I wanted to say to the Government was this, that they have failed totally to understand and appreciate this movement in its true light and all the errors committed by the Government have arisen out of their misappreciation. They have done things in a manner which they would not have done if they had correctly appreciated the real state of things. What I intended to say is this that the movement by which the country is now faced did not originate from the illiterate masses, it originated from the discountented middle classes as a sort of protest against

the existing system of Government, not with the avowed object of subverting Government. This is the standpoint which the non-co-operators took. We must agree with them that the grievances which they expressed are really common to all the people of this country; we differ only in the procedure adopted by them for redress. Whatever that be, we can say this to the Government that non-co-operators were doing nothing or preaching nothing for inducing the people to resort to violence and blood. If there was any deviation contrary to their principle and preaching surely it will be too cruel and unjust of the Government to hold the leaders of the non-co-operation movement responsible for such deviations. Well, the Government may have done wisely, from their own standpoints to secure within the walls of jails the persons who were engaged in preaching the triple boycott of courts, councils and schools, and there they ought to have stopped. They ought not to have further set the Assam Rifles and punitive Police and Additional Police upon the villagers and spent large sums of the provincial revenue. This is all that I meant to say. I have no mind or right to defend the non-co-operators or the non-co-operation movement. Then, Sir, the Hon'ble Finance Member stated that these Assam Rifles were employed as a measure of emergency and that the same fact is known to all the other members of the Council except myself. I confess, Sir, I am fully ignorant of what took place in other parts of the country, but so far as my own part of the country is concerned I repeat my statement that there was no necessity for the employment of the Assam Rifles, that nothing extraordinary happened. As to what happened in the other Valley we have only read reports in the papers and also heard from people we met.

We heard that people were going to stop payment of the revenue, or had stopped payment; Sir, assuming that this was true—I do not know whether it was true or not, and I am not going to make an admission or denial about that—still, I do not think that the Government are right in employing the Assam Rifles for the realisation of revenue, when the ordinary Civil law was certainly sufficient. If this is the procedure to be adopted by the Government for the realisation of their ordinary revenues, surely the non-co-operators are right in saying that this country is not worth living in. However, so far as my knowledge of the other Valley goes, nothing extraordinary had happened there also to justify the use of the Assam Rifles, and since there is no allocation between the Assam Valley and the Surma Valley, I would like to protest against this demand upon the Provincial Revenues.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—Sir, I welcome the assurance of the Hon'ble Member that nothing was further from his mind than any attempt to defend the non-co-operation movement. I think the Council will admit that there was some reason for misunderstanding. I do not accuse the Hon'ble Member of being himself a non-co-operator. I know that he is not. He would not be here if he were. But I would suggest that what he says in this Council and the speeches which he makes are liable to be misunderstood both inisde and outside the Council.

He suggested that these operations were intended to be an exhibition of military strength and that we might have kept the exhibition over for

a more prosperous year. I confess that the suggestion that we held a sort of review, a *tamasha,* in a year when money was short, and that we might quite easily have postponed it to a year, if one ever comes, when money will be plentiful strikes me as a slightly humorous one. I do not think I need say more.

Well, Sir, to come back to prosaic details, I have asked the Council to vote an additional demand of Rs. 75,000 to meet the charges incurred in connection with certain measures that the Government had to take in the end of last year and the beginning of this year on objects and for reasons with which most of the Council are familiar, but of which the Hon'ble Mover still finds himself completely in ignorance.

SRIJUT LOHIT CHANDRA NAYAK :—Sir, I wish to ask one question. May I be allowed to ask how the Hon'ble Member (Babu Krishna Sundar Dam) estimated Rs. 31,000?

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—Sir, I am afraid the Hon'ble Member has no right to speak. I did explain how the Mover arrived at the figure and he accepted my explanation.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, may I be permitted to explain in reply to Mr. Nayak?

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—You can make a personal explanation.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, I want to explain how I estimated Rs. 31,000. The question has been put to me. I will only give a short explanation. I am afraid Mr. Nayak has not followed the explanation. I will only repeat.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—Sir, if permitted I shall repeat the explanation which I gave and which I think the Hon'ble Mover accepted. In March last we made a demand for an addition to the Armed Police Rserve, of Rs. 1,74,000. Of this sum the Council voted only half, Rs. 87,000. We shall presently ask, my Hon'ble colleague will, instead of Rs. 87,000 for Rs. 43,000. If to Rs. 43,000 you add this demand of Rs. 75,000, which is for an entirely different purpose, we reach a total of Rs. 1,18,000. If then you deduct from this sum the Rs. 87,000, which was the extent by which our original demand was reduced by the vote of the Council, you will arrive at the figure of Rs. 31,000.

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—The original motion was :—

"That an additional sum of Rs. 75,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray certain charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923 for the administration of the head '26.—Police (Assam Rifles).'"

since which the following amendment has been moved :—

"That the demand for Rs. 75,000 be reduced by Rs. 31,000."

The question is that the amendment be adopted.

The amendment was negatived.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, I press for a division.

The HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—I am afraid you are rather late.

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

"That an additional sum of Rs. 75,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray certain charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923 for the administration of the head '26.—Police (Assam Rifles).'"

The motion was adopted.

The HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I beg, Sir, to move :—

"That an additional sum of Rs. 2,76,221 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray certain 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 put and adopted.

The HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I beg, Sir, to move :—

"That an additional sum of Rs. 3,500 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray certain charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923 for the administration of the head '43.—Famine Relief and Insurance.'"

The motion was put and adopted.

The HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I beg, Sir, to move :—

"That an additional sum of Rs. 2,940 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray certain 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 (Reserved).'"

The motion was put and adopted.

The HON'BLE MR. A. MAJID :—Sir, I beg to move :—

"That an additional sum of Rs. 2,50,333 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray certain charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923 for the administration of the head '26.—Police'."

Sir, there is notice of an amendment.

RAI BAHADUR AMARNATH RAY :—Sir, the motion standing in my name proposes to reduce the supplementary demand No. 8 by Rs. 43,000, being the additional sum demanded for the re-organisation of the Armed Police Reserve. I wish to refer to and read out the note on this item at page 6 of the printed list of supplementary demands for grants supplied to Hon'ble members.

"(2) An estimate of Rs. 1,74,000 was presented to the Council in the budget for 1922-23 for the re-organisation of the Armed Police Reserve, as it had been recognised for some years that the existing strength of this force was insufficient for the duties which it was intended to perform, and the events of the previous year had shown that its increase was imperatively necessary. The provision was reduced by the Council to Rs. 87,000. His Excellency the Governor, when proroguing the Council, assured the Council that Government would, in consultation with their departmental advisers, go over the proposals carefully again and effect any changes in them which they thought reasonably

possible; and he added that if Government found that the sum already voted was not sufficient for what they in their responsibility judge to be the clear needs of this reserved subject, then they would hereafter present the Council with a supplementary demand for any uncovered expenditure, and would then place before it their reasons for their action.

The re-examination of the proposals which has been made in accordance with this undertaking has convinced Government.....".

MR. A. W. BOTHAM :—Sir, I think the Hon'ble member has omitted to notice the correction slip which has been issued to this explanation.

RAI BAHADUR AMARNATH RAY :—"In accordance with this pledge the proposals have been re examined, and the requirements for the current year have been reduced from Rs. 1,74,000 to Rs. 1,30,240. The number of European Inspectors has been reduced from four to two, and temporary buildings have been substituted for permanent ones. Recruitment has been completed, but at a later period than was originally contemplated, and this has enabled Government to ask for a much smaller grant than was originally thought necessary. The sum of Rs. 1,74,000 originally asked for included Rs. 1,21,000 for recurring expenditure together with non-recurring expenditure of Rs. 7,000 for first kit and Rs. 46,000 for buildings. The reduced requirements are as follows :—

			Rs.
Pay and allowance	...	...	82,322
Clothing and accoutrements	...	...	6,497
Temporary buildings	...	...	41,421
Total	...	...	1,30,240

Government are satisfied that this provision is indispensably necessary to enable them to discharge their responsibility for the maintenance of law and order. They therefore ask the Council to grant an additional sum of Rs. 43,000".

Sir, I hope Hon'ble Members have carefully gone through the note. When Rs. 1,74,000 was demanded in March last the Hon'ble the Home Member explained at length the reasons for which it had been found necessary to increase the strength of the Armed Police Reserve. He stated that the existing strength fell short of the ordinary requirements of the Province, that other Provinces had much larger reserves and that it was not desirable that the Assam Rifles should be requisitioned for dealing with internal disorder. He also mentioned the excited state of the Province and did not forget to refer to the cries of "Lore, Lore" raised by street urchins in the Sylhet district at the sight of Europeans and of pronounced co-operators like ourselves. The Council listened respectfully to what he and the Hon'ble the Finance Member said but was not convinced that the re-organization was necessary. My Hon'ble friend Mr. Nilmani Phukan who is no extremist and is well-known for the sobriety and moderation of his views in the course of his speech moving the reduction and also of his reply gave it as his deliberate opinion that he thought that the entire expenditure was unnecessary but that he moved for a partial reduction only because some expenditure had already been incurred.

Government now demand this Rs. 43,000 with a view to give full effect to the scheme of re-organization in spite of the decision of the Council and I thought I should be lacking in my duty if I failed to challenge this item. We are thankful to His Excellency the Governor in that he did not restore the item immediately after the reduction and for having carefully examined the matter again. But it will now be the clear duty of this Council to refuse the amount unless the Hon'ble the Home Member succeeds in making out a stronger case than before or unless the Council thinks that its former decision was wrong even on the facts then stated. Hon'ble Member should not think that the additional expenditure of Rs. 43,000 has already been incurred. The rank and file have no doubt been recruited but we have a period of six months and a half of the current year still ahead and there should be little difficulty in sending away some of the men recruited. Even if the amount had been spent already it would still have been within the competence of the Council to vote the proposed reduction by way of protest leaving it to His Excellency the Governor to restore the item if he thought fit. No doubt my Hon'ble friend Babu Krishna Sundar Dam would give the Government this Rs. 43,000 if the cut proposed by him were voted by the Council, but I could not follow his logic.

Sir, Assam has been a separate Province for well-nigh fifty years now with a short break during which it was tagged on to Eastern Bengal and it remained for an Indian Member of the Government born in the Province and knowing the people intimately to discover that the existing Armed Police Reserve was wholly inadequate for the ordinary preservation of law and order. It is really in the system that is at fault and not the nationality of the occupant of a high office. My own idea is that during these 48 years opium, starvation and disease on the one hand and the Arms Act and a stern Police Rule on the other have so thoroughly pacified the people that they are wholly incapable of combining for violence on any considerable scale.

We all know, Sir, that an uneasy situation was created by the attempt of agitators to generate in the masses a disregard of law and we all felt that the situation demanded a firm though sympathetic handling. But the movement was in a state of collapse at budget-time last year and the people have now settled down to their normal peaceful preoccupations. I think the existing Police force and Armed Police Reserve and such increase of the latter as the Council approved in March last will, for a long time to come, suffice for the needs of the Province. We might have over-armed ourselves against possible or even imaginary future troubles if we had a superfluity of funds, but, standing where we do, it will be reckless prodigality on our part to sanction unnecessary expenditure. Most of it is recurring expenditure and means further taxation in the end.

Let us for a moment recapitulate what we have achieved during the past year and eight months. Excepting the provision for the *kala-azar* campaign we have done very little for the masses. What have we done to combat disease, to supply pure drinking water in the rural areas, to remove illiteracy and its concomitant evils, to expand the resources of the Province or combat the chronic poverty of the people? No money was available for these purposes. What we have done has been to increase the salaries of people coming mostly from the same classes as ourselves and to increase the Police expenditure by several lakhs annually. This has been our net achievment. It was not for this that we were sent here. It was not for providing means

to the Government to hold the people we represent in perpetual terror of the baton or the bayonet that we sought entry into the Councils. I believe my Hon'ble friends, patriotic as they are, realise that we have gone too far in meeting the demands of the Government for extra Police expenditure and that it is high time to check the process. We know our powers are limited for Police is a reserved subject. But we should certainly try our best to impress on the Government the necessity for economy in this direction. It should not be forgotten that the police forces are being strengthened at the expense of the development departments.

It is one thing to take special measures for coping with an emergency and quite another to permanently arm oneself against very remote contingencies. If Government had asked for a temporary strengthening of the Armed Police Reserve for proper reasons that would have been a different thing altogether.

Then we all know that the Assam Rifles were utilised for restoring peace and order in some parts of the Province for some months last year and for the past few months of the current year. That shows that the present strength of the Rifles is hardly necessary for their legitimate purpose of keeping off our turbulent neighbours, the hill-tribes. The right course for the Government would have been to reduce the strength of the Rifles a bit and divert the saving effected thereby to the re-organisation of the Armed Police Reserve if this were at all necessary. But no such thing is perhaps possible so long as the Government is not wholly responsible to the people, so long as the people are distrusted and no hesitation is felt in coercing them at the slightest provocation. It was said not long ago by one who is not a non-co-operator himself that we moderates were merely crawling on our bellies under the cover of the big guns of the non co-operators and that we should be nowhere as soon as those guns were silenced. It behoves the Government to demonstrate that this is not true, that our faith in it was not misplaced and that there has really been a change in the angle of vision since the inauguration of the reforms.

THE HON'BLE MR. A. MAJID :—Sir, it is true that we asked for Rs. 1,74,000 for the re-organisation of the Armed Police Reserve. The Council, after an interesting discussion, was pleased to grant us Rs. 87,000 but disallowed the balance Rs. 87,000. Now, we are asking not for the whole of that amount which was disallowed but only for a portion of that sum, *viz.*, Rs. 43,000. The Council will naturally like to know why we require even this smaller sum. Now, Sir, my friend the Hon'ble Mover of the resolution has been pleased to remark that it is an Indian Member who has discovered the need for the re-organisation of the Armed Police. I will refrain from indulging by way of reply in criticisms in a similar strain. I will content myself at this juncture by merely saying that if my friend the Hon'ble Mover had occupied my place and had had the opportunity of referring to and studying the materials to which I have had access I confidently think that he would have, like myself, come to the same conclusion which I have arrived at. Let me assure my Hon'ble friend that the need for the strengthening of the Armed Police is no new discovery of mine but it has been recognised for years. My Hon'ble colleague on the left and I have been serving in the province from almost the same year and we have served for about thirty years. After a few years subsequeent to my entry

into service, I went to the judicial side, but my friend has been serving all along on the Executive side, and no one has had a better opportunity of judging the needs and requirements of this Province than my Hon'ble colleague. As he is here and will perhaps kindly speak, I will not refer to what he spoke in this Council hall on a previous occasion and I am anxious not to be guilty of trying to anticipate what he will say.

As has been already stated, the need for the re-organisation of the Armed Police has been recognised for years. Not only is this so, but from what we heard the Hon'ble members say in the debate held in March last, we may take it that the Council also took this view. Though we could not obtain the whole sum of Rs. 1,74,000 we asked for, yet from the fact that the Council was pleased to grant us Rs. 87,000 the Council was satisfied that the Armed Force was inadequate. The result is that where we differed was as to the amount to be spent on the Armed Police. The events of the last year and this sufficiently emphasised the need for re-organising the Armed Police on a satisfactory basis. It was not a question of introducing a temporary measure to meet a special emergency. The force was actually inadequate and had to be strengthened. When proroguing the Council His Excellency the Governor was pleased to address the Council and made among others the following observations :—

> "The money you have voted will enable us to make a beginning and to carry on for some time.
>
> "I undertake that we will in consultation with our departmental advisers go over the proposals carefully again and effect any changes in them that we think reasonably possible. But if we find that the sum already voted is not sufficient for what we in our responsibility judge to be the clear needs of this reserved subject, then we shall hereafter present the Council with a supplementary demand for any uncovered expenditure and will then place before it before any final decision is taken, our reasons for our action."

In fulfilment of this pledge the proposals have been examined further and the requirements for this year have been reduced from Rs. 1,74,000 to Rs. 1,30,240. For pay and allowances we had asked for Rs. 1,21,000, but for that purpose we are now asking for Rs. 82,322. Then for kit we are now asking for only Rs. 6,497 against Rs. 7,000 we had asked for. For buildings we had estimated for Rs. 93,000. We have revised the estimate and we are now asking for Rs. 41,421. Government have most patiently, anxiously and carefully considered the proposals and the estimates and have reduced as much as it was possible to be done, and they have regretfully come to the conclusion that further reductions cannot be made if they are to discharge satisfactorily their responsibility for the security of lives and property.

They fully understand and sympathise with the desire of the Council to avoid unnecessary expenditure on the Police and have reduced the demand from Rs. 87,000 to Rs. 43,000. Government are meeting the Council rather over half way and I hope that the Council will recognise our difficulties and will be ready to accept this compromise and to meet us half way.

MR. A. W. BOTHAM :—Sir, particulars of the proposals for the re-organisation of the Armed Police Reserve have already been laid before the Council, but it will perhaps be convenient if I go through them again

briefly at the risk of inflicting some rather dull figures on the Council. I should in the first place explain what is meant by the Armed Police Reserve. The forces at the disposal of the Superintendent of Police are divided into two branches the armed branch and the unarmed branch. The unarmed branch supplies the ordinary thana police of which six or eight constables are usually attached to each thana. These are fully occupied with the various duties connected with the ordinary business of the thana and they clearly provide no force for dealing with disturbances on anything but the smallest scale. The armed branch is again divided into two parts. One part provides guards for treasuries, magazines, etc., and escorts for prisoners and treasure. Its strength is barely sufficient for this purpose and it is most unlikely that any part of it will be available at any particular time for the maintenance of order. The other part of the armed branch is the part with which we are now dealing, *i.e.*, the Armed Police Reserve. This is a body of police maintained at the district headquarters with the object of dealing with any disturbance which may occur in any part of the district. The strength of the Armed Police Reserve before reorganisation was 76 constables and 6 head constables in Sylhet, 26 constables and 2 head constables in each district of the Assam Valley, and 12 constables with 1 head constable in Cachar. The sanctioned staff of officers was 7 sub-inspectors and 5 inspectors, but for some years only 3 of the inspectors' posts have been filled. I think, Sir, these figures only have to be stated for their inadequacy to be realised. The officers responsible for the peace of the district had for some years complained that their forces were insufficient, and Government had recognised this at any rate from the time of the Doom Dooma riots about two years ago. The events of the past year brought matters to a head and Government decided that it was necessary if the Armed Police Reserve was to carry out its duties efficiently, to increase the force to 102 constables, 8 head constables and 2 sub-inspectors in Sylhet and Lakhimpur, 76 constables, 6 head constables and 2 sub-inspectors in Sibsagar, and 51 constables, 4 head constables and 1 sub-inspector in the other districts. They proposed to fill the two vacant posts of inspector and in addition to appoint 2 additional inspectors. With the usual provision for leave and sickness reserve these proposals involved a total addition of four inspectors (four, that is, as compared with previous actual strength, or 2 as compared with the previous sanctioned strength), 5 sub-inspectors, 23 head constables and 347 constables. The recurring cost of these additions was estimated at Rs. 1,11,000 and the non-recurring cost at Rs. 1,00,000, *viz.*, Rs. 93,000 for buildings and Rs. 7,000 for initial equipment. The sum of Rs. 1,74,000 for which Government originally asked for the current year included the full provision of Rs. 1,11,000 for recurring charges, Rs. 10,000 for the hire of accommodation while the buildings were being constructed, Rs. 7,000 for initial equipment, and an instalment of Rs. 46,000 towards the cost of buildings. Government have now decided to leave out the two additional inspectors and merely to fill the two existing vacancies. They propose for the present to erect temporary buildings at a cost of Rs. 41,000 instead of permanent buildings. Owing to late recruitment and the omission of the two additional inspectors the pay bill for the current year will be Rs. 82,000 odd instead of Rs. 1,11,000. About Rs. 6,500 is required for initial equipment. These sums make up a total of Rs. 1,30,000 towards which the Council provided Rs. 87,000 in the budget. The sum of Rs. 43,000 now asked for represents the balance.

SRIJUT NILMONI PHUKAN :—Sir, in the last Council I had the clear duty of moving certain reductions under this head. So I think I should give an explanation to the Council now if I have since changed my views or adhered to them. From the explanatory notes which have been submitted before the House it appears that it is practically a restoration of the amount which had been not voted by the Council. The subsequent explanatory note which has been put before the House to-day of course shows that we are not asked to vote the whole amount for the present year because recruitment had been made perhaps in the latter part of the year, and certain items have been omitted for the present. But nevertheless it is an item for which provision should be made for future years. It appears to me the matter has already been decided upon and it is due to the courtesy of His Excellency that we have been asked to vote for this demand again.

So at this juncture if we feel the difficulties of the Government we must also clearly express our own views. The unfortunate thing is that we as a legislative body may know the intentions of the Government and of the people but it is the Executive who translate these intentions into actions. Means and ways are always with them. So it is not unoften that we as legislature and the Government as Executive often do not agree unless we do know each other perfectly well. So apart from the question of fact I am only inclined to speak a few words on the principle that might be involved in this question. In our province we are peculiarly placed, we have the civil police, we have the armed police, and besides we have the Assam Rifles. The position of the Assam Rifles is still to my mind anomalous. We clearly feel that the charges for the Assam Rifles should be entirely Imperial. We have not been told whether under the present arrangement, contributing a certain proportion of the cost occasionally, we are allowed as a Government to utilise this force for internal affairs. If we are allowed, I still do not understand why this force should not be enough at a time of urgent necessity, and actually they have been utilised as such. Even a few moments ago we had to vote for a demand of Rs. 75,000 on that account. So the question must be settled once for all. If we are to strengthen our Armed Police Reserve, which I personally do not feel is enough at this moment, then why should we maintain even partly this Assam Rifles ? We have nothing to do with this force. We even do not like to control them ; and for our internal purposes if we require to strengthen the civil police we are ready to do that and we should do that. But owing to this anomalous position we feel diffident to vote for this item or that item. It has been suggested that the building arrangements are for the time being temporary. I wish this could have been permanent because this amount will be spent for nothing. I find the strength of this armed police has been doubled almost in every respect. It appears even a district like Lakhimpur will now maintain 102 constables ; if I remember aright last time we found the figure for Barisal was 100. May I ask the House are we in a worse position in this matter than Barisal ? Similarly, we find the figures for other districts also. I quite understand that this is not a question which has emerged recently during these few years of non-co-operation troubles. If I remember aright this question has been long mooted before the Government and I think in the year 1912 or 1913 it was the Assam Branch of the Indian Tea Association who actually asked the Government to strengthen this armed police and since then there had been much political disturbance in the country and the tea gardens were also greatly affected. That is a fact. But if for all

these reasons the armed police had to be strengthened I have no quarrel But for ordinary business which has been carried on with this strength for so many years without inconvenience—though there might have been some inconvenience—why should this strength be doubled at this moment ? If they are required for the disturbances, political or otherwise in the country, I should like to decide whether we should pay anything for the Assam Rifles or whether we should at all have recourse to the Assam Rifles. That was what I said in the last Council. I take that stand again. So unless I am convinced that this force will henceforth be utilised in quelling internal disturbances, and that henceforth no resort will be had to the Assam Rifles, and also the Government and the people both will combine to see if they can get rid of the Assam Rifles which are used for imperial purposes,—unless I am satisfied on these points—I think I should not be justified in voting this amount this time as well. But again I say I do not like to create difficulties in the way of the Government in any way. When it has been already settled and when actually we find that recruitment has been completed and practically it has been decided upon, we may vote this amount though on principle we must again press the Government that once for all we must settle the position of the Armed Police Reserve in relation to the province and also the Assam Rifles. And I hope, Sir, that some of my Hon'ble colleagues, or better the Government themselves will put forward such proposals before the Government of India that we should not be asked to contribute anything to the Assam Rifles because we have to maintain a large number of Armed Police reserve for quelling the internal disturbances due to the peculiar position of our province in relation to the whole country. So I hope, at least I feel we shall be compelled to vote this amount this time, but let us in future settle once for all this question of the armed police and the Assam Rifles.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, I support this motion for reduction moved by Rai Bahadur Amarnath Ray. First of all I should tell him that he has taken a wrong view of my motion for reduction by the strange figure of Rs. 31,000 ; that by choosing that figure I never meant to signify my consent to the grant of Rs. 43,000, questioned by him. However, now that question of my motion has been settled once for all. And that is all the more reasonable ground why I should oppose the present motion against Rs. 43,000. As I have already said, Sir, the Government have been overdoing things with the excuse of maintaining internal peace and order and the effect of this overdoing on the people concerned has been quite the contrary to what was desired and expected by Government. Of course every one of us here is as anxious as the Government themselves for the maintenance of law and order and certainly the people should learn to respect law and order. But I believe, Sir, and I think there will be many who will agree with me in this view, that this business of teaching the people respect for law and order should not be left to the police and the military, and I for myself should ask the Government to transfer this duty to the Hon'ble Mr. Cunningham in the Education Department (Laughter). I shall ask him to invade the country with a large army of school masters and loving pupils behind him instead of Commandants of Assam Rifles, and District Superintendents of Police and a large force of Rifles and armed police. Sir, the Hon'ble Mover of the resolution has referred to the forgotten cries of *Lore, Lore* of which we talked rather too much in the last Council. We know how troublesome these cries were in the town of Sylhet. But, Sir, incidents of this kind bring more and more prominently before the attention of the Government the question of educating the ignorant village people—the masses in a more energetic and systematic way than has

been hitherto done. Well, Sir, indecent incidents of the kind to which the Hon'ble Mover referred occurred in the suburbs of the town of Sylhet. I think, Sir, the Education Department which is represented now by the Hon'ble Mr. Cunningham has no reason to be proud of a state of things, a state of things which has allowed a large number of untrained, unlettered boys to exist and grow up as they have been doing now in the neighbourhood of Sylhet. If this is the state of things in the neighbourhood of the most advanced and ancient town of the province I think there must be something wrong somewhere in the administration. My friend also has referred to this aspect of the question. So if I oppose the full grant it is not because I do not like that there should be law and order in this country but because I prefer that these things should be otherwise managed, instead of being placed in the hands of the police, should be left in the hands of more deserving agents of the Government, say for instance, the Director of Public Instruction or the Director of Industries. On this view, Sir, I support this motion for reduction moved by Rai Bahadur Amarnath Ray.

MR. A. J. G. CRESSWELL :—Sir, I have attentively listened to the speeches of those members who wish to oppose the granting of funds considered necessary by Government for maintaining the Armed Police. Sir, it seems to me that no speaker has offered any practical grounds for so doing — while in no case has there to-day in this House been any expression of gratitude shown for the measures eventually adopted by Government for restoring peace with law and order. Sir, at first sight it may perhaps with some reason be claimed that with providing part of the funds for maintaining the Assam Rifles, it is not necessary to also have a body of armed police — and to those who do not thoroughly know the nature and habits of at least a portion of the people this may carry considerable weight. Experience has clearly proved that the Gurkha with his more impetuous temperament is not always able to control himself, or be controlled when subjected to *simian* insolence and irritation — Government thus being obliged to provide other measures. Sir, when entering this Council I was imbibed with every wish and intention to conscientiously do my best to further the advance of efficient and responsible self-government — which can only be achieved by results and the convincing of the outside world that the test has proved good. Those who are watching our development care little or nothing whether we decide on granting a little increased pay to our school masters. They are even tolerant if the Council rejects by a small majority the advisability of insisting that the carcasses of animals that die of infectious diseases be destroyed. The discussion of measures to prevent a young man of eighteen, and a student of twenty years of age, from smoking, invites only passing attention to Puritan ideas. But, Sir, the opposing of measures considered necessary by Government to check and prevent the occurrence of the terrible political and social chaos that prevailed some few months ago—the opposing of Government in this instance, can, in my opinion, only induce all true Imperialists to believe that there exists a semi-rebellious feeling with little or no wish to guard against internal upheavals which may again result in a total disregard of law and order and the illegitimate interference with those who wish to be loyal subjects of the Empire, and to be allowed to live and conduct their business in peace and harmony.

Sir, I emphatically oppose the amendment before the House.

REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY:—Sir, I want to speak a few words in regard to this matter. I am sure the motive of those who moved this resolution is a good one. They moved it not on account of any disloyalty to the Government or on account of any spirit of non-co-operation, but simply because we, as the representatives of the people, look at the matter from a standpoint different from that of the Government; and therefore differences of opinion arise. It may be possible that if we were placed in the position of the Government, we would have arrived at the same conclusion as theirs. The differences of opinion which arise now regarding this matter or any other matter is not on account of any disloyalty to the Government.

In regard to the resolutions for reducing the grants, placed before the Council for discussion, I believe the reason for bringing them forward is because we feel that there may be some way of reducing expenditure. It sometimes happens that when a man has plenty to spend he does not think very much of the ways by which he can spend economically, but if there be some pressure from outside that will demand him to spend economically, he will be made to think a second time, it may be a third or even a fourth time, and afterwards he may possibly come to the conculusion that the amount which was considered necessary at first was estimated too high. And that is why, we, as the representatives of the people, have brought forward these resolutions.

As regards the merits of this particular motion, I have not understood yet whether we have any reasons for voting against the grant. In the last Council the demand was reduced by half and the Government seems, to me, to be very fair in coming forward to meet the Council half-way. If we were placed in the position of the Government, I think we might see the difficulties as the Government sees them.

Regarding the Assam Rifles, it is a somewhat anomalous thing, and I do not understand yet why the Assam Government should bear the expenditure on the Assam Rifles. But this is not the question at present: the question at present is whether this demand should be granted or not, and as far as I am concerned, hearing the details which Mr. Botham has already given to us, I do not see any reason why we should vote against this grant. Though as a matter of principle, as the Hon'ble Mover said, we would like to oppose it yet as a matter of practicability, we should not oppose it: and as far as I am concerned I would vote for it.

MR. A. J. LAINÉ:—Sir, the Council have heard the official views of Government regarding the general necessity for the additonal expenditure to which we are now asked to agree, and they have also heard the opinions of some members of Council who suggested vaguely that this expenditure, or at least a substantial portion of it, is quite unnecessary. It may assist the Council in coming to a decision if they hear the views of an officer who has, during practically the whole of his service, been directly concerned with district administration and who has, in conjunction with the Superintendent of Police, been responsible to Government for the control of Armed Police Reserves in several districts of this province.

As you have already heard, the Armed Police in each district consist of two branches, the first of which is intended to supply the men required

for treasury and other guard duty and for escorting treasure and prisoners from one part of the province to another, and occasionally to other provinces. The second branch is intended to supply, in constant readiness for use, a mobile and highly disciplined force for dealing with disturbances—actual or anticipated—in any part of the district.

With regard to the first branch, Members of Council probably do not realise how often these requisitions for escorts are submitted to District officers, how imperative it usually is that they should be met on demand, and the serious administrative inconvenience which is caused if, for some reason or other, they have to be postponed.

On numerous occasions I have been confronted with urgent requisitions when the whole of this branch of the reserve was already engaged on other public duties, and have been obliged to adopt the undesirable alternative of utilising, for purely routine purposes, that section of the reserve which is meant to be kept permanently in readiness for use only in case of special emergencies. If grave emergencies are to be dealt with efficiently they must be dealt with promptly, and it is obvious that any practice which reduces, and not unfrequently entirely depletes, the only police force which is recruited and trained for such special purposes, is open to the most serious objection.

I will give you a few concrete illustrations from among many of the difficulties with which District officers have to contend in the discharge of their ordinary public duties. A few years ago, when an epidemic of *hât* looting broke out in Goalpara, I was compelled, owing to the depletion of my own Armed Police Reserve through unavoidable circumstances, to indent for reinforcements on the reserve forces of other districts. These were supplied to me at considerable public risk, as, if disturbances had broken out simultaneously in the districts from which I received these additional forces, the position in those districts would necessarily have been dangerous.

The inadequacy of the existing district reserves is not a new development. It has, I believe, been brought to the notice of Government by District officers on more than one occasion, but the imperative necessity of a substantial increase was brought home to me again very vividly when I was Deputy Commissioner of the Darrang district during the years 1920-22.

The first serious riot in that district with which I had to deal, occurred on a tea garden in the east of the district some 50 miles from my headquarters. The riot was of a serious nature and I was compelled to utilise practically the whole available balance of my Armed Branch to cope with it, leaving nothing in reserve for other emergencies which might easily have arisen in other parts of the district. The manager of the garden concerned, I may add, had already applied to the local police station for assistance but had been informed that the only policemen available were one head constable and one constable, one of whom was on the sick list.

Similarly, last October when disturbances on a large scale broke out in the tea gardens in the north of my district, all available men of the Armed Reserve were sent out to cope with the first outbreak. A second and more serious outbreak occurred two days later on another garden several miles away, and yet another and still more serious outbreak took place on a third garden some two days later. To deal with these further outbreaks, we had not at the time a single civil policeman, armed or unarmed, available,

with the natural consequence that in attempting to cope single-handed with one of these outbreaks, my Superintendent of Police was attacked and severely beaten by a drunken mob, while the hood of my car saved me from a similar unpleasant experience in attempting to deal with the order. The Council will doubtless remember that this was not the only instance in which a Superintendent of Police was severely injured because he had not been given an adequate force. Under these circumstances, therefore I was compelled to call in the aid of Military Police from the 5th Battalion of the Assam Rifles at Lokra and to rely very largely on their invaluable co-operation in coping with, not only these riots, but also a number of minor disturbances and threats of disturbances which occurred later in various parts of the district, in many cases simultaneously.

I might also mention that during the night which followed one of the more serious disturbances to which I have referred, the entire adult labour force of the garden concerned, numbering some 2,000 persons, marched on Tezpur, armed with sticks and other weapons. Their arrival at Tezpur in a state of drunken excitement naturally caused considerable and justifiable alarm in the town and I was besieged with applications from the leading residents of the the town, some of whom I believe are here to-day, and from the chief members of the trading community, to give them police protection during the night. I was reluctantly obliged to inform them that I had practically no police left in the town and that they would have to wait till the arrival of the reinforcements for which I had already arranged. Owing to the lucky accident that I had already a force of Military Police in the district these reinforcements arrived in time and with their help we were able to avert what might have been a very ugly incident at the headquarters of the district.

Obviously, if we had had at our disposal an Armed Police Reserve of reasonable dimensions, the risk to life and limb and property, to which the general public in the areas affected by these disturbances were exposed, would have been considerably reduced.

I have given the Council briefly some of my experiences in the last two districts in which I have served, but the Council can rest assured that my own experiences were in no way exceptional and that my own view, that an increase in the Armed Reserve is imperatively necessary, is, and has been for several years past, shared by all District officers.

In conclusion, I would like to remind the Council that District officers are the custodians of the public peace within their districts and that they are responsible to Government and to you for the safety and preservation of the lives and property of the inhabitants committed to their charge. If District officers with their Superintendents of Police are to continue to discharge these important executive functions, it is only reasonable that you should provide them with the means which are indispensable for that purpose. It is far easier—and incidentally much cheaper—to prevent the occurrence of breaches of the public peace or at least to circumscribe their operation, than it is to repair their ravages and to pay the resulting bill, when all the damage has been done.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I should like, Sir, in the first instance to acknowledge gratefully the moderation displayed not only by the Mover of the resolution but by those members who have spoken in the debate. I should like to acknowledge further the appreciation shown of the difficulties which the

Government have experienced. The Hon'ble Mover gave an accurate account of what happened at the debate in March, and said very reasonably that the Council would require reasons, full and adequate reasons, before it could think of going back on its former decision. Well, Sir, we had Mr. Botham giving the Council in the fullest detail our exact requirements, and explaining why we fixed our programme as we have done. And then we had an officer fresh from the charge of a district, giving concrete instances of his own experiences.

I am glad to think, Sir, that in this debate two entirely separate subjects have been carefully distinguished. The grant which we recently discussed had to do with an emergency which has disappeared, and which we hope will never again arise. The present demand is to meet no emergency, but to meet the ordinary everyday requirements of district administration. We have, as my Hon'ble Colleague told the Council in March, been long conscious that our force of Armed Police Reserve was inadequate and insufficient. We had a clear warning of this in the year 1918 when the *hāt* looting epidemic broke over certain districts. We had a still clearer indication last cold weather, for the only connection between the political situation as it then was and our proposal for an increase, is that events then made it unmistakable to us that we could not continue as we were, that we were not in a position to deal with outbreaks or riots which might occur at any time. The Hon'ble Mover said that it has been left to my Hon'ble Colleague as the first Indian in charge of the Police Department in Assam to discover for the first time that his forces were insufficient, and to propose an increase. Once more, Sir, the Hon'ble Member has not been able to resist the temptation of uttering a well turned phrase. I am sure he means nothing more. Mr. Roffey told us at the last meeting that the Indian Tea Association had years ago pressed for an increase in this force. I can tell the Council that three years ago when I was Commissioner of the Assam Valley, I also urged strongly that there should be an increase. Then Mr. Nilmani Phukan in a speech of studied fairness put a very reasonable question. "Are Government going to have it both ways? Are we to go on paying the whole cost of the Assam Rifles, a cost which is yearly increasing, and at the same time are the Government going to increase the Armed Police Reserve?" Well, Sir, the answer to the question is not altogether a simple one. I understood Mr. Phukan to hold that if we increase the Armed Police Reserve we ought not to employ the Assam Rifles on duties which would then be performed by the other branch of the force. With this principle we entirely agree. We cannot guarantee that if any special emergency arose—we hope it will not arise—we should never call in the Assam Rifles. But we can at least say that the increase which we propose renders it less likely that we shall have to call in the Assam Rifles, that without using them we ought to be able to deal with ordinary riots, outbreaks, disturabances, and things of that kind. He and the Hon'ble Mover both suggested that if we are going to increase our Civil Police charges we should seriously consider a reduction of the charges on account of the Assam Rifles. I can only say, Sir, that this is a matter which we are already examining, that if it is in any way possible—and enquiries are now in progress—to reduce the strength or at all events the cost of the Assam Rifles, the Government will be only too ready to do this so long as it does not prejudice the safety of the inhabitants of this province. For

I may suggest this to Mr. Phukan, the "Imperial" duties of the Assam Rifles include the protection of the inhabitants of our plains districts from being murdered or looted or carried off and held to ransom by some of our turbulent neighbours. The Hon'ble Mover and one or two other Members pointed out sorrowfully that the more money we spend on Police the less money we have to spend on other departments. We, Sir, must sorrowfully admit that this is the case. But I would like to assure him that the Government are fully conscious of this, that it is only the very strongest sense of their responsibility that makes them press proposals like this on the acceptance of the Council at a time when money is lacking for almost everything, and that in fact nothing but the direst necessity could compel them to do what they have done.

I would again remind the Council that when Mr. Majid moved the vote in March he was, it is true, the Member in charge of the Department, but that the decision was the decision of the whole Government and he was merely appearing as the spokesman of the Government. I did in fact remind the Council of this when summing up the debate in March. The question is simply this. We feel that an increase in this branch of the force is essential, if we as a Government are to discharge our responsibilities. We have, as my Hon'ble Colleague said, examined the position most carefully. We have reduced our demands to the utmost that we consider possible. We have, as some speakers put it, met the Council half-way. We appeal to the Council to give practical effect to their appreciation of our difficulties.

SARDAR BAHADUR ANJAB ALI KHAN :—Spoke in Hindi supporting the motion. He considered that in view of the present situation in the country the need for strengthening the Armed Police Reserve was imperative. He suggested that if it was at all not necessary to increase the force, then there was no need for the Police Department at all. It was useless to meet the needs of the situation half-way. The Police were the custodians of the peace and if they were not maintained, chaos would prevail in the country.

BABU RAMANI MOHAN DAS :—Sir, I have listened to all the arguments on the side of the proposers and also on the side of the opposers. I think the Mover of this demand is fully justified to have the money that is going to be spent in the course of the year under the head "Police". My friend the Hon'ble Mover of the amendment has arrived at the figure of Rs. 42,000, the figure he considers should be taken as the reduction proposed by him. I must confess that I fail to understand how he has arrived at this figure. The Hon'ble Mr. Botham has explained the expenditure and if I have understood him rightly this allotment was formerly made when this demand was put forward in the Council, and they have tried their utmost to make some reduction of the expenditure, and the amount now asked for by the Member in charge of Police is the figure which was arrived at after considering a reduction. I have myself asked questions in the Council, both old and new, about the inadequacy of the Police Force, and the answers given by the Government were sometimes to the effect that no funds were available I say as far as I can remember as regards the Silchar and Cachar police, and yet why my question was asked, it was asked in order to find some remedy. I can only speak of the Municipalities where always we receive reports of burglaries and thefts, and also reports from police officers in the town and mofussil that it is the dearth of the police force that could not cope

with crime. I brought this matter sometimes to notice through the Council, sometimes through the head of the officials of the department, and my request was either to increase the police force or to devise some other means, by creating some volunteers perhaps, as my friend Mr. Dam proposed to Mr. Cunningham from among the students or other gentlemen, to guard the villages and towns. I find this amount, according to my motion, may be rather less if the towns and villages are properly guarded by the police. I am not speaking of the Assam Rifles or any emergency measure to be taken by the Government I am simply speaking of the police force which is essentially necessary to keep the peace in various directions. Now what we find. Suppose there is a theft or a dacoity. Although the police will go and investigate, sometimes they can catch and punish the culprits, they sometimes are not able to do so, but if there had been a sufficient number of the police there to be able to keep efficient guard and watch these burglaries and dacoities would not have occurred. So from this point of view I say that I have nothing to grudge to vote this amount which has been demanded by the Hon'ble Judicial Member, and I think I have reason to ask my friend who has got the amendment before the House to withdraw it.

RAI BAHADUR AMAR NATH ROY:—Sir, I am glad that the debate on my motion has been a most interesting one and that all aspects of the question have been brought out in the course of the speeches. I beg to sugguest again that a serious attempt be made again to reduce this province's contribution towards the maintenance of the Assam Rifles.

I find that the sense of the House is against this motion and I accordingly beg leave of the Council to withdraw it.

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

The HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT:—The original motion is:

That an additional sum of Rs. 2,50,333 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray certain charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923 for the administration of the head '26.—Police.'

The motion was adopted.

The HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR GHANASYAM BARUA:—Sir, I beg to move:—

That an additional sum of Rs. 3,125 be granted to the Governor and his Minister to defray certain charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1923 for the administration of the head "30—Scientific Departments."

The motion was put and adopted.

The HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT:—The Council is adjourned to Thursday, the 14th September, at 11 45 A.M. At 12 noon, His Excellency the Governor will prorogue the Council. There is no business before the Council except questions.

The Council was then adjourned to Thursday, the 14th September, at 11 A.M.

SHILLONG, S. E. STINTON,

The 16th September 1922. } *Offg. Secretary to the Legislative Council, Assam.*