

**Proceedings of the First Session of the Second Assam Legislative
Assembly assembled under the provisions of the
Government of India Act, 1935.**

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber, Shillong, at 11 A.M. on Saturday, the 23rd March, 1946.

PRESENT :

The Hon'ble Mr. Debeswar Sarmah, Speaker, in the Chair, the seven Hon'ble Ministers and ninety Members.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

STARRED QUESTIONS

(To which oral answers were given)

Pay of Primary School Teachers

Babu PURNENDU KISHORE SEN GUPTA asked :

*12. (a) Is it a fact that no effect has been given to the promise made by the last Government to fix the minimum salary of Primary School Teachers at Rs.40 per month ?

(b) If so, what steps do Government propose to take to alleviate the distress of the Primary and other lower-grade School Teachers and also of the Teachers of the Aided and Unaided schools ?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI replied :

12. (a)—Last Government took measures to ensure a minimum pay of Rs.20 to Lower Primary Teachers.

(b)—The matter is under the consideration of Government.

†Babu PURNENDU KISHORE SEN GUPTA: Do Government agree that they cannot attract properly qualified persons in this Department without assuring a decent living to the persons?

†The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI: That question is also under the consideration of Government.

†Babu PURNENDU KISHORE SEN GUPTA: May I know from the Hon'ble Prime Minister whether they received representations from the Secretary of the Golaghat Shikhak Sanmilan ?

†The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI: Yes, Sir, we received various representations from various quarters.

†Babu PURNENDU KISHORE SEN GUPTA: Is it a fact that there is a disparity between the pay of the Teachers of the Lower Primary Schools and the Middle Vernacular Schools?

†The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI: Yes, Sir, steps are already being taken to see that this disparity does not exist.

†Maulavi ABDUR RASHEED: Are Government aware that the Lower Primary School Teachers in the North Sylhet Sub-division went on strike for 11 days for the redress of their grievances?

†The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI: Yes, Sir, we heard about it.

†Speech not corrected.

Radio Station for Assam

Srijut SARAT CHANDRA SINHA asked :

*13. Do Government propose to represent to the proper authorities to set up a Radio Station for Assam ?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY replied :

13.—The probable cost of establishing a Broadcasting Station in Assam was examined, but in view of the high cost involved (probably considerably over one lakh of rupees), it was decided not to pursue the matter further.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(To which answers were laid on the table)

Managing Committee of the M. M. M. C. Girls' High School, Karimganj

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA asked :

62. Will Government be pleased to state—
- For how long the present Managing Committee of the M. M. M. C. Girls' High School, Karimganj, functioning ?
 - When did the election of guardians' representatives last take place ?
 - Why no Committee has yet been formed with those elected Members ?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI replied :

62. (a)—Since 30th March, 1941.
 (b)—7th January, 1945.
 (c)—The Managing Committee has since been reconstituted. There was some delay in obtaining nomination of two members from the Chairman, Karimganj Municipal Board.

Eviction from Professional Grazing Reserves and Government waste lands

Maulavi ABDUL HAI asked :

63. Will the Hon'ble Revenue Minister be pleased to state—
- Whether it is a fact that the recent out-going Ministry, in a Cabinet Meeting, passed an order on 2nd February, 1946 regarding the eviction of occupiers from the Professional Grazing Reserves and Government waste lands ?
 - If so, what was the said order ?
 - Whether it has been given effect to ?
 - If not, why not ?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI replied :

63. (a)—(d)—Government are not prepared to disclose, on grounds of public policy, the outcome of discussions in Cabinet which are not translated into action, as such discussions are confidential.

Library for the Nalbari College

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR asked :

64. (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether the Director of Public Instruction, Assam, has received an application No. 333, dated the 19th September 1945, from the Secretary, Nalbari College seeking a non-recurring grant of Rs. 2,000 for the purpose of building up a sound Library for the College ?

(b) Are Government aware that this is the only College in the Province established in a rural area in the midst of villages thickly populated by cultivators ?

(c) Do Government propose to grant the money sought for ?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI replied :

64. (a)—No application has been received.

(b)—Nalbari is considered to be an urban area.

(c)—Does not arise.

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: Will Government be pleased to enquire from the office of the Director of Public Instruction, Assam, as to whether the application sent by the Secretary, Nalbari College has been received there ?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI: No, Sir. Applications sent to the Director of Public Instruction's office are not always required to be sent to Government.

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: Will Government take it from me that as a matter of fact, an application seeking Rs. 2,000 for the Library of the said College was sent and I have got a copy of that. Will Government be pleased to consider the question of giving the aid sought for?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI: When the hon. Member says that, we can take it to be true, and all I can say is that the matter will be considered.

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: My question is that this College being situated in a rural area, *i.e.*, in the midst of villages thickly populated by cultivators, do Government propose to give the necessary grants that it deserves ?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI: I have already replied, Sir, that the matter will be considered.

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: My question is that if Government treat Nalbari as an urban area, will Government be pleased to give it all the facilities that an urban area deserves? As a matter of fact an application has been made by the Town Committee for giving due grants for the development of the Small Town. Will Government consider the request sympathetically?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI: That question requires notice, Sir.

Rationing of cloths in rural areas

Khan Bahadur Maulavi ABUAL MAJID ZIAOSH-SHAMS asked :

65. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether they propose to introduce rationing of cloths in rural areas of any District in Assam and specially Goalpara ?
 (b) If so, when ?

The Hon'ble Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE replied :

65. (a)—Government do not intend to introduce complete and statutory rationing in rural areas but instructions have already been issued to introduce a scheme of equitable distribution in rural areas in all districts closely approximately to rationing.

(b)—Does not arise.

Babu PURNENDU KISHORE SEN GUPTA: To whom the instructions were given, Sir ?

The Hon'ble Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: District and Subdivisional Officers, Sir.

Babu PURNENDU KISHORE SEN GUPTA: Will Government be pleased to state the instructions here?

The Hon'ble Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: I shall place a copy of the instructions on the Library table on Monday, Sir.

Babu PURNENDU KISHORE SEN GUPTA: Have Government any scheme of their own for equitable distribution of cloth in rural areas?

The Hon'ble Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: There is one scheme. The present Government is considering whether any improvement can be made in this matter.

Babu PURNENDU KISHORE SEN GUPTA: May I know from the Hon'ble Minister whether instructions have been issued to the Sub-divisional Officers and all the Local Committees for the equitable distribution of cloth?

The Hon'ble Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: One set of instructions is already in existence, Sir, but other instructions will be issued as soon as the matter is finally decided. As I have already said, it is still under the consideration of Government and this Government is trying to improve the situation.

Demands For Grants

GRANT No. 30

(57.—MISCELLANEOUS)

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 32,45,700 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1947, for the administration of the head "57.—Miscellaneous."

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 32,45,700 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1947, for the administration of the head '57.—Miscellaneous'."

I find there are as many as †6 Cut Motions; but none of the hon. Members are present. Therefore I put the question.

The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 32,45,700 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1947, for the administration of the head '57.—Miscellaneous'."

The question was adopted.

† 1. Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY to move:

That the provision of Rs. 11,826 under Grant No. 30, Major head—57.—Miscellaneous, Minor head—C.—Donations for Charitable purposes (total), at page 146 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 32,45,700 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

(To raise a discussion about proper utilisation of the grant.)

† 2. Khan Sahib Maulavi NURUL HOSSAIN KHAN to move:—

That the provision of Rs. 67,290 under Grant No. 30, Major head—57.—Miscellaneous, Minor head—I.—Contributions, Sub-head (b) Grant to local bodies for general purposes, Detailed head—Grants to Municipal Boards for general purposes, at page 148 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 32,45,700 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

(To urge upon the Government the immediate necessity of introducing separate electorate in Municipal Board election.)

† 3. Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY to move:

That the provision of Rs. 1,77,209 under Grant No. 30, Major head—57.—Miscellaneous, Minor head—I.—Contributions, Sub-head (b)—Grant to local bodies for general purposes, Detailed head—Grants to Local Boards for general purposes, at page 148 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 32,45,700 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

(To raise a discussion about equitable distribution of this grant.)

† 4. Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY to move:

That the provision of Rs. 4,15,448 under Grant No. 30, Major head—57.—Miscellaneous, Minor head—K.—Miscellaneous and unforeseen charges, Sub-head—Expenditure connected with the control and distribution of cloth and yarn, at page 149 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 32,45,700 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

(To raise a discussion about the control and distribution of cloth and yarn in the Province.)

† 5. Maulavi MD. ABUL KASHEM to move:

That the provision of Rs. 4,15,448 under Grant No. 30, Major head—57.—Miscellaneous, Minor head—K.—Miscellaneous and unforeseen charges, Sub-head—1.—Expenditure connected with the control and distribution of cloth and yarn, at page 149 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 32,45,700 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

(To raise a discussion on the policy of distribution of cloth and yarn.)

† 6. Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY to move:

That the provision of Rs. 34,500 under Grant No. 30, Major head—57.—Miscellaneous, Minor head—K.—Miscellaneous and unforeseen charges, Sub-head—4.—Expenditure in connection with Hoarding and Profiteering Prevention Ordinance, 1943, at page 149 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 32,45,700 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

(To raise a discussion about the failure of the Government to check hoarding and profiteering.)

GRANT NO. 13.

(29.—POLICE)

The Hon'ble Mr. BASANTA KUMAR DAS: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 39,42,300 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1947, for the administration of the head "29.—Police".

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 39,42,300 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1947, for the administration of the head '29. — Police'."

There are 7 Cut Motions under this Grant and we have a surplus of 50 minutes to be distributed. There are 9 Demands for Grants in the agenda for to-day. How does the hon. Leader of the Opposition propose to distribute the time we have got at our disposal? (*After a pause*). Perhaps the hon. Leader of the Opposition could not follow me. What I was wanting to know is that we have got 50 minutes to be distributed among 9 Demands for Grants and I would like to know the views of the Opposition as to how we should distribute this surplus time available among all these Demands.

Mr. A. WHITTAKER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would suggest that 10 minutes be allotted to Police, 20 minutes to Medical and 20 minutes to Public Health Departments.

Khan Sahib Maulavi MUDABBIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we would suggest that 30 minutes be allotted for the Medical Department.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: All right. I allot 10 minutes for Police, 10 minutes for Public Health and 30 minutes for Medical Department.

Under Police, should we take Cut Motion No. 5 or Cut Motion No. 7?

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: Let us take up Cut Motion No. 5.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I would call upon Maulavi Sy d Abdur Rouf to move Cut Motion No. 5 standing in his name.

* Maulavi Syed ABDUR ROUF: I beg, Sir, to move that the provision of Rs. 31,59,461 under Grant No. 13, Major head—29.—Police, Minor head —B.—District Executive Force, Sub-head—(a)—District Police (total), at page 74 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 61, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 39,42,300 do stand reduced by Rs 61

My object of moving this Cut Motion is to criticise the general policy of the Government in this Department. Instead of beginning from the top let me begin from the bottom. In the Armed Branch of the Police Department I still find people mostly of provinces other than ours. In the Un-armed Branch though we find our own boys, there are still a large number of outsiders who are definitely inferior to our boys in intellect. It is now high time when we want to see our own men serving in both the Branches. We are told that local recruits cannot be persuaded to join the Armed Branch. Well, if that is the case, we should rather sanction higher scale of pay to the Branch than seeing it manned by outsiders. It is known to all that our constables have always got to go to mofussil on foot. This is to a great extent responsible for failures in detecting and preventing crimes. I would, therefore, like to suggest that every constable should be provided with a cycle.

* Speech not corrected.

I am really proud to see recent rapid promotions in the rank and file. This is a healthy sign but I cannot but bring it to the notice of the Government that promoted constables and Assistant Sub-Inspectors very miserably lack in etiquette and manners. These men suffer from a sense of inferiority complex and they want to make it up with rude behaviour towards public. This is really regrettable and I would like to suggest that their superiors should see their way to teach them manners and good behaviour. I always find a very funny thing in every thana — I mean the lilliputian quarters meant for Assistant Sub-Inspectors. These Assistant Sub-Inspectors tell me that as they are now entrusted with the enquiry of cases, attaching of lands under Section 145 of the Criminal Procedure Code and with works in the court office, they also earn Rs. 500 a month and therefore their wives cannot be expected to be less fat than those of Daroga Babus and the number of their children cannot be expected to remain below those of Darogas. I hope, the attention of the Government will be drawn towards these inequities.

As for the Sub-Inspectors of Police, I must admit that the rank of the present day is definitely superior to that of the past atleast in manners and conduct. Bribery, corruption and other vices are however rampant in the rank as they were before. For the last few years though they have been losing their championship to their brethren in the Supply Department, they have systematically maintained their position as runners-up. With the cessation of hostilities I hope they will regain their position again.

I would like to draw the attention of Government towards some sources of corruption with a hope that Government will take necessary steps. The practice of acceptance of bail bonds by the Police Sub-Inspectors is one of the main sources. The other practice is to arrest an unnecessarily large number of people in connection with every enquiry, in most cases without an iota of evidence. It is true that after arrest many people are released on bail in the mofussil but no man has ever been so released without paying a handsome amount to the Darogas. Those who cannot afford to pay are brought before the Magistrate and in cent. per cent. cases the bail petitions are opposed by the Police. A very large number of persons always rot in *hajat* for months together only to be discharged later on payment of money to the Police. The Police must learn that it is bail and not detention in *hajat* which should be the rule rather than exception. Promotions, rewards and good service marks of officers should depend to a great extent upon the ratio which the number of convicted persons bears to the number of persons arrested. Persons who rot in the *hajat* but subsequently get discharged should be compensated by the Government.

The Police would have been greatly benefited had they had a monthly magazine of their own wherein officials and experienced officials could have contributed articles of interest to the benefit of all. I draw the attention of the Government towards this direction.

With these words, Sir, I commend my Motion for the acceptance of the House.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Cut Motion moved :

“That the provision of Rs. 31,59,461 under Grant No. 13, Major head —29.—Police, Minor, head—B—District Executive Force, Sub-Head —(a)— District Police (total), at page 74 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 61, *i. e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 39,42,300 do stand reduced by Rs. 61.”

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, there are two specific Cut Motions† standing in my name, but, Sir, as the Cut Motion which is under discussion relates to the policy of the Government in the Police Department, I may be allowed to ventilate my grievances on those two points.

At the very outset, I must say that the Police Administration in this country remains what it was during the pre-Reform days. The mentality or attitude of the Police towards the public has not yet been changed. They consider themselves still to be our masters and not our servants. Sir, their dealings with the public has always been rude and objectionable. A vast sum of money is being annually spent under this head and we are maintaining a very big Department, but the hon. Members will bear me out when I say that they have proved utterly inefficient in the detection of crimes. I think, steps should be taken so that the Police may discharge their duties with honesty and with good conscience.

As regards corruption that is prevalent in the Police Department, I need not repeat what has often been repeated on the floor of the House. During the last few years when the Supply Department came into being, that Department has outshone the corruption that is to be found in the Police Department but, nevertheless our attention should not wholly be diverted to the Supply Department and steps should be taken to rid the Police force of this vice.

By Cut Motion No. 1, I wanted to raise a specific subject. My intention was to raise a discussion about placing of armed guards on the requisition of private individuals without proper check on them. Only the other day, we had a discussion on the unfortunate incident at the Paswa *beel*. And you rightly ruled that as the matter was *sub judice* no discussion could take place. I maintain, Sir, that a great question of principle is involved there. The Government should decide once for all whether armed constables without proper check—without a first class Magistrate who could issue orders of firing in an emergency—should be allowed to private individuals. My submission is that the armed constables should be used as sparingly as possible. With these words, I support the Motion that has been moved by my hon. Friend Maulavi Syed Abdu Rouf.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD ABUL KASHEM: Sir, Chaukidars and Collecting Members are getting very small remuneration. Chaukidars do the work of Police officers in the villages. They are to guard at night. With the amount of Rs. 6 that they are getting, it is not expected that they should work properly. Government should make some provision for them so that they may work properly on the expectation of getting higher remuneration.

As regards Collecting Members they get about Rs. 100 on average as commission. They engage some workers on payment or some one from their own family to collect the amount, generally at a cost higher than what they get as commission. I consider that some sort of relief should be given to these Collecting Members.

† Maulavi Abdul Bari Choudhury to move:

That the provisions of Rs. 50,419 under Grant No. 13, Major head—29.—Police, Minor head A.—Superintendence, Sub-head—2.—Pay of Establishment (total), at page 72 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 39, 42, 300 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

(To raise a discussion about placing of armed guards at the requisition of private individuals without proper check on them.)

2. Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY to move:

That the provision of Rs.50,419 under Drant No.13, Major head—29.—Police, Minor head—A.—Superintendence, Sub-head—2.—Pay of Establishment (total), at page 72 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.39,42,300 do stand reduced by Rs.100.

(To raise a discussion about the heavy expenditure without corresponding gain and unsympathetic attitude of the Police towards the public and failure to detect crimes.)

With these words, I support the Motion moved by my hon. Friend Maulavi Syed Abdur Rouf. I also want to point out that the Goalpara District is under-represented in the Police Service. For the last ten or twelve years we have not seen either Hindus or Muslims being recruited for the Police Sub-Inspectorship. Government should give special consideration to that District because that is the most backward District in the Province. With these words, I conclude and support the Motion moved by my hon. Friend Maulavi Syed Abdur Rouf.

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: Speaking generally on the Motion moved by the Hon'ble Ministers, I would like to commend one question to his serious consideration. (*Voices—It is difficult to hear, Sir.*)

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The hon. Member will please come to the microphone.

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: Speaking generally on the Demand, I would like to say that I shall not be a moment too soon to ask for the withdrawal of Railforce from the Surma Valley. I do not know what is the condition in the Assam Valley. It has become a veritable nuisance to the public now-a-days. Taking advantage of rifles in their hands, these people overawe the travelling public and extort money from them. Several cases have already been started against the members of the Railforce. Very often the travelling public find it very inconvenient specially during night to travel close to the railway line. So, Sir, I do not think there is any necessity for maintaining the Railforce after the war is over.

The Hon'ble Mr. BASANTA KUMAR DAS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I really appreciate the views that have been expressed in connection with this Cut Motion by the hon. Members who have spoken on it. Sir, the Motion has been moved with a view to discussing the policy underlying the Department of Police. Now, Sir, the present policy that has come down to the present Government, was shaped, I should say, from time to time from since the time the British administration was established in this country. This policy certainly requires to be examined at the present day in the light of the public opinion that is expressed against it. And I may straightaway tell the hon. Members that the one policy which the present Government will pursue is to make the Police efficient in all possible respects. In going to do that the points that have emerged from the discussion started by the hon. Members would certainly be taken into consideration.

Now Sir, the Police in India, of course, have not a very happy tradition behind them. Charges of corruption, insolence, over-zealousness and even oppressive acts are the usual charges that are brought against the Police; and no political organisation in India has got more knowledge and experience of police acts of over-zealousness and police oppression than the Congress. I should not dilate the reasons for which the Congress Organisation claims such knowledge and experience, and belonging as I do to that great Organisation I can assure the House that that knowledge and experience will be utilised to the full in order to effect an improvement in the policy in the Police Department.

Sir, the Police constitute the only agency of the Government for the detection of crimes, for prevention of crimes and for maintenance of public tranquility, and, this being so, certainly the Police should be so organised as to keep them at the highest level of efficiency. Now, Sir, so far as this Province is concerned, to organise the Police in the best way suiting the conditions of the Province and satisfying its requirements has been a problem for a long time and I find that the late Government also took up this matter and they appointed a Special Officer to prepare schemes for the purpose. The schemes have been prepared and of course, Sir, we shall examine these schemes and shall see in what way the Police should be organised in order to make the Police an ideal organisation in the Province. And again I say, Sir, that in that connection the particular points that

have been urged by the hon. Members who have taken part in the debate will certainly receive proper attention in the hands of the Government. I shall, however, only deal with some of the points that have been stressed.

Maulavi Syed Abdur Rouf has urged that the recruitment to the Armed Branch should no longer be from people living outside the Province. I shall certainly consider this point and see how far that would be possible. There are various factors that will have to be taken into consideration in this matter, keeping always in view the principle that the right type of men should be recruited for the Armed Branch and if really it will be possible to recruit right type of men in the Province, there would be no reason to rely upon any outside source for the purpose.

Then he has said, Sir, that bicycles should be provided to the Police people. That is certainly a thing which deserves consideration. The one thing to be done for expeditious action on the part of the Police officers and men is to arrange for their easy mobility and with that object in view, Government will certainly consider whether that can be done. (*Hear, hear.*)

The old charges of bribery and corruption which are usually levelled against the Police have also been stressed, and, I have generally said, Sir, that Government will consider how the Police can be made henceforward immune from these charges and make them things of the past.

With regard to other matters, for instance, that the Police should be warned for taking any undue advantage from anybody or quarters on account of the powers given to them, they will certainly come under examination. Police officers and men are never to be placed in such positions of advantage as will give them opportunities to make illegal gains which, it would always be the policy of Government to ruthlessly put down.

Of the other points that have been urged by my hon. Friend Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury, the one point on which he has spoken at length is about the employment of Armed Guards and he said that that should not be done without placing a First Class Magistrate to guide them in the duties for which they are deputed. Now, Sir, when an Armed Guard is posted for the purpose of dispersing an unlawful assembly, generally, a First Class Magistrate accompanies them and it is on the orders of the First Class Magistrate—if the First Class Magistrate thinks that it is necessary to take recourse to firing—firing is taken recourse to. But under section 13 of the Police Act a private individual can ask for help from Government for the purpose of protecting his life and property and he can ask for detaining the Armed Guard for a period of time even for a month and in that case it is not always possible to depute a Magistrate with them. Now the one course, he advocated, the Armed Force to follow is to employ the minimum force when an occasion arises for the purpose of using their rifles. I may submit, Sir, it should always be the policy of Government to see that the Armed Branch of the Police do not lightheartedly take recourse to firing. Occasions for taking recourse to firing should be as rare as possible. Generally they should be reluctant to adopt such a step and it is only when a situation arises in which they find that they cannot protect their own person or protect the property, it is only then they can take recourse to firing. The basic doctrine that the Armed Police should follow is "minimum force" in situations like these and that they are not to take recourse to firing when

that is not absolutely necessary. From the Motion † that was tabled by hon. Khan Bahadur Maulavi Abul Majid Ziaosh Shams—No. 4, it appears from the note he appended to the Motion that when it is absolutely needed firing can be taken recourse to. So, when a Police Guard is deputed for the purpose of protection of person and property there may be such a situation when there is no other course open to them to save themselves or others than to resort to firing. My hon. Friend referred to the case of firing which took place in a part of Sunamganj Subdivision, and with regard to the Adjournment Motion on that incident I said the other day that the Police version was that there had been such a situation in which firing was absolutely necessary. But I assure the House that that matter will be enquired into thoroughly and if it is found that there was no necessity to take recourse to firing then certainly the men responsible will be punished.

Then with regard to the point that has been urged by my hon. Friend Maulavi Muhammad Abul Kashem about the amelioration of the lot of the village chowkidars, Sir, I fully sympathise with the chowkidars. I feel that they are not adequately paid, and Government realise that the present system under which they are paid is not at all satisfactory. It is only in three Districts of the Province, viz., Goalpara, Sylhet and Cachar, that this system is in vogue, and the efficiency of this system would certainly depend upon the right type of men who would be appointed as chowkidars and panchayats. It has been my personal experience, Sir, that generally right type of men is not employed and they are not available too at Rs. 3 to Rs. 6 a month. But, Sir, they really form the rural police and their case certainly deserves consideration. Government will see what can be done to improve the lot of these people who render very valuable services to the State.

Now, Sir, whatever reforms Government may undertake to improve the efficiency of the Police, certainly they will not go in for expenditure which will not be justified by the steps they would take. Now, Sir, reforms may be quantitative and qualitative, and the present Government stand more for effective qualitative reforms than for quantitative reforms and to attain that object it would be necessary, perhaps to have a Police Training School. The hon. Members know that this Province once had a Training School, but that was abolished. Now, for training of our Police officers we send them to Sarda in Bengal, and the Government are considering whether it would be feasible to start a Training School for the Province. A scheme has been prepared, which will be examined and if funds permit a Training School may be established in this Province. I have already said, Sir, that Government would certainly not go in for any expenditure which will not be approved by this House. Expenditure on this Department is not generally viewed with any favour in view of the fact that there are other nation-building Departments which claim priority on the ground that they merit greater expenditure, but if it becomes absolutely necessary that expenditure should be incurred for the purpose of reforming the Police Department, I hope the House will give their approval.

I think, Sir, that all that I have said will satisfy the hon. Members and they would appreciate that the Government would sincerely try to remove all the grievances that have been voiced forth by so many hon. Members. At the very outset I said that I appreciated the views that had been expressed by them, and

† Khan Bahadur Maulavi ABUL MAJID ZIAOSH SHAMS to move:—

That the provision of Rs. 23,92,512 under Grant No. 13, Major head—29.—Police, Minor head—B.—District Executive Force, Sub-head—(a).—District Police—(2).—Pay of Establishment—(i).—Police Force (total), at page 72 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, i. e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 39,42,300 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

(To criticise the Government and their responsible officers on their failure to issue proper instructions against firing by the police upon the people unless absolutely needed which lead to unfortunate casualties.)

therefore I would request the hon. Mover of this Cut Motion to kindly withdraw his Motion.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Does the hon. Mover press his Motion?

Mavlavi SYED ABDUR ROUF: No, Sir. I beg leave of the House to withdraw my Motion.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Has the hon. Member the leave of the House to withdraw his Motion?

The Motion was, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The question is:

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 39,42,300 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1947, for the administration of the head ‘29—Police.’”

The question was adopted.

GRANT No. 19.

(39.—PUBLIC HEALTH)

The Hon'ble Srijut RAM NATH DAS: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 18,62,100 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1947, for the administration of the head “39.—Public Health”.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 18,62,100 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1947, for the administration of the head ‘39.—Public Health’.”

There are 12 Cut Motions under this Demand, two being tabled by hon. Dr. Terrell, but the subject-matter of both the Cut Motions is the same. I find that he has proposed a cut of Rs. 100. In this connection I will repeat that in censure Motions a token cut of Re. 1 should be sought, but when an economic cut is proposed the amount that is sought to be reduced should be placed. Henceforward I propose to give preference to those who table Motions in the way I indicated, *i. e.*, for censure Motions a token cut of Re. 1 should be proposed and for economic cuts the amount sought to be reduced should be given. Of course, hon. Members may table Cut Motions with reduction of Rs. 100, but I will see that they do not get preference. Those hon. Members will be called upon to move their Motions after Cut Motions of Re.1 have been disposed of. Now, hereunder I find that Cut Motion No. 10 standing in the name of Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury wants to raise a discussion about the Public Health policy of Government.

Mavlavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: Sir, I desire that the Cut Motion No.11 standing in the name of Maulavi Dewan Abdul Basith should be moved.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Very well.

Maulavi Dewan ABDUL BASITH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the total provision of Rs. 18,62,100 under Grant No. 19, Major head—39.—Public Health, at page 104 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i. e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 18,62,100 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

The object of my moving the Cut Motion is to raise a discussion about the Public Health Policy of the Government. Sir, so far as my knowledge goes, in the beginning no care was shown to this Department. Though a separate Department of Public Health was created, no sufficient fund was provided to make it useful. I am told that in the last Budget Session, *i. e.*, in the Budget Session of 1944-45, a scheme was placed before this Hon'ble House. I think the then hon. Members supported the Motion in anticipation that the attitude of the Government to this Department would be changed and more fund would be provided. But unfortunately we find from records that the attitude of the Government remained almost the same. In the Budget estimates of 1946-47, a sum of Rs. 18,62,100 has been provided whereas the actuals for 1944-45 was Rs. 17,70,595; the slight variation in the figure is due to the scale of pay and dearness allowance of the officers. Sir, I think, it is essential to give more attention to protective measures than to curative measures and from that stand point the Public Health Department is to be considered as one of the most important Departments of Government. To make a better Assam, we should provide more money and should have a scheme before us for improving the Department of Public Health. Sir, for the consideration of Government I would like to put forward certain suggestions for the improvement of this Department. I understand that as a result of the new scheme, Public Health doctors have been posted in different sub-divisions, as Sub-divisional Medical Officers of Health. They are Sub-Assistant Surgeons without Public Health Degrees. I suggest that medical graduates with Public Health qualification should be placed in charge of the sub-divisions as Public Health Officers. They should be provided with quarters and regular offices. And in charge of each thana there should be an Assistant Health Officer who should be a Sub-Assistant Surgeon with experience of Public Health Department. He should be given sufficient staff and each thana should be divided into some circles and one rural Inspector of Health should be put in charge of a circle. When selecting Rural Inspectors preference should be given to public spirited matriculates and before they take charge they should undergo a training to make them fit for collecting vital statistics. I think it will be more useful if we get qualified compounders for such works. In that case they will be able to manage the work of inoculation and vaccination. For training of this Rural Health Inspectors there should be regular public health institutes. I suggest that immediate steps be taken to establish public health institutes one at Sylhet and the other at Dibrugarh. Sir, I have been told by the officers of the Public Health Department in reply to my queries as to the causes of unsuccessful vaccination, that the system now prevalent in Assam for keeping vaccine and serum is responsible for this unsuccessful cases. I think, Sir, some arrangements should be made at least for cold storage for keeping vaccine and serum in Sylhet and Dibrugarh. I further suggest that the public health institutes should also serve the purpose of manufacturing vaccine and serum. For the purpose of better co-ordination and effective work I suggest that Public Health Advisory Committees should be set up in each sub-division with the Sub-divisional Medical Officer, the Chairmen, Local Board and Municipal Board, the Sub-divisional Officer, the Deputy Inspector of Schools, Members of the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council and some nominated members who are to be selected by Government. This Committee will provide facilities to the Public Health Department to come in touch with real problems and get help of other Departments of Government.

In fairness, Sir, I think, this Department should be given preference in preparing the list of our Post-War plans. If it is not given the first place, it should be given the second. But in my opinion it should get the first place in the list and the Free Primary Education scheme the second.

With these words, Sir, I commend my Motion for the acceptance of the House.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Cut Motion moved :

“That the total provision of Rs. 18,62,100 under Grant No. 19, Major head—39.—Public Health, at page 104 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i. e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 18,62,100 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.”

Maulavi MUHAMMAD ABUL KASHEM : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to draw the attention of Government to the fact that the Sub-Assistant Surgeon posted at Tura in charge of the Public Health *Kala-azar* Dispensary is not getting the hill allowance. The Minister-in-charge of Public Health being also the Minister of Medical Department will realise that there is some differentiation among the doctors of both Medical and Public Health Departments in respect of hill allowance. I hope the Hon'ble Minister will kindly see that this grievance of the Sub-Assistant Surgeon in charge of *Kala-azar* Hospital at Tura is removed and justice done to him by granting hill allowance. I may also draw the attention of Government to another point. When patients go to Fulbari and Kalaichar Dispensaries they are to build houses for their own accommodation and mostly under insanitary condition. When they are admitted as patients they should be given all facilities for better diet and better accommodation as well. I therefore urge upon Government to see their way to make provision for the accommodation of the patients of Fulbari and Kalaichar Dispensaries in Garo Hills.

With these words, Sir, I support the Motion moved by my Friend Maulavi Dewan Abdul Basith.

Dr. C. G. TERRELL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to bring to the notice of Government a few aspects of the medical and public health problems which call for early consideration.

The value of preventive inoculation is well known to all of us, but unfortunately this is so often forgotten or ignored, until such time as the matter is brought prominently to our notice by the advent of an epidemic, with the invariable consequences of loss of life and disability. These epidemics seem to be taken as a matter of course and the indifference shown over the simple methods which exist for their prevention is a matter of concern. As far as cholera is concerned, a very fair degree of increasing immunity can be assured by a single injection of the vaccine prepared by the Pasteur Institute, repeated every year. It should not by any means be considered an impossible problem for the Public Health and Medical Services to organise preventive inoculation yearly against this disease throughout the Province—at any rate as far as the notoriously epidemic areas are concerned. On the majority of Tea Gardens where this is generally practised, there is ample evidence to prove its value, and although isolated cases may occur, epidemics are fully guarded against by this simple measure.

Closely associated with prevention of cholera and all bowel diseases is the question of pure water supplies which are so vital for good health and well being. The notorious shortage of proper water supplies in our towns, and their almost

complete absence in the majority of our villages, constitutes a major problem which should receive a very high priority in the coming schemes for general uplift, which we all hope to see materialise in the immediate post-war period. Their value to the local inhabitants is so obvious that I should not have thought that great difficulty in financing them locally would be encountered, provided they were properly planned, controlled by Government and subsidised to a certain extent.

Certainly the value of preventive vaccination against small pox is generally more appreciated by the public. Here again an energetic lead by the Government Medical Services is long overdue. It can be accepted as a fact that protection of all infants by primary vaccination and re-vaccination of the whole population against small-pox every three years would eradicate this disease from Assam. The present position is always one of danger and anxiety, and when in particular no isolation arrangements exist for treatment of cases and contacts, it is more than ever essential to employ the only means readily available, namely wholesale vaccination of the entire population.

I am fully aware, Sir, that the present Medical organisation is hopelessly inadequate to cope with all the medical problems that confront us. Progress should, however, be no longer delayed and in this connection I would like to refer to and commend the suggestions contained in the Post-War Reconstruction programme for medical uplift in Assam. A start could easily be made with travelling dispensaries, with a view to bringing many of the outlying areas—now completely cut off from any help—within the scope of medical advice, assistance and protection.

Finally, Sir, I would like to sound one note of warning about a disease which is always epidemic in Assam and at times reaches grave epidemic proportions. I refer to *Kala-azar*—a disease somewhat difficult of detection, and requiring special medical organisation to deal with it in its epidemic form. It has one peculiarity—that its epidemics shew a remarkable recurring tendency every 15 years, and this cycle is again due in the present year.

Before concluding, Sir, and as I find evidence in Questions and Cut Motions that other hon. Members are interested in food adulteration; I venture once again to say a word about mustard oil. There is ample evidence, and more could easily be made available that much of the mustard oil at present being retailed in this Province—particularly in the Surma Valley—is of poor quality, often adulterated and contaminated, and as such injurious to the consumer. Consumption of this unwholesome substance often results in various forms of bowel diseases and, indirectly different toxic effects on the individual, dependent on the types of adulterant used. Apart altogether from any toxic effects, it must also be borne in mind that its food value is often negated and as we have to depend largely on mustard oil for the essential fat constituent of the diet of the people, it will be appreciated how serious is this loss. We know, Sir, the inability of Assam to produce sufficient mustard oil for its requirements, particularly in the Surma Valley and large quantities have to be imported by Government from outside—notably the United Provinces. In view of this it does not appear to be beyond the bounds of practicability to suggest that imported oil should be controlled to the extent of a proper examination of a percentage by analysis, before it is distributed to the authorised dealers. This procedure would at least confirm whether the imported oil was pure or not. After its distribution and as far as the oil manufactured in the Province is concerned, we must look to our own machinery and resources for combating adulteration, and it will be found that these are hopelessly

inadequate and unsatisfactory. This is largely due to the fact that we have to depend on the Assam Pure Food Act, whose provisions often fail in practice to achieve the objects for which it was designed, chiefly for the unfortunate reason that the Act must be administered by local authorities. Confirmation of this can be found from the record of activities, or lack of activities of the average local authorities, and in the case of my own Sub-division there was no evidence of interest in the matter from their latest returns. On the other hand in the same Sub-division the District Magistrate has over the same period many successful convictions to record as a result of real interest taken in the matter and based on reports of samples sent to the Public Analyst.

In conclusion, Sir, I wish to assure the present Government of my sincere and continued interest and support, and that of my colleagues, in the medical problems of Assam, and it is with the hope of seeing an early amelioration in health conditions that I have made these suggestions and commend them in this Cut Motion for consideration of the Members of this House.

Srijut BELI RAM DAS: Mr, Speaker, Sir, I do not like to speak on the Cut Motion, but I want to speak on the Motion of the Hon'ble Minister. The hon. Members who have spoken just before me spoke as to how to combat with the epidemic diseases by the Public Health Department and how to accommodate patients in the Public Health dispensaries, etc. But they have spoken not as to how to improve the condition of the Doctors of the Public Health Department. As is admitted by all, this Public Health Department is the most important department. This is a preventive department and we know that prevention is better than cure. These Public Health Department Doctors are placed in the interior places and they are not given the assistance of the Compounders, they are not given the benefits of private practice; they have to do many arduous works. So I will request the Hon'ble Minister to see that their pay and prospects are improved and that they are given the assistance of the compounders and as far as practicable they should be allowed to have some private practice and a stock of medicine for their own use and also for others in special circumstances.

We have been told that there has been dearth of Doctors in the Public Health Department. It is only because their pay and prospects are not good. So I urge upon the Government to see that their condition is improved.

With these few words, Sir, I resume my seat.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi ABUAL MAJID ZIAOSH SHAMS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I like to speak a few words on a thing which is a very important one, *viz.*, food adulteration. Food adulteration has become rampant and widespread, and it is eating into the vitality of the nation and is slowly and steadily ruining our health.

Now, what is our food adulteration due to? Of course in the first place it is due to the dishonest dealers and the dishonest manufacturers who want to make money; and in the second place it is due to the apathy of the public who continue to take food which is adulterated without trying to bring the cases to the notice of the authorities or without even avoiding those dealers and manufacturers who give adulterated food. In the third place it is due to inadequate staff. The staff is quite inadequate and not commensurate with the heavy task that one has got to do, to tackle and to combat the enormous way and so many varieties in which this adulteration has entered and so to say in almost all foodstuff that it has spread.

In the fourth place it is due to corruption amongst the Public Health Officers who are responsible for detection of these crimes and in charge of prosecution. Some of them are in receipt of regular pay from the adulterators and dealers. I was the Chairman of the Municipality for 3 years and all that I can say is that in my time there was perhaps a larger number of prosecution than before. Even I prosecuted one person who supported me in my Chairmanship. Still I do not congratulate myself as much remained to be done. I will go so far as to say that there is sometimes corruption found in judiciary as well when big dealers are concerned. Food adulteration cannot be adequately dealt with unless the judiciary is free from corruption.

I know in a certain place—I will not name the place here—there were two cases of similar nature. One Court convicted the accused and the other Court was a corrupt one and acquitted the accused. The provisions of the Food Adulteration Act are also surely inadequate to punish the enormity of the offence.

So there are so many factors which have combined together to make our life miserable. Sir, we surely do not visualise the proper amount of adulteration, the varieties of food stuffs in which this adulteration has gone into and we do not visualise the extent to which we are suffering on account of this food adulteration. Food adulteration can be found in mustard oil, it can be found in Ghee, in butter, in milk and even in sugar and in tea. (*Voices*—to what not?). And I know, Sir, not only there is adulteration in food, there is medicine-adulteration as well. Even quinine was found adulterated. So such is our character and with this character, Sir, we want Swaraj and independence. We must improve our character first, and I do hope that we shall improve and are improving our character within a short time and will be fit for Swaraj.

What is necessary now is that in every town Government should have an Advisory Board taken from the disinterested persons who will take interest in detection of the crimes as regards food adulteration otherwise there is nobody who can check these officers who are in charge of prosecution and detection of crimes.

That is one point and the second point is, Sir, this legislation, *viz.*, the Assam Pure Food Act—is out of date. More severe punishment than what is given to the thieves should be meted out to those who are guilty of adulteration of food-stuffs because they are more dangerous than the thieves. The thieves take our properties but these adulterators take our lives slowly. Now in this food adulteration what is the punishment? The punishment is only a fine of Rs. 50 or Rs. 100. When I was the Chairman of the Municipality, the maximum fine in one case was Rs. 150. Now, Sir, by paying Rs. 150 the culprit knows that in a day or two he can make three times the profit by adulteration (*Hear, hear*). So it does not touch his pocket at all. So there should be severer punishment and provisions should be made for this. The Subdivisional Officers and even the Deputy Commissioners should make it a point that they should check the shops of the dealers every week and there should be weekly or fortnightly drives and they should send samples from those shops for analysis to Shillong. There should be some compulsory duty imposed upon the District Officers or the Subdivisional Officers to take recourse to these measures.

With these few words, I support the Mover of this Motion.

Khan Sahib Maulavi NURUL HOSSAIN KHAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it cannot be denied that the working of the Public Health Department is most unsatisfactory. There is prevalence of cholera, malaria, *kala-azar* and other diseases throughout the Province. But the supply of medicine is very inadequate. There are places, within 10 or 12 miles of which there is no Local Board dispensary or Public Health Centre. There are some subsidised dispensaries.

But supply of medicine to these dispensaries is almost nil. It is urgently necessary in the interest of public health that Government should take adequate measures to improve the health of the general public. But it appears to me that Government is altogether indifferent to this matter. Unless and until the health of the public is improved, there is no hope for the country. Every one of us now-a-days is very anxious for getting independence but unless the people are healthy and unless they are strong and stout, who will enjoy this independence and who will protect the independence of the Mother-land?

I would draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister in-charge of this Department to one matter. We find that the Subdivisional Medical Officers of Public Health have no time to attend to their duties. Most of their time is devoted to clerical works and they do not find sufficient time to work in the Mofussil areas and attend to the patients. In the interest of public health it is necessary that the Subdivisional Public Health Officers should be provided with adequate staff at least with a clerk to help them in their works. We have got two or three Public Health Doctors at Baniachong for giving injection to *kala-azar* and malaria patients. This number is very small for this particular locality. The House is perhaps fully aware that there was an outbreak of malaria at Baniachong and a large number of people died of that fell disease. It appears that *kala-azar* has now taken place of malaria and a large number of people are suffering from *kala-azar* for sometime past at Baniachong. But the number of Public Health Doctors appointed for this purpose is not at all sufficient. I have got a letter to-day from Baniachong that prevalence of malaria and *kala-azar* has greatly increased in that place and I would draw the attention of Government to this and request them to increase the number of Public Health Doctors at Baniachong, where a terrible havoc has been created by malaria since 1942 and where nearly 12,000 to 13,000 people died on account of that disease.

With these few words, Sir, I beg to support the Motion

Khan Bahadur Maulavi MD. ROUFIQUE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I should say that the Public Health Department has failed to tackle with success the problem of public health in Assam. Government should face this and devise some means by which to find out the remedy to bring about a better state of affairs in the Public Health administration in Assam. Malaria and *kala-azar* stalks the land and are playing havoc in Assam undaunted by the steps taken by Government to suppress them. During war the supply of quinine to the public was almost nil and it is not known what steps Government would take now to restore its supply to the general public.

Similarly, Sir, the anti-mosquito scheme launched by Government is not working at all satisfactorily. I do not know if the Government is aware of the fact that during war anti-mosquito spray was used by the military people in the jungles of Burma and Assam and I am told that they carried on this campaign with success. I have seen with my own eyes how the Military people used this D. T. T. spray in Nowgong where an American Camp was stationed. These Military people were also kind enough to lend their D. T. T. spray for use in private houses and it was used with great success and was appreciated very much. I would therefore request Government to try to get sufficient supply of this D. T. T. spray for use by the civilians.

Then, Sir, food adulteration has become a nuisance now-a-days. Everything that is sold in the market is adulterated. Milk, *ghee*, *atta*, *maida* and all articles of food are adulterated. I think Government should think seriously about this state of things and they should seriously attempt to find out how this Pure Food Act has failed in its objective. We have got the Act but we have not got any benefit out of that Act. Therefore, I would draw the attention of Government to this fact and I hope they should now seriously try to find out means so that this Act might succeed in its objective.

Maulavi ABDUL HAMID : I cannot approve the suggestion made by Srijut Beliram Das that the Public Health Officers posted in the subdivisions should be given permission for private practice nor do I think this is quite consistent. On the one side we hear that the Public Health Officers have not got sufficient Assistants to help them to properly discharge their duties. On another side we hear that they should be allowed to have the privilege of private practice. Sir, I desire particularly to say a few words about what has fallen from Khan Bahadur Maulavi Abual Mazid Ziaosh Shams. He stated that we are not fit for democracy because of corruption. I do not know where to lay the blame. We are going to take drastic measures so that we may remove corruption. Under the present circumstance it is difficult. Sir, I have seen during my experience that even honest people—people who have the greatest scruples—do not consider it bad to take two pice out of the Government by unfair means. The reason for this is that the present Government is alien and therefore they do not think cheating is bad. I am of the opinion, Sir, that if we continue as present we shall go down in the scale of honesty. Unless some sort of change is made, unless we get power in our hands, it will not be possible effectively to tackle the question of corruption which is deeply entering into the body politic of India (*Hear, hear.*) It is not a fact that all the people are corrupt, there are people who are quite honest. The canker of corruption has entered the machinery of Government and very seriously injuring its reputation. I have, however, very great confidence that we shall be able to root it out if we co-operate and move with purpose.

If Police Department can be improved by stamping out corruption, here also in the Public Health Department we can remove corruption. If we select men who have certain amount of missionary temperament I am sure they will be able to do much service to the people. With these words I commend the Motion of my hon. Friend Dewan Abdul Basith. I again suggest, Sir, that in selecting Officers in the Public Health Department special consideration should be given to persons who are likely to feel for the people. (*Applause.*)

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to add a few more words on the subject. A good deal has been said on the adulteration of foodstuffs but some of the hon. Members have missed a very important point. Under the present Pure Food Act which was passed as far back as 1931 no effective steps can be taken. At the present moment, Sir, the procedure under this Act is very elaborate and protracted. Some functions have been placed with the Local Boards and this makes the procedure very lengthy. My suggestion to the Hon'ble Minister would be that during the next session of the Budget he should come up with an amending Bill to amend the Assam Pure Food Act, which can alone check the adulteration of foodstuff in our Province.

The Hon'ble Srijut RAMNATH DAS : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am thankful to the hon. Mover of this Motion who, at the time when this Government Committee, the Report of which has just come out, in moving the Motion has made some valuable suggestions which when accepted may add to the improvement of the Department. He began by saying that the Government has paid little attention to the Public Health Department and to its officers. I think, Sir, I should also admit that the Government has not given that attention which the Public Health Department deserves. The present Government is considering to raise the prospects of the Officers of the Public Health Department who are serving in the lower cadre, *i e.*, the Sub-Assistant Surgeons. I fully admit that the Sub-Assistant Surgeons of this Department have to work in such places where these Officers do not get proper facilities for the education of their

children and other facilities which are available to the Officers of the Medical Department. Officers of the Public Health Department have to work under circumstances which are sometimes very arduous and difficult. So, Sir, we are considering to improve their lot as far as practicable to us.

Secondly, Sir, most of the hon. Members of this House have drawn attention of the Government to the condition of the foodstuffs which are, as they have said, adulterated and to the defects of the Pure Food Act for which this adulteration cannot be removed at present. For their satisfaction, Sir, I can say that Government has already appointed a Special Officer to draft an amending Bill and the Government is thinking of introducing the Bill, to amend the present Act, if possible in the next session to remove the defects which are at present in the Act.

We are quite aware of the prevalence of *Kala azar* in numerous places of Assam, but, Sir, we are just giving our attention to that and we will be trying to prevent it as far as we can. But at present we are short of our staff because many of our doctors have gone to Military and we expect to get them very soon.

Thirdly, one hon. Member of this House has suggested that private practice should be allowed to the Officers of the Public Health Department. But Sir, Government think that this should not be allowed to the Officers of the Public Health Department as the Officers of the Public Health Department should only be entrusted with the preventive side of the affair.

Fourthly, Sir, one hon. Member has drawn attention of the Government that there are *Kala-azar patients* at Fulbari and Kalachara dispensaries in the Garo Hills. I may tell the hon. Member that Government has called for an estimate for 20 more beds in the Garo Hills *Kala-azar* Hospital and when these 20 beds will be added to the *Kala-azar* Hospital in the Garo Hills, the patients of these places will be accommodated in that Hospital. The same hon. Member has drawn attention to the fact that the Sub-Assistant Surgeon at Tura is not getting a special hill allowance, but, Sir, no Public Health doctor is given any hill allowance and so we cannot make an exception to this Sub-Assistant Surgeon who is at present posted at Tura.

Again Sir, many hon. Members and specially hon. Dr. C. G. Terrell has brought to our notice the need of pure water supply in the villages. Of course, pure water supply is eminently necessary. If we can supply pure water then in that case we can prevent many diseases; but, Sir, this lies at present with the Local Boards.

Lastly, Sir, I thank all the hon. Members of this House who have given their constructive criticisms—to improve the policy of this Department and Government will consider their suggestions at the time when they will review the policy of this Department and will try to implement as far as practicable the suggestions given by them.

Another hon. Member has asked as to what Government is going to do with regard to compounders. That suggestion, Sir, also will be taken into consideration at the time of reviewing our policy.

With these few words, Sir, I hope the hon. Mover of this Motion will withdraw his Motion.

*Khan Sahib Maulavi MUDABBIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: May I know from the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge of Public Health Department whether he is thinking of supplying the public with a chart of foodstuffs that are taken by them with their food values.....

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Order, order, that is a new point raised and I cannot allow that after the closure of the debate.

Does the hon. Member press his Motion ?

Maulavi Dewan ABDUL BASITH : On the assurance of the Hon'ble Minister, Sir, I beg to withdraw my Motion.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : I think the hon. Member has got leave of the House, to withdraw his Motion.

The Motion was, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Now, I am putting the main Demand. The question is :—

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 18,62,100 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1947 for the administration of the head ‘39.—Public Health’ ”.

The question was adopted.

GRANT No.18

(38.—Medical)

The Hon'ble Srijut RAMNATH DAS : On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs.15,10,200 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1947 for the administration of the head ‘38.—Medical’.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Motion moved :

“That a sum not exceeding Rs.15,10,200 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1947 for the administration of the head ‘38.—Medical’ ”.

There are 9 Cut Motions including one by hon. Dr. C. G. Terrell and we can carry on with this debate till twenty minutes past three. So, will the hon. the Leader of the Opposition kindly indicate as to which Cut Motion he would like to be taken up by his Party Members.

* Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : Cut Motion No.1, Sir.

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the provision of Rs.5,100 under Grant No.18, Major head—38.—Medical, Minor head—A.—Medical Establishment—(a)—Superintendence, Sub-head—1.—Pay of officers, detailed head—Personal Assistant, at page 97 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.100, i.e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs.15,10,200 do stand reduced by Rs.100.

Sir, my intention of moving this Cut Motion is to raise a discussion about the urgent necessity of starting the proposed Medical College at Sylhet.

Sir, at the very outset, I may be allowed to say that the question of starting a Medical Institution at Sylhet is being agitated for the last 20 years. As far back as the year 1927 a censure Motion was passed in the Assam Legislative Council on the question of starting such an institution at Sylhet. I may inform the Hon. Members that on that occasion the Motion was supported by no less a person than Sir Walter Smiles (then Lieutenant Colonel), the then Leader of the European Group. I may also inform my hon. Friends coming from the Assam Valley that it was supported by the late illustrious Nabin Chandra Bordoloi whose memory, we revere up to the present day. As a result of this agitation a scheme was prepared and the buildings were constructed at a cost of Rs.8,37,312. As a matter of fact, the school buildings were completed in the year 1931 and in that year, Rai Bahadur Kanak Lal Barua, who was then the Minister-in-charge of the Medical Department, assured the Council that classes would be started from the year 1932. But unfortunately, Sir, that assurance did not materialise. In the year 1937 when this August House came into existence, a Cut Motion on this

*Speech not corrected.

subject was moved by hon. Maulavi Munawwar Ali and that was, Sir, also a censure Motion and it was carried on the floor of this House. But unfortunately then also no action was taken on it. In later years circumstances changed and in October 1940 the Indian Medical Council decided that starting of Medical Schools would not be encouraged and all schools should be raised to the University standard. During subsequent years we have been urging that the buildings that were constructed at a huge cost should be utilised in starting such a college at Sylhet.

Sir, the outgoing Inspector General of Civil Hospitals was of the opinion that Sylhet was the most favourable place for starting such a college which will give enough facilities in clinical matters and also for experimental work. I will admit, that we have got no quarrel over the question of raising the Dibrugarh Medical School to the standard of a college, but at the same time we do maintain that the necessity of starting a college at Sylhet is very important and urgent and it can tolerate no further delay.

Sir, rumour has it that the Congress Government have already decided to start a college at Dibrugarh while they are dubbing the people of Sylhet by starting a Post-Graduate Training centre at the proposed Sylhet Hospital Buildings. Sir, this move is nothing short of an ingenious device to circumvent the opinion of the Inspector General of Civil Hospitals. The Hon'ble Minister may take it from me that this dole will not satisfy the long-standing demand of the people of the Surma Valley.

Sir, I have already mentioned that an illustrious Bardoloi supported the cause of starting the Medical School at Sylhet. I am happy to find that another illustrious Bardoloi is leading the Congress Government. May I hope that he will prove equal to the situation and take all steps so that the proposed college at Sylhet may be established within a short time? I have no doubt, Sir, that the hon. Members coming from the Surma Valley, who are adorning the Government Benches, will support my Motion. Sir, finally I appeal to all the hon. Members of this House to rise above valley patriotism and arrive at the right decision.

With these few words, Sir, I commend my Motion to the acceptance of the House.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Cut Motion moved:

"That the provision of Rs.5,100 under Grant No.18, Major head—38.—Medical, Minor head—A.—Medical Establishment—(a)—Superintendence, Sub-head—1.—Pay of officers, detailed head—Personal Assistant, at page 97 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.100, i.e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs.15,10,200 do stand reduced by Rs.100."

*Shri SATINDRA MOHAN DEV: May I know from the hon. Mover when and by which Government this scheme of splitting the college in the two valleys was originated?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The hon. Member said "a rumour has it".

*Shri SATINDRA MOHAN DEV: Does the rumour say that this Government has done it or the previous Government?

*The Hon'ble Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: He was just airing a rumour, Sir.

Maulavi NASIR-UD-DIN AHMED: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I should like to say a few words in support of the Motion moved by Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury. The demand for a medical institution at Sylhet—let us call it a school or a college—is so very insistent and is going on for such a long time that I think we, the Surma Valley Members, will be failing in our duty if we do not give our unstinted support to the hon. Mover.

Now, Sir, coming to the Motion, we learn from the hon. Mover that a large sum of money was spent for starting this institution and that the construction of buildings was completed long ago. Now, as a prudent man I urge upon Government that when they have spent such a large sum of money it will be wise on their part to spend some more money to give the proposed institution a real shape and bring it to completion. In this view of the matter I hold that they should immediately start the institution—it may be a Medical School or a Medical College (*Voices:—A college*) All right, Sir.

Then this question has another aspect. It is one of those few questions on which there are no two opinions. I know in the Surma Valley all are unanimous on this point. I should also add that all right-thinking people of the Assam Valley will agree that this medical institution at Sylhet should be started without any delay and they should not lose time in controversial matters.

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

Adjournment

The House was then adjourned for lunch till 2 P.M.

After Lunch

Srijut LAKSHESVAR BOROOAH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise not to oppose the Motion of the hon. Mover. I rise simply to appeal to the hon. Mover and the Members of this House not to act in a way that would involve the risk of losing a thing we have in hand in our attempt to run after one that we may or may not have. I realise that there is keen desire of the people of the Assam Valley to have a Medical College at Dibrugarh and I realise also that the desire of the Surma Valley people is no less burning. Circumstanced as we are, Sir, we must not allow sentiment to prevail over reason. I for one think that we should all endeavour to raise the status of the Berry-White Medical School to that of a College. I may tell the hon. Members that the Berry-White Medical School at Dibrugarh is not the property of the people of the Assam Valley nor that of Dibrugarh people but also of the people of the whole of Assam. I think it is pertinent here to mention the circumstances under which the Berry-White Medical School came into being. The hon. Members are perhaps aware that there was a time when this country was overrun by *Kala-azar*, Malaria and other fell diseases and at that time Assam's resources were not sufficient to cope with the devastating effect of those diseases in the country. At that gloomy period of our Assam's history a European Doctor in the person of Brigade-Surgeon John Berry-White who served the country in combating the diseases, donated Rs.50,000 by Will for the establishment of a Medical institution with the minimum standard of teaching then prevailing in India. Sir, I have got a leaf of the Medical Administration Report of the Government of Assam of 1919 in which the Will of that noble gentleman as well as the assurance given by the Government in that respect can be found. I treasured the leaf for years as I consider the words of the noble gentleman sacred. The Will of late Brigade Surgeon Berry-White runs thus—“And I bequeath to the Charitable Hospital, Dibrugarh, in the Province of Assam, British India, by, with and out of such part of my personal estate as may lawfully be given for charitable purposes and in priority to all other payments thereout, the sum of Rs.50,000 to be applied towards founding a Medical School in Dibrugarh and attached to the said Hospital for the instruction of youths who are natives of India and whose parents or one of them are or is natives or a native of or have for the space of ten years been resident in the said Province of Assam, in the principles of medicine and surgery up to the grade of the Hospital

Assistant class and upon the lines, curriculum and course of training and study in use at the School of Medicine, Dacca, Bengal, subject, however, to such modifications as to course of instruction and to the qualifications of candidates as the authority appointed by the Executive Administration of Assam may make, provided always that this bequest shall be conditional upon the said Administration of Assam agreeing and undertaking to supervise the application of the said legacy to the purpose aforesaid and to supplement the same by grants from the public or provincial funds to an extent sufficient to carry out the object specified above, and for the future efficient maintenance and working of the school so to be established."

The bequest was accepted by the then Chief Commissioner in the following terms :—

"On behalf of the Administration, the Chief Commissioner thankfully accepts this legacy on the conditions enumerated by the testator, he will undertake to supervise its application for the purposes indicated. The wishes of the testator will be adhered to, as far as possible, both in respect of the course of instruction and of the qualification of candidates for admission to the school. Practical considerations may make it necessary to modify in certain details the arrangements which are followed at the Dacca Medical School ; but no change will be allowed to interfere substantially with the testator's beneficent intention, which is that students who are natives of the Province, or are the children of parents permanently residing in Assam, shall be afforded, in their own Province, the opportunity for studying the principles of medicine and surgery up to the standard laid down for Civil Hospital Assistants in Bengal. The Assam Administration will undertake to supplement Dr. White's legacy by grants from Provincial and Local Funds to such extent as may be required and will guarantee the future efficient working and maintenance of the proposed Medical School."

As I have said before, Sir, Dr. Berry-White bequeathed this amount at the time when the minimum standard of education was that of a school course only. By a resolution passed a few years ago by the all India Medical Council the minimum standard of medical education has been raised to that of a collegiate course. This is a statutory law under which no university in India shall be able to have medical institutions with lower standard of teaching. Under these circumstances all the Medical Schools in the Province as well as all over India must be abolished unless such School standards are raised to that of colleges. Therefore, Sir, this Medical School was established about 45 years ago in Dibrugarh, the Government of Assam have been carrying on the School as within the limits of its finances and I submit that the Berry-White Medical School has been serving the need of the children of the soil of both the Valleys in Assam and innumerable doctors of both the Valleys have been turned out who have been serving not only in tea gardens but also in Government and Local Board dispensaries in Assam.

Sir, the public in general and particularly the public of Dibrugarh are contributing all these years towards the development of this institution. Sir, I state below a list of wards' beds, nursing sisters' quarters and common rooms that the public, particularly of Dibrugarh, European and all sections of Indians, have been donating for gradual development of the institution. They are :—

1. Nursingdass Maternity and Gynaecological Wards by late Surujmall Jalan of T.n.sukia.
2. Stuart Memorial European Ward by Mr. Stuart.
3. Paying Wards :—
 - (i) Hiralal Ward by Messrs. Ramrikdas Ganga Prasad,
 - (ii) Rai Bahadur Rameswar Saharia Ward,

- (iii) Public Donation Ward.
- (iv) Female Paying Ward by late A.C. Chatterjee.
- 4. General Wards:—
 - (i) Mullane Memorial Ward.
 - (ii) Dr. O'Brein Ward.
- 5. Nursing Sisters Quarters by Rai Saligram Bahadur and Co. and Silver Jubilee Fund.
- 6. Women Ward 'Routh Mall Ward'
- 7. Chest Clinic by Dr. R.M. Dass.
- 8. Student Common Room by Srijut. N. Chakravarty.
- 9. There are donations from public for a Women and Children Ward.

Sir, the value of the above will be between 2 to 3 lakhs of rupees at present day market. So, Sir, I say that it is the property not only of the Assam Valley but of the whole of Assam. It is the sacred duty of all the people of Assam to make this School a full fledged College. Sir, I understand that a sum of about 30 lakhs of rupees has been allotted to Assam for establishment of two Colleges in Assam. But I don't think that Rs.30 lakhs will be sufficient in the present day wages, cost of materials and of labour for the construction of one Medical College with hospital, hostel and the purchase of necessary equipment. We should also consider whether any recurring expenditure has been assured to run the two institutions. From my personal experience I have known that to run a Medical College up to the mark about 10 lakhs of rupees are required annually. Hon. Members will see whether it will be possible for a poor Province like Assam to incur a recurring expenditure of Rs.20 lakhs for the two Colleges. Therefore, Sir, I appeal to the sentiment of the hon. Members to have one model institution for our boys so that they may turn out brilliant Surgeon Physicians in Assam. We should work arm in arm and shoulder to shoulder to establish a model Medical College in Assam.

With these words, Sir, I request the hon. Member to revise his decision and urge upon the Government to establish one Medical College in Assam and withdraw his Motion.

Dr. C. G. TERRELL: Sir, I beg to move Cut Motion No. 9.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, my object in moving this Cut Motion.....

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member propose to move his Cut Motion separately?

Dr. C. G. TERRELL: If I have the permission, Sir. The subject of my Cut Motion is rather a different one and I wish to move it separately.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi ABUAL MAJID ZIAOSH SHAMS: Mr. Speaker Sir, apart from pleasing our fancy or giving some gratification to our sense of pride if an educational institution is located in a particular locality certainly the people of the locality get more facilities. Sir, the Medical School at Dibrugarh has been utilised for years for all the people of the Province including those of the Surma Valley. But it is a fact that the people of the locality stand on a greater advantageous ground. It not only opened up new facilities and broader outlook for the people of the locality but it also gave a great stimulus to them in Medical Education. Sir, so long the people of the Surma Valley was without a Medical School and even now they are without one, but as such an institution is already in existence in our Valley their desire to have a Medical College in the Surma Valley is not unnatural. So in the fitness of things as there is already a Medical School in existence here in this Valley the Surma Valley people should have a Medical College (*Hear, hear*). But, Sir, surely we of this Valley will not be deprived of the facilities that will be surely afforded (*Hear, hear*) to all the people of the Province. We can take as much advantage of that Medical College as the people of the locality but that they will have of course greater facilities no doubt. Since we have been enjoying facilities for so many years in this Valley with the Berry-White Medical

School, it is time that we should give them some greater facilities in respect of the Medical College (*Hear. hear.*). If our finances improve, I think time will come shortly with better schemes for revenue making when we shall be able to establish another College at Gauhati preferably.

So, Sir, with these words I support the Motion of my hon. Friend, Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury.

Maulavi MD. IDRIS ALI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I will be failing in my duty if I do not register my emphatic support to the Motion moved by my hon. Friend, Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury, regarding the establishment of a Medical College at Sylhet. When Government has spent so much money for erecting beautiful buildings at Sylhet I do hope that the Government will be pleased to open a Medical College there. In this respect I think we all will be unanimous; we will watch with interest the attitude of our Congress Friends as well as the Jamiat-ul-ulema Members in this question of establishing a Medical College at Sylhet. When it is not a communal or a party question I think all of us will be unanimous in this respect and will get the same facilities and advantages as our Assam Valley Friends are getting by the Medical School at Dibrugarh.

With these few words, Sir, I support the Motion of my hon. Friend Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury.

Maulavi MAYEEN-UD-DIN AHMED CHOWDRY : Mr. Speaker, Sir, in support of the Cut Motion of my hon. Friend, Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury, I beg to say a few words. The Government of Assam have been holding out hopes to the people of the Surma Valley for establishing a Medical College, but those hopes still remain unfulfilled. The idea of starting a Medical School was taken long ago and buildings were built as far back as 1931. For the last 14 years we have seen the School buildings, Sir, but neither the School nor the College. These houses remained empty for a very long time till at last, the military people came to utilise them. Sir, with the withdrawal of the Army from Sylhet the houses have again been left unused without any prospect of being utilised in future.

It has been stated by my Friend, Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury, in his speech while moving his Cut Motion, that there will not be any objection on the part of the Government to establish two Medical Colleges, one at Dibrugarh and the other at Sylhet, if they so desire. The Surma Valley people have been very unfortunate for a long time in not having a Medical College in their side. From records it will be found that more than 8 lakhs of rupees had been spent on the erection of those buildings. But I do not understand what was the idea of the Government in spending so much money in erecting the buildings and then to keep them absolutely blocked.

Sir, as has been said by my hon. Friend, Khan Bahadur Maulavi Ziaosh Shams, Abual Majid that when the Surma Valley has been deprived of facilities such for a pretty long time, in the fitness of things, they should have preference in establishing the College first in the Surma Valley. I am sorry to find that one hon. Member opposite has said that we should all join with him in converting the Dibrugarh Medical School into a College and make it an ideal one. Well, Sir, I do not find any reason why we should harp on that word *ideal*. We have no College at all at present; and without having any College why should we harp on that word *ideal*? And all the hon. Members of the Surma Valley will bear me out when I say that, it is the earnest desire of the people of the Surma Valley to establish a Medical College in our Valley.

With these few words, Sir, I support the Motion moved by my Friend, Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the other day in course of the Budget discussion I referred to the urgent necessity of raising the status of the Dibrugarh Berry-White Medical School to that of a College. While discussing this matter I deem it my duty to stress those points. The Dibrugarh Medical School—as has been already mentioned by my hon. Friend, Srijut Laksheswar Borooah—was founded as far back as 1899 and for the last 46 years it has gone through years of struggle. It has served very useful purpose and turned out a number of Licentiates from all over the Province. The position is this that before the war it was found that all the Licentiates passing out from that School were fully utilised when there was unemployment, so to speak, among the Licentiatees passing from that School. But at that stage war broke out, and with the war the demand for Medical Licentiatees had again been on the increase. It has already been mentioned by my hon. Friend, Mr. Borooah, that the Indian Medical Council has found out that the standard of Medical education that is imparted in the School is quite out of date; and they have definitely ruled that they will not allow any more establishments of these Medical Schools. So the position is this that this Institution which was founded so many years back and which had been serving very useful purpose, whether this Institution should be allowed to function as it is or should be improved. In other words whether this Institution should be ended or it should be mended. My submission is that this School, at any rate, should instead of rendering it useless, now be raised to the status of a College.

As regards the demand of my hon. Friends over here for the Medical College, there is also a legitimate demand. But I do not know whether there is scope in this Province for two Medical Colleges. If there be, then surely I should like to have two Colleges in both the Valleys. But if we can have only one College, then I must plead for the existing School to be raised to the status of a College. Sir, this question has been agitated for a very long time and lately the question was examined by the head of the Medical Department. I am told that the outgoing Inspector General of Civil Hospitals was of opinion that they will prefer to have a College at Sylhet to having a College at Dibrugarh. I had a talk on this matter with the present Inspector General of Civil Hospitals and immediately after taking over charge he had been to both the places to examine the feasibility of this proposal. I am told that he has not expressed any opinion so far, but, I think, it has been made clear to him that there is every facility for converting the Dibrugarh School into that of a College.

It was said sometimes that there was dearth of clinical materials. But now it has been ascertained that there would be no dearth of clinical materials there. Moreover, the question of site also should not be standing on the way. Of late we have got the buildings of a combined military hospital available very near the town and, I think, the buildings of that hospital which I understand have been vacated or are going to be so vacated by the Military Department can be utilised for the purpose of the college.

In conclusion, therefore, I want to say that I am not opposed to this Motion and I support it, but at the same time, I hope that the question of converting the Medical School at Dibrugarh to that of a college will not be overlooked and in fact it should receive priority.

Maulavi MD. ABDULLAH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I think, I shall be failing in my duty if I do not come forward to support the Motion moved by my hon. Friend, Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury, regarding the establishment of a Medical College at Sylhet. Sir, it is the burning desire of the Surma Valley people for the last 20 years and I am at a loss to understand why this scheme has not yet been considered by our Government. I came to know

from the former Minister-in-charge of Medical Department—Khan Sahib Maulavi Mudabbir Hussain Chaudhuri—that though they had the intention to start the College they could not do so owing to dearth of implements and other materials. But I think, Sir, the present Ministry will seriously consider this question of starting the proposed Medical College at Sylhet immediately. The Surma Valley people have become wholly impatient as regards the delay in starting the College and I am afraid, they will not tolerate any more delay in this respect.

Sir, I had not the least intention of raising the valley question here, but I find my hon. Friend coming from Dibrugarh is very loud in speaking to start a Medical College there. I do not find any necessity on the part of that hon. Member to claim monopoly of starting all the medical institutions in his valley alone. Sir, I do sincerely believe that it is the one united demand of the people of the Surma Valley, Hindus and Muslims, men and women together, that the Medical College at Sylhet should immediately be started.

Sir, there are very many difficulties that we have to come across in order to give medical training to our children in the Berry-White Medical School. There is the difficulty of long distance, huge expenditure and the general climate which does not suit our boys. Over and above these difficulties there is another practical difficulty, *viz.*, the difficulty in obtaining seats for our boys, as the number of seats in that institution is very limited.

Then, Sir, we are short of qualified doctors at the present moment. In the year 1942, when the terrible malaria broke out in Baniachong and took a heavy toll of human life, numbering some twelve thousand, there was dearth of Doctors and even the Compounders were sent there to fill the gap of Doctors. Had there been two such medical institutions in the Province, surely we would not have felt this sort of difficulty in finding out Doctors to combat the diseases. In this view of the matter, I would appeal to Government and all Members of this House to render their sympathetic help towards the establishment of a Medical College at Sylhet at a very early date.

If I remember aright, Sir, one Committee was formed at Sylhet one year back, in which the Hon'ble Mr. B. K. Das, and the Hon'ble Mr. Mookerjee were also present. In that Committee it was proposed to raise donations for the purpose of starting the Medical College at Sylhet and I remember Mr. B. C. Gupta of Silchar alone donated 1½ lakhs of rupees for the purpose.

With these few words, Sir, I support the Motion before the House and would request Government to start the College at Sylhet immediately.

Babu NIRENDRA NATH DEV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, people of the Surma Valley have been agitating for a medical institution at Sylhet for the last 20 years and that agitation found its expression here in this Assembly also and perhaps not a single Budget Session had passed during the last few years when this matter was not discussed on the floor of this House. As Members of the Cabinet, we expected Khan Sahib Maulavi Mudabbir Hussain Chaudhuri and Maulavi Munawwar Ali to take up the matter in right earnest. I do not know, Sir, how far it is a fact that there is a proposal of splitting up the institution into two departments, one for Post-Graduate studies to be established at Sylhet and the main college to be situated at Dibrugarh. If there be any truth behind this rumour, certainly my hon. Friend, Khan Sahib Maulavi Mudabbir Hussain Chaudhuri, should be held responsible for that sort of proposal, because it must have been done during his tenure of office. Any way, Sir.....

*Khan Sahib Maulavi MUDABBIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: On a point of personal explanation, Sir.....

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The hon. Member will get his chance to speak later.

Babu NIRENDRA NATH DEV: Sir, we all do join whole-heartedly with our hon. Friend, Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury, in demanding that the Medical College should be started immediately at Sylhet. I do not know, Sir, why our hon. Friends, Srijut Lakshesvar Borooah and Khan Bahadur Sayidur Rahman, should lay so much stress on the need for starting the institution at Dibrugarh. We know that Government will have to continue maintaining the Berry-White Medical School as per the agreement with the founder of that institution and we have no quarrel with that. But it has been our experience during the last few years that there is a great dearth of doctors in this Province. We have experienced very much difficulty in the matter of finding out doctors for villages, especially at the time of epidemics. If the institution which was proposed to be started at Sylhet had been started 15 or 20 years back, we would not have found any difficulty during the last few years. We would have got in our Province more doctors. The Bhoze Committee Report has exposed thoroughly the miserable condition of public health and medical relief in this country. Sir, for some time to come we shall require many doctors to look after our villages and for that purpose we do not think one institution only at Dibrugarh will be sufficient to meet our requirements. From that point of view, Sir, we think we all want that the proposed institution at Sylhet should also be started immediately.

We understand, Sir, the Government of Assam is going to get some 8½ to 13 crores of rupees from the Central Government during the next 5 years for Post-War Reconstruction works. Medical, Education and Public Health are most important items of reconstruction work and we do not see any reason why the requisite money for financing both the colleges, at least the initial expenditure as also the recurring expenditure for the next 5 years, should not be found out from what the Central Government would give to this Province for Post-War Reconstruction works.

I would appeal to our Government with all the earnestness that I command that they should give their most serious consideration to this matter and let not this be delayed any further and let not it go by any default on their part. Let us all join in our demand to the Central Government for giving us adequate funds for financing both the institutions at the sametime so that the Province can have the requisite number of Medical Graduates in time.

Maulavi ABDUL HAMID: Mr. Speaker, Sir, before we finally decide what to do in the matter of establishing the Medical College for the Province of Assam, we shall have to consider several things. The hon. Members of the House are well aware that when the proposal matured for starting the Medical School at Sylhet it was decided that the institution should bear the name of Lord Irwin, the then Viceroy of India, and his permission was obtained. Depression intervened, and the School was not completed. The building was finished during the time of my hon. Friend, Rev. Nichols-Roy, but funds could not be provided for hospital and actual starting of the School. Government after Government, Ministers after Ministers were giving hope that when funds would be available the School would be started. At least one Governor of the Province on a ceremonial occasion declared that the Sylhet institution would be a College. Are you going to show disrespect to the august personage whose name was associated with this institution? Are you going to show disrespect to the Governor who made the solemn promise that the Sylhet institution should be a Medical College? Are you going to belie all the promises made year after year (*Srijut Beliram Das—What were you doing so long?*). Dibrugarh had the advantage of having a Medical School. But can any one in this House lay his hands on his bosom and declare that this is the most ideal site for starting a College. Inspector-General after Inspector-General, declared that the most suitable place is Sylhet. And the present incumbent has not given his

opinion. Are you going to disregard expert medical opinion in the matter of location of the Medical College? Many of the hon. Members sitting opposite urged session after session in this very House for completion of the work. Will they now go behind their words? What the public will think if they change colour? Sir, with these few words I beg to submit that every consideration should be given to this question and due respect should be shown to the promises already made before the matter is finally decided. We should not show disrespect to Lord Irwin (now Earl of Halifax). Due respect should also be paid to the solemn declaration of the Governor of the Province.

*Srijut GAURIKANTA TALUKDAR: May I know whether this Province can afford to have two well equipped colleges running on scientific basis and satisfy the present day demands of medical education? This Province cannot afford to have two Medical Colleges.

Maulavi ABDUL HAMID: I do not think the finances of the Province will allow just now the luxury of two Medical Colleges. It is all eye-wash. Just now you are providing a decent burial to the proposal of having a medical institution at Sylhet.

It has been suggested by my Friend, Mr. Nirendra Nath Deb, that there is some proposal of separating the Post-Graduate study from the college. If you do that you will be doing the greatest mischief. Post-Graduate study should not be separated from the college. I am sure no medical man will support the proposal. Those who labour under the idea that at some future date another college will be started there they should give it up. If you start a Medical College at Dibrugarh you will have to start the Post-Graduate class at Dibrugarh. Sir, the Assam Valley has enjoyed the facility of a Medical School for the last 46 years and the Surma Valley, and Goalpara had very largely to take shelter in the institutions in Bengal for medical education. I think, Sir, every one wants a Medical College. Sylhet where buildings have been constructed is considered suitable for the purpose by experts. With these few words I warmly commend the Motion of my hon. Friend, Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury.

Srijut BELIRAM DAS: Was the hon. Member once a Minister? If so, why did he not establish a Medical College at Sylhet during his regime?

Khan Sahib Maulavi MUDABBIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I find that there is much misunderstanding over the statement of the hon. Member, Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury, regarding the splitting up of the proposed Medical College into two parts—one part of the Medical College proper being started at Dibrugarh and the other the Post-Graduate classes at Sylhet. He based his statement on a rumour that the Congress Ministry or the matter of fact the Congress Party has decided to tackle the vexed problem in this way, that is the Medical College will be started at Dibrugarh and the Post-Graduate classes at Sylhet. Now for that rumour a charge has been levelled at me that the previous Government, while I was in charge of Medical Portfolio, decided the Medical College to be at Dibrugarh and the Post-Graduate classes at Sylhet. It was not a fact as has been remarked by hon. Babu Nirendra Nath Deb. He perhaps could not follow what had been said by hon. Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury. He will, I am sure, now understand that it was not the decision of any Government. I was for a few months in-charge of the Departments of Medical and Public Health. I know definitely that the opinion of the two successive Inspectors-General of Civil Hospitals were in favour of starting the College at Sylhet. (*Applause.*) It will be borne out by the fact that their suggestion has been placed in the list of Post-War Reconstruction plan. One was Colonel Taylor (he was then Lieutenant-Colonel) and the other Colonel Dimond. These two highest Medical authorities were of opinion that

* Speech not corrected.

Sylhet will be most suitable place for starting the Medical College. That was the opinion then. While I was in charge of Medical and Public Health Departments I asked the present incumbent, if I remember aright, the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals, to make an enquiry and submit a report as to which place will suit most for a Medical College. He, I understand, submitted a report, Sir, but before I had time to go through we had to resign. From what I have heard I presume he has not mentioned the name of any place and kept the question open for the decision of the Government.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Order, order. I think it would be proper not to mention the names of the Inspectors-General giving their opinion because we find that there is no evidence before the House to show as to which of the Inspectors-General gave what opinion. A moment ago we heard hon. Khan Bahadur Sayidur Rahman disputing the hon. the Deputy Leader of the Opposition when he said that two Inspectors-General gave their opinion in favour. When these facts are disputed and when there is no evidence before the hon. Members to ascertain which of the statements are correct, I think, this controversial matter should not be raised.

Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: There is a difference here, Sir. The hon. the *ex*-Education Minister and hon. Maulavi Abdul Hamid—none of them had any access to the file but my Friend on the right, the *ex*-Medical Minister had access to the file and so he had special knowledge of the matter.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I might point out to the hon. Members that the people of this Province, generally speaking, are sceptical about the special knowledge of special people.

Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: I could not follow you, Sir.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Order, order, the hon. Mr. Chaudhuri will please go on.

Khan Sahib Maulavi MUDABBIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: Sir, whatever may be the expert opinion there is no denying the fact that there is a genuine and long standing demand from Sylhet for a Medical School there, and at every opportune time the question is raised and discussed before the House. So I want, Sir, that this question should be decided once and for all. When there is a genuine demand from the people of Sylhet and when buildings are ready there, I do not understand why immediate steps cannot be taken for its start. So, Sir, I hope that while my Friends from the Assam Valley, have already got a school and have availed themselves of the opportunity of educating their boys so long, they will not now grudge in starting a College at Sylhet.

With these words, Sir, I support the Motion.

Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: Sir, I had no mind to speak on this subject but I find that the matter has got a bit confused. The question is whether a Medical College should be started at Sylhet. That question should be decided on its own merits. The question of Berry-White Medical School being raised to the status of a College has been dragged into it to confuse the issue and, as a matter of fact, it has been done so.

The question is as old as 1927. In the Budget Session of that year, I think, it was I who moved a censure Motion accusing the Government for the dereliction of their duty and in that Motion I had the support of the entire House—sub-dependents all combined to pass a severe censure on the Government.

*Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA : Sir, for how many years the hon. Member was in the Cabinet since that Motion was passed ?

Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI : Sir, if time permits, I will reply to that.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : But the time at our disposal is very short.

Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI : Therefore, Sir, there should be no interruption and if there be any, that should be prevented.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : There should be no interruption.

Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI : Now, Sir, the Congressmen of both the valleys combined in passing a censure Motion against the Government. Then structures were started and the principle of a Medical School at Sylhet was accepted and Government after the severe censure woke up and did what they could. They spent in those days no less an amount than about Rs.10 lakhs which is equal to a very much bigger figure for those days. They were sleeping over the question and it was my lot again to wake them up by another censure Motion in 1937. Then my hon. Friend, the present Finance Minister, I am sorry, I have not got his speech before me—he lent me his whole-hearted support in his characteristic way. Now the question is if there is to be one College in the whole of Assam, whether that should be one central institution. One should forget the existing institution and its location should be decided on the merit of the locality or the site, as to which one should be most usefully equitably and justly selected—whether Dibrugarh, Gauhati, Jorhat or Sylhet. Well, I am not going to mention the name of any Inspector-General but I know that more than one Inspector-General have declared in favour of Sylhet. Now if you are to give Sylhet a medical institution you are debarred from giving a school because as my hon. Friend to my left has stated that it is the accepted policy not to start a school but a college. Having accepted the principle of a medical institution being started at Sylhet you cannot but start it as a college. Raise the school at Dibrugarh to the status of a college, if you may, but having started a medical college at Sylhet you find your way, if you may, to raising the status of Dibrugarh, I do not mind, but do you agree to give that valley, the Surma Valley, a medical institution ? The reply must be "Yes". Then you cannot give a school; you must give a college, and so the college cannot but be located at Sylhet. Now, the question of *propriety, justice, sense of equilibrium* and *sense of proportion* also demand that the college should be located at Sylhet. History has been quoted and the justice of the demand has been amply urged and expounded and justified. If I can read through the minds of the Surma Valley Congressmen and the members of the Jamiat-ul-ulema there, if I have a true penetration into the bottom of their hearts, then I must say that they not only whole-heartedly want and desire that the college should be located at Sylhet, but every iota in them is speaking eloquently for it.

(Another hon. Member of the Opposition rose to speak.)

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : I am sorry there is no time. We have already spent two hours and two minutes, the longest time available for any Grant. Now, we have got only eighteen minutes for this whole Grant, and I also propose to give a chance to the hon. Member from the European Group to move the Cut Motion because the claim of that minority Group is, as has always been in this respect, very modest and reasonable. I would now request the Hon'ble Minister to reply.

Shri SATINDRA MOHAN DEV : On a point of information, Sir. May I know how many students the proposed college can produce annually ?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI : I hope I shall be able to give the information sought by my hon. Friend.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, with your permission I propose to reply to the debate that has been waged over this question. My hon. Friend Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury has been pleased so make a certain personal reference to me and I thought that I should not be doing my duty if I did not respond to that appeal.

Sir, this Government is perfectly aware of the strong feeling among the people of Sylhet for a medical institution of their own. The demand for that institution is indeed a very old one, and there have been hon. Members who have tried to take us back to as many as 18 to 20 years over this question. I would not like to go back to such a long period, in view of the fact that we no longer think of medical education in terms of medical schools. We cannot think of it just at the present moment in view of certain conclusions that have been arrived at by the Medical Council of India and which were accepted also by certain conferences of this Province. I shall relate only to that period of its history in which the question of medical college, instead of medical school, came to the forefront for consideration of the Government. As the hon. Members might know that as early as 1938 there was a medical conference at Delhi (I think it sat on the 8th or 9th November) in which it was decided that the education of a lower standard by what they meant medical school education, should be abandoned, for the primary reason that that kind of education did not receive any recognition in any other part of the world. It was a conference of the licentiates themselves who had come to that conclusion. I wish I could read the proceedings of that conference for the information of the hon. Members of this House. The conference was of opinion that teaching in our medical schools was not of a sufficiently high standard and not recognised by any one else outside India, and they recommended that our medical education should be such as shall satisfy the requirements of the Medical Council of India.

Then, Sir, just a year after a conference was held in Shillong in November 1939, wherein also the following resolution was adopted "This conference recommends that one uniform minimum standard of training and qualification for practitioners of modern scientific medicine should be established throughout India at an early date and that this standard should be such as shall satisfy the requirements laid down by the Medical Council of India."

I should like to say in this connection that in 1940 the Executive Body of the Indian Medical Council passed a resolution that after 31st March 1947, no recognition should be given to any medical man excepting such as had passed the Degree examination according to the standard laid down by the Medical Council. In the light of these discussions and decisions, the question of establishing a medical college in Assam was being considered from time to time. If there has been any delay in the matter of establishing a medical college—whether at Dibrugarh or Sylhet—the House should know that the responsibility does not lie with the present Government at all. The decision was arrived at as early as 1939, and during these long seven years if the last Government had wished to bring it into existence, they might have done so. But they decided to sit quiet and now criticism is being offered that this Government should do this and that.

Some reference was made regarding the opinions of the various Inspectors-General of Civil Hospitals. With the facts that I have before me—I hope, Sir, you will allow me to place the actual words—not hearsay reports—of those responsible officers before this House. The first Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals, Colonel Phipson, whose opinion was taken on this matter, stated as follows:

* Khan Sahib Maulavi MUDABBIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: Sir, is it necessary to quote from the note?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I want to make the point clear. The Hon'ble Deputy leader of the Muslim League party said that two Inspectors-General spoke in favour of establishing the Medical School at Sylhet and it was at once controverted by hon. Khan Bahadur Maulavi Sayidur Rahman. Now if one hon. Member makes an affirmative statement and another hon. Member stands up and says that that statement is not true, and there is no evidence or proof before the House to judge as to which of the statements is true then the hon. Members find themselves in great difficulty to come to any conclusion. All controversial matters about which there is no evidence before the House to come to a conclusion should be scrupulously avoided. Now the Hon'ble the Premier is reading from certain official reports of Inspectors-General on definite matters. There can be no controversy regarding the fact that that particular officer made that report and therefore the Hon'ble Prime Minister is entitled to do so.

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI: "It is unnecessary, as the existing medical school turns out more students than can find employment in the Province, and almost everywhere there is demoralising competition among them for a livelihood. In my opinion it is the clearest duty of Government, not to duplicate medical schools of the low standard of the Berry-White Medical School, but to raise the standard of existing medical education even if it aspires no higher than to the licentiate standard."

And he concluded like this, Sir, as regards the conversion of the hostels (relating to the Sylhet buildings) into hospital.

"Although the buildings are excellent as hostel buildings, their adaptation to hospital purposes can never be as efficient as a hospital designed and constructed with the requirements of a hospital in view, and there will be a great sacrifice of convenience in many directions, and the element of makeshift which has characterised the existing civil hospital at Sylhet, and has detracted from its value, will thus be perpetuated though on another site." Thus Colonel Phipson was very emphatically against the establishment of another medical school at Sylhet.

Colonel Hesterlow, the successor of Colonel Phipson, was again asked to go over the question, and make his report with a view that the school could be started in 1942-43. But he too was of the same view as his predecessor. He said: "I find myself compelled to agree completely with the views expressed by Colonel Phipson on this subject, and to express the opinion, that it would be far more desirable and profitable to concentrate on raising the standard and improving the teaching in the existing medical school at Dibrugarh, to construct a really efficient hospital in Sylhet on the plans of the original scheme more or less and to utilise the hospital as a field of clinical training for the students of the existing medical school, during their final years of study in addition, and as part of their course of training. The medical and hospital buildings in Sylhet may be disposed of as a school or college or offices as being no longer necessary for a medical school."

Colonel Shortt who succeeded Colonel Hesterlow too was of the same opinion as his predecessors that the medical school at Sylhet would be only a deterioration in training standard or sheer waste of money.

But under Government instruction the last Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals was made to cause enquiries as to whether the necessary equipment and medicinal stock for the hospital and a college could be obtained in the Dibrugarh School. He also gave some views which are almost on the same line, but in view of certain difference of opinion, I am reading his report so that nothing can be withheld from the House. Accordingly Colonel Dimond gave his opinion and I quote here his views :—

“In October 1940, the Indian Medical Council passed a resolution requesting the Central Government to ask Provincial Governments to abolish the licentiate medical schools or else to raise them to the University standard, so that there would in future be only one uniform minimum standard of medical qualification for the whole of India. This would mean that there would be one—all India Register for doctors acceptable in reciprocating countries—a most important measure. A number of Provincial Governments have accepted the invitation and in most provinces in India after 1948 the medical schools will be a thing of the past. It is however for consideration if Assam can at the present juncture of its history do without the Licentiate class. This, of course, for purely economic reasons. From reading the Sylhet Medical School file, I gather that the consensus of opinion of the Ministries and the Public Health Department is that the Licentiate will definitely continue to have a place in the needs of Assam community, and therefore while pressing strongly for the adaptation of the Sylhet buildings into a college, suggest that the existing Berry-White School should carry on until such a time as there is no further need for a medical school in this Province”.

“Should a scheme materialise, a larger hospital than the ordinary District Hospital will need to be constructed at Sylhet. It should have 250 beds. The scheme, submitted, is according to the opinion of experts unworkable. Here a scheme has been submitted showing non-recurring amount of Rs. 15 lakhs and recurring amount of Rs.5 lakhs. This money is quite insufficient for any medical college.”

These are, Sir, some of the opinions which I have placed before the House. After this, the whole thing was again sent for re-examination by the last Government to Colonel Bhatia our present Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals. He has submitted a scheme which I shall try to place before this House.....

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: As this is a very important subject I propose to extend the time of the House by half an hour. Will the hon. Members express their views whether they would sit till half past 4 today ?

* Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I suppose the time limit of the House has been fixed by His Excellency the Governor.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Only the dates have been fixed by His Excellency. For preparation of the time-table I requested the Leaders of different parties to give their suggestion. Since they have not sent any suggestion I took it that the time-table drawn up by me would be suitable for them and has the approval of the House.

*Maulavi ABDUL HAMID: Sir, may I enquire if you have taken the approval of His Excellency after preparing the time-table?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: After drawing up the time-table I placed it before the House, no approval of His Excellency is required for this. The approval of His Excellency is required in respect of the dates only.

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLAI: Now, Sir, this is what he says ; “if the Government accepts the view, as a matter of policy, that there should be only one standard of medical education in Assam, as in other parts of India and that this standard should be the one recognised by the Medical Council of India, the question naturally arises “what should be done to the

Berry-White Medical School, Dibrugarh. "This means that either the Berry-White Medical School should go out of existence altogether or, if it is to exist how it should exist? My answer is that it should be raised to the standard of a medical college, and should be affiliated to a University. In the absence of any University in Assam at present, it will have to be affiliated to the Calcutta University. Later on, if and when a University is established in this Province, its affiliation to it may be considered. The name may be altered to Berry-White Medical College. In organising a medical college we could utilise the facilities at Sylhet Civil Hospital also. An institution called Sylhet Hospital Medical College may be established at Sylhet but it will be an integral part of the Medical College at Dibrugarh. The two institutions will be closely integrated as described below".

Now, then, I propose to read that portion of the note also to show how he proposes to establish this institution.

"I would suggest that apart from the Medical College at Dibrugarh, a suitable teaching hospital should be constructed at Sylhet. The functions of this institution which may be called 'Sylhet Hospital Medical College', would be:—

(a) To provide facilities for the clinical instruction of senior students of the Berry-White Medical College at Dibrugarh, especially the six months training required before registration."

I am reading the points one by one so that there might not be any mistake in the minds of the hon. Members as to what has been said by Colonel Bhatia.

"(b) To give instruction to general practitioners and medical officers of Government and local bodies and tea estates in the form of 'Refresher Courses'. At present such facilities do not exist. But they are necessary for us, in order that our knowledge may not become 'rusty', and also that we may be acquainted with the latest advances in medical science. Such instruction should be imparted separately from that for the undergraduates.

(c) To give clinical instruction to those licentiates who wish to take the M. B. degree.

According to the recommendations of the Medical Council of India, all Licentiates are required to undergo training in Anatomy and Physiology for six months, and two years' training in clinical subjects before being eligible to appear at the degree examination ;"

I am not reading all the details. Then I go to (d).

"(d) To give Post-graduate instruction of a higher type than the refresher courses in certain special subjects.

There are centres in India which are noted for special facilities for Post-graduate work in certain special subjects but there are no centres of that kind in Assam.

Then to undertake medical research we must have Post-graduate College of medicine so that full advantage of all sorts of facilities will be available."

Then I come to (f).

"(f) To train Nurses and Health Visitors.

(g) To provide house appointments (House Surgeonships and House Physicianships) and Registrarships."

So these are some of the functions which the Sylhet Hospital Medical College will perform. Government have carefully scrutinised this proposal of Colonel Bhatia and have come to the conclusion that that is the most workable scheme which can be adopted at the present time. The question that would be naturally asked is for what special reason Government did come to this conclusion. My reply, Sir, is that from 1948 we could not have any medical practitioners who are not qualified in some of the colleges which are sanctioned

by the Indian Medical Council and it is only in the Berry-White Medical School that we can bring the object of the Indian Medical Council into immediate fruition. I personally feel and I am sure it must be the opinion of all medical authority that with an addition of one year's course and a slight alteration in the syllabus the college can come into existence immediately, and possibly we may have medical graduates from 1948 without any difficulty. But if a new college has got to be started from the beginning we have greater difficulties, very much more than we shall find in the medical college established. Secondly on the condition of the gift of the Berry-White Medical School we cannot close down that Institution. So, taking all these factors into consideration the Government have come to the conclusion that there will be two institutions—one complimenting the other and the fullness of the college education will be completed by study in both the institutions. A point has been raised that to have a post-graduate training class so far away from the main institution will be a bad thing. I do not know. But when even in ordinary circumstances people had to go from one Province to another in order to complete a course of education, I don't know why we should not be agreeable to this small difficulty.

But I can tell the hon. Friends opposite who are criticising the Government that we are not going to rest content with what we shall have at the immediate present. We want to proceed further along with the fulfilment of Colonel Bhatia's Scheme.

Possibly the attention of the hon. Members has been drawn to the Bhore report. We are expecting great changes to come over India particularly in reference to public health of the people and their medical treatment. Bhore report envisages at least one doctor for every thousand of population. Taking our population as it is, we should require about ten thousand doctors if we are really to serve the people of the country side. If we do really require ten thousand doctors, would two institutions be too much for the Province? This is a point which I have found that even all the Inspector-Generals have stressed against. But as a popular Government I feel we must cater to the good of the people. We should see that two colleges are made possible. We propose to take up this matter as soon as possible and basing our recommendations on the Bhore Committee Report we want to approach the Government of India that a provision should be made in the Post-War Reconstruction Scheme for another college at Sylhet also. The way in which they will proceed will be that so far as the Assam Valley is concerned, possibly we shall require another institution just of the type which is now proposed for Sylhet, and at Sylhet another institution of the type now proposed for Dibrugarh. That means for the Dibrugarh College we take up the top portion, while for Sylhet, we take things from below. As you have just now heard from the report I read to you, Sir, Sylhet has now the top and it moves downwards but in Dibrugarh it moves from downwards to upwards. So the second proposal is that if the hon. House would approve of it and would give us authority we would immediately like to approach the Government of India to make provision for expenditure for another college at Sylhet.

This is the way, Sir. If they decline we shall still proceed to move them. I am sure they must give the grant, if they want to implement the Bhore report. Therefore I never think of the possibility of refusal in the circumstances. And if the House is unanimous, I feel that Government of India cannot say 'no'. I think, Sir, if the Motion is moved and pressed for a division the unanimity may be lost. So I request the hon. Mover to withdraw his Motion.

*Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: I do feel, Sir, that if the Motion is pressed and carried the case will be strengthened. In the circumstances, I press my Motion for division.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the provision of Rs. 5,100 under Grant No. 18, Major head—38. — Medical, Minor head—A.— Medical Establishment—(a)— Superintendence, Sub-head—1.—Pay of officers, Detailed head—Personal Assistant, at page 97 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i. e.*, the amount of the whole Grant of Rs. 15,10,200 do stand reduced by Rs. 100"

The Assembly divided.

Ayes—27

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| 1. Maulavi Md. Abdullah. | 16. Maulavi Mayeenud-Din Ahmed Chowdry. |
| 2. Khan Bahadur Maulavi Abual Majid Ziaosh Shams. | 17. Khan Sahib Maulavi Mudabbir Hussain Chaudhuri. |
| 3. Maulavi Muhammad Abul Kashem. | 18. Mumtazul Muhaddisin Moulana Md. Mufazzal Hussain. |
| 4. Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury. | 19. Maulavi Munawwar Ali. |
| 5. Maulavi Dewan Abdul Basith. | 20. Maulavi Nasir-ud-Din Ahmed. |
| 6. Maulavi Abdul Hamid. | 21. Maulavi Md. Nazmai Haque. |
| 7. Maulavi Abdul Khaleque Ahmed. | 22. Khan Bahadur Maulavi Maham med Roufique. |
| 8. Maulavi Md. Abdul Latif. | 23. Maulavi Saiyid Sir Muhammad Saadulla. |
| 9. Maulavi Dewan Abdur Rob Choudhury. | 24. Khan Bahadur Maulavi Sayidur Rahman. |
| 10. Maulavi Syed Abdur Rouf. | 25. Mr. G. Kydd. |
| 11. Maulavi Md. Ali Haider Khan. | 26. Dr. C. G. Terrell. |
| 12. Dr. Emran Husain Chaudhury. | 27. Mr. Mody Marak. |
| 13. Maulavi M. Idris Ali. | |
| 14. Maulavi Md. Mafiz Chowdhury. | |
| 15. Maulavi Makabbir Ali Mozumdar. | |

Noes—60

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| 1. The Hon'ble Srijut Gopinath Bardoloi. | 12. Srijut Bepin Chandra Medhi. |
| 2. The Hon'ble Mr. Baidyanath Mookerjee. | 13. Srijut Bhadra Kanta Gogoi. |
| 3. The Hon'ble Mr. Basanta Kumar Das. | 14. Babu Bidyapati Singha. |
| 4. The Hon'ble Srijut Bishnuram Medhi. | 15. Srijut Bijoy Chandra Bhagavati. |
| 5. The Hon'ble Srijut Ram Nath Das. | 16. Srijut Bejoy Chandra Saikia. |
| 6. The Hon'ble Maulavi Abdul Matlib Mazumdar. | 17. Srijut Bimalaprosad Chaliha. |
| 7. The Hon'ble Rev. J.J.M. Nichols-Roy. | 18. Srijut Dandeswar Hazarika. |
| 8. Shri Abala Kanta Gupta. | 19. Srijut Gauri Kanta Talukdar. |
| 9. Raja Ajit Narayan Dev of Sidli | 20. Babu Gopesh Chandra Pal. |
| 10. Babu Akshay Kumar Das. | 21. Srijut Haladhar Bhuyan. |
| 11. Srijut Beliram Das. | 22. Mr. Harendra Nath Sarma. |
| | 23. Srijut Hareswar Das. |
| | 24. Srijut Harinarayon Baruah. |
| | 25. Srijut Hem Chandra Hazarika. |
| | 26. Babu Jagat Bandhu Sircar. |
| | 27. Babu Jatindranath Bhadra. |
| | 28. Babu Kamini Kumar Sen. |
| | 29. Babu Khagendra Nath Samaddar. |

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| 30. Srijut Lakshesvar Borooh. | 43. Srijut Santosh Kumar Barua. |
| 31. Srijut Mahendramohan Choudhury. | 44. Srijut Sarat Chandra Sinha. |
| 32. Srijut Manisankar Basumatari. | 45. Shri Satindra Mohan Dev. |
| 33. Professor Nibaran Chandra Laskar. | 46. Srijut Siddhi Nath Sarma. |
| 34. Babu Nirendra Nath Dev. | 47. Babu Suresh Chandra Biswas. |
| 35. Srijut Omeo Kumar Das. | 48. Maulavi Abdur Rasheed. |
| 36. Mr. Prabhudayal Himatsingka. | 49. Maulana Ibrahim Ali. |
| 37. Srijut Purandar Sarma. | 50. Mr. J. C. Horwood. |
| 38. Srijut Purnananda Chetia. | 51. Mr. E. S. Kaye. |
| 39. Babu Purnendu Kishore Sen Gupta. | 52. Mr. R. A. Palmer. |
| 40. Babu Rabindra Nath Aditya | 53. Mr. A. Whittaker. |
| 41. Srijut Rajendra Nath Barua. | 54. Mrs. Bonily Khongmen. |
| 42. Babu Ramesh Chandra Das Choudhury. | 55. Srijut Chanoo Kheria. |
| | 56. Srijut Dalbir Singh Lohar. |
| | 57. Srijut Dharanidhar Basumatari. |
| | 58. Srijut Jiban Santal. |
| | 59. Srijut Karka Dalay Miri. |
| | 60. Mr. Larsingh Khyriem. |

The question was lost.

Dr. C. G. TERRELL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the total provision of Rs. 15,10,200 under Grant No. 18, Major head—38.—Medical, at page 96 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i. e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 15,10,200 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

I will be as brief as possible. My object in moving this Cut Motion is to try to interest all Members of this House in the Assam Nurses, Midwives and Health Visitors' Registration Act, 1944 and to bring to their notice the serious delay of Government in fully implementing and carrying out of the provisions of this Act.

After very careful consideration, and with the full support of all Members of the Assembly, this Bill was launched in 1943 and passed into Law in March, 1944. Two years have elapsed and even now the Act is not fully functioning in all respects, and unless a stimulus is given, I greatly fear that it will fall far short of the hopes and expectations attached to it at its inception.

The Council was established by Government and held its first meeting in March of last year, and a second meeting in August. At these meetings very careful consideration was given to all details connected with its function, and by previous sanction of the Provincial Government, this included the framing of its rules and these were duly prepared and submitted to Government for approval, together with its first Budget. After considerable delay most of the rules were approved by Government but I regret to inform the House that those rules relating to the financial recommendations, which the Council was fully empowered to frame for approval of the Provincial Government, have not been fully implemented.

Enquiries at the office of the Medical Department in the Secretariat as to the reason for this unnecessary delay and these restrictions gave me the regrettable impression that this Act is looked upon as of very minor importance and that its Council cannot be considered in any parallel with the Assam Medical Council. It will, I am sure, be understood that it is impossible at the very beginning for any such organisation to stand on its own feet financially, and not until the Act is working smoothly and efficiently can a regular income from registration fees be expected. This was exactly the same in the case of the Assam Medical Council, which even now has to be subsidised by contributions from Government.

It will, I think, be a surprise therefore to most Members to learn that the Council's request for an annual grant—to begin with of Rs. 1,000 only—has been turned down, and only a sum of Rs. 500 sanctioned by Government for the working of this Act for 1946, and even that qualified.

Other minor criticisms and restrictions have also been imposed in relation to the Council's other financial recommendations. For example, it was recommended by the Council—for reasons of the very considerable amount of office and clerical work required, at any rate for the first year or two, and for convenient supervision by the President (the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals) that the Head clerk in the office of the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals should, in addition, take on the post of Registrar of the Nurses Council and be paid Rs. 40 per month. Government, however, have only approved the payment of Rs. 15 per month and I do not think it will be possible to find any one to undertake the onerous and important work involved for such a meagre salary.

Again, a very qualified approval, or disapproval, is given by Government to the Council's natural recommendation that its members should receive the same halting allowance and travelling allowance as paid to members of the Assam Medical Council—the travelling allowance being the same as paid to hon. Members of the Assembly. In their note this recommendation is described by Government as "rather excessive". Most of the members of this Council are Lady doctors or senior Lady Hospital Matrons attached to Missionary institutions, and have to travel long distances from all parts of the Province to attend the Council meetings—and as nominated individuals, to supervise examinations. As such, I do not believe that the Members of this House will consider the Council's recommendations as excessive, and hope early confirmation of these will be forthcoming.

I hope, Sir, to be excused for having given the House some details of the pin-pricks and discouragements that have been associated with the launching of this Act, whereas the reverse had been expected. I am sure that the value of the legislation as provided for in the Act and the great need for the encouragement and a higher standard of training for the nursing services in Assam, is fully appreciated by all. In these days when every effort should be made to assist in finding employment for personnel released from the services, it will I think be of interest that the Assam Medical Council has taken steps for the classification of all *ex-service* nursing personnel—male and female. Those in the highest category will immediately be eligible for registration and employment and those in other categories will be encouraged to complete their training with a view to early registration. As a result we anticipate within a very few years that with this *ex-service* personnel on the register and an increasing number of nurses trained from recognised institutions, and passing out regularly, the Register will soon assume considerable proportions and adequate numbers will be available for the medical services of Assam.

As such, I sincerely hope that this Act will receive the wholehearted interest and support of all individual Members of this House and that Government will see their way at an early date to encourage and support the Council of this Act by fully endorsing its recommendations made within its framework.

Sir, before sitting down I would like to make one remark on a medical subject and to ask the Hon'ble Minister for Forest to excuse my correcting a statement he made yesterday on the subject of the new anti-malaria drug 'Paludrin'. He said that it was an American product, whereas in fact it is entirely British and was discovered by Imperial Chemical Co. England and is being manufactured in a special laboratory set up in Scotland.

*The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: I thank the hon. Member for the correction.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Cut Motion moved :

"That the total provision of Rs. 15,10,200 under Grant No.18, Major head—38.—Medical, at page 96 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs 100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 15,10,200 do stand reduced by Rs. 100."

Now there is no time. The Hon'ble Minister should reply.

The Hon'ble Srijut RAMNATH DAS : I do not admit that there was undue delay on the part of the Government in bringing the Act into operation. I think it is known to many hon. Members of the House that some time would be inevitably necessary to bring the provisions of an Act like this from the date of passing the Bill. Assuming that there was some delay that cannot be remedied at present. As regards the recommendation of the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals to some of the rules which are to be approved by the Government, they were approved, of course, with certain modifications and direction to the effect that when the Council has been established, it is the duty of the Council to administer the Act with minimum expense. This Government can only give aid and see that it may run well. For the year 1945-46 Government granted Rs. 2,500 and I think, at first Government granted Rs. 2,000 and very recently they have granted Rs. 500 more. If the Council cannot run with this amount and if the Council comes up before the Government for further aid for the next financial year Government will certainly consider their case sympathetically. With this assurance, I hope, the hon. Mover will withdraw his Motion.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Does the hon. Mover press his Motion ?

Dr. C. G. TERRELL : I should like to thank the Hon'ble Minister for the assurance he has given and for the evident interest he is taking, in encouraging the working of this Act. In view of this, I beg leave of the House, to withdraw my Cut Motion.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Has the hon. Member the leave of the House to withdraw his Motion ?

The Motion was, by the leave of the House, withdrawn.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : I now put the main Demand. The question is :

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 15,10,200 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1947 for the administration of the head '38—Medical' "

The question was adopted.

GRANT No. 33.

(64-B—CIVIL DEFENCE)

The Hon'ble Mr. BASANTA KUMAR DAS : On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 100 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1947 for the administration of the head "64-B.—Civil Defence".

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Motion moved :

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 100 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1947 for the administration of head '64-B.—Civil Defence' "

There is no Cut Motion under this Demand, I am now putting the question :

The question is :

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 100 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1947 for the administration of the head '64-B.—Civil Defence' "

The question was adopted.

GRANT No. 35

(LOANS AND ADVANCES)

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 7,75,000 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1947 for the administration of the head "Loans and Advances, etc."

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 7,75,000 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1947 for the administration of the head 'Loans and Advances, etc.'"

There is no Cut Motion and so I am putting the question.

The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 7,75,000 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1947 for the administration of the head 'Loans and Advances, etc.'"

The question was adopted.

GRANT No. 9

(18 B AND 68B.—NAVIGATION, EMBANKMENT AND DRAINAGE WORKS)

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: On the recommendation of His Excellency, the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 6,91,700 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1947 for the administration of the head "18B and 68B.—Navigation, Embankment and Drainage Works."

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 6,91,700 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1947 for the administration of the head '18B and 68B.—Navigation, Embankment and Drainage Works.'"

There are four Cut Motions. Does any of the hon. Members propose to move any Motion?

*Maulavi SYED ABDUR ROUF: Sir, I propose to move my Cut Motion No. 3.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Very well.

*Maulavi SYED ABDUR ROUF: That the provision of Rs. 3,24,708 under Grant No. 9, Major head—18B and 68B.—Navigation, Embankments and Drainage Works, Minor head—18-B.—Navigation, Embankments and Drainage Works financed from ordinary Revenues, Sub-head—A.—Works, at page 45 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, i.e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 6,91,700 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

My object is to draw the attention of the Government towards the imperative necessity of erecting bunds on the banks of Beki river in Barpeta Subdivision to avert the effects of flood.

To the north of the Barpeta Subdivision below the Bhutan Hills the Manas river was running from east to west. On its way towards the west it found two outlets on the left bank—the source of Beki and of Maramanas. The main current however ran through Jia-Manas. But for all that Beki was never a meek river. Again and again it refused to submit to the authority of the Railway Department and washed away the bridge-pillars nailed to its heart. The Engineers of the Railway Department were not however prepared to admit defeat in the game of wits and they practically stopped the source of Beki by erecting a bund. This resulted in a counter move by Beki in finding out a new source

just near that of Maramanas. In 1943 a small *char* appeared to the east of Maramanas source—Maramanas had to give way to the new source and as a result Beki has again come out this time more furious and devastating than she was at any time during the last 100 years.

Sir, you know Barnagar is a historically important place and it has played a very important part in the history of Assam for the last 600 years. The Beki flows through this Barnagar circle. For the last few years this river has been eroding away villages after villages and throwing sands on others on its bank making those villages unfit for cultivation. Over and above that every year the river finds out some Dhalas or current courses towards the east and south-east. Two or three of these current courses have been destroying the crops of villages in Barpeta Subdivision for the last two years. One or two bunds on the left bank of the river can in my opinion save our Subdivision to a great extent. The cost will be small and I can assure the Government that in any undertaking of the kind fullest public co-operation will be forthcoming.

My Friend Maulavi Abdul Hai suggests in a separate Cut Motion that a Committee should be constituted to examine the question, a good idea indeed, but I want that early steps should be taken to save the Subdivision of Barpeta from the annual ravages of Beki-floods.

With these words, Sir, I commend my Motion to the acceptance of the House.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Cut Motion moved:

“That the provision of Rs. 3,24,708 under Grant No. 9, Major head—18B and 68B.—Navigation, Embankments and Drainage Works, Minor head—18B.—Navigation, Embankments and Drainage Works financed from ordinary Revenues, Sub-head—A.—Works, at page 45 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 6,91,700 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.”

The Hon'ble Rev J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: Sir, the hon. Member has described about the change of the courses of two rivers. The Public Works Department and the Embankment Department do not seem to have any knowledge of this locality and we have nothing in the file to know about the condition of these rivers and their banks. We will however examine the question.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member press his Motion.

*Maulavi SYED ABDUR ROUF: May I know whether Government will make an enquiry into the matter this year, Sir?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: Yes, Sir, if possible.

*Maulavi SYED ABDUR ROUF: After getting the assurance from the Hon'ble Minister, I beg leave of the House to withdraw my Motion.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Has the hon. Member got leave of the House to withdraw the Motion?

The Motion was, by the leave of the House, withdrawn.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Then I am putting the main question. The question is:

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 6,91,700 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1947 for the administration of the head ‘18B and 68B.—Navigation, Embankments and Drainage Works.’”

The question was adopted.

GRANT No. 29

(56.—STATIONERY AND PRINTING.)

The Hon'ble Mr. BASANTA KUMAR DAS: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 5,07,800 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1947 for the administration of the head "56.—Stationery and Printing."

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs.5,07,800 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1947 for the administration of the head '56.—Stationery and Printing.'"

There is one Cut Motion.

Dr. EMRAN HUSAIN CHAUDHURY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the total provision of Rs 5,07,800 under Grant No 29, Major head—56.—Stationery and Printing, at page 142 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.5,07,800 do stand reduced by Rs.100.

My object is to criticise Government for not (a) reducing the working hours of the Press by one hour towards the evening, (b) for not creating a distinct grade of Readers and (c) for not reviving the post of the Head Reader in the Press.

Sir, in my opinion the Government Press here is a very much neglected Department although it is as old as the Secretariat. From its very start right up to 1932 the employees appeared to be satisfied with their conditions of work, with their holidays, with pay, etc. What with the usually high cost of living and what with the climatic conditions of Shillong they were allowed less working hours and other amenities. But after 1932 the working period was increased by two more hours. The Government granted them three advance increments which merged in their pay in course of three years. The employees were naturally not satisfied. This resulted in vigorous agitation on the part of the employees whose Association sent deputation after deputation to Government in order to revive the old system of holidays and working hours. As a result of this agitation the Government reduced their working hours by only one hour. That did not satisfy the employees and agitation went on. On account of Government's indifference to the health of the employees and on account of the hardships suffered by them, the "absentee statements" increased considerably with increased death rates and invalid pensions. Quite a large number of employees died before they could earn their pension. Also, Sir, some of the employees have got to walk long distances in order to come to the office. Some of them cover as long a distance as five miles, living as they do, outside the Municipal area. They come at ten o'clock in the morning and leave work at six in the evening. By the time they leave work in the evening it is already dark and they hardly find any time to look to their domestic needs. So, I urge upon Government to consider the question of reducing the working hours by one hour. The Government have got to consider the fact that elsewhere the employees have got quarters, the climatic condition in which they work is more favourable and the cost of living cheaper.

The Hon'ble Mr. BASANTA KUMAR DAS: Sir, one matter is to be discussed by a Cut Motion. The hon. Member has put down as many as three matters in his Motion. Is it permissible?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Since the hon. Member is new to this House I shall permit him on this occasion.

Dr. EMRAN HUSAIN CHAUDHURY: Thank you, Sir. I am, like many others, quite new to this House and have had no time as yet to learn and understand the rules and regulations of the House.

The Hon'ble Mr. BASANTA KUMAR DAS: Ignorance of law is not a plea.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: That is so.

Dr. EMRAN HUSAIN CHAUDHURY: Sir, in every other Government Press there is a distinct grade of Readers who are academically advanced people. Many of them are Graduates and Intermediates. On them rests the great responsibility of correct printing. But unfortunately the pay paid to them is very low here. For the information of the hon. Members of this House I should like to read out some lines from the Handbook of Government of India Presses in order to show the position enjoyed by the Readers of the Calcutta Press. It is surprising to see that Government revised the scale of junior Readers from Rs.60—4—80 to Rs.50—4—90—5—120 per mensem without simultaneously revising the scale of the senior Readers. There in the Calcutta Press the Head Reader is on Rs. 350—10—400 per mensem; two Senior Readers on Rs. 300—10—350; seven Readers on Rs. 200—10—250; eight Readers on Rs.160—10—200 and eight Readers on Rs.100—8—150 per mensem. Therefore it stands to reason that Government should think over the position of Readers in the Government Press here, and I would request Government to create a distinct grade of Readers here.

Lastly, Sir, I would take up the question of the Head Reader. There is no Head Reader here, although in every other Government Press, there is a Head Reader and he has responsibility connected with revision of proofs, supervision, apportioning tasks to proper persons expeditious submission of proofs, etc. In view of the responsibility of the Head Reader I think the post of a Head Reader should be created here. In this connection I should like to read out what the Handbook of Government of India Presses states regarding the responsibility of the Head Reader. "The Head Reader is in charge of, and exercise general supervision, over the reading section. He is responsible for the efficiency of the section and should see that the Readers and revisers are given work in proportion to their pay as far as possible. He should attend to clean sheets, solve queries, sign all returned sheets of Readers and revisers and watch that proofs are not delayed but is also responsible for the general good conduct of the section and should attend to trials of prospective Readers and Copy-holders when vacancies are filled up."

In view of this, and in view also of the fact that the employees of the Government Press have got an Association, registered as a Trade Union, which can at any time take some serious steps as are being taken by their fellow employees in Bombay and Calcutta Presses, I would like the Government to seriously consider their position and the desirability of the creation of a post of Head Reader.

I would therefore urge upon the Government to appoint a Committee of Enquiry in order to investigate the causes of increased death rolls, absentee statements and invalid pensions.

I hope, Sir, that the grievances which I have voiced here have not fallen on deaf ears.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Cut Motion moved:

"That the total provision of Rs 5,07,800 under Grant No.29, Major head—56.—Stationery and Printing, at page 142 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs 100, i.e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs.5,07,800 do stand reduced by Rs.100."

The Hon'ble Mr. BASANTA KUMAR DAS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Mover has discussed three points by this Cut Motion.

The first point is that the working hours of the Assam Government Press workers should be reduced by one hour towards evening. Now, Sir, the present working hours are 45 in a week; that means $7\frac{1}{2}$ hours per day. Under the Factory Act the hours of work are given as 54 per week. (The Hon'ble the Speaker: That is the maximum). Yes, Sir. I do not know whether these long hours of work

that are required to be put in by our employees in the Government Press are affecting their health or not. My hon. Friend has described the effects of this on the health of the workers in his speech. I shall certainly look into that matter and see what can be done.

Then with regard to second point, Sir, about the creation of distinct grades of Readers. I do not exactly follow what he means by this. But I may tell the hon. Member that there are already two grades, one is a senior grade and the other a junior grade. The scale of senior grade formerly was Rs.80—5—170 and the present one is Rs. 80—5—150. The scale of the junior grade is Rs. 50—4—90—5—120.

Now the hon. Member has also urged for the appointment of a Head Reader. So far as Assam Government Press is concerned it has been realised by the Government the necessity of reviving the post, because the duty of supervision of distribution of work is with the Superintendent. The senior Reader also gets a monthly allowance of Rs. 20. I may tell the hon. Members however that I am at present dealing with a file relating to a representation from the Press workers. That representation has been pending for long from the time of the late Government. I am going to consider the grievances put forward therein by the Press workers. Beyond this I think need not say anything more. I shall carefully examine the grievances of the Press workers and see what I can do to remove them.

Dr. EMRAN HUSAIN CHAUDHURY: In view of the assurance given by the Hon'ble Minister in-charge that he would consider the grievances of the Press workers sympathetically I beg leave of the House to withdraw my Motion.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Has the hon. Member the leave of the House to withdraw his Motion?

The Motion was, by the leave of the House, withdrawn.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 5,07,800 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1947 for the administration of the head '56.—Stationery and Printing'."

The question was adopted.

GRANT No. 4.

(9.—Stamps)

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 62,000 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1947 for the administration of the head "9.—Stamps".

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 62,000 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1947 for the administration of the head '9.—Stamps'".

As there is no Cut Motion under this Demand I am putting the question.

The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 62,000 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1947 for the administration of the head '9.—Stamps'".

The question was adopted.

ADJOURNMENT

The Assembly was then adjourned till 11 A. M. on Monday, the 25th March, 1946.

SHILLONG:

The May 1946.

A. K. BARUA,

Secretary, Legislative Assembly, Assam

A.G.P. ((L.A.)No.13—118—14-5-1946.

SPH