

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

The Council met in the Council Chamber, Shillong, on Wednesday, the 11th April 1923 at 11 A.M.

P R E S E N T :

The Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Nalini Kanta Ray Dastidar, *President*, the Hon'ble two Members of the Executive Council, the Hon'ble Minister of Education and 34 nominated and elected Members.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

(UNSTARRED QUESTIONS.)

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI asked :—

1. (a) Are the Government aware that the Shillong generally are in great difficulty about the house accommodation?

clerks Quarters for Shillong clerks.

(b) Is it a fact that the Government had decided to provide the clerks of Shillong with building sites ?

(c) If so, will the Government please state what they have actually done to give effect to their decision ?

(d) If no building sites have been provided, have the Government decided to take early steps to provide the same ?

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

1. (a)—The Government are aware that there is a shortage of house accommodation for clerks in Shillong.

(b) and (c)—There has been no definite decision, nor can there be until terms mutually acceptable to the Government and the clerks have been settled.

(d)—The Registrar of Co-operative Societies has, at the request of the Government and in consultation with the clerks, recently submitted two alternative housing schemes which are under consideration.

MAULAVI RUKUNUDDIN AHMAD asked :—

Burial ground at Golaghat. 1. (a) Is it a fact that the Muhammadan residents of the Golaghat town have submitted a representation about a burial ground at Golaghat ?

(b) If so, will the Government be pleased to state what action they have taken or propose to take on their representation ?

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

1.—Government are aware of no such representation.

REV J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY asked :—

Number of villages under each Local Board declared under Assam Local Self-Government Act. 1. Will the Government be pleased to state the number of villages at present under each Local Board in Assam, which are declared to be villages under the Assam Local Self-Government Act of 1915 ?

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

1.—The number is as follows :—

Silchar Local Board	...	...	...	1
North Sylhet	„	...	...	2
Karimganj	„	...	...	1
Habiganj	„	...	...	1
Sunamganj	„	...	...	5
Gauhati	„	...	...	65
Barpeta	„	...	...	19
Nowgong	„	...	...	9
Sibsagar	„	...	...	2
Jorhat	„	...	...	30
Golaghat	„	...	...	7
Dibrugarh	„	...	...	8
North Lakhimpur	„	...	...	8

MAULAVI SAIYID SAMIUR RAHMAN asked :—

1. Will the Government please state how many village authority Benches were established in South Habiganj ?

Village
Authority
Benches.

THE HON'BLE MR. A. MAJID replied :—

1.—There are as yet no village benches in the South Habiganj constituency.

MAULAVI SAIYID SAMIUR RAHMAN asked :—

2. (a) Will the Government be pleased to state if there is any boundary of the Forest Department to determine the boundary between the British and Hill Tiperra State and whether Forest officers have power to arrest men outside their jurisdiction ?

Forest
boundary
between
British and
Hill
Tiperra.

(b) Has the attention of Government been drawn to cases in which Forest officers arrested men outside their jurisdiction ?

If so, what orders were passed by Government ?

3. Will the Government be pleased to state whether Forest officers have power to arrest men from the portion of Hill possessed by any Zemindar ? If not, then why the Forest officer of Muchikandi thana do so ?

Power of
Forest
officers.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID replied :—

2. (a)—Yes.

(b)—The attention of the Government has not been drawn to any such cases.

3.—The question is not understood. Any one who thinks that he has been wrongfully arrested has the right to complain.

THE HON'BLE PRESIDENT :—I have to communicate to the Council a message received from Srijut Mahendra Nath Barua, son of the late Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Ghanasyam Barua, Minister, Local Self-Government, in reply to the telegram sent him embodying the resolution passed in the Council meeting held on the 5th April 1923. The message runs :—

“ My most grateful thanks to Members, Legislative Council, for recording their sense of loss in the death of my beloved father late Hon'ble Ghanasyam Barua.”

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS.

GRANT No. 16.

(41.—Civil Works.)

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

“ That a sum not exceeding Rs. 33,29,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1924 for the administration of the head ' 41.—Civil Works ' ”.

There are two notices of motions for reduction.

* REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY :—Sir, I think I shall withdraw this motion, but before I do so I want to refer to the budget speech which I made under this head a few days ago. Some expressions in that speech, it now appears, were considered by the hon. Mr. Taylor to be somewhat of a personal attack against him. I must say at once that it was never meant to be such. I am sorry if my expressions were considered to mean a personal attack against him. I would ask his pardon if any of the expressions I made were objectionable. But Sir, I still hold that there is a great deal that can be saved under this Public Works Department. The Public Works Department has been considered by the public to be a department that wastes a lot of money, and therefore I ask that those who are in authority and who have charge of this Department may look properly into the Department and that the small offices under this head may not waste any money.

I beg to withdraw this motion.

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

Maulavi Abdul Khaliq Chaudhuri being absent his motion† was deemed to have been withdrawn.

The original motion was then put and adopted.

GRANT No. 5.

(10.—State Railways, 11.—Subsidised Companies, 12.—Miscellaneous Railway Expenditure and 13.—Construction of Railways.)

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 2,62,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1924, for the administration of the “ Railways.”

* That the demand for grant No. 16, under Civil Works, of Rs. 33,29,000 be reduced by 5 per cent., i.e., by Rs. 1,66,450.

† That in grant No. 16.—Civil Works—the sum of Rs. 6,000 as pay of the Registrar be omitted.

REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY :—I want to withdraw the motion* in my name, Sir.

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

The original motion was then put and adopted.

GRANT No. 12.

(27.—Ports and Pilotage.)

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

“ That a sum not exceeding Rs. 63,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1924, for the administration of the head ‘ 27.—Ports and Pilotage.’ ”

REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY :—I withdraw the amendment standing in my name against this motion, Sir.

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

The original motion was then put and adopted.

GRANT No. 6.

(15B.—Navigation and Embankments.)

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

“ That a sum not exceeding Rs. 73,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1924, for the administration of the head ‘ 15B.—Navigation and Embankments.’ ”

REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY :—I beg to withdraw my amendment, Sir.

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

The original motion was then put and adopted.

GRANT No. 14.

(31.—Education—European Education.)

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

“ That a sum not exceeding Rs. 68,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1924, for the administration of the ‘ European Education.’ ”

There is a notice of a motion for reduction.

* That the demand for grant No. 5 Railways, of Rs. 2,62,000 be reduced by 5 per cent., i.e., Rs. 13,100.

† That the demand for grant No. 12, under 27.—Ports and Pilotage, of Rs. 63,000 be reduced by 5 per cent., i.e., by Rs. 3,150.

‡ That the demand for grant No. 6, under 15B.—Navigation, Embankment and Drainage works, of Rs. 73,000 be reduced by 5 per cent., i.e., by Rs. 3,650.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, the motion which stands in my name is :

“ That in grant No. 14, 31.—Education—European and Eurasian, the item Grant towards buildings, Rs. 18,000 be omitted.”

Sir, I am not going to impeach this allotment on the ground that this amount cannot be usefully employed, but I am impeaching it on the question as to the fairness or otherwise of the apportionment of the revenues as between Reserved and Transferred subjects. Before I state my views I should like to quote certain figures from the Budget. At page 100 of the Budget Estimates hon. members will find that provision has been made under 31.—Education—European and Eurasian for an allotment of Rs. 70,000. This Rs. 70,000 includes the Rs. 18,000 to which my amendment relates, and this sum is allotted under the head 31.—Education, European and Eurasian, as a direct grant to non Government secondary schools for buildings. As hon. members will find from the Quinquennial Review of Mr. Cunningham's there are only four institutions with a total number of 325 pupils. So the expenditure per head of pupil according to arithmetical calculation amounts to Rs. 200 or near about this sum. Now, Sir, look at page 122 of the Budget. There under the head “Secondary Education—31B” occurs a sum of Rs. 6,27,427 for the current year. Says the hon. Mr. Cunningham in his Quinquennial Review “The total number of secondary schools in the province has risen from 286 to 336 while the number of their pupils has fallen from 39,610 to 35,322.” I take the number to be about 35,000 during the current year. So dividing this Rs. 6,27,427 by Rs. 35,000 the expenditure which the State is going to incur per boy of the secondary schools amounts to Rs. 20 or thereabouts. Hon. members will therefore find some data on which to proceed namely an expenditure of Rs. 20 per boy on the one side as against Rs. 200 per boy on the other side. I do not know whether the Government member replying to the motion will repeat the arguments which have been embodied by the Director of Public Instruction in his Quinquennial Review implying directly or indirectly the view that there is no demand for secondary education, that secondary education is more harmful than otherwise at this present stage of the country's progress, and calling upon the Government to arrest the progress of secondary education instead of encouraging it.

MR. CUNNINGHAM :—Will the hon. member kindly quote the remarks to which he refers ?

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—On page 37 of the Report, Chapter 65, after stating the difficulties with which the Government are confronted in solving the educational problem, Mr. Cunningham says :—

“ If the situation is biddable on paper, in practice it presents a problem of excessive difficulty. In the provincial education report of ten years ago the view was expressed, with reference to the developments then in contemplation, that social and economic progress must advance with even step if our eagerness in spreading education was not to do harm instead of good. And this warning has been renewed at intervals. Social and economic progress have not advanced with even step. What then is the result ? It is probably too much to say that such educational advance as has taken place has as yet done more harm than good. The strangeness and

the passing depression of the times must make it unwise at this stage to attempt conclusions. Without boding, it may, nevertheless, be prudent and opportune to emphasise the warning. The educated classes are in circumstances marked in growing measure by distress. If their condition is not to pass from bad to worse they must change their conservative outlook on life and work and putting aside the hope of salvation by academies or phrases, set themselves in earnest to a laborious solution. Schools may play their part. But to throw the burden on schools is to mistake their function and the measure of the problem."

And later on page 43 it is said :—

"The following seem to be the only remedies in view :—' That the establishment of new schools should be discouraged for the present, that the weaker schools should be allowed to fail and disappear, that the fee rates should be increased and that grants from public funds should be increased,' "

and there are also other scattered observations which show that the present Director of Public Instruction seems to look at the educational problem purely from an economic point of view. He has called upon Government to discourage Secondary and University education on the ground that the products cannot be assimilated by the State and tea-garden. Of course this is only one view of the matter. But I believe that the hon. Mr. Cunningham would have done well if he had taken into consideration the other national aspects of the question. Now of course I am bound to give to the hon. Mr. Cunningham the credit for boldly stating the problems with which we are confronted, but if you will permit me to say so, Sir, I shall say that he has only stated the difficulties and solved the problem only in a negative way. He has not suggested any solution, rather he says it is incapable of solution and he has attempted to cut the gordian knot by closing schools and so on. Now, Sir, it may reasonably be argued that the education of the European children or children brought up in European habits is bound to be more expensive than that of the Indian boys, just as European boys require more expensive food and clothing than we Indians do. That cannot be denied, but the question is whether the Government have given or are ready to give the little that we require. My submission to the Council is that in the allotment of the State revenues Government have given more to the Reserved side than they should have given and they are ready to take away from the Transferred side what they were given. We cannot deny the fact that the European community is richer and abler to pay more than the Indians, and these circumstances I think should fairly be taken into consideration by the Government member in replying to this motion. To show the need for diverting money to secondary education on the Transferred side I should like to quote certain figures from the Director's Review. In the province with a population of 76,62,300 there are 133 Middle Vernacular Schools, 126 Middle English Schools and 41 High Schools and the average number of towns and villages served by these institutions for males is 7.1, so that it amounts to this that about 8 villages have got one school. The percentage to population of the scholars in all institutions is 2.84. Well, Sir, as I have already said the conduct of the State will appear in this case to be similar to the partiality of parents who are kinder towards some of their children and provide them with good houses, good dress, good food and so on allowing the others to wither and die in neglect.

To Srijut Nilmani Phukan I should also make an appeal to consider seriously how he has been pressing upon the Hon'ble Finance Member insistently the claims for granting more and more money towards secondary aided schools, and I should like also to draw his attention to the observations of the Director of Public Instruction to the change of jurisdiction which is likely to be effected by the constitutional changes in the University of Calcutta to which express reference has been made in the Quinquennial Review. So that, if he is very serious about educational progress in this province he must be ready to find out money in order to take up the responsibilities of education which the Calcutta University may throw on us in the future. These questions have been noticed also in the Government resolution, as also how anxious and serious the situation has become on account of the constitutional changes contemplated in the Calcutta University. And Mr. Cunningham has very ably dealt with this question throwing a distinct and dark hint about the future with which Assam is confronted. With these words, Sir, I shall await the reply of the Government.

MR. J. R. CUNNINGHAM :—Sir, I confess I would rather that this important subject had been dealt with in the form of a resolution, for that would have given me time to think it over in all its aspects, time for my slow mind to incubate a reply. As it is, it is a motion to reduce a demand for a grant. I received notice of this motion no earlier than yesterday afternoon. Viewing it as it appeared in the budget list of demands I assumed that Mr. Dam was simply stirred to protest by the fact that at a time when we were so pressed that we could afford not more than 8½ lakhs for the first instalment of the buildings of the Murarichand College we were proposing to lavish a sum of Rs. 18,000 on buildings for the institutions designed for the education of the community to which it is my fortune to belong. But knowing Mr. Dam to be a man who has many weapons in his armoury and can wield them with considerable adroitness, I thought it prudent to ask him why it was that he wanted to effect a reduction on this particular item of Rs. 18,000 against 'grant towards buildings'. I had thought it might be possible to overwhelm him by explaining that this Rs. 18,000 was not meant for buildings but was meant for the maintenance of a number of deserving institutions. He was good enough, however, to let me know that he perfectly understood that the provision was not intended for buildings and that his general objection was the objection he has just now put before the Council, namely, that the expenditure on European schools was disproportionate to the number of students or pupils for whom the institutions provided for in the budget were designed. With regard to the Quinquennial Review as to which I had no warning I may merely say in passing that the Report does not only state the difficulties. It also suggests solutions. The solutions suggested involve a certain reliance upon the self-sacrifice of the public and the initiative of the Council. These suggestions are embodied in the Report.

Before going further I venture, with the permission of the President, to touch on a question which was raised in the budget debate. It was suggested by one hon. member, but was not taken up by any other, that the same principles of retrenchment had not been applied in the Reserved and Transferred portions of the Education budget, that more favourable principles had been applied in the case of the Reserved head than in the case of the

Transferred head. I thought it unnecessary at the time to reply, but in case there may be misunderstanding on this point it may be as well to state perfectly clearly that this is not so. The situation stands open to any one who cares to examine the figures in detail as they are given in the budget. Precisely the same principles were applied in both cases, and on the whole I am inclined to think that the Reserved head came off second best. It is possibly not necessary to trouble the House with the details that are involved, but should any member after a study of the figures feel unconvinced I shall be glad if he will call on me in my office when I shall be happy to conduct him to demonstration on the subject.

Now, as I have said, the motion made by Mr. Dam is only on a subsidiary point, the item against aided schools. The main contention is that in the budget education is provided for Europeans at a rate disproportionate to the provision which has been made for the education of other communities. Now, Sir, the European community is a community not without importance. Its members have played and are still playing a large part in the progress of the province and are by their labour and enterprise—as we have learnt from Mr. Roffey—contributing heavily to the Exchequer. Like every other community the European and Anglo-Indian community has educational needs and it has a right to expect that its efforts to supply these needs should be encouraged and that they should be helped from public revenues. Mr. Dam has admitted that the education of Europeans in this country must be, head for head, more expensive than that of other communities. He has not, however, fully realized the reasons for this. In the first place the community is small and widely scattered. It is impossible to provide schools for them everywhere. We have to establish schools in convenient centres which the community may take advantage of. This of course of itself makes the cost high. And a point which is worth noting at this stage is that if the cost is high, the fees are also high. But they are gladly paid. Take the figures for education in the province which the hon. member has referred to. The vast majority of the pupils constituting the total number of children under education in this province are obtaining education free of cost. There is no such provision in the case of Europeans. Parents have to send their children to the few schools which there are in the Hills and pay fees varying from Rs. 30 odd to Rs. 50 odd a month per head for their education and maintenance in these schools. Again the children are taught according to European standards. They require to be instructed by highly qualified teachers. The European and Anglo-Indian community believe in education and in education according to Western standards. There can be no fair comparison in cost between the education of the children of those who believe in education as a matter of necessity and of those, I refer to the majority of the pupils who are taught in this province in the small mofussil schools, who send their children to school less for the sake of learning than as a social convention and who withdraw them by the time they have mastered the alphabet and possibly the manipulation of a bundle of sticks to enable them to count up to ten.

Now, Sir, having regard to these considerations, it appears to me that the appropriate comparison is not with school education in general or with general schools but with schools established for the needs of other communities who believe in education or for communities which have special needs

which have to be specially provided for. I suggest as examples of such institutions—let us say, the Arts Colleges (the Murarichand College for instance as to the expenditure on which I made a reference in the beginning of this speech), the Law College, the Sanskrit College at Sylhet which has been provided for the Brahmins, a community having special needs, a college in which some eight or nine scholars are occupying the attention of three highly qualified Professors, or the Government Madrasa at Sylhet. Well, Sir, if comparison is made with these institutions, and this will be a fair comparison, it will not be to the disadvantage of European schools.

We may make our comparison with general education, not general education as a whole but general education in a backward area—take for example Mangaldai where a High School has been established for a comparatively small number of boys and naturally the expenses are very high.

Indeed, Sir, we might even go further and carry the principles adopted by the hon. member into invidious comparisons between different groups belonging to his own community. We might compare, for example, taking them as the most forward group educationally, the expenditure on the education of the small handful of Vaidyas who appear in the Census Return and compare it with the pittance spent from Government revenues on educating the hosts of the depressed.

Sir, I do not know if it is possible for an adversary to have more than two flanks. But if the hon. mover has more than two flanks he has left them all in air. Another important aspect from which his motion lays itself open to a strong attack is that of the percentage of the cost of their education which is borne by the various communities. In this matter the European and Anglo-Indian community give a lead to the province. If you look at the figures, you will find that while on the education of the non-European—and—Anglo-Indian community 75 per cent. is provided from public revenues, only 25 per cent. coming from private contributions, precisely the reverse is true in the case of European schools—only 25 per cent. being paid by the Government and 75 per cent. being borne by the community. The greater part of the Rs. 18,000 to which the motion refers to is the grant to St. Edmund's College, Shillong. I have had occasion recently to go into the finances of that institution and I found that the Government contribution of Rs. 10,000 represented only one-eleventh of the whole cost of maintaining the institution. Surely there is no one who will think that that is an unduly large proportion.

Sir, I am wearying the Council on this subject, but it is an issue of very considerable importance. And there is still another aspect which I wish to bring before them. The staff of aided European Institutions consists almost exclusively of members, men and women, of religious teaching orders who have devoted their lives to their work believing it to be their religious duty to educate the people to whose service they have been called. They suffer exile, renouncing worldly ambition and all thought of material gain, requiring for themselves only food and clothing and covering for their heads. In the case of St. Edmund's College to which I have just referred the Brothers ask in addition that they should be put in a financial position to make a contribution in respect of each member for their central organization in order to provide for the administration of the Order, to provide also for

occasional charges, cases of illness and so forth. This contribution which St. Edmund's College expects, amounting to a large sum for the many years of the existence of the College, remains, I may say, almost wholly unpaid.

Sir, we have in these aided schools—these missions schools—whose small allotments the motion seeks to reduce, a living example of devotion and of self-sacrifice which ought to be a beacon to our feet.

All members of the House have probably in their childhood read Æsop's fable of Hercules and the waggoner which has issue in the moral that the gods help those who try to help themselves. I feel sure that Mr. Dam when he moved this motion was ignorant of the facts. Now that he knows the facts, I trust that he will not persist in asking the House to admonish Government, by refusing this small grant of Rs. 18,000 for their conduct in following the advice of the deity in the fable.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, as I have already said it is not so much the extent of the allotment by itself as other questions which induced me to move for this reduction, and I shall be quite prepared to withdraw this amendment, but before I do so I should like again to impress upon the Council that if they will carefully go through the observations and opinions of Mr. Cunningham and read the budget allotments with these observations and his present statement they will find that there is much to which they may find reasons to object.

MR. J. R. CUNNINGHAM :—Sir, may I know whether the hon. member is going to withdraw this amendment?

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, I will withdraw the amendment.

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

The original motion was then put and adopted.

GRANT No. 13.

(30.—Scientific Departments.)

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

“ That a sum not exceeding Rs. 14,000 be granted to the Governor in Council to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1924, for the administration of the ‘ Scientific Department ’ ”.

There are two notices of reduction.

Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY :—Sir, I want to withdraw this motion.

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

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, The motion which stands in my name is this—“ That in grant No. 13, ‘ 30.—Scientific Departments ’ the item annual contribution to the Indian Tea Association, Rs. 10,000 be omitted. ”

* That the demand for grant No. 13, under 30.—Scientific Departments, of Rs. 12,000 be reduced by 5 per cent., i.e., by Rs. 600.

Sir, here also I raise the question of the fairness of the Government in giving more to those who have plenty and taking away the little that belongs to others. I am not unmindful of the great services rendered to the province by the Tea Industry although I cannot give them the credit of helping much the provincial revenues which question has been the subject of discussion in the Council as well as in the *Darbar* during the last few days, but apart from the question of the prosperity or otherwise of the provincial revenues to which the Tea Industry has contributed I am not unwilling to give them credit for doing much for the benefit of the people of this country. But the Hon'ble the Finance Member yesterday in moving the Local Rates Bill declared that in his opinion the planting community were fit to bear the burden of a small taxation. In his opinion they were prosperous enough to be able to bear extra taxation, and I beg to supplement his observation with the statement that they will be able to give up this Rs. 10,000 in the interest of the Agricultural Department which is a Transferred subject. They are getting large and fat dividends and the loss of this Rs. 10,000 will not affect them very much. We know that this year the Hon'ble Finance Member has been forced to reduce the grant for eradicating water hyacinth from Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 7,000 and he has dispensed with the post of Agricultural Chemist. The *kala-azar* doctors also, I find from the budget figures, have been reduced in number.....

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DUTTA :—No, no. We are increasing their number.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—At page 153 of the budget it will appear that in 1922-23 there were 8 assistant surgeons, and in the current year provision has been made for 4 assistant surgeons only under head *kala-azar* and *beri-beri* investigation. So it appears that there has been a decrease to the extent of half. I do not know what this means, the figures stand as they are.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I think that if the hon. member will compare the total expenditure in the two years he will see that there has been no reduction.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—I do not know what the sum total of rupees is.....

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—The figure is at the foot of the page.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Yes, the total is the same, but the number of doctors is half, but whatever that may be the fact remains that there has been a reduction in the grants for the eradication of water hyacinth and the Agricultural Chemist, and I cannot help also referring to the lamentation which we have been pouring so long on behalf of the discharged clerks and many other purposes for which we require money more urgently and so my submission to the Council is that they will vote for the omission of this grant so that this amount may go either towards balancing the budget or may be appropriated in directions more urgent and deserving.

MR. D. M. SOMERVILLE :—Mr. President, Mr. Dam has opposed the grant of Rs. 10,000 to the Tea Industry as a contribution towards the Scientific Department of the Indian Tea Association on the ground of fairness and because of the prosperity of the Tea Industry. I wish to associate myself altogether with the sentiment which has just been voiced by the Director of Public Instruction. The sentiment is this that those who help themselves are due help. I beg to point out that the Tea Industry while it is being very heavily taxed has further taxed itself for the support of a Scientific Department, which was brought into existence to enable us to meet the difficulties of hard times. The Industry is having good times now but the times were not good always, and I would point out that when tea is in a bad way Assam is in a bad way also. In order to meet these difficulties we inaugurated a Scientific Department to assist us in the better carrying out of our business. It has very materially contributed to our success and it has enabled us to pass over these difficulties and to climb up the hill of prosperity. The results of this Department are available to all. They are not confined to our own Industry. They have discovered many things useful to anybody who likes to avail himself of the information which is open to the public. I would point out that the Scientific Department costs us something over two lakhs a year and the amount of contribution now given by the Assam Government scarcely amounts to Mr. Roy's ubiquitous five per cent. I think that the case of the Tea Industry as being able to bear increased taxation has been mentioned. It has been pointed out that we do not object to taxation, but we do object to so small a contribution being objected to while we help pay so much to the Imperial revenues. I would therefore ask the House to give the grant as laid down in the resolution.

SRIJUT NILMANI PHUKAN :—Sir, I want to speak a few words on this motion because I also opposed such a motion for reduction in last year's budget discussion or the year before last. My idea is this that the Tea Industry actually can stand on its own legs at this moment, but that is no reason why they cannot fairly expect a grant from the Government if such grants are available for other purposes also. From what we have heard just now from the hon. Mr. Somerville it appears that the Tea Industry already spends more than two lakhs of rupees for this purpose, and for this Rs. 10,000 or so they will neither be better nor worse, but as a matter of principle when they actually have helped themselves to such an extent I think they should not be grudged this small grant from the province to the expansion of which they certainly pay their quota.

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DUTTA :—Sir, as the hon. members are aware tea is a staple industry of this province. It contributes largely to our revenue and finds employment for lakhs of Indians. Also a very large amount of Indian capital has been sunk in tea in this province. Therefore the importance of tea to this province cannot be over-estimated. The demand on which the Council have been asked to vote is for the purpose of helping the Tea Industry in making scientific experiments. That such work is necessary will be admitted by all. The question is a matter which affects materially the people of this province who should bear the cost, the Government or the tea industry. In Madras experimental farms have been instituted by Government for the benefit of tea. In Assam we have got indeed agricultural farms but they do not concern themselves with tea. The Tea Industry has taken upon itself the burden of paying

for their research work. What is asked from the Government is a small contribution as recognising the fact that they are doing important work not only for themselves but also for the province as a whole. Now we have been told by one of the speakers that the annual cost of this Research Institute is about Rs. 2,00,000, and that out of this sum only Rs. 31,000 is contributed by the different Governments concerned. The Government of India gives Rs. 15,000 and the Government of Bengal Rs. 4,000, and I think we used to give them about Rs. 12,000, but now the amount has been reduced to Rs. 10,000. It will be remembered that the benefits of this Research Institute are not confined to the Europeans only, but extended also to Indians and I believe that the hon. mover of the resolution is also interested in tea as a shareholder if not as anything else and I hope he realises that it is necessary to have scientific investigations made into the conditions of tea. But for the steps that the European planters have taken here in having a Research Institute at their own expense, all the things that we know would not have been known to us. I submit, therefore, Sir, that there is absolutely no reason why this grant should be reduced. It has been suggested that while we have to abolish this post or that to retrench expenditure we cannot very well be asked to contribute to a Research Institute like this. If we go on like that I surely think that it will not be possible for us to render any help to anybody, for as soon as it is suggested by anybody that this or that is a fit case which deserves consideration, then somebody else will come forward and say there are others who are more deserving of help. The scientific research, Sir, is a matter which deserves genuine sympathy and help, and as there can be no difference of opinion as to its utility, we should not grudge this small contribution.

MAULAVI RUKUNUDDIN AHMED :—Sir, we cannot forget the good that the tea planters have brought to this province. I find this Scientific Industry situated in my own place, Jorhat. I have found a lot of our own people being employed there. In my opinion by making this contribution of Rs. 10,000 we are simply asserting our own rights to employ our own people as far as practicable and at the same time the sum allotted originally was Rs. 12,000 which has already been reduced now to Rs. 10,000. The sum is no doubt a paltry one, and I think that we should not grudge this sum.

With these few words, Sir, I beg to oppose the amendment.

SRIJIT LOHIT CHANDRA NAYAK :—Sir, if Assam is known in the markets of the world it is known for its tea industry. When Eastern Bengal was amalgamated with Assam the proposal was to style the amalgamated province as the North-Eastern Province, but I think that the then Secretary of State, Mr. Brodrick, raised an objection to the effect that if the province is to be called the North-Eastern Province then the name of Assam the favourite home of tea will die out for ever. It is for this sentimental purpose that I think the province was called Eastern Bengal and Assam.

Now, Sir, this industry has developed our province to a very considerable extent. It has given employment to many Indians "*Cha bagicha* babus," and coolies and many Indians following the example of Europeans, have sunk a good deal of capital in starting gardens of their own in various parts of the province. Now, Sir, it would be a pity if this Industry, which has done so much good work for the welfare of the province, were to be deprived of this paltry sum of Rs. 10,000 in spite of the fact that we have a lean year and consequently been reduced to financial straits. Again, Sir, the retrenchment

axe has been wielded everywhere and wielded even in this particular demand before the House, in that the original grant was reduced from Rs. 12,000 to Rs. 10,000. The industry has already spent some two lakhs of rupees as just now stated by the speaker who followed immediately after the hon. mover, and I think we can hardly grudge them this paltry sum of Rs. 10,000 which it is now proposed to apportion to the industry.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—Sir, the tea industry has clearly so many friends in this Council that it is almost a waste of time my speaking on their behalf, but I should like to reply to one or two points that the hon. mover has raised. He said that yesterday in introducing the Local Rates Bill I held that the tea industry were prosperous enough to bear a little additional taxation. Well, Sir, if I had not thought that it was possible for the industry to bear this taxation, I certainly would not have proposed it. But as I said yesterday I would hardly have ventured to make the proposal unless the tea industry had been good enough, heavily as they are taxed already, to let me understand that they were willing to submit to yet another burden for the good of the province. That is not quite the same thing. The hon. mover stated that in the interests of economy we had reduced the grant for the eradication of the water hyacinth. This, Sir, is not correct. The grant was one I think of Rs. 20,000 given to Local Boards in Sylhet. It was never expected that with this paltry sum anything could be done towards combating the spread of this dreadful pest. The contribution was made, I think I am right in saying, as an encouragement to a few village authorities, to show them that something could be done by their own efforts with some small assistance. We found that the grant last year was not utilised, that it was not appreciated, and therefore on the advice of the Commissioner we reduced it to Rs. 7,000, continuing a grant only I think to the one Board that used it. As for *kala azar* expenditure I think the Hon. Minister will agree with me that the demands for fighting that scourge have not been curtailed in any way.

Well, Sir, several speakers have pointed out that this Rs. 10,000 is a very small proportion of the total cost of the tea scientific department. I cannot help thinking that the representatives of the tea industry value this grant quite as much as an indication of the good will of the Council and of the province towards their industry as they do for its intrinsic value. And I suggest, Sir, that after all that we have heard, after all we know of what the industry has done for the province, after what has already been mentioned—that they are consenting to shoulder yet another burden in spite of the heavy burdens that press on them—it would be mean to an almost incredible degree if this Council voted down this small tangible manifestation of their good will towards the industry.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Sir, I have sense enough to anticipate that the tea industry had many well-wishers in the Council and as far as I understand the sense of the Council the motion is going to be negatived and the grant continued as a courtesy grant or as negligible grant. I have nothing more to add on this point. I wish only to say a few words with regard to certain other points raised in the course of the debate. As regards the statement that the tea industry employ many Indians in this province, I would like to say that the people who are actually employed are not so much those who are indigenous to this

province but those who are imported from outside the province, and consequently it is other provinces who are really benefited. As a matter of fact I don't think a fair percentage of the population of this province is employed in the tea industry. I cannot also overlook the fact that the consumption of rice and other foodstuffs which is made by the coolie population of the gardens, is going to enhance the price of our food articles. Further, I cannot ignore the fact that the tea industry by monopolising all the lands available for ordinary cultivation and other concerns has deprived the people of the necessary lands for the cultivation of paddy, and other food-grains, as is the case in the South Sylhet subdivision. As to whether we have grown richer or poorer on account of the tea industry I would have been very glad to hear what Maulavi Munawwarali had to say in the matter. When he opposed the Local Rates Bill which was moved yesterday he complained of the total inability of the poor people to pay anything. It would not do for us to go on in this way. If really he believes that the tea industry has improved our financial capacity he ought to have supported the Hon'ble Finance Member when the latter introduced the Local Rates Bill. I say now that we ought to be consistent, and from the attitude which he took up against that Bill, I was encouraged to think that he would now again rise (*laughter*) and say that we are not going to bear any further cost on behalf of the tea industry.....

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI :—I rise to a point of order, Sir. The hon. member rose before I did and therefore did not afford me the opportunity of ventilating my own views before he expressed his.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—Well, Sir, without meaning any offence to the members of the planting community I am just reminded of another political gain which has accrued to us on account of the tea industry which I cannot altogether forget. It has a political aspect and—of course the Council will judge whether it is a gain or a loss—the tea-gardens facilitate the operation of the Seditious Meetings Act. Draw a circle with a tea-garden as the centre and a radius of 7 miles and you get an idea of the local application of the Seditious Meetings Act.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—Does the hon. member withdraw his motion ?

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—No, Sir, I do not withdraw it. I ask that it may be put to the vote.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I have nothing more to say, Sir.

KHAN SAHIB ALLAUDIN AHMED CHAUDHURI :—I suggest, Sir, that the question be put to the vote.

The motion was put and negatived.

The original motion was then put and adopted.

GRANT No. 24.

(32.—*Medical.*)

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DUTTA :—
I beg, Sir, to move :

“ That a sum not exceeding Rs. 7,82,000 be granted to the Governor and his Minister to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1924, for the administration of the ‘ Medical Department.’ ”

There is no motion, Sir, against this.

The motion was put and adopted.

GRANT No. 25.

(33.—*Public Health.*)

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DUTTA :—
I beg, Sir, to move :

“ That a sum not exceeding Rs. 4,70,000 be granted to the Governor and his Minister to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1924, for the administration of the ‘ Public Health Department.’ ”

There are two motions, Sir.

REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY :—I withdraw the motion* standing against my name.

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

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

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

The original motion was then put and adopted.

GRANT No. 23.

(31.—*Education—other than European.*)

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DUTTA :—
I beg, Sir, to move :

“ That a sum not exceeding Rs. 21,10,000 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 1924, for the administration of the ‘ Education Department.’ ”

There is a motion, Sir, against this.

* That the demand for grant No. 25, under 33.—Public Health, of Rs. 4,70,000 be reduced by 2 per cent., i.e., by Rs. 9,400.

† To reduce by Re. 1 the total budget grant of Rs. 1,26,000 under 33.—Public Health Establishment.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—This motion* falls on a question of procedure. So I beg to withdraw it.

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

The original motion was then put and adopted.

GRANT No. 22.

(9.—Registration.)

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DUTTA :—
I beg, Sir, to move :

“ That a sum not exceeding Rs. 71,000 be granted to the Governor and his Minister to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1924, for the administration of the ‘ Registration Department ’ ”.

There is a notice of motion, Sir.

REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY :—I withdraw this motion,† Sir.

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

The original motion was then put and adopted.

GRANT No. 26.

(34.—Agriculture.)

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DUTTA :—
I beg, Sir, to move :

“ That a sum not exceeding Rs. 4,17,000 be granted to the Governor and his Minister to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1924, for the administration of the ‘ Agriculture Department ’ ”.

There are notices of three motions, Sir.

RAI BAHADUR BIPIN CHANDRA DEB LASKAR :—Sir, the motion that I have to move is :—

“ That a sum of Rs. 35,000 provided for the Titabar Farm be omitted. ”

Hon. members may think that I am going to propose a retrograde step towards agriculture but nothing like that is in my mind. What I intend is that we should not spend any more money on experimental measures. We have already spent too much on experiments and we have seen the results, good or bad, of those experiments—what has been done in the Jorhat farm, in the Karimganj farm and in the Upper Shillong farm and

* To reduce by Re. 1 the total budget grant of Rs. 2,66,000 under 31.—Education—General—Inspection.

† That the demand for grant No. 22, under 9.—Registration, of Rs. 71,000 be reduced by 5 per cent. i.e., by Rs. 3,550.

in the LaChaumiere Fruit garden, which has been leased to Mr. Holder, is known to the hon. members more or less. My impression is that the agricultural population in Assam have not been profited by these experiments, but much public money has been wasted on these experiments yielding no profit to the Assam Government. I think if we are really earnest to improve agriculture in this country we should do our best to help every individual cultivator in his fields, by supplying seeds, cattle, manure and agricultural implements at a reduced cost and by any other universal measures. Therefore I think I am justified in proposing a cut of Rs. 35,000 for the Titabar farm.

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DUTTA :—Sir, what the hon. mover means is that there should not be any more experimental farms because these farms have been of no use to the ryots. I am afraid, Sir, it is rather too late in the day to say that. In the Titabar farm, in the Karimganj farm and in the farms in the other places as the reports published annually will show very good work is being done. One of the objects of the agricultural farms is the selection of paddy seeds and the selection means giving the cultivators the benefit of the seeds which will give them more yield in a *bigha* than before; and when we consider the number of *bighas* that are under paddy cultivation we can easily realise what would be the gain to the province as a whole. It has been suggested that the best thing would be to supply seeds to the people and demonstrate to them their utility on the fields. I am surprised that the hon. member is not aware that this is exactly what is being done by the Department. The seeds are supplied and demonstrations are given on the fields of the selected paddy plants. The House may remember that this scheme was sanctioned in 1921 and they voted a grant of Rs. 40,000 for the purpose of acquiring lands and for other preliminaries. Lands have been acquired and it is for the purpose of giving that scheme a start that this money has been asked for. True, we have got one farm in Karimganj, but the experts have advised us that the soil and climate of Karimganj are different from the soil and climate of the Assam Valley and that it is essential that the Assam Valley should have a farm of its own for the purpose of selection.

The motion is one which cannot therefore be accepted.

SRIJUT NILMANI PHUKAN :—Sir, I beg to oppose this motion, as I did a similar motion on some other occasion. Perhaps the hon. mover who wanted to abolish the Agriculture Department totally again has thought fit to lay his hands wherever he can. He speaks of the experimental farms as losing concerns and in connection with his former motion on this subject I remember to have said that really they are losing concerns in the sense that a scientific laboratory is a losing concern. We never expect any tangible result from the experimental farms themselves, but do we from a scientific laboratory? But do we not know in how many ways the country is benefited by the fruits of these laboratories, these experimental measures, after repeated failures? I need not dwell on this point at length because in the last year's budget motion the Hon'ble Minister for Local Self-Government very clearly explained the whole situation regarding these experimental farms, and to-day we have again heard from the Hon'ble Minister the same thing, and if I have followed the hon. mover aright I also find that he wants better seeds at least. The Titabar

farm actually proposes to give them. Recently there was an Exhibition at Gauhati. Many of my hon. friends perhaps might have been there, at least I stopped there for some time and went round the exhibits and I was really impressed by seeing how useful these Exhibitions were even from this one point of view of the paddy cultivation of the country. If better seeds are available, if these seeds can be given to the cultivators, if they know how to utilise them properly, then will the hon. mover think for a moment how it will enrich the country in a few years. Already the Titabar farm has been established, the work has begun and to leave it at this stage will be quite useless. The money that has already been spent will not return. In these circumstances what is our duty? If we feel the pinch of revenue at this moment it is all the more desirable that we should make all sorts of provisions to make the country more productive so that more revenue might be yielded to the coffers of the province. So, I hope the hon. mover will be convinced of the utility of this farm and will not press for a division on this point.

MR. R. N. CHAUDHURI:—Sir, may I point out that the speech of the hon. mover has been misunderstood. I have got that speech in writing with me; so there is no mistake on my part. What he says.....

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID:—Sir, the Council have heard the hon. mover of the Resolution and they have sufficient intelligence to judge what he means. They hardly require an explanation of his speech from another member.

MR. R. N. CHAUDHURI:—I may point out, Sir, that this was misunderstood. Shall I be allowed.....

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT:—I think the hon. mover is the fit person to look at it.

MR. R. N. CHAUDHURI:—What I understood from the mover is that the seeds, agricultural implements and other things would be distributed to the agriculturists and not stored or sold by the farm at Titabar. If that is the speech, then the proposal is quite different. If the seeds are sold or distributed to the agriculturists, there will be no difficulty. So first of all this misunderstanding must not remain in our minds and we should see clearly the necessity for maintaining this department. This department is becoming a matter of much controversy for such a long time as you all know. I am not going to propose that the whole Department should be removed or abolished. I do not see any harm in the proposal that has been made by the mover in so far as he says that seeds and other things should be distributed to the cultivators instead of these things being stored in the store house.....

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DUTTA:—These things are done as a matter of fact.

MR. R. N. CHAUDHURI:—If this is done, then very well.

REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY :—Sir, I want to add a few words. As the Hon'ble Minister has said I suppose the supporter of the resolution misunderstood the object of the experimental farms. The experimental farms are, as I understand, maintained for the sake of knowing what is the best seed to be distributed to the cultivators. Unless there is an experiment, a proper knowledge cannot be acquired regarding that. When once such a knowledge has been acquired, then those seeds will be distributed. Therefore the experimental farms are very necessary for the country. Though at the beginning they are being carried on at some expense, in the long run they are not a loss but a gain to the country as a whole.

SRIJUT LOHIT CHANDRA NAYAK :—Sir, the motion is for a reduction of a sum of Rs. 35,000 provided for the Titabar Farm. My friend, the hon. mover, is not perhaps familiar with the term 'Experimental Farm.' Experiment has a good deal to do with the promotion of our affairs, material and mental. A great deal of spade work has to be done by experiment before any results can be brought to the notice of the people. Now to do the spade work a large sum of money has to be spent and as a result of that spade work we expect to get good results afterwards. We know the case of *kalaazar*. In my younger days when *kalaazar* was raging throughout the entire length and breadth of Assam, every one was in dread of that fell disease. Whenever a man was attacked with *kalaazar* his case was considered to be hopeless and not only hopeless, in treating him his family was almost ruined financially. Now after so many years of experiment a remedy has been found out. Now, we know that if one gets *kalaazar*, he could be cured by intravenous injection of tartar emetic. Exactly similar is the case with this Experimental Farm. After the experiment is made it is known what results it will give. What experiment does? By experiment it is shown what kind of seeds will be suitable for a particular area and what will be the sufficient quantity. That is, it goes to give men what is called agricultural education. Now, Sir, by the Experimental Farm as well as by field demonstration the scientific education in agriculture is brought home to the masses. The present work of cultivation that is done by our cultivators is of the antediluvian age, but by and by and with the advance of experiment and its success, an intensive method of cultivation will be introduced amongst our ryots so that by spending a small amount of labour they can have a plenty of yield. That is what is called experiment. So, for this reason though the experiment may be costly in the beginning, it is expected to give good results in the long run. So I oppose the hon. mover with all the emphasis that I can command.

RAI BAHADUR BIPIN CHANDRA DEB LASKAR :—As most of the members are opposing the amendment for reduction, I beg to withdraw it.

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

REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY :—I beg, Sir, also to withdraw the motion for reduction in my name.

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

* That the demand for grant No. 26, under 34.—Agriculture, of Rs. 4,17,000 be reduced by 2 per cent., *i.e.*, by Rs. 8,340.

BABU KRISHNA SUNDAR DAM :—I beg, Sir, to withdraw the motion* for reduction standing in my name.

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

The original motion was then put and adopted.

GRANT No. 27.

(35.—Industries.)

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DATTA :—I beg, Sir, to move :

that a sum not exceeding Rs. 99,000 be granted to the Governor and his Minister to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1924 for the administration of ' Industries Department '.

The motion was put and adopted.

GRANT No. 30.

(47.—Miscellaneous—Transferred.)

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DATTA :—I beg, Sir, to move :

that a sum not exceeding Rs. 3,17,000 be granted to the Governor and his Minister to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1924, for the administration of the head " 47.—Miscellaneous " (Transferred).

- There is a motion for reduction.

REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY :—Sir, I beg to withdraw the motion† for reduction.

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

The original motion was then put and adopted.

GRANT No. 29.

(41.—Civil Works—Transferred.)

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DATTA :—I beg, Sir, to move :

That a sum not exceeding Rs. 4,69,000 be granted to the Governor and his Minister to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1924, for the administration of the head 41.—Civil Works (Transferred).

There is a motion for reduction.

REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY :—I beg, Sir, to withdraw the motion‡ for reduction.

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

The original motion was then put and adopted.

* That in grant No. 26.—Agriculture—Veterinary charges, the item Deputy Superintendent Rs. 3,000 be omitted.

† That the demand for grant No. 30, under 47.—Miscellaneous, of Rs. 3,17,000 be reduced by 5 per cent., i.e., by Rs. 15,850.

‡ That the demand for grant No. 29 under Civil Works of Rs. 4,69,000 be reduced by 5 per cent., i.e., by Rs. 23,450.

(37.—Miscellaneous Departments—Transferred.)

THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DATTA :—I beg, Sir, to move :

That a sum not exceeding Rs. 5,000 be granted to the Governor and his Minister to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1924, for the administration of the head "47.—Miscellaneous" (Transferred).

There is a motion for reduction.

REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY :—I beg, Sir, to withdraw the motion* for reduction :

The motion was, by leave of the Council withdrawn.

The original motion was then put and adopted.

The Council then adjourned for lunch till 2 P.M.

The Council re-assembled after lunch at 2 P.M.

RESOLUTIONS.

SRIJUT NILMANI PHUKAN :—Sir, the resolution that stands in my name is :—

That this Council recommends to the Government of Assam that the Government of India be moved to make a two-third contribution of the entire cost of administration of Hills districts or in lieu thereof to remit the provincial contribution of 15 lakhs to the Central Government.

At the outset I must say that the other day I moved a resolution for bearing of the entire cost of the Assam Rifles by the Government of India, and to-day I am moving another resolution to a similar effect. Perhaps again it may seem that I am a bit unreasonable, but if you will allow me to dwell on the subject a little more, possibly I can convince you that it is not an unreasonable resolution.

In connection with the budget discussion of 1921-22 the Hon'ble the Finance Member said—"One hon. member if I heard him aright asked what return we get from the Hill districts and said that the heavy cost of administering these districts was borne by the plains. The real answer is that the return we get is the security of our plains districts. It is not so very many years ago since people knew what Naga and Lushai raids were, and had we not occupied these districts we might still be maintaining a long chain of outposts and still be liable to the risk of murder and pillage." Then, Sir, I take it that these Hill districts are maintained more as political than civil areas, and as such they do not strictly come under civil administration and in fact they are not so administered. Now the question is whether I am justified in moving this resolution. I think I am.

* (1) That the demand for grant No. 28, under 37.—Miscellaneous Departments, of Rs. 5,000 be reduced by 5 per cent., i.e., by Rs. 250.

Our financial difficulties require further adjustment with the Government of India regarding these political areas. Sir, in connection with a resolution of mine regarding the remission of the provincial contribution to the Government of India the whole question was so ably discussed by the Hon'ble the Finance Member that I think that I need not take up the time of the House to recapitulate his arguments. As this resolution has reference to that question of provincial contribution as well, I cannot possibly go out of my way if I refer to that. We find in the Report of the Joint Select Committee and the Meston Committee a remark that "The Committee desired to add their recognition of the peculiar financial difficulties of the Presidency of Bengal which they accordingly commend to the special consideration of the Government of India." That was the finding regarding the province of Bengal. Again they say—"The two provinces which come next in difficulty are the Central Provinces and Assam. They have a small margin at the best of times and their need for development is great. The former has a more rapidly expanding revenue than the latter, but on the other hand its finances are more liable to disturbance by famine." This is the finding regarding the Central Provinces and Assam. So as we know that the whole question was taken up by the Hon'ble the Finance Member and that our case was so ably pressed before the Government of India is also known to us. I remember that he pressed the question of this provincial contribution before the Government of India on the following grounds :—

- (1) the undeveloped state of the province ;
- (2) the fifteen lakhs contribution to the Central Government ;
- (3) about twenty-six lakhs for revision of pay ;
- (4) about three lakhs for the additional cost of the Reformed Government ; and
- (5) about four and half lakhs for leave allowances and pensions, (a new item which was borne before by the Central Government).

Then, Sir, it appears it has been admitted by the Meston Committee and the Joint Select Committee as well that this province needs help financially, and besides with the Reformed Government the expenditure has also increased to a large extent, and that has also been recognised by the Government of India. The Hon'ble the Finance Member pressed the question before the Government of India from the very point of view that—"for years, long before the Reforms came into being, we begged to be given a fair start to be allowed to develop the province, to have enough money to undertake capital outlay on communications and on the development of industries and the making the most of our undoubted resources." So all these facts have been recognised both by our Government and by the Government of India. Now the question is what is the justification for moving this resolution. My point is this, that if so long we did not grudge for maintaining these hill districts more or less entirely at our own cost, why we do so now. It was due to the fact that we were not so hard pressed before, but we are very hard pressed at present on all hands. So before we put our own house in order we cannot afford to be charitable to any great extent. It might be questioned whether these hills districts

do not form a part of the province. I say they do, but there is a difference to a great extent as regards matters of administration. I may be allowed to say that these hills districts more or less form a sort of Agency to the Governor General of India and as such our Government administers these hill districts on behalf of the Government of India. That is my point of view. So far as we know, I do not know how far I am correct—these hill districts are not self-contained. There is a large deficit every year from the resources of the hill districts themselves and the deficit has to be made up by our provincial revenue. We would not have grudged it had it been possible for us at this moment. I would here like to comment on the Report of the Meston Committee on the recommendation of the Joint Select Committee—which is not to my mind very reasonable in our case. An element of chance entered into the Meston reward. Bengal got the remission because the Hon'ble the Finance Member with the Government of India made a special pleading in her behalf on the ground of the Joint Select Committee's recommendations, and Bihar and Orissa because no contribution was paid by them for the first year at the recommendation of the Meston Committee. They had good luck there, as also Bihar and Orissa, because no contribution was paid by them for the first year on the recommendations of the Meston Committee and the Joint Select Committee ruled that no province must pay more than it paid in the first year. So I say that an element of chance has entered into it. If Bihar and Orissa paid something in the first year perhaps they would have had to pay again. Then if these provinces by special pleadings were fortunate enough to get the remission and in one case a total remission, then why should not Assam for stronger reasons claim a similar remission. If that remission is not given, at least the Government of India may reasonably bear something of the upkeep cost of these hill districts which are no less Imperial than Provincial. Again, Sir, as regards our revenue we lose much as I said yesterday. We lost much in the shape of customs duties and other things. We have a thriving tea industry at this moment. The tea industry pays largely to the Central Government and it is an undoubted fact that this is one of the main resources of the revenue of the country. Then if we are not to get a reasonable share out of that revenue certainly it is not our fault if we are faced with a deficit budget to-day. Had we been half as fortunate as some of our other provinces perhaps we would have been able to show a surplus budget, and not only that, our power of borrowing would also have increased, and we would incidentally have been able to undertake many schemes of development which we as well as our Government have at heart. So in view of all these circumstances I think I am justified in moving this resolution. My point is not that the hill districts should form a separate province or a separate district. We are bound to administer these districts because they form part of the province. There is no help for it, but I ask, Sir, for what purpose really are these hill districts there? They are I submit there more on political grounds than for the necessities of civil administration. So long as these hill districts do not share all the benefits and advantages of civil administration they are more or less politically administered and their upkeep should be borne not by this Government but by the Government of India. So in a rough way I made the calculation that either the Government of India should contribute about two-thirds of the cost of administering the hill districts or in lieu thereof they should remit the provincial contribution of Rs. 15,00,000, in which case we shall also be in a position to administer the

hill districts. I hope therefore that this resolution will be accepted by the House, on the ground that these hill districts are more or less agency areas and not strictly under civil administration.

THE HON'BLE MR. W. J. REID :—I may say at once, Sir, that Government are in the fullest sympathy with the objects of this resolution. In fact last year we made a request somewhat on these lines to the Government of India but without success. There is a small matter of detail. The hon. mover suggests that we should ask either for a contribution of two-thirds of the entire cost of the administration of the hill districts, or that instead we should receive a remission of our provincial contribution of fifteen lakhs. Well, Sir, the request that we made did not go quite so far as that. I do not want to bother the Council with too many figures. We went into the question as carefully as we could and we took out to the best of our ability the cost of administering the various hill districts and the returns in the way of house-tax, royalties and so on that we get from these. We found the same difficulty that the hon. mover has found in keeping the cost of the Assam Rifles out of our calculation. In the end we asked the Central Government for a contribution of six lakhs towards the cost of administering the hill districts as apart from the cost of the Assam Rifles.

Every one knows—I think the hon. mover quoted from a speech of mine—that the administration of the hill districts and the exercise of control in the Frontier Tracts were measures undertaken for the security of the plains portion of the province. They made it no longer necessary to maintain a long chain of frontier outposts. The force of Assam Rifles came into existence to permit of the administration of and the exercise of control in these areas. Well, Sir, at present we do get a considerable measure of assistance from the Government of India. We receive the annual subvention of fourteen lakhs towards the cost of the Assam Rifles. In addition the entire cost of exercising control in the two Frontier Tracts, the Sadiya Frontier Tract and the Balipara Frontier Tract, is paid by the Government of India. Similarly, all expenditure in the State of Manipur is classed as "Political" and is met by the Government of India. We are left with a group of what Sir Nicholas Beatson Bell in his Note on the Reforms dealt with as backward areas. I hasten to say that the term 'backward areas' is not used in any offensive or derogatory sense. I do not think any of us would admit that the district in which we are at present is backward in any sense of the word. The term is a technical one, and denotes areas which are administered on other lines than the ordinarily administered districts of the province. We need not consider the North Cachar Hills for instance which is a sparsely populated area in the middle of regularly administered country. For similar reasons we need not consider the Mikir Hills. Let us take only the four big hill districts which cost money, the Lushai Hills, the Naga Hills, the Garo Hills and the Khasi and Jaintia Hills. In the case particularly of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills with the capital of the province situated in the middle of the district it is a matter of very great difficulty to decide what is properly district expenditure and what is expenditure rendered necessary by the fact that Shillong is the headquarters of the Administration. It is for instance improbable that had Shillong not been the provincial capital we should have had a road of the quality that we now have connecting us with Gauhati. Similarly, there are many buildings, there are many offices in Shillong which do not exist for purely district purposes. Our calculations are

probably not absolutely accurate, but we reckon from these four districts we receive as revenue from all the different heads, land revenue, house-tax, excise and so on, something over seven lakhs, while our expenditure on these districts was about sixteen lakhs. We suggested to the Government of India pitching our demand low as we knew how serious their financial embarrassments were, that they should give us a subsidy of six lakhs a year to make up to us to some extent for this drain on our resources. Our request was negatived, and I only hope that the recommendation which this Council will, I have no doubt make this afternoon, may lead the Government of India to change their mind. I would only suggest, Sir, that the alternative suggested by the hon. mover of the resolution goes considerably further than our request. We asked for six lakhs, and therefore to ask in the alternative that the whole of the provincial contribution should be remitted is a much more heavy demand.

MR. R. N. CHAUDHURI :—Sir, may I know whether the Government have passed any opinion as to the question whether the request is a reasonable or unreasonable one. The whole thing depends upon that.

THE HON'BLE MR. REID :—I said, Sir, that the Government accepted the resolution. Surely that answers the hon. member's question.

SRIJUT NILMANI PHUKAN :—Sir, I am glad to find that the Government is in a position to accept the resolution and I think that the sense of the House is that the Government of India should be approached with a view to obtaining some relief.

The resolution was put and carried unanimously.

✓SRIJUT NILMANI PHUKAN :—Sir, the resolution that stands in my name runs thus :—

“ That this Council recommends to the Government of Assam to take such action as may be necessary to secure an adequate representation for this province on the Senate and on the Syndicate of the Calcutta University or on such Councils and Committees as may be formed for the government and administration of the University under the reconstitution which is in contemplation following on the Report of the recent University Commission.”

Sir, I move [this resolution with a hope that our anomalous position regarding the Calcutta University should be settled once for all. I am one of those who believe that for some time to come there is no hope for a University in Assam and at the same time I am not prepared to sit with folded arms showing apathy or inaction regarding University matters. To speak the truth the Calcutta University was constituted at a time when Assam and other territories were also included in the Act of incorporation. To-day we stand on that ground. There might have been other territorial changes regarding other matters in different provinces, but as regards university education there has been no change at all in the case of our province. I feel it my duty to urge this question before this House and upon Government at this moment knowing as I do that at this time the Calcutta University has become a field for a tug-of-war. We must know our position at this moment. Recently, we found that certain Bills have been introduced into the Bengal Legislative Council to make reforms in university matters, but I find Assam is nowhere in those Bills and the object of the e Bills is undoubtedly

far-reaching. As far as I could gather from the preambles of those Bills I find they are now intent upon making changes regarding the funds of the University and to obtain a wider constitution for the University and also to revive the position of the Rector. Those are the three things, the chief points for which these Bills are introduced. If that be the case, if they want a wider constitution for the University, for whom is it? If they want greater financial control,—for whom? and if they want to revive the position and status of the Rector,—for whom? The natural answer would be that it is for all those territories which even now form part of the Calcutta University. If that be the case, if that is the legal right which all these territories constituted under the Calcutta University have, then may we not claim at this moment that Assam should be properly represented in the Calcutta University. But we are sorry to find that in the introduction of these Bills Assam was quite ignored. Regarding this there is at the present moment a great controversy, a great fight between the Vice-Chancellor and the Government of Bengal. We have nothing to do with this fight, but one thing that strikes me is that even the Governor of Bengal, His Excellency Lord Lytton is suspicious that our Government has been won over by the Vice-Chancellor to his side. I respectfully protest against such uncharitable remarks from a man of the position of His Excellency the Governor of Bengal. It is the business of our Government and the Government of Bengal to say whether these remarks are at all deserved by our Government. I am not in the know of the correspondence between the Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University and our Provincial Government. But apparently, I say it cannot be said that a Government like ours might be won over to the side of the Vice-Chancellor without rhyme or reason. Whatever that may be I have nothing to do with that. But I protest we did not deserve this insinuation. My main point is this now that the University is being reconstituted, there is no doubt about that, and if that be the case, then is this not the opportune moment, the proper time for us also to establish our rights and claims which have been so systematically, I should say, ignored from the very beginning. We have no proper representation on the University. That is an undeniable fact. We are not properly represented on the Senate and Syndicate of the Calcutta University and I do not think the Government of Bengal have any right to legislate for us in that University now. The most that they can do is they can get away from the Calcutta University, but they cannot dislodge us from the constitutional position we hold under the Calcutta University Act. So I understand now there will be wider power exercised by the Calcutta University as an independent body. So if it at all comes under the control of the Government of Bengal then it is all the more reasonable that we should have a place in it. We should have more reason to press this resolution at this time, because so long our interests have not suffered, we may take it, at the hands of the Government of India, but now we cannot leave our interests in the hands of the Government of Bengal to that extent. Apart from the question of legality or otherwise of these Bills— I am not a great lawyer nor a jurist to decide that— but apart from that question, I simply press this question and say that if we are to be under the Calcutta University we must have proper representation which we have not at this moment and with this end in view let us press with all the emphasis at our command that at this time if there

be any reconstitution, Assam must be properly represented. I am really sorry to find that Assam is not taken into consideration by the Government of Bengal. If the position of the Rector is revived then where will be our Governor? This very question was very pertinently raised in the discussion of the Senate regarding these Bills, and I am glad to find that our renowned country-man, Mr. K. K. Chanda has argued this question at length. He said :—" In 1915, Sir Surendra, then Mr. Surendranath Banerjee, moved a resolution in the Imperial Legislative Council for the transfer of control over the Calcutta University from the Government of India to the Government of Bengal. At that time the representatives of Assam in the Council opposed the motion on the ground that Assam was subject to the Calcutta University. So long as the Governor General was the Chancellor, the Government and people of Assam could approach him easily and place their grievances before him which they could not very well do if the Provincial Government of another Province was in charge of the University. Assam was at present under the Calcutta University and what was the position of Assam in this matter? The Bill had no reference to it". Sir, Asutosh Chaudhuri said 'absolutely none'. And actually that is the fact. If these Bills are passed and if the Bengal Government becomes the sole authority we shall be nowhere. Mr. Chanda continuing said "that the framers of the Bill forgot that Assam was under the Calcutta University at all. How did Assam stand with regard to election or nomination? He did not wish to say anything about communal representation. There was nothing in the Bills about territorial administration. There was no chance of any one of Assam getting elected. He endorsed everything that Sir Asutosh Chaudhuri had said with reference to nomination. If the Bill was passed into law Assam had no chance of getting nomination in the University. The Bills illustrated the maxim 'Charity begins at home'. It was inevitable. As Assam was also under the Calcutta University why should it not be granted that privilege? What position would Government take up with regard to the matter? They were going to make the Minister of Education the Rector. Supposing they from Assam claimed a similar right that their Minister also should be made Rector, could they resist it?" And should we not make a similar demand? If the Government of Bengal claim that their Governor should be the Chancellor of the University, we with equal propriety can also claim that our Governor should be the Rector at least, or we may claim that our Minister also should have a good position there.

Mr. Chanda continued "He might tell them that it was not in the power of the Bengal Legislative Council to legislate in the way contemplated". Then he entered into a discussion of the subject in detail. I need not go through all that. But I may say that our cause has actually been so ably pleaded before the Senate by Mr. Chanda that I need not dwell on the subject any more. In any case we should have proper representation whether the University is controlled by the Government of Bengal or the Government of India. It is most important that so long as we are under the Calcutta University we must have some voice there. It is with that end in view that I move this resolution, so that we may have larger powers in the Senate or the Syndicate or any other body that will be constituted for the administration and academical purposes of the University.

✓
 MR. J. R. CUNNINGHAM :—I may take it, Sir, that the purpose the resolution has in view is approved by the Council as a whole. In that case I am to say, to inform the Council, that the Government of Assam has been in correspondence on the subject with the Government of India and that they hope that arrangements will be made in connection with the impending legislation to which the hon. member has referred and other Bills to which he has not referred, to give effect to the wishes of this Council as expressed in the resolution. Government therefore gladly welcome the resolution as strengthening their hands in the matter.

MR. A. J. G. CRESSWELL :—May I ask, Sir, if I correctly understood the speaker to say that the Bengal Government or rather His Excellency Lord Lytton had insinuated that the Vice-Chancellor had been or was intriguing or had intrigued with the Government of Assam in order to work against the wishes of the Government of Bengal?

SRIJUT NILMANI PHUKAN :—Yes, Sir, it appears from a letter of Lord Lytton himself. He has accused the Vice-Chancellor of asking Government of Assam to oppose the Bills. I may quote at length the very letter.....

MR. J. R. CUNNINGHAM :—I do not know, Sir, if this letter which has been referred to was not supposed to have been a confidential letter and seem to remember that objection has been raised to the publication of the letter. I venture further to suggest that it is inadvisable that we should as a Council intervene or appear to intervene in any way in a matter affecting the relations between His Excellency the Governor of Bengal and the Vice-Chancellor of the University.

MR. A. J. G. CRESSWELL :—Well, Sir, may I ask that the first speaker will withdraw his remarks? They are insinuating.

SRIJUT NILMANI PHUKAN :—Sir, I already said that I am not a competent person to discuss the matter which is now looming so large in the public eye. The correspondence between His Excellency the Governor of Bengal and the Vice-Chancellor is already before the public. We have got the letter of His Excellency to the Vice-Chancellor in the press in a clear language "You have appealed to Sir Michael Sadler, to the Government of India and the Government of Assam to oppose our Bill". I do not know whether it was confidential or not. I have got it in the paper. I do not for one moment want to judge whether His Excellency was right or wrong. I am not going into the merits of the question. I am simply telling what is in the paper. As I have said I do not know whether it is confidential or not, I have made no insinuating remarks in any way. I have simply stated the facts. I am not prepared to withdraw my remarks.

The resolution was put and carried unanimously.

MAULAVI ABDUL KHALIQUE CHAUDHURI :—I beg to withdraw the following resolution which stands in my name :—

“ That this Council recommends to the Government of Assam that early steps be taken to increase the land open to pasturage up to 10 per cent. of the total land area in the localities of this Province within four years, some substantial increment being made in the first year and the rest equally distributed in the next three years.”

The resolution was by leave of the Council, withdrawn.

SRIJUT NILMANI PHUKAN :—Sir, I beg to move that—

“ This Council recommends to the Government of Assam that a substantial grant be made in the course of the financial year to ameliorate the conditions of aided schools of the province.”

Sir, this is the last resolution in the Session perhaps. I feel the House will feel tired of my resolutions regarding aided High Schools. From the very beginning I have been moving in the matter though not successfully, but I have this much confidence that if the cause is a good one, it must achieve its end some time. I must speak something about it. I know that I should be failing in my duty as a teacher, if being here I do not press the real cause, the real grievance of the aided schools at this time in the province. And I may tell the House that nobody is more in sympathy with the aided High Schools at this time than the Director of Public Instruction himself. If we read the Quinquennial Report, if we read the Annual Reports on Education, we will find that nobody could plead the cause of education better than he did. In the last Quinquennial Report I find he writes the following words :—

“ In the field of education Government must rely largely on the enterprise of unofficial agencies. It is one of the first articles of practical administration in this matter that such enterprise should be encouraged by assistance from the public revenues and that it should be led to follow lines which consist with public policy. The main instrument which Government uses to this end is the system of grant-in-aid.

Grant-in-aid is needed to fertilise the thin soil of private effort. If we are to have a full crop of good schools under private management, grants must be liberally applied. The allotment placed at the disposal of the department for this purpose is probably rupee for rupee more usefully spent than any other considerable allotment in the budget. It fosters private effort and is a token of the interest and influence of Government. It is on private effort that we must depend in the main for educational advancement and to schools maintained by private effort that we must look for the education of the middle classes in loyalty to Government.”

Sir, I cannot place the case of the aided schools in a better language than he did. Then again he says :—

“The sums involved are not excessive, as will be seen from the undernoted statement of the amounts spent on grants-in-aid during the quinquennium :—

				Rs.
1917-18	...	...	...	1,47,216
1918-19	...	...	...	1,55,683
1919-20	...	...	...	1,66,819
1920-21	...	...	...	1,57,067
1921-22	...	...	...	1,61,392

An additional Rs. 50,000 would be a notable easement.”

Could it be said that this amount is sufficient at this time to reorganize the aided High Schools of this province when other reorganization schemes have cost Government two-fold, three-fold of expenditure during these years. Is it possible that a few thousands thrown at the door of the aided High Schools will be sufficient at this time? I think there must be a larger policy to be pursued at this time by Government in the matter of finding funds for aided schools. That is my aim. But what I would like to impress on the Council, and as a matter of fact on the Government, is that the position of aided schools—high, middle, primary or elementary—are very precarious at this time and if we read the signs of time aright, then—I might be borne out by the testimony of the Director of Public Instruction himself—these institutions require more help at this time, especially if a new departure is to be made regarding the educational policy of the province and that will have to be done under the Reforms Scheme when the whole subject has been transferred to the control of the popular Minister. The popular Minister will be faced with the problem of removing the ignorance of the masses and the present desire for education amongst them, and what will be the means of doing that? There is the only solution—that will be the spread of education throughout the country. There cannot be a check on this desire. That is a fact. No amount of persuasion will ever convince our people not to get education this time. Though they know perfectly well that this education is not after all fruit-bearing as yet, still when it is a fact, we shall have to face it very boldly and the whole question has been so ably discussed in the Quinquennial Report by the Director of Public Instruction that I do not like to tease the House any longer on this question. But I would like to make a few remarks on the cost of maintenance of schools. When the cost of maintaining a Government school has increased to a great extent, there has been no proportionate increase in the cost of the aided schools. At the same time the demand for aided High Schools is not less. In a Government High School the average salary of a teacher is Rs. 80 while in an aided High School his salary is Rs. 40—just half the amount. Then is it not a fact that these institutions are greatly helping Government in giving education to the children of the soil? If this is so, it is incumbent on the part of the Government to provide for these institutions before anything else. I must not enter into more details. I have pleaded the cause of aided High Schools so often that I must not tease you out of your patience by repeating them again. I only hope that this resolution will be accepted by the Government or if it not be possible to accept it in this form, I want some form of assurance from Government that these things will be done.

MR. J. R. CUNNINGHAM :—Sir, the resolution cannot of course be accepted in its present form, because it has designs on the budget which has just been passed. But there is agreement on the question of the unfortunate position in which aided schools at present find themselves. Their fee income has fallen with the reduction of enrolment. No increase in the grant-in-aid from Government has been made during the past few years, when increase in pay has been the rule in the Education Department and every other Department. The needs of aided schools are admitted. The sole question we are concerned with is that of the provision of funds. The hon. mover may rest assured that when the financial situation is eased, the case of the aided schools will not suffer for lack of attention. Government is sympathetically disposed and I personally shall not be in the least likely to ignore any opportunity which may occur for bringing their claims to notice.

SRIJUT NILMANI PHUKAN :—I think no other member will speak on the subject.

MUNSHI SAFIUR RAHMAN :—Sir, the cost of education has increased so much that it will hardly be possible for our boys to receive education unless Government substantially aids private institutions. The Muhammadan students are particularly poor: it will not be possible for them to go to headquarters stations to read in the Government institutions. I urge that Government should provide sufficient funds for aided institutions.

SRIJUT NILMANI PHUKAN :—Sir, I have already explained the object of my moving this resolution, and I am glad to know from the hon. Mr. Cunningham that he has full sympathy with this resolution. I have already admitted that he has actually full sympathy with the aided schools, and on the assurance that he has given that the matter will always receive that very sympathetic consideration, and when funds are available (though he does not say that the matter will receive first consideration) I say that they may receive the *first* consideration, I beg to withdraw the resolution with the permission of the House.

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

THE HON'BLE THE PRESIDENT :—His Excellency the Governor will come personally to prorogue the Council at 12 noon to-morrow.

The Council then adjourned till Thursday the 12th April at 11-30 A.M.

SHILLONG :

The 11th April 1923. }

A. MELLOR,

Secretary to the Legislative Council, Assam.