

DEBATES

IN THE

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF CEYLON,

On Wednesday, July 22, 1925.

Pursuant to adjournment the Honourable the Members of the Legislative Council met at the Council Chamber at 2.30 P.M. this day.

PRESENT :

- THE HONOURABLE COLONEL H. W. HIGGINSON, C.B., D.S.O., A.D.C., OFFICER COMMANDING THE TROOPS, *Presiding Member*.
- THE HONOURABLE MR. E. B. ALEXANDER, C.M.G., ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY.
- THE HONOURABLE MR. L. H. ELPHINSTONE, K.C., ATTORNEY-GENERAL.
- THE HONOURABLE MR. H. W. CODRINGTON, ACTING CONTROLLER OF REVENUE.
- THE HONOURABLE MR. W. W. WOODS, TREASURER.
- THE HONOURABLE MR. F. A. STOCKDALE, C.B.E., DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE.
- THE HONOURABLE SIR PONNAMBALAM RAMANATHAN, KT., K.C., C.M.G. (NORTHERN PROVINCE, NORTHERN DIVISION).
- THE HONOURABLE MR. L. MACRAE, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION.
- THE HONOURABLE MR. T. Y. WRIGHT (EUROPEAN RURAL MEMBER).
- THE HONOURABLE MR. H. A. LOOS (NOMINATED UNOFFICIAL MEMBER).
- THE HONOURABLE MR. E. W. PERERA (KALUTARA REVENUE DISTRICT).
- THE HONOURABLE MR. E. R. TAMBIMUTTU (BATTICALOA REVENUE DISTRICT).
- THE HONOURABLE MR. A. C. G. WIJEYEKOON (NOMINATED UNOFFICIAL MEMBER).
- THE HONOURABLE MR. E. J. HAYWARD C.B.E., V.D. (COMMERCIAL MEMBER).
- THE HONOURABLE MR. W. L. KINDERSLEY (GOVERNMENT AGENT, CENTRAL PROVINCE).
- THE HONOURABLE MR. C. W. W. KANNANGARA (SOUTHERN PROVINCE, WESTERN DIVISION).
- THE HONOURABLE MR. N. J. MARTIN (SECOND BURGHIER MEMBER).
- THE HONOURABLE MR. J. STRACHAN, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS.
- THE HONOURABLE MR. W. T. SOUTHOORN, PRINCIPAL COLLECTOR OF CUSTOMS.
- THE HONOURABLE MR. K. BALASINGHAM (NOMINATED UNOFFICIAL MEMBER).
- THE HONOURABLE DR. J. F. E. BRIDGER, PRINCIPAL CIVIL MEDICAL OFFICER.
- THE HONOURABLE MR. A. CANAGARATNAM (NORTHERN PROVINCE, SOUTHERN DIVISION).

- THE HONOURABLE MR. C. E. VICTOR COREA (COLOMBO TOWN, NORTH).
THE HONOURABLE MR. C. H. Z. FERNANDO (NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCE,
WESTERN DIVISION).
THE HONOURABLE MR. H. R. FREEMAN (NORTH-CENTRAL PROVINCE).
THE HONOURABLE MR. T. B. JAYAH (THIRD MUSLIM MEMBER).
THE HONOURABLE MR. D. B. JAYATILAKA (COLOMBO DISTRICT).
THE HONOURABLE MR. H. M. MACAN MARKAR (FIRST MUSLIM
MEMBER).
THE HONOURABLE MR. G. E. MADAWALA (NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCE,
EASTERN DIVISION).
THE HONOURABLE MR. A. MAHADEVA (WESTERN PROVINCE, CEYLON
TAMIL).
THE HONOURABLE MR. A. F. MOLAMURE (KEGALLA REVENUE DISTRICT).
THE HONOURABLE MR. A. H. E. MOLAMURE (RATNAPURA REVENUE
DISTRICT).
THE HONOURABLE MR. F. A. OBEYESEKERE (SOUTHERN PROVINCE,
CENTRAL DIVISION).
THE HONOURABLE MR. I. X. PEREIRA (FIRST INDIAN MEMBER).
THE HONOURABLE MR. S. RAJARATNAM (NORTHERN PROVINCE, CENTRAL
DIVISION).
THE HONOURABLE MR. D. S. SENANAYAKE (NEGOMBO DISTRICT).
THE HONOURABLE MR. M. M. SUBRAMANIAM (TRINCOMALEE REVENUE
DISTRICT).
THE HONOURABLE MR. S. R. MOHAMED SULTAN (SECOND INDIAN
MEMBER).
THE HONOURABLE MR. V. S. DE S. WIKREMANAYAKE (SOUTHERN
PROVINCE, SOUTHERN DIVISION).
THE HONOURABLE MR. G. A. H. WILLE (FIRST BURGHES MEMBER).
THE HONOURABLE SIR J. THOMSON BROOM, Kt. (EUROPEAN URBAN
MEMBER).
THE HONOURABLE MR. W. A. DE SILVA (CENTRAL PROVINCE, URBAN).
THE HONOURABLE MR. P. B. RAMBUKWELLE (CENTRAL PROVINCE,
RURAL).
THE HONOURABLE MR. T. M. SABA RUTNAM (NORTHERN PROVINCE,
EASTERN DIVISION).

MR. J. A. MAYBIN, *Clerk to the Council.*

Announcement.

THE HON. THE OFFICER COMMANDING THE TROOPS :—
I regret to inform Honourable Members that the Honourable the
Vice-President, Sir James Peiris, is unfortunately indisposed and is
unable to preside at the meeting to-day.

Minutes.

The Minutes of the Meeting of July 3, 1925, were confirmed.

Papers laid.

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—I lay
on the table, Sir, the following papers :—

Administration Reports, 1924 :—

Part I., Civil : Reports of the Government Agents of the Western,
Central, Southern, Northern, Eastern, North-Western, North-
Central, and Uva Provinces.

Part IV., Education, Science, and Art : Report of the Acting
Government Veterinary Surgeon.

Sessional Papers, 1925 :—

XIX.—Report on the Revision of the Lunacy Ordinance.

XX.—Horses for the Ceylon Mounted Rifles.

XXI.—Salaries and Pensions of Teachers in Assisted Schools.

XXII.—General Report of the Board of Improvement Commissioners, Kandy, for the Year 1924.

By-laws made by the Ratnapura Urban District Council under sections 164 and 168 (1) of "The Local Government Ordinance, No. 11 of 1920," relating to the conduct of meetings.

Rules made by His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government in Executive Council under section 7 of "The Ceylon Telegraph Ordinance, 1908," as amended by Ordinance No. 10 of 1923.

By-laws made by the Ratnapura Urban District Council under sections 164 and 168 (8) (c) of "The Local Government Ordinance, No. 11 of 1920," regarding licensed stands for motor vehicles.

Rule made by His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government in Executive Council under section 7 of "The Ceylon Telegraph Ordinance, 1908," as amended by Ordinance No. 10 of 1923.

By-law regarding leave made by the Municipal Council, Colombo, under section 109 (1) of "The Municipal Councils Ordinance, No. 6 of 1910."

Accounts of the several Provincial Road Committees in the Island for the year 1924.

Statement giving particulars of the periodical card passes issued on the Railway.

List showing complimentary periodical card passes.

Statement giving the names, &c., of recruits in the Irrigation Department during the last ten years, from January 1, 1915.

PETITIONS.

Petition from W. Weeraratne.

THE HON. MR. D. S. SENANAYAKE (Negombo District) :—I beg to present a petition, Sir, from one W. Weeraratne of Welihenda estate, Pelmadulla district. The petitioner complains of unfair treatment by the Rubber Controller. He states that he owns about 70 acres of rubber, the whole area being tappable and capable of producing 4,500 pounds of rubber a month, but he was only allowed 700 pounds a month—a little over one-sixth. He states that the assessor was prejudiced against him, and he feels that if another assessor is sent he will not be treated as he has been.

Petition from the Inhabitants of Polhena.

THE HON. MR. F. A. OBEYESEKERE (Southern Province, Central Division) :—I beg to present a petition, Sir, from the inhabitants of Polhena. They complain that from the commencement of this year the police tax has been levied though no case of even petty theft has been committed for a considerable time. The petitioners pray that the tax be removed.

Petition from G. J. Alles.

THE HON. MR. F. A. OBEYESEKERE (Southern Province, Central Division) :—I also present a petition, Sir, from G. J. Alles of Godagama within the Four Gravets of Matara.

Petition from Percy David.

THE HON. MR. T. B. JAYAH (Third Muslim Member) :—I rise, Sir, to present a petition from Mr. Percy David, late Masonry Overseer of the Extension Department, Ceylon Government Railway.

He states that he was connected with the Ceylon Government Railway for twenty-four years. At the completion of the works of the Railway Construction Department his services were discontinued, and although he applied for a gratuity he was refused one. The petitioner then applied to the Railway Construction Department for re-employment, but was again refused. The petitioner states that his case deserves the sympathetic consideration of Government and prays for redress.

Petition from Miss Eva Elhart.

THE HON. MR. N. J. MARTIN (Second Burgher Member) :—I beg to present a petition, Sir, from Miss Eva Elhart, who was for some time employed in the Civil Medical Department as a nurse and later on as matron. She served for ten years, and owing to ill-health she was compelled to retire on a pension of Rs. 22·50 a month at the age of forty-five. She has now broken down in health, and the scanty pension she receives does not enable her to meet the cost of living. Till recently she was able to add to her pension by undertaking private work, but ill-health prevents her doing this now. She is about fifty-two years of age, and she prays that her pension might be increased to Rs. 40 a month to enable her to live without attempting to do the impossible and work. She has apparently no one to help her.

QUESTIONS.

Recruits for the Irrigation Department Field Service.

THE HON. MR. E. R. TAMBIMUTTU (Batticaloa Revenue District) :—I rise, Sir, to ask—(1) How many youths were recruited for the Irrigation Department Field Service during the last ten years, commencing January 1, 1915, to date? (2) Will the Government be pleased to furnish a list containing the names of all such recruits, showing their age, race, educational qualifications at the time of recruitment, and their present position in the service, and where any have ceased to remain in the service, the reason for their discontinuance, for example, death, dismissal, resignation, compulsory retirement, and so on? (3) How many of the subordinate field officers in the Irrigation Department have risen to the position of Assistant Irrigation Engineers since the Department began to exist as a separate Department?

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—(1) Eighty-six.

(2) A statement giving the desired information is laid on the table.

(3) Six (two of these rose to the rank of Chief Irrigation Inspector, which designation was subsequently altered to Assistant Irrigation Engineer).

The statements given as regards recruitment include the names of those recruited as "Learners" in addition to those appointed to substantive posts as Irrigation Sub-Inspectors.

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—The replies to questions Nos. 83 and 85 are not yet ready.

Appointment of Chief Headmen.

THE HON. MR. G. E. MADAWALA (North-Western Province, Eastern Division) :—I rise, Sir, to ask—(1) Does the Government observe the principles enunciated by the late Sir Alexander Ashmore, who held the office of Colonial Secretary of the Colony, and the recommendations contained in the report of the Headmen Commission, that in the matter of the appointment of Chief Headmen preference be given to men of local influence having vested interests in the district? (2) If so, how was it that Mr. S. L. B. Dharmakirti, an officer of the Second Class of the Clerical Service, with no local interests and having no family influence, and not possessing an inch of land in the Kurunegala District, was appointed as President of the Weudawili hatpattu in preference to local candidates with all the requisite qualifications? (3) If not, why not?

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—(1) The Government considers that in making appointments to vacant offices of Chief Headmen it is essential to give the most careful consideration to the claims of local applicants who have vested interests in the district affected.

(2) In the case referred to by the Honourable Member, the claims of all local and other candidates were fully considered. The Government finally came to the conclusion that in view of his experience of judicial work and other qualifications Mr. Dharmakirti was the candidate best suited to fill the vacant office, and accordingly appointed him to the office on probation.

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—The replies to questions Nos. 90, 93, 94, 98, and 99 are not yet ready.

Government Clerical Examination—Number of Candidates from the Northern Province.

THE HON. MR. T. M. SABA RUTNAM (Northern Province, Eastern Division) :—I rise, Sir, to ask—(a) Will the Government be pleased to furnish a statement showing the number of candidates who took up each of the last five Government Clerical Examinations, and the number of those candidates (including officers in Class III. of the Clerical Service) whose permanent residence is in the Northern Province? (b) Was the examination ever held in Jaffna, and if so, why was the practice discontinued? (c) In view of the very large number of candidates, and of the high percentage of Jaffnese now taking up this examination, will the Government be pleased to direct that the examination be held simultaneously in Jaffna in future?

THE HON. MR. L. MACRAE (Director of Education) :—(a) The number of candidates who sat for each of the last five examinations is as follows :—

Year.	Number of Candidates who sat.			
1921	635
1922	657
1923	658
1924	887
1925	911

The number of candidates whose addresses were stated to be in the Northern Province is as follows :—

Year.				Number of Candidates whose Addresses were in Northern Province.
1921	..	..	..	124
1922	..	..	..	105
1923	..	..	..	116
1924	..	..	..	209
1925	..	..	..	195

(b) This examination was held in Jaffna until the year 1906, when communication between Jaffna and Colombo was made easier by the opening of the railway.

(c) It is easier to control examinations which are held at one centre, and in the case of a competitive examination like the Government Clerical Examination, it is very desirable for all the candidates to be examined under the same conditions. In the circumstances Government does not consider it desirable to hold this examination at two centres.

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—The reply to question No. 101 is not yet ready.

Medical Officers who hold Permanent Acting Appointments.

THE HON. MR. T. B. JAYAH (Third Muslim Member) :—I rise, Sir, to ask—How many Medical Officers are there in the Medical Department who hold permanent acting appointments? How many of them have held office for over twelve months?

THE HON. DR. J. F. E. BRIDGER (Principal Civil Medical Officer) :—There are no Medical Officers in the Department holding permanent acting appointments. There are eleven Medical Officers on continuous acting duty, of whom six will be taken into Grade II. from August, 1925. Of the other five, only one has over twelve months' service, having acted for an officer who was on long leave and resigned at the end of last month.

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—The reply to question No. 104 is not yet ready.

General Free Passes for Railway Travelling.

THE HON. MR. A. F. MOLAMURE (Kegalla Revenue District) :—I rise, Sir, to ask—(a) Will the Government be pleased to provide this Council with a return giving the names of all the persons to whom general free passes for railway travelling have been granted, stating the official designations of such persons and giving in each case the special class in the railway for which these passes are available? (b) Under what authority, rule, or regulation in each individual case are such passes granted? (c) Will the Government state whether such passes may be used in particular cases for travelling in connection with non-official business. If so, in what cases? (d) Will the Government give the approximate revenue value, for the financial year ending October, 1924, involved in the issue of these general passes for free travel on the railway? (e) What is the present method, if any, by which the authorities are able to check the proper use of such passes?

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—(a) It is presumed that the question refers to periodical card passes. The number issued is as follows :—

1st Class	..	..	..	202
2nd Class	..	..	..	781
3rd Class	..	..	..	719
				<hr/>
				1,702
				<hr/>

A statement giving details is tabled.

(b) These passes are issued under General Orders 1261 and 1262. Passes other than those enumerated in General Order 1262 are also issued in special circumstances under special authority of Government.

(c) With the exception of the passes shown on the list marked A, which is now tabled, all card passes bear one of the following stamps, and can only be used when travelling as indicated therein :—

- (1) For use on Government duty.
- (2) For use on ———— duty only.
- (3) For use only when accompanying the Hon. Mr. ———— or travelling on his orders.

The issue in (3) is confined to the servants of Unofficial Members of the Legislative Council.

(d) It is impossible to compute, even approximately, the revenue value of all the free passes which are issued.

(e) Passes are examined at railway stations and by the Travelling Ticket Inspectors and Examiners in the ordinary course.

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—The answer to question No. 106 is not yet ready.

Port Surgeon, Colombo, and Medical Officer, Nuwara Eliya.

THE HON. MR. S. RAJARATNAM (Northern Province, Central Division) :—I rise, Sir, to ask—Is the Government aware that the Medical Department in spite of protest appoints gentlemen belonging only to one particular community as Port Surgeon, Colombo, and Medical Officer, Nuwara Eliya? If there is no such rule, written or unwritten, will the Government be pleased to direct that in the future men also of other communities without any distinction of race be appointed to these posts?

THE HON. DR. J. F. E. BRIDGER (Principal Civil Medical Officer) :—The question of race does not affect appointments to the posts of Port Surgeon, Colombo, or District Medical Officer, Nuwara Eliya. Consideration is given only to the suitability of the candidates for these posts.

No protests on the score of racial discrimination have been received against any previous appointments.

Acting Assistant Principal Civil Medical Officer.

THE HON. MR. S. RAJARATNAM (Northern Province, Central Division) :—I rise, Sir, to ask—Is it a fact that when the Principal Civil Medical Officer went on leave the post of Assistant Principal Civil Medical Officer was filled up by a junior officer, the claims of some of the senior officers being passed over? If it is on the score

of inefficiency of the senior men, when was it found out? Is there any record of it? If the appointment was made without full consideration of the claims of the senior men, will the Government be pleased to see that no such mistakes do hereafter occur?

THE HON. DR. J. F. E. BRIDGER (Principal Civil Medical Officer):—It is not a fact that when the Principal Civil Medical Officer went on leave the post of Assistant Principal Civil Medical Officer was filled by a junior officer. The post was filled by the Medical Officer who has the longest service of any officer of the Department, and this officer was considered the most suitable officer for the acting appointment; that being the case the other portions of the Honourable Member's question do not call for any reply.

Sanitary Inspectors—Number belonging to each Race.

THE HON. MR. S. RAJARATNAM (Northern Province, Central Division):—I rise, Sir, to ask—Will the Government be pleased to state the number of Sanitary Inspectors the Sanitary Department has successfully trained during each of the last four years, showing the number that belongs to each race?

THE HON. DR. J. F. E. BRIDGER (Principal Civil Medical Officer):—The figures desired by the Honourable Member are as follows:—

1921	..	{	Sinhalese	..	15	1923	..	{	Sinhalese	..	18
			Tamils	..	7				Tamils	..	7
			Burghers	..	1				Burghers	..	5
			Malays	..	1						
			Total	..	24			Total	..	30	
1922	..	{	Sinhalese	..	18	1924	..	{	Sinhalese	..	19
			Tamils	..	5				Tamils	..	9
			Burghers	..	3				Burghers	..	5
									Malays	..	1
			Total	..	26			Moors	..	1	
			Total	..	26			Total	..	35	

Medical Men—Consultation and Private Practice.

THE HON. MR. S. RAJARATNAM (Northern Province, Central Division):—I rise, Sir, to ask—Will the Government be pleased to state the number of medical men that are in the Government service: (a) Without any private practice? (b) With only consultation practice? Is there any penalty if the officer concerned has private practice in spite of his undertaking not to do so?

THE HON. DR. J. F. E. BRIDGER (Principal Civil Medical Officer):—(1) The number of Medical Officers not entitled to private practice is fifty-nine, and the number allowed consulting practice only is five.

(2) There is no specific penalty laid down for doing private practice against orders, but officers found guilty have in the past, and will in the future, be suitably dealt with.

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY:—The replies to questions Nos. 112 to 116 are not yet ready.

Doctors on the Waiting List.

THE HON. MR. V. S. DE S. WIKREMANAYAKE (Southern Province, Southern Division) :—I rise, Sir, to ask—(1) How many doctors are there in the waiting list now? How many of these are holding acting appointments? (2) How many doctors have been taken over to the fixed pensionable establishment since the last Estimates were passed in Council? (3) How many apothecaries are there in charge of stations?

THE HON. DR. J. F. E. BRIDGER (Principal Civil Medical Officer) :—(1) There are 63 medical applicants on the waiting list, of whom 11 are on continuous acting duty. Of the latter, 6 will be appointed to Grade II., with effect from August 1, 1925.

(2) Since October 1, 1924, 2 officers on the waiting list have received appointments in the Sanitary Branch and 29 in the Medical Branch. These figures include the 6 appointments referred to in the answer to (1), which will take effect from August 1.

(3) 184 apothecaries are in charge of stations in the Medical Department.

Land Sale Rules.

THE HON. MR. C. W. W. KANNANGARA (Southern Province, Western Division) :—I rise, Sir, to ask—What is the exact interpretation of the words “partially surrounded by” in Land Sale Regulation No. 35? Is there general dissatisfaction in the country over the land sale policy of Government and the manner in which the elastically worded land sale rules are put into practice? If so, will Government consider the advisability of revising the policy as well as the rules?

THE HON. THE ACTING CONTROLLER OF REVENUE :—(1) The Land Sale Regulation in question was framed to meet the case of areas of small extent which form enclaves in existing estates. A precise definition of what the words “is partially surrounded by” may mean under all circumstances is plainly impossible. Cases of difficulty are expressly reserved by the regulation for the decision of the Governor.

(2) Government is not aware of any such general dissatisfaction.

(3) In view of the foregoing answer this question does not arise.

Parcel Post to the Philippine Islands.

THE HON. MR. H. M. MACAN MARKAR (First Muslim Member) :—I rise, Sir, to ask—Is Government aware that at present a parcel addressed from Ceylon to the Philippine Islands is forwarded through London, New York, and so on, and takes ten weeks to reach its destination? Does Government consider this satisfactory? If not, will Government be pleased, in the interests of commerce, to establish immediately such a parcel post system between Ceylon and the Philippine Islands *via* Hong Kong as will expedite the service?

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative.

The Government does not consider the present system satisfactory. The Postmaster-General has been for some time in correspondence

with the Postal Administration of the Philippine Islands with a view to establishing a more direct postal service. It is hoped that these negotiations will result in more satisfactory arrangements being made.

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—The answers to questions Nos. 120 to 129 are not yet ready.

Tax on Chenas in the North-Central Province.

THE HON. MR. H. R. FREEMAN (North-Central Province) :—I rise, Sir, to ask—(a) Did the Government in 1899 waive the then tax on chenas in the North-Central Province? (b) Will the Government be pleased to stay recovery of this tax, now again being recovered, to enable this Council to discuss the matter?

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—The answer to the first question is in the affirmative. The Government has instructed the Government Agent, North-Central Province, to suspend the recovery of fees for kurakkan chena permits in the North-Central Province during the present year, 1925.

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—The reply to question No. 131 is not yet ready.

Government Notifications and Tamil-speaking Communities.

THE HON. MR. H. M. MACAN MARKAR (First Muslim Member) :—I rise, Sir, to ask—(a) Is the Government aware of the fact that in certain districts of the Island where the Sinhalese are in a majority all such Government notifications, as summons, and so on, are issued only in English and Sinhalese? (b) Is the Government also aware of the difficulty and inconvenience experienced in these districts by those who can read and write only Tamil? (c) For the convenience of the members of the Tamil-speaking communities in these districts, will the Government be pleased to issue necessary orders that in future all Government notifications be published in Tamil also?

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—Government has recently received representations that the Indian estate population in certain districts was put to inconvenience by the issue of summonses and court notices in Sinhalese. Inquiries showed that in certain districts this was true, and that the reason for the issue of these notices in Sinhalese was that there was no Tamil-speaking clerk attached to the courts having jurisdiction there. Steps are being taken to transfer Tamil-speaking clerks to the courts in question.

Representations from any other districts will receive the sympathetic consideration of Government.

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—The answers to questions Nos. 133 to 135 are not yet ready.

Police Headmen and Remuneration.

THE HON. MR. M. M. SUBRAMANIAM (Trincomalee Revenue District) :—I rise, Sir, to ask—In view of the evidence collated some years ago by the members of the “Headmen’s Commission” and the responsible work done by the police headmen, especially in rural areas in connection with the administration of justice, does not the Government think it desirable to remunerate them for their services?

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—The Government does not at present propose to introduce the payment of salaries to those headmen who are not in receipt of a fixed remuneration.

The Government has, however, introduced into the present Budget, under Head 13, item 4, a vote of Rs. 100,000, which is more than double the vote of Rs. 45,700 in the last Budget, for remuneration to headmen.

Recommendations of Select Committee on Rubber Restriction.

THE HON. MR. C. W. W. KANNANGARA (Southern Province, Western Division) :—I rise, Sir, to ask—What steps has Government taken on the report of the Select Committee of this Council appointed on November 28, 1924, as regards the Rubber Restriction Ordinance, No. 24 of 1922? Is Government going to adopt any of the recommendations made by the Committee about the working of the Ordinance? If so, which of them, and when will they be put into operation? What are the reasons for rejecting the other modifications recommended?

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—The Government has transmitted the report to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and has taken steps to ascertain the views of the various bodies representing the interests affected. When the views of all these bodies are before the Government, a decision will be arrived at as regards the recommendations included in the report. Government is not, at present, in a position to make a more definite statement on the subject.

Report of Communal Pastures Committee.

THE HON. MR. C. E. VICTOR COREA (Colombo Town, North) :—I rise, Sir, to ask—Will the Government be pleased to state if the Communal Pastures Committee has drawn up its report, and if so, when it will be laid before this Council?

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—The Communal Pastures Committee has forwarded its report, which has been sent to the Government Printer to be printed as a Sessional Paper. The Sessional Paper, when ready, will be laid before the Council.

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—The answers to questions Nos. 139 and 140 are not yet ready.

The Ceylon Telegraph Ordinance.

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—I beg, Sir, to move—That the rules made by His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, in exercise of the powers vested

in him by section 7 of "The Ceylon Telegraph Ordinance, 1908," as amended by Ordinance No. 10 of 1923, and published in *Government Gazette* No. 7,472 of July 3, 1925, be confirmed.

THE HON. THE TREASURER seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—I beg, Sir, to move—That the rules made by His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, in exercise of the powers vested in him by section 7 of "The Ceylon Telegraph Ordinance, 1908," as amended by Ordinance No. 10 of 1923, and published in *Government Gazette* No. 7,473 of July 10, 1925, be confirmed.

THE HON. THE TREASURER seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

The Supply Bill, 1925-26.

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—I beg, Sir, to move the second reading of "An Ordinance for making provision for the Public Service for the Financial Year 1925-26."

THE HON. THE TREASURER seconded.

THE HON. MR. D. B. JAYATILAKA (Colombo District) :—I rise, Sir, to offer a few general observations on the Supply Bill, the second reading of which has just been proposed and seconded. Speaking on this subject, one cannot but refer to the unusual circumstance of pomp and ceremony which prefaced the introduction of the Budget three weeks ago, and also to the very remarkable address which was delivered by His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government on that occasion. His Excellency's speech and the ceremonial setting in which it was cast were calculated to invest the consideration of the Budget with that degree of importance which should always belong to it.

The Honourable the Acting Colonial Secretary, when he introduced the Budget on July 3, congratulated himself on his good fortune in being able to introduce the Budget at a time when the revenue was expanding. It is not only the Honourable the Acting Colonial Secretary, but we ourselves, and I think the country also, can congratulate itself on that fact. There is hardly any doubt that Ceylon has recovered from the financial and commercial depression from which it suffered, with many other countries, for many years, after the war. But I do not think it is safe for us to come to the conclusion that this returning prosperity is shared by the bulk of the country. It is true that trade is expanding. The Customs returns bear eloquent testimony to that fact. There is no doubt that in some directions industrial and commercial activities are spreading; but at the same time we cannot on these facts come to the certain conclusion that the masses of the people are really sharing in this growing prosperity. The question is a very difficult one, and I do not wish on this occasion to embark upon a discussion on that point.

Having congratulated himself upon the returning prosperity, the Honourable the Acting Colonial Secretary proceeded to express his satisfaction that the Budget he was introducing bore a striking family resemblance to its predecessor in one important respect, and that is, there is going to be no reduction of taxation. I was rather

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surprised when the Honourable the Acting Colonial Secretary dismissed this most important announcement of his in so few words. If there is anything in the present Estimates which calls for a full explanation from the Government, it is the decision not to reduce taxation. According to the Estimates the revenue for the next year is expected to total no less a sum than Rs. 106,000,000. Over and above that there is in the hands of the Government a surplus revenue totalling nearly Rs. 24,000,000. When there is in the hands of the Government such an immense amount of money and such immense resources, I think that it is due to this Council and to the country that the Government should have explained fully the reasons which compelled them to persist in the attitude of no reduction in taxation, especially in view of the fact that within the last few years there was additional taxation imposed upon the people of this country in view of an expected deficit which was mainly due to the increase of salaries granted to public servants. That expected deficit did not materialize. On the contrary, year after year Council had to deal with a surplus balance. I therefore say that there is no justification for the Government to say that they are unable to think of the possibility of reducing taxation. I do not wish to elaborate upon this point, as I know that Honourable Members much more competent than myself will deal with this aspect of the question, and will, in the course of the debate, submit definite proposals for the reduction of taxation. I will only express the hope that these proposals will receive sympathetic consideration at the hands of the Government.

Now, Sir, I have devoted some little time to the study of the thick volume which contains the estimates for the ensuing year; and, going through the figures, one thing that struck me very forcibly was this, that out of the revenue we are spending too large an amount upon the machinery of Government. Going through the wilderness of figures contained in these Estimates I find—I hope the figures I am going to quote are accurate; if they are not, I hope I will be corrected—that personal emoluments, that is, all the salaries and in some instances such allowances as house rent, total very nearly Rs. 42,000,000. Add to that amount the travelling allowances, which, according to the Estimates, come to very near Rs. 2,500,000. I am giving the amounts in round numbers as they are easy to remember. Then, what is paid in the shape of pensions comes to nearly Rs. 5,000,000. Totalled up, these three different items amount to just over Rs. 49,000,000. But there are other payments which are not included in the Estimates as personal emoluments. For example, there is the item of Rs. 425,000 to be paid as passage allowances to officers and their families, and there is also an item of Rs. 800,000 which is proposed to be spent on labour employed in the Surveyor-General's Department. These are not included in personal emoluments; and if you go through the provisions for the Medical Department on page 60 of the Estimates you will see that there are various items of special allowances which are not included in personal emoluments, but which total up to a very large sum indeed. When all these items are taken into account, I think it is no exaggeration to say that no less than Rs. 50,000,000 are proposed to be spent upon personal emoluments and charges.

Now, the estimated revenue for next year is, as I said before, Rs. 106,000,000. If you strike at a percentage you will find that, excluding pensions, it is proposed to spend no less than 42 per cent.

of the total income upon salaries; and if you include pensions, the percentage is 47 per cent. I submit, Sir, that this is an extraordinary state of affairs. I do not know if the cost of administration is so high in any other country, with the possible exception of India. His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government in his speech referred to the fact that the service is efficient and that it is contented, and he deprecated the idea of disturbing the present happy state of affairs. But, Sir, I very respectfully submit that this is a problem which we cannot shirk; this is a problem which sooner or later the country will have to face. I do not for a moment suggest that we should get a cheap service, inefficient, incompetent, and unable to perform its duties. That is not at all my suggestion or my wish. But I would ask whether it is not possible to get efficiency and competency without spending so much upon the machinery of Government.

I have recently been reading a book upon Japan, where I have no doubt that the administration is very efficient and the service satisfactory. Incidentally, the writer refers to the fact that in Japan, when compared with India, the cost of administration is very small. This question requires careful consideration. I do not suggest that there should be an immediate reduction of salaries all round, but I do suggest that both the Government and this Council should take account of the fact that this item of expenditure is growing out of proportion to the revenue, and that very soon, if no check is applied, the larger part of the public revenue will be swallowed up by this gulf of expenditure.

THE HON. MR. E. W. PERERA (Kalutara Revenue District):—
It is so now.

THE HON. MR. D. B. JAYATILAKA (Colombo District):—
Passing on, Sir, I should like to refer to another matter which I consider very important. I refer to the fact that our trade is expanding. There is no doubt about that. My honourable friend the Principal Collector of Customs in his last report gloats over the fact—and very rightly too. If you take the exports—I am concerned mainly with them—there is one item which is exceedingly interesting. In the year 1922-23 this Colony exported raw material to the value of Rs. 107,000,000, whereas in the same year the value of manufactured articles exported totalled just over Rs. 2,000,000. In 1923-24 the value of raw materials exported from Ceylon amounted to over Rs. 113,000,000, while manufactured articles that were exported amounted only to about Rs. 3,000,000. This is a matter to which I think not only the Government, but the people of the country as a whole ought to direct their attention. We are like the people in the wilds of Africa, who are content with exporting raw material to other countries, where they are manufactured, and the manufactured articles come back to us in most cases, and we pay large sums for them.

I ask, "Is this to be our fate for ever"? Are we going to be forever the suppliers of raw material to other countries? Can we ever hope to see at least some part of the raw material of the country turned into the manufactured article, and the manufactured article exported, giving us a very much larger return than we would get had the raw material been exported? Are there circumstances which make it utterly impossible for us to do anything in that

direction? If it is not impossible, why not make the effort? In this matter Government initiative is very necessary. We may, of course, be told that as we are dependent on Government for everything that it is impossible for Government to take the initiative; but I think that as matters stand to-day—and as His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government explained the other day that the Government is composed, not of a few officials, but of both officials and the representatives of the people—that argument will not give us satisfaction. In other countries it is the Government which has taken the initiative and directed the activities of the people in new directions.

Take again the case of Japan. Before 1868, when the glorious Meiji era was inaugurated, what was the position of Japan commercially and agriculturally? Japan was unknown in the civilized world. Her foreign trade was in the hands of foreigners; she had no ships; her export business was small. But after the inauguration of that great era the Government took up the matter of commercial and agricultural development in 1869, and appointed two bureaux—a business bureau and a commercial bureau—and initiated all measures for the improvement of industries and trade. What is the result as we see it to-day? Japan stands in the front rank of the countries of the world both commercially and industrially. Is it impossible for the Ceylon Government to do what the Japanese Government has done? If it is impossible, there is only one reason for it, and that is, the Japanese Government is a national Government, and ours is not truly national as yet. I submit, with great earnestness, for the consideration of the Government, the necessity for starting in these new directions, so that the people of this country may be benefited in matters which are not even within their reach at the present moment.

His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government in his speech very rightly referred to the development of agriculture as the one safe basis or foundation for industrial development and prosperity of the country. But the question arises whether there is real agricultural development in this country. I know that there is in some directions an expansion of agriculture. In some directions you see great attention paid to the development of agriculture, but so far as the bulk of the people are concerned, has there been any development of agriculture with which we can be satisfied? It is true that we have an Agricultural Department, which costs a large sum of money; we have a large number of experts who I am perfectly sure are doing their very best in certain directions; but the unfortunate part of the business is that the Agricultural Department with its experts is too remote an institution for the ordinary village cultivator. For him the Agricultural Department hardly exists. These experts are like bright luminaries shining in the high heavens. The villager hardly sees them. If by chance one of these experts, or one of the Divisional Officers, swims into his ken, the village *goiya*, if he knew English, would be tempted to sing—

Twinkle, twinkle little star,
How I wonder what you are.

Another reason for the fact that there is hardly any, what we may call, agricultural development in this country is this. The Agricultural Department by itself cannot possibly promote agriculture. There are various other departments which must

co-operate with the Agricultural Department, for example, the Irrigation Department, the Forest Department, the Medical Department, and the various Kachcheries connected with rural administration. All these departments must co-operate. The Agricultural Department is in Peradeniya; the Irrigation Department is in Trincomalee; the Forest Department is in Kandy; the Medical Department is located in Colombo. I have no doubt that papers circulate occasionally all round these various departments; but that is not co-ordination of effort, nor is it co-operation. I have often considered the situation, and I have often been reminded of a humorous Sinhalese verse which I learnt years ago. Translated it runs thus:—

The bow is in Dunugamuwa
The arrow is in Radalagamuwa
The hunter is in Negombo
The cry of the deer is heard at Nodalagamuwa.

All the necessary elements for a hunt are there, but they are scattered, and the hunt is a failure. That is exactly the cause of the failure of the Agricultural Department in this country; and I think that unless the various departments I have mentioned are brought together, their efforts co-ordinated, and co-operation ensured, we may go on spending millions and millions of rupees while the result will be just the same and we shall make no further progress. I shall give Honourable Members one instance of how things are being done in this country as regards agriculture. Somewhere about March last the Finance Committee allocated half a million rupees for the clearing of elas and channels. The news was published in the papers. I received a number of applications asking that a portion of this money should be allocated for various elas in the Colombo District. Now, what had happened in the case of some of these elas was that they had got silted up during the past few years. There is one in Waga, which flows into the Wak-oya and which has been silted up for the last six years, and as a result of which over a hundred acres of paddy land have been rendered quite useless. Another ela close to Colombo has proved utterly useless within the last twenty or thirty years. Why has this been allowed to happen? And who is responsible for it? Is it the Agricultural Department, the Irrigation Department, or the Provincial Administration? Nobody has even taken the least notice of these matters. It is for that reason I say that unless there is complete co-ordination of work of the various departments concerned and co-operation between them, the effort to improve agriculture will result in an immense waste of money.

I have referred to rural administration. After careful consideration, I have come to the conclusion that the rural administration of this country has become antiquated. The system answered well years ago, when the Government was run on patriarchal principles, when the Government Agent was the sole authority. He knew all about the district or the Province he ruled over, because he moved freely among the people, learnt their needs, and did his best for them. But that time has passed. Circumstances are entirely different to-day, and the result is that the system of rural administration has become more or less obsolete. I could give instances if I chose to, to prove what I say, but I do not wish to go into details. I could give instances where in the matter of obtaining redress for a wrong, representation made to the responsible authority was not attended to for one whole year although in one case I appealed to

the officer concerned twice personally and twice by letter. The officer concerned is one of the most conscientious, fair-minded, and sympathetic officers whom it has been my good fortune to meet. It is not his fault; it is the fault of the system, which is all routine and red tape.

I do not propose to dwell at length on various other points in the Estimates which call for comment; but before I conclude I should wish to refer to one or two other matters. His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government referred at length to the question of temperance reform. He very wisely suggested that temperance legislation should follow, not precede, temperance education. I do not think that any one of us will disagree with His Excellency in that matter. The first essential is to educate the people; but at the same time, while the temperance workers are trying to educate the people on temperance lines, the Government must at least try to refrain from educating the people in the use of liquor.

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY:—May I ask for a repetition of that statement? I did not follow it.

THE HON. MR. D. B. JAYATILAKA (Colombo District):—The Government must refrain from doing anything which will help to educate the people in the use of liquor. I will explain the position. The Government should not license either distilleries or foreign liquor shops or any other liquor shops where such institutions did not exist, and where the people have expressed their will by exercising the right of local option. I do not think I am asking too much from Government, when I beg of them to refrain from pursuing that policy at least in the future. I can give instances where the Government has acted contrary to the will of the people, but I refrain from going into details.

There is one other matter which I think I should refer to on this occasion, and that is the attitude of Government towards labour. The matter is one of growing difficulty; but I say that it is essential for the welfare of the country that the labour question should be dealt with very sympathetically. There are various matters connected with the labour question to which I cannot refer at this moment, but there is one little fact to which I should like to call attention. The other day I asked in the Labour Advisory Committee for the number of workmen employed in the different workshops, such as the Railway, the Government Factory, and so on, and from the answer I found that a little less than 3,000 were employed in the Railway workshops. I then asked a further question, namely, how many of these workmen are non-Ceylonese. The answer was that in the Railway workshops there are nearly 1,000 men employed who are non-Ceylonese. That, Sir, is, I think, a serious state of affairs. My honourable friends who represent the Indian community will not, I hope, misunderstand me. I am not here trying to raise the cry of Ceylon for the Ceylonese. I do not believe in it. It is against our tradition. Ceylon had been a free home for all peoples during the time the Sinhalese kings ruled this country. I may mention that there is an inscription of the tenth century where the king's services are recorded at length, and among them, it is said that he made Ceylon the equal home for those coming from all quarters. That is the spirit in which we people of Ceylon have

treated strangers who came among us. I am not, I repeat, raising the cry of Ceylon for the Ceylonese. All who come here from India or elsewhere are welcome ; but I do say that the Government must not give to others the work that can be done by Ceylonese workmen. The Government is depriving the people of this country of the opportunity of earning their bread. That is the point I want to impress on the Government, and if the Government sets a good example in this matter, I have no doubt that it will be followed by private employers of labour. Our workmen have no place to go outside this Island, and therefore, they should have the first right to every job that is in the gift of the Government.

Now, Sir, the Labour Advisory Committee has classified the skilled workmen into various categories, namely, A, B, C, D, E, and so on, according to their merits, and it was stated that if a man had a grievance, his case would be brought to the notice of the head of the department. When a case like this comes up the matter is settled by the man being told that he will get his promotion. But as a matter of fact, I know that no promotion takes place in the ranks of the labour men. There is a good deal of dissatisfaction on this account, and I ask the Government in all earnestness to consider this matter as a serious one, and to take steps as early as possible to deal with the matter in a sympathetic manner.

I am coming to the conclusion of my address ; but before I sit down I should like to refer to the concluding portion of His Excellency's address where he repeated some words of our Vice-President, whose indisposition and absence from the Chamber to-day we regret so much. His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government referred to the fact that the Vice-President described this Council as a happy family. The Acting Governor re-echoed those words, and I think that we are all agreed that we are a happy family here. At all events we understand each other. We understand to a large extent the official mind, and the officials understand our mind, and we understand each other much better than we did before. The relations between the officials and the unofficials and between the unofficials themselves have been exceedingly satisfactory, and I do hope that that state of affairs will always continue. At the same time I venture to express the hope that this Council will not degenerate into a sort of Mutual Admiration Society, in which Honourable Members may feel it their duty to pat each other on the back and say "What a fine set of fellows we are." We unofficials come from all parts of the country to perform a certain duty, and in the performance of that duty it may be necessary to express our minds very strongly, without hesitation and without favour. It may happen that our criticisms may not be well founded in fact, but that is our misfortune, and not our fault. We criticise from outside ; we do not know what is happening inside Government departments, and until we get that knowledge our criticisms may at times be ill-founded. Our criticisms, however, are offered with sincere motives. We have one thought in our minds, and that is, to promote the well-being and the progress of the country.

THE HON. MR. W. A. DE SILVA (Central Province, Urban) :—
Sir, I rise to add a few remarks to the observations made by my honourable friend who represents the Colombo District. I should like to say in the first instance that we have in this Supply Bill

an immense amount of figures. When I look at these figures one thing strikes me. It is, to put it very frankly, that this Budget is a nightmare Budget. There has been an attempt to distribute the revenue in such a way as to make that distribution disproportionate and distortionate. As I have made these observations, I suppose I will have to substantiate them. When one looks at the revenue of the Island for the last twelve years, one would find that it is a subject of very interesting study. In 1904, we had Rs. 30,000,000 ; in 1914, Rs. 50,000,000 ; in 1919, Rs. 70,000,000, and so on. In 1924-25 the anticipated revenue was Rs. 102,000,000. Coming to this estimate of Rs. 102,000,000, I venture to say that at the end of the present financial year it would come to about Rs. 110,000,000. So that the revenue for the year 1924-25 had been under-estimated at least by about Rs. 8,000,000. This would not be a windfall, because it should have been expected. In the current Estimates the revenue is put down as one hundred and six millions, but I venture to say, and I say it boldly, because it can be verified at the end of the next year, that we shall not have a revenue of one hundred and six millions, but a revenue of over one hundred and sixteen millions. I stake my reputation on that.

Now, under the circumstances the obvious duty of any framer of a Budget is to find out whether the extracting of all this blood from the country—I do not say so in a disrespectful way, because everybody in every country thinks of taxation as “bleeding” the country—and “bleeding” may be necessary to keep the organic health of the individual—will be conducive to the welfare of the country as a whole. There is, of course, always the natural desire that less should be extracted and taxation remitted. But we do not find any suggestion for the remission of taxation in this Supply Bill, and I believe it will be our duty to make the suggestion, and also, if necessary, to express our view by a very large majority that taxation should be reduced. We do not propose merely to make an academic statement and say that taxation should be reduced. I think we should definitely indicate in what directions we require that reduction. It is possible to reduce taxation by fifteen millions if it is desirable to do so. But I do not think I will suggest that, because it will give a great shock to those who framed the Budget. I have learnt in the course of pruning that the first pruning should be very light. If you go in for collar pruning at once the tree may die. Collar pruning may come in later. Similarly, with regard to the reduction of taxation, I think Honourable Members of Council may agree with me that the most important consideration should be to fix a certain amount, so that, as mentioned before, the pruning need not shock the tree that gives the Budget or the Supply Bill. If we can in the first instance prune about four millions, it will, I think, show that we are in earnest, and that we have taken the pruning knife and have started our work. These four millions can be reduced in a very useful way by reducing the import duties on some of the necessities of life that are consumed by the poor, both the people of this country and the people who come from other countries to work here. I would have liked to suggest the abolition of the taxes on all food products, including rice. But, as I mentioned before, I do not want to shock this House or the Government. So, in regard to remission of taxation, we would suggest the removal, not the reduction, of the Customs duty on curry stuffs in the first instance. It is nothing much of a reduction

for a Budget of, as I have pointed out, one hundred and sixteen millions. It will mean a reduction of about Rs. 300,000. Then we come to other necessities of life used by a very large number of the people of the country: dry fish, salt fish, and Maldive fish. The reduction of the duty on these articles will come to about Rs. 400,000. That would bring the total to Rs. 700,000. Then I will also suggest that the duty on sugar and jaggery should be remitted. That will mean a reduction off the Budget of about another Rs. 2,000,000, bringing the total to Rs. 2,700,000. We have another concrete suggestion to make.

There has been a desire that the Ceylon Government Railway should be run on business lines. I know that a very handsome prize has been offered publicly to anybody who will write an essay giving suggestions for dealing with the competition of transport by motor traffic—a first prize of Rs. 10 and a second prize of Rs. 5. Anyway I will not compete for the ten-rupee prize. It is, I think, known all the world over that where there is competition, specially in transport, that competition has to be met by more efficient work, by better attention to customers and cheaper fare and freight charges. Therefore, both for the purpose of improving railway work as well as for the sake of economy, we propose to ask Government to reduce passenger fares on the railway by thirty per cent. on the third class, twenty per cent. on the second class, and ten per cent. on the first class. All this would not amount to more than one and a quarter millions immediate loss; but I am sanguine enough to believe that there will be no loss at all, and that on the contrary more money may yet come to the railway, because the railway will be able to compete with the other means of transport, while at the same time helping to expand other transport facilities throughout the Island. One of the most important requirements in the development of a country is the improvement of the means of transport. The Honourable Member who represents the Rural European Constituency has always been urging before this House the importance of maintaining roads in this Island. I think the expenditure on roads in this Island should be double or three times of what has been proposed. The more roads we have the better will be the means of transport, and the greater will be the prosperity, not only of the larger cultivators and planters, but also of the smaller cultivators. The larger cultivators can afford to keep motor lorries or have their produce carried on the backs of coolies to railway stations. In the case of the smaller cultivators, who predominate in the country—about three-fourths of the population—they find it difficult to grow any profitable crop because they cannot get easy access to a centre for the sale of their produce. A man living thirty or fifty miles away from Colombo and growing vegetables cannot bring his produce to Colombo and sell at a profit, because the means of transport is so difficult. So, it should be the first duty of the Government to see that this question of transport is taken in hand if they desire the improvement of the condition of the country. I mention this, because of certain remarks, which I evidently misread in connection with the introduction of the Budget, and which appeared to me to be a sort of tentative suggestion—whether it is worth while to improve the roads, because by that improvement the railway may suffer. It was not stated in so many words, but I read it through and thought it a possible

interpretation. I think we should distinctly say that if the railway requires such external aids to support it, the sooner we convert the rail roads to motor roads the better it will be.

Then, in connection with what is called the Supply Bill or Budget, where there are very large estimates, we have to remember from previous experience that the spending departments cannot spend more than a certain amount with efficiency or economy during a given period. For instance, if we place forty millions of rupees in the hands of a department that could spend only twenty millions, we will not get more than twenty millions worth of work. So these Budgets have a tendency to encourage extravagance, and we should be very careful. They give room for people to ask for quite a number of things from Government, things necessary and unnecessary. Now each of us has his own hobby. In the case of many it may be education, social service organization, establishment of vagrants' homes, private charities, and so on; and we come before Government and ask for funds. That should be avoided, because, after all, in the public service, if moneys are to be spent, they must be spent on establishments which should be started by Government. If I want to do a charitable act I must do it myself, and not ask Government assistance. If we think that Government should carry on any charitable organization for the amelioration of the poor, then I think Government ought to do it. If we follow this rule, it will necessarily enable Government to frame definite regulations as to how and when they should give grants. When one charitable institution gets a certain amount of money, all the other charitable bodies will clamour for an equal share. There are many bodies which are now given grants. I think there should be strict regulations on this matter, and no head of a department should be able to go behind the regulations. I know there are many who think that the General Order Book should be burnt—not only officials, but also unofficials. I know many who think that red tape is being used to a very large extent, and that there should be some economy. Under these circumstances, I trust that in the consideration of the items in this Budget emphasis will be laid on the necessity for spending money under definite regulations that are laid down, and not according to the whims and fancies of individuals. It is absolutely necessary that these regulations should be properly framed before any money is allowed to be spent.

In regard to the development of the country there are one or two matters which strike me as worthy of consideration. One is the inauguration of a system of banking in the country. Ceylon is very badly served as far as banks are concerned. There was an attempt at running a Ceylon bank, but it failed. The Principal Collector of Customs will say that when a ship fouls an inquiry should be held though the damage be small, perhaps not more than a few rupees. But when a bank suspends payment there is nobody to inquire as to how it failed. I believe this is a matter which requires attention, and the public should seriously consider the establishment of trade banks in this Island. The trade in this Island is greatly hampered. I have in mind particularly the small traders, and I think that it is surprising that they can survive and carry on under the present conditions. In any other country if a business yields a profit from 4 to 6 per cent. it is considered good. But in this country a small trader has to

pay sometimes about 16, 17, or 18 per cent. on his purchases. There are men who have good security, men who are perhaps able to carry on their work very successfully if facilities are given them. Of course, there are bigger banks, but these are not prepared to advance money to small businesses. In India when they gave a charter to the Imperial Bank they required them to open over 100 branches throughout the country. In Ceylon a State bank should prove very helpful. A State bank should be able to do very useful and profitable business and at the same time help in the creation and expansion of industries. I trust that this matter will receive the attention of the Government and of this Council.

Then, in regard to legislation there are one or two matters which I think I should mention. One matter that struck me very forcibly is with regard to the question of the adulteration of tea. The reputation of a country for any produce is a great asset, and once that reputation is lost a great deal is lost as regards the value of the produce. With regard to rubbishy teas, it has been said that all sorts of leaves were dried and mixed with tea leaves and boiled in lime water and sent out of this Island. I believe that all this is due to the lack of the necessary legislation. I think this Council should have seen to it during the past years. Adulteration of tea with any other leaf or boiling it in lime water should be penalized. The codification of the law may come later, but the crime should be visited with punishment. In olden times the law-givers prescribed the penalty at the time of the offence, and the codification of the laws came in later. Similarly our law-givers can also act. Let us have these things attended to at once. We have suffered in Ceylon very much owing to the adulteration of produce, because the reputation we had has been completely lost. For instance, I do not think that the best citronella oil can be sold in America if it is said that it is Ceylon oil. Why? Because it is believed that the oil is adulterated with a large quantity of alcohol and kerosine oil. I trust, Sir, that this matter will receive attention.

There is another matter which I should like to mention, and that is, workmen's compensation. The other day we had quite enough trouble regarding some words—"act of grace"—in connection with a motion to grant a pension to an injured workman. India has now enacted a Workmen's Compensation Act. If we look at the Indian Bill we will find that it is easily applicable to Ceylon. None of the employers need fear that they would be put into any expense. Only a very few workmen would be getting compensation; and private companies do pay compensation. But unless there is an act of law, the payment of compensation for what a workman has suffered would always depend on the grace or goodwill of somebody else. I trust that this matter too will receive the attention of Government, as every endeavour is now being made for the advancement and development of industries in this Colony.

Another point that struck me in connection with this discussion was that continual criticism, which is absolutely necessary in State affairs, because without it we will turn lethargic and sluggardly, is very useful—and criticism sharpens our wits, and on occasions it is the means of stimulating our brains. But it might so happen that the heads of departments may hesitate before they indulge in expenditure to carry out any work, thinking whether such and such a work would be criticised or not criticised; and the result

will be that they will become mechanical and drift into mere machines. That must be avoided. There are 37 unofficial and 12 official members who are to spend these 116 millions in the Budget, and I think a difficult problem will be solved if we appoint some Committee of this House for each head of a department to take advice from. This is not a demand, Sir, but only a suggestion. If this suggestion is adopted the heads of departments, hard worked people themselves, would feel that they have somebody supporting them.

I trust, Sir, that this nightmare Budget will receive the due attention of the Select Committee, and that Government will accept the wishes of the country to make the prunings—the reductions—indicated by me.

THE HON. MR. C. E. VICTOR COREA (Colombo Town, North) :—
 Sir, during the Budget debate last year, commenting on the Honourable the Colonial Secretary's exultant announcement of an overflowing revenue, I ventured to doubt whether the people of this country would derive any benefit from the surplus balances, and I expressed a fear that they would merely offer temptations to inconsiderate officials to launch into absurd ideas and schemes of spending that money. On that occasion I also implored the Government to remit all unnecessary taxation; and at every opportunity subsequently the Unofficial Members of Council requested Government to do away with the burdens of the people. But have the Government respected the wishes of the representatives of the people? Have they shown the slightest sympathy for the poor and unfortunate? No. They propose to go on like a Juggernaut, crushing the people whose cries and supplications mount up to high heaven in one long note of agony. I might compare the Honourable the Acting Colonial Secretary to the foolish King Rehoboam, who replied to a petition from his people in these words: "My father chastised you with whips, but I shall chastise you with scorpions." As my honourable friend Mr. W. A. de Silva said just now, we, the representatives of the people, have resolved that all taxes that bear most heavily on the poor shall be done away with. As my honourable friend the Member for the Colombo District stated, it would appear that nearly 50 per cent. of the revenue of this country is swallowed up by our establishments. The lion's share of this large amount is given to the heads of departments and their satellites. I shall be the first to admit the justice of the saying that the labourer is worthy of his hire; but I have no hesitation in saying that while the actual workers in this country do not get a moiety of the hire they deserve, those at the top, who have little to do, generally speaking, beyond supervising, and sometimes sucking the brains of their subordinates, are given the means of living in luxury and indulging in epicureanism. In his historic despatch, Sir Henry McCallum stated—I have no doubt that it was his ambitious Lieutenant, Sir Hugh Clifford, who was responsible for the statement—that it was the Government Agents and the Assistant Government Agents who were the real representatives of the people. I suppose that what he meant to say was that the Government Agents and Assistant Government Agents knew more about the conditions the people were living in and were more in sympathy with them than the educated Ceylonese. How far this statement was justified this House can judge from a story which I have to relate.

On May 9 last I addressed the following letter to the Assistant Government Agent, Puttalam :—

Sir,—As you are doubtless aware, the Finance Committee has decided to devote Rs. 100,000 this year for the sinking and building of wells in those villages where there is no supply of good drinking water. It was my representation of the state of affairs in the villages in this part of the country, and particularly those in the Demala hatpattu, which moved the Committee to allow this vote. Feeling sure that you will do all in your power to give effect to the Finance Committee's benevolent intention, I am writing this to request that you will be so good as to instruct your Mudaliyar and Ratemahatmayas to furnish you with a complete list of the villages in the Chilaw and Puttalam Districts where there are no good wells.—(Signed) C. E. Victor Corea.

I waited for nearly two months, and not having received a reply I addressed this letter on July 1 to the same official :—

Sir,—I have the honour to invite your attention to the letter I sent you some months back on the above subject, and to request that you will be so good as to let me know what steps you have taken to give effect to the wish of the Legislative Council to provide wells for those villagers where no good wells exist.—(Signed) C. E. Victor S. Corea.

Up to this date, Sir, I have not had even an acknowledgment of these letters from the Assistant Government Agent. What are we to infer from this silence? I can afford to overlook the lack of manners. For some of our Civil Servants—I am happy to say not all of them—have achieved quite a reputation for incivility and ill-breeding. This silence must mean one of two things. Either the Assistant Government Agent is ignorant of the wants of the villagers within his jurisdiction, or he wants to frustrate the intentions of the Legislative Council. I am not personally acquainted with this official. I have not met him; I have not even seen him; but from this incident I should say that he is unworthy of being entrusted with the administration of a district. I trust that my honourable friend whom we may well call the Father of this House will take the earliest opportunity of making an example of this officer by moving to have his salary reduced.

I have been endeavouring, Sir, to show that while the Ceylonese do all the hard work and are paid nothing like an adequate hire, the Government displays an inordinate anxiety for the welfare and comfort of those whom my honourable friend the Member for the Kalutara District takes a delight in calling "the imported article." Let alone the comforts, even the legitimate claims of the Ceylonese in the Public Service are being persistently overlooked in every department. Let me take an instance from the Government Printing Office. Barely three years ago, Sir, it would appear that there was a young European Salt Inspector employed at Elephant Pass. Being constantly attacked with malaria he had to give up his job and come down to Colombo, and he was hanging about in search of employment. He had a brother, who happened to be an assistant to the Government Printer. Well, this young man, with no experience whatever in printing, and without much of an education, has been taken on to the Printing Department and given a post created for him called "Assistant Head Reader." Now, there is a Head Reader, a Ceylonese gentleman, Mr. Peter J. Fernando, who had the assistance of several readers—second reader, third reader, and so on. But yet this young man has been appointed Assistant Head Reader, and I understand that all the work he does, and is able to do, is to sit at a new table given him and pore over cross-word puzzles. There is a great danger, Sir, in employing incompetent and inexperienced men like this over hundreds of other workmen, because in his

inexperience it is quite possible that he might think that the workmen are shirking their work, or are malingering, or are not able to do the work they are doing in proper time; and he might report these poor unfortunate men to the head of the department. Thus it is quite possible that the head of the department without further inquiry will accept the word of this subordinate officer, and these poor voiceless workmen will run the risk of losing their jobs altogether. I understand that it is now proposed to give this young man a staff appointment, overlooking the claims of several Ceylonese officials. The immediate superior of this young man, Mr. Peter Fernando, was appointed Head Reader in 1900, and after he has put in twenty-five or thirty years' service, this young man is to be appointed over his head. Is that justice to Ceylonese?

Let me pass on. Here I have before me a memorandum concerning the acquisition of land at Regent street for the purpose of putting up quarters for European nursing sisters. Why European nursing sisters, I should ask? What about the Ceylonese nursing sisters? I suppose the bureaucracy will say that mere hovels will do for the people of the country. Consider again, Sir, the solicitude displayed by Government over their European officials. In page 110 of the Estimates, Head 58, Public Works Extraordinary, I find the following items:—

	Rs.
13. Quarters for the Chief Justice, Colombo	85,000
23. New Residency, Matara	50,000
32. Quarters for the Superintendent of Police, Kurunegala ..	27,500
34. Bungalow for Manager, Experimental Station, Anuradhapura (re-vote to complete)	15,000
38. Bungalow for the Superintendent of Police, Badulla (re-vote to complete)	30,000
45. New bungalow for the Provincial Engineer, Sabaragamuwa (re-vote to complete)	35,000

THE HON. THE ACTING CONTROLLER OF REVENUE:—
He is a Ceylonese.

THE HON. MR. C. E. VICTOR COREA (Colombo Town, North):—
Is that so? I am sorry. Then there is also this item:—

	Rs.
57. Additional accommodation for the Training College ..	825,000

Then under Head 59 there is this item:—

	Rs.
23. Colombo: New residence for Colonel Commandant ..	75,000

These are some of the items, and the amount is very large. Is anything like this solicitude, Sir, displayed for Ceylonese officers? If things go on at this rate, I fancy our newspapers will have no chance of referring to our Budgets as practically "brick and mortar" Budgets, for our officials coming from Europe will spurn the idea of dwelling in mere terrestrial palaces, and will want perhaps aeroplanes *de luxe* to live in and move about in a congenial sphere, coming down perhaps when necessary on occasions to supervise the work of the officers of this country. This is really a serious matter.

Now let me not be charged with striking the racial note. I wish it to be distinctly understood that we yield to none in pride of race. We, the people of this country, will not admit the superiority of any other people or community, and we are resolved that in the administration of this country henceforth the noble promise of Her

Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria of happy memory shall be carried out to the very letter. We do not ask for preferential treatment. "A fair field and no favour" is our modest demand. I do trust, therefore, that my English colleagues, with that broadmindedness which has earned for the English name the respect of every country throughout the world, will express in the most emphatic terms their strong abhorrence of this policy of the bureaucracy which has brought discredit on the fair English name.

Let me pass on to less controversial matters now. When I entered Council, I came with the resolve to interest Government in the following measures: the amelioration of the condition of our villagers and the labouring classes, increase of food production, education, and the remission of such taxation as tells most heavily on the poor. Having already taken up so much time of this Honourable House, I do not propose to go into all these questions, particularly in view of the fact that I am aware that many of my colleagues who are far more competent than myself will discuss these questions at length. But I should like to express my strong disapproval of the policy Government is pursuing in regard to food production, particularly in the direction of irrigation. If Honourable Members would turn to page 86 of the printed Estimates, they would find under Head 53 that no less than Rs. 828,614 would be swallowed up in Personal Emoluments and Other Charges, while the sum to be expended on works is only Rs. 799,150. I look in vain, Sir, for any scheme to increase food production in my own district. So far back as 1889 the late Sir William Davidson (then Mr. Davidson), Government Agent, Chilaw, wrote as follows in connection with works most required and plans for improving the district:—

The one scheme which transcends all others for the improvement of this town (Chilaw) and its district falls under both these heads. This scheme is one to utilize the waters of Dedro-oya for a constant supply of water to the town as well as of feeding a series of tanks on both sides of the river. The scheme is now under the consideration of the Provincial Engineer, and includes the construction of an anicut The benefits to both the health and comfort of the inhabitants would be immense. From the point of view of "will it pay?" the prospects are very bright. Under the string of five tanks, of which that of Munnesseram is the chief, Mr. Macready estimated that 1,100 acres would be benefited could the waters of Dedro-oya be held up as it is now hoped will be On the north side there is a channel constructed to Diganweva, and the tanks below it which have failed to be of use except in flood times. This channel might be utilized again if a sufficient head of water can be maintained at the proposed anicut.

In 1891 Mr. E. T. Noyes, Assistant Government Agent, wrote:—

The restoration of Karavita tank, 4 miles to the east of the town of Chilaw, and of the old Yoda-ela leading into it through Wilattava and Kanattava tanks, is a work which I would much like to be undertaken. It is the finest tank in the district, and from it Chilaw should, I think, eventually obtain its water supply.

In 1894 Mr. Ælian King, Government Agent, wrote:—

Works most required.—The renewal of the ancient anicut across the Kola-mune-oya and reopening of the Yoda-ela to Karaviti tank, &c., connected therewith.

And—

(Manuagama-eba) the completion of the Dedro-oya scheme (for many years left incomplete and inoperative) by throwing a dam across the river to turn water at ordinary times into the headwork already constructed (Rambepitiya sluice).

These words were repeated by the Government Agent in 1895.

In the same year Mr. E. M. de C. Short, Acting Government Agent, wrote :—

Works most required.—The restoration of Karavita tank and Yoda-ela and the repair of the Dedro-oya head sluice.

In 1897 the Assistant Government Agent, Mr. C. R. Cumberland, also referred to these works as works most required—restoration of Karavita tank and Yoda-ela.

In 1899 the Government Agent urged the importance of the Dedro-oya and other permanent sources as feeders to tanks. Mr. Thorpe, Assistant Government Agent, recommended the repair of the head sluice. Under Irrigation he says: "An old work which has attracted some attention is the Dedro head sluice and channel. This is an inlet sluice built some miles up the Dedro-oya and carries water down to the Munnesseram tanks, from which extensive paddy fields are irrigated."

He adds, that "so effectively does it fulfil its purpose that during the rains the tanks are filled many times over." So we see, Sir, that all these agents of Government have been emphasizing the fact that this irrigation scheme was one of the most important in the district.

In 1901 Mr. Leak, Assistant Government Agent, wrote of works requiring attention as—

(1) Completing the Munnesseram group of tanks, together with a scheme for improving the water supply by constructing regulating gates on the Manuangama-eba.

(2) Restoration of the Diganweva, Bombivela, Karukkuliya group.

In 1910 Mr. E. B. Alexander stated that the question of the water supply to Chilaw—to bring water into the town from the Dedro-oya at a point about 7 miles distant (Manuangama-eba)—was referred to the Director of Irrigation for report.

In April, 1920, when Sir Graeme Thomson visited Chilaw as Acting Governor, the Chilaw Association in their address drew attention to elas and amunas which need restoration, and urged for steps in aid of food production. His Excellency earnestly invited them to submit a scheme, and promised that such a scheme would be carefully gone into. A scheme taking in the Manuangama-eba and Yoda-ela was accordingly forwarded to the Colonial Secretary, the Director of Food Production, and the Assistant Government Agent, who all promised consideration. From the correspondence which followed, it would appear that the restoration of these elas was not considered a paying proposition, as all the lands under the tanks which it was considered would be benefited were already cultivated either in coconut or paddy—that is, they were private property—and that the Crown owned no field under the tanks to be benefited. In 1922 the Controller of Revenue promised to have an estimate for the Manuangama-eba and the Yoda-ela, and the Colonial Secretary said that the members would consider a supplementary vote on that particular item. That is to say, that the members agreed to defer the question on the distinct understanding that the works referred to would be taken in hand in the near future on a supplementary vote. Nine of the Unofficial Members made this clear in a rider to the Select Committee's report on the Budget, which was as follows :—

Rider No. 5.

In view of the admitted desirability of increasing the local rice supply, and inasmuch as the standard of maintenance of village tanks on which paddy cultivation in various districts mainly depend, has been reported to be such as not to prevent actual deterioration, we pressed for an increased vote for

Village Irrigation Works Extraordinary, and were given to understand that estimates would be called for, and the question of the restoration of certain village works would receive consideration. We wish to leave on record our hope that the matter will receive consideration without delay.

(Signed) S. D. Krisnaratne, W. Edwin Boteju, Jno. H. Meedeniya, T. B. Panabokke, N. H. M. A. Cader, W. Duraiswamy, C. E. Corea, C. W. W. Kannangara, D. H. Kotalawala.

Well, it would appear, Sir, that ultimately an estimate of Rs. 150,000 was put forward, and the Colonial Secretary has said: "Such expenditure is considered unjustifiable in view of the area to be benefited, which is at present cultivated in paddy except when the season is unusually dry." This statement is not correct, and I would only say that the Colonial Secretary has been misinformed by those who were responsible for the statement. For about twenty-five years, Sir, I understand that a great proportion of cultivable fields has year after year been left uncultivated for want of water, and the remainder in the most favourable seasons could only be cultivated with inferior, unprofitable, short season paddy for the same reason. Besides, fields capable of fourteen to twenty-fold yields only give eight-fold crops. Admittedly, on account of the difficulty of getting good paddy crops, villagers are either themselves converting their good paddy fields into bad coconut plantations, or selling the fields to coconut planters. In December, 1924, the Surveyor-General, who had been asked to investigate the area unsuitable for paddy below the Manuanga-eba, wrote that it was found that a considerable area of paddy land due east of Chilaw town has of recent years been planted with coconuts. When the disposal of the surplus of 1923 was under consideration, a Sub-Committee of the Unofficials was appointed to recommend works for which money should be voted. This Sub-Committee unanimously agreed on allotments for the Yoda-ela, the Manuanga-eba, and the Chilaw water supply, which depends on the eba.

The Unofficials agreed to let the allotments made by the Sub-Committee stand over and vote the balance of the surplus for the University, on the express promise by the Colonial Secretary that the proposals of the Sub-Committee would be provided for in the Budget.

It tells badly for the value of official assurances, even those on record, that every single assurance, in respect of these two elas—the recorded assurance to bring up the question after seeing reports at the Finance Committee meeting on July 20, 1921, the promise of a supplementary vote at the Budget Select Committee's meeting on September 20, 1922, and lastly, the promise to budget the vote for 1924-25—has been forgotten.

The last Budget has voted Rs. 120,000 for village works in the whole Island when Rs. 150,000 has been estimated for Manuanga-eba alone. I might say, Sir, that it is essential that cultivators should have proper control over the water supply for their fields. It sometimes happens that harvests fail for want of water, and sometimes owing to excess of water. So they must be able to exercise control over the water supply.

I have got with me, Sir, a letter sent to me by a gentleman living in Kelaniya, from which I may read a few extracts. He says:—

In the front of this place there are about 200 acres, as I am informed, of paddy fields which are flooded almost every year, some in the lower ranges so badly, that very often for two or three years at a stretch they cannot be cultivated, and they remain stagnant marshes breeding mosquitoes. This

sad state of things whereby the people are deprived of their cherished occupation, and food that should serve them for some months at least, is due, you will be tickled to hear, to a marvellous bit of engineering. A little beyond the sixth milepost on the Kandy road there is bridge built so substantially as to last till the crack of doom. Its bed consists of huge blocks of granite firmly embedded in the soil, and is, according to my information, four feet above the level of the fields! Naturally the flood water does not escape, and the fields are water-logged. Years ago on my representation, the Hon. Mr. F. R. Saunders inspected the bridge, and his remedy was the construction of another small culvert close by, and the matter dropped.

Then, Sir, I have got a sort of poser for the Government. So far back as 1914 a responsible member of the Government, Mr. Elliott, who was for many years the Government Agent of the Southern Province, stated in an article contributed to the second volume of the *Tropical Agriculturist*, page 99, that there was in existence "a nest egg of Rs. 50,000,000." I should like to ask the Government what became of this "nest egg of Rs. 50,000,000."

Finally, Sir, I would like to make a passing remark on the food crisis of 1920. We all remember what a serious time we had when thousands and thousands of people actually starved for want of sufficient food. Our Government officials were panic stricken, and they resorted to all sorts of extraordinary schemes of legislation. That all these schemes failed no one will venture to deny. Have the Government since then considered this serious question and made provision to prevent the recurrence of that awful time we had in 1920? I fear not, Sir. The Budget at least gives no indication of any such idea. All I can say is that those who are now responsible for the government of this country, unlike the Bourbons, have forgotten everything while they have learnt nothing.

THE HON. MR. V. S. DE S. WIKREMANAYAKE (Southern Province, Eastern Division):—I propose, Sir, to make some general observations as regards the Budget, and I shall take up first the revenue side of the question. During the last few years we have seen that the revenue has been increasing by leaps and bounds, and the Government would have us believe that this is a sure indication of the prosperity of the Island. We who go about the country and often come in contact with the masses do not and cannot say that it is a sure sign of the prosperity of the masses of the Island. At least since the war the conditions of the poor people in the rural districts—the peasantry—have been very trying, and some of them have had to leave their homes in search of employment in the rubber estates. What has been the policy of the Government during the last few years? The Government has been going on raising the salaries of officials and putting up palatial buildings for them; but the crying needs of the country have to a great extent been neglected. Large votes have been put down in the Budgets of this year and last year, and perhaps in the Budgets of previous years, for many buildings, and some of these votes have been so great that the spending department had found it very difficult to expend the amounts voted. So much so that the surplus balances have considerably increased. I think this is a principle that should not be permitted. We have very little control over the surplus balances, and I submit, Sir, that we should endeavour at least to cut down these various votes in such a way that the Public Works Department would be able to spend the amounts voted. In fact, Sir, the principle of good Government should be to reduce taxation when there is a large

revenue and a large surplus. That is the principle that should be followed by us now. This principle was followed in Ceylon so long ago as 1866. In 1866 Lord Carnarvon informed Governor Robinson that it was needless to require the Ceylon Government to accumulate surplus balances, and that the local Legislature should be allowed at once "to devote any surplus either to the remission of taxes, which press upon enterprise or industry, or to the most rapid construction of such public works as are calculated to develop the resources of the Island, or in any other way is calculated to produce immediate advantage." Lord Carnarvon further stated "in Ceylon the advantage derivable from a judicious expenditure of money or remission of taxation is much more than equivalent to the interest of the money while lying with local banks or invested in Colonial debentures." The Government in introducing the Budget said that they did not propose to reduce any taxation, and it was with great regret that we heard those words. But, Sir, in our Unofficial conference it was agreed almost unanimously that we should vote for the reduction of taxes. The taxes that we propose to abolish were more or less adumbrated by my honourable friend the Member who represents the Urban District of the Central Province. It has been pointed out that the railway fares should be reduced, and that the duty on curry stuffs, dry fish, and sugar should be removed, and I need not go over the ground of my honourable friend the Member for the Urban District of the Central Province, but I may say, Sir, that this is more or less the unanimous opinion of the Unofficial Members of this Council. We need not go over the same grounds as in the last Budget debate, and we shall cut down our speeches as much as possible by avoiding repetition. It is perhaps necessary for me to say that our proposals are considered proposals. We met for three days altogether and came to certain understandings. With regard to the reduction of taxation, I should like to suggest that the corresponding deficit in revenue should be met as far as possible by increasing the duty on cheap liquor, especially cheap gins, which are doing a great deal of harm to the country. We have by local option closed many taverns in many parts of the Island, but, lo and behold! some cheap liquor shops come up to be patronized by many. By increasing the duty on such cheap liquor a great deal of good would be done to the country, while at the same time increasing the revenue of the Island. I should also like to refer to the estate duty, which is telling very heavily on the people. A reduction of this duty will mean a great relief to the people of this Island, as an estate may get sold up for estate dues in four generations. This is rather a difficult question, and it is not one which can be settled to-day. I think the best thing we can do is to collect facts and ask Government to effect that reduction when preparing the next Budget, and I hope later on to introduce a motion with regard to this subject. The question may be asked, "If you go on reducing the revenue at this rate by the reduction of taxes, how is the Budget to balance?" That is a question which we have to face. In regard to that we are more or less agreed as to what items should be cut down, and I should like to deal with only a few of these items. First of all, there is to be a new prison at Ragama. The total estimate for this work is Rs. 3,000,000, and the amount to be expended this year is Rs. 200,000. Now, I believe about seven prisons were closed down a few years ago, partly due to the recommendations of the Retrenchment Commission and

partly because Government thought, I suppose, that it was best to close those prisons. But I think it was not a very wise step to have taken. We see that the closing of those prisons has resulted in huge items of expenditure being found necessary while working great hardship in the case of some of the outstations. For instance, in the Southern Province the jails at Hambantota, Tangalla, and Matara were closed. Now, if a man is convicted in a court of law, say, at Tangalla and fined Rs. 100, he would be taken to the Galle jail, and the next day perhaps removed to Welikada or some other prison. Think of the inconvenience if, on the day after, a near relation of the man convicted pays the fine! What happens? The man has to be brought back again, and the same thing happens in cases of appeals. The inconvenience caused is practically the same in every other district of the Island where prisons have been closed. Now, Sir, we have the buildings of these prisons that have been closed, and they can be utilized; and if these buildings can be utilized, there is no necessity for this expenditure of three millions on a prison at Ragama. Besides, it must be remembered that a district or area where there is a prison can get the benefit of prison labour. Were it not for prison labour Tangalla could never boast of having anything like a playground.

There are several other items which I should like to touch upon, and at least I would touch upon another item—quarters for the Chief Justice. The Chief Justice has a fine bungalow to live in, and there is no need to put up a super type bungalow, and I would submit that this item is unnecessary and might be cut down. There is another item which I should like to refer to, and that is the provision for five new District Engineers. In these days of motor cars I do not see why more District Engineers are wanted. In days of old a District Engineer used to go in a horse and carriage, or perhaps in a bullock cart, and do his work. But to-day he has a motor car to go about a district, and he can cover a much wider area. Moreover, a District Engineer has head overseers, and I think if we have more head overseers added on to the present staff the District Engineers would be able to cope with their work, especially as the District Engineers in rural areas have mostly road making to do.

I should also like to refer to the item of special expenditure—New Customs-house at Passenger jetty. The vote on this item for this year is Rs. 675,000. I doubt, Sir, whether the Public Works Department would be able to spend very much of this money this year. Last year we voted Rs. 200,000, but only Rs. 25,000 is estimated to be spent up to September 30, 1925. Then there is the new Council Chamber and Secretariat, and the vote asked for this work is Rs. 1,000,000 for this year, and I doubt if the department could spend this amount during the year. I think, Sir, that instead of devoting so much attention to all these buildings and to the pay of officials, we should first see to the needs of the poor people and reduce taxation. Judging from the high salaries now paid to the higher officials and the palatial buildings put up for them, it looks as if the Ceylon Government is being run more for the benefit of these higher officials than for the benefit of the masses.

I shall now come to the expenditure side. I wish first of all to refer to agriculture, which I consider should receive foremost attention. I have twice before in this House dealt with this subject, and I have said on both those occasions that the Agricultural Department, which costs the Colony a very large sum of money, has

done practically nothing for the masses or the peasantry. I find that that criticism of mine has borne some fruit, because a sum of Rs. 30,000 has been provided for paddy experiments this year, whereas the vote last year was only Rs. 9,000. But what the Department of Agriculture means to do with the Rs. 30,000 I fail to understand, although I am a large cultivator. The department perhaps thinks that with scientific knowledge they will be able to increase food production, but I doubt it very much, at least for years and years. All these years by preaching and by leaflets I think the department has done nothing in the way of increasing food production mainly as regards paddy cultivation. In this connection I wish to refer to the method of paddy cultivation employed by the goiyas. It is easy for officials to say that the goiyas are conservative and that they would not listen to advice. The predecessor of the present head of the Agricultural Department has said that "this method was a highly specialized process and the hopes of improving upon it are not of a sanguine character. The cultivator knows his business." I may refer to a Civil Servant of experience, Mr. Elliott, who was subsequently manager of a large paddy estate in my district—an estate of over 800 acres. He went on cultivating paddy, using his intelligence and his scientific skill, but he says that he found that all that did not help him at all. He says "that the goiya will give a good reason for the existing practice, and that he is perfectly aware of the other various ways of paddy cultivation, and follow the course which pays him best." So that you will find that this sort of work done by the department will not increase food production at all. My learned friend who represents the Colombo District has rightly said that these scientists are like luminaries in the heavens, and I say that the masses trodden down by taxation are too weak to look up towards them. I wish to refer to two things to show that the goiyas are more or less expert men, and that they have gained this expert knowledge, not from scientific books, but from practical experience throughout a period of about 2,000 years. They have gained this experience because they and their ancestors have followed this vocation which had been handed down to them from generation to generation. Now, if there is an insect pest what would these scientists do? Perhaps they would say "Have your plantations clean and well cultivated and well looked after." But you ask the goiya what you should do, and you will find that what he says is probably correct. He would say that cultivation at the proper season would remove this difficulty.

Mr. Zanetti, who was the Divisional Irrigation Engineer of our district, was a practical man, and was conversant with paddy cultivation. He had to control the work of other Irrigation Engineers as well, and he too would say that if you cultivate at the proper season you will avoid the fly. I have brought this instance to show that the goiyas are not the ignorant fools they are supposed to be. I will give you another concrete case. A gentleman in Tangalla bought under the Kirindi-oya Right Bank Scheme forty acres during the food crisis. According to the Irrigation Rules the Irrigation Engineer had to trace the channel, and the channel had to be cut according to that trace. That gentleman was wise enough to allow the goiya to use his discretion, and the goiya did not cut the channel as traced by the Irrigation Engineer. The Irrigation Engineer traced the channel with scientific knowledge and by taking

levels. This man cut the channel according to his practical knowledge, and lo and behold! a report was sent to the Divisional Irrigation Engineer with the object of prosecuting this gentleman. This gentleman was sent for by the Divisional Engineer, and it was explained to him that he had not followed the rules. He said that his goiya must be questioned on the matter. The goiya was sent for, and he said that if he had cut the channel as traced by the Irrigation Engineer he could have cultivated the land minus eight acres, but he traced his own channel and irrigated the entire land. Then the Divisional Engineer asked the Engineer in question, who wanted the owner of the land prosecuted, whether the goiya's statement was true. The Engineer admitted that the goiya was correct, and the prosecution dropped. Do not these show that the goiya is not the conservative fool he is supposed to be, because he does not follow scientific ideas, and that he knows his business. The peasant cannot afford to follow scientific ideas, use special manure, and so on. I submit that what the Government should do is to increase food production, and with that object I mean to put forward a constructive proposal. I do not for a moment say that the Department of Agriculture is doing no work. On the contrary, it is doing good work in its own line, and Mr. Stockdale is doing his best. He is of course often fettered by Government, and he cannot proceed on his own ideas. The suggestion I would like to make is that in every district there should be a Food Production Committee, with power to spend money and do the necessary work with legislation introduced if necessary. The details of the Committee might be left to the Government to decide, but I would suggest that the Government Agent or Assistant Government Agent of the district should be the Chairman of each Committee. Further, in that Committee there should be a representative of the Agricultural Department, say the Divisional Agricultural Officer of the district. Then there should also be in that Committee a representative of the Irrigation Department, the Member representing the district in the Legislative Council, and a member or two nominated by the Chairman. And if money is voted for each of these Committees, I am sure they would be able to do very good work in the respective districts.

The Committee I suggest would be run on the lines of the District Road Committees, the District School Committees, and Sanitary Boards, which are doing very good work in the Island. I think that, considering the small amount of money given to District Road Committees, they do far better work than the Public Works Department. The cost of maintaining each mile of Public Works Department roads is about Rs. 1,300, and the cost to the District Road Committee for each mile in my district is Rs. 300. In this connection I wish to refer to a vote we passed in Finance Committee some time back. We passed from the surplus balances a sum of one million rupees for distribution among the District and Provincial Road Committees. But the vote has not yet been distributed among those Committees. I cannot really understand the reason for this delay. I pressed for that vote in Council, but the Honourable the Colonial Secretary asked the head of the Public Works Department whether that money would be well spent, and the reply was that it was not likely that the money would be well spent. I then pointed out the composition of these Committees, and that, therefore, there was no fear of the money not being well spent. I should here like to say that the amount voted this year for minor roads was not

distributed fairly. The best principle of distribution would be according to the number of miles of road in each district. My district being a poor district should have got a larger share. To take the case of my district, our funds are so little that some roads had to be entirely neglected this year. We could not spend a cent for some important roads. If any Government official happens to go along one of those roads he would realize the condition in which they are.

I wish to go back to the question of food production for a few moments. There was a vote, I believe, of five lakhs for clearing elas, and again that money has not been distributed. If there are Food Production Committees on the lines I have suggested no such difficulty would have arisen. The members of each Committee who would be members of such district would know the wants of their district and how the money may be spent best. They could also, if necessary, consult other prominent people of the district on the matter. In addition to the clearing of elas this Committee could see to cutting drainage channels where necessary. Some tracts of paddy lands which are more or less water-logged are not very productive. With regard to the cutting of these channels, the chief difficulty is that a man generally owns only a portion of an area, and the cutting of the channels has to be done by the owners of the whole area. The result is, no one does it. To give a concrete case, there was a large extent of land which was full of water, so much so that the area could not be cultivated, as each man waited till the other did the work; about four of the owners, including myself, deposited the money required by Government and got the work done, and this benefited a large number of others. The fault, I say, in a case like that is partly due to the Government. What I want to show is that it is impossible for one owner to cut the channel, and all the owners would not join in doing the work.

Then there is the question of colonization, which this Committee can take up. Our friends of the north clamour for the colonization of the Wannu, but there are no paddy areas, and no villagers there. It is advisable for Government to try and colonize places where there are very few settlers by getting a few families more to settle down there. The cultivators should also be given pasture lands, and this Committee can see to that too. The Government, as I have pointed out, has put down Rs. 30,000 for paddy experiments. Last year the amount put down for the same purpose was Rs. 9,000. I would say that Rs. 10,000 would be sufficient for the purpose, and that the remaining Rs. 20,000 might form the nucleus for starting the Food Production Committees, and I would earnestly commend this suggestion to the Government.

I shall now pass on to the Medical Department. That is another department at which I have been hammering away, and it is necessary for me to do so to-day, because I have been and am taking up the cause of the peasantry and the masses in the rural districts. Food is the most important thing we need, and those who are engaged in food production must be assisted by the Medical Department. What has the Medical Department done so far? I do not want to belittle the work it has done, but I must say that it has not seen to the wants of the masses. If you go about the unhealthy districts, which are not well populated, you will find that the present state of affairs is a disgrace on the medical administration of this Colony. Take for instance my own district. A little

less than two years ago there was one apothecary stationed at one place and he had to visit five other stations, which are about eight or ten miles distant from one another and where the roads leading to them were bad. Surely the Government was able to send more than one apothecary to these six stations. Now another apothecary has been sent in charge of two of those stations. The Tangalla District is a very large district, and the Assistant Government Agents who went there have been more or less marking time, and doing the work they were accustomed to do instead of trying to adopt some new ways and means of improving the district. The only man who tried to improve the district was Mr. Woolf, but unfortunately the recommendations and the conduct of this Assistant Government Agent, who was trying to do something to improve the district, were not approved by Government.

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—Mr. Woolf's conduct was highly approved by Government.

THE HON. MR. V. S. DE S. WIKREMANAYAKE (Southern Province, Southern Division) :—I am very glad to hear that. Mr. Woolf did very good work, but he found that the methods of Government did not suit him, and he therefore resigned from the service. It was he who got a hospital for Tissa. The Tangalla hospital serves an area of 250 square miles, and the Hambantota hospital serves an area of 300 square miles. I think the hospital at Tissa serves an area of about 460 square miles. In these hospitals there is no provision whatever for maternity cases, and there is not a single trained or certificated midwife in the whole district. It was said by Government that only four maternity cases came to these hospitals during the year 1924. But if you go to these hospitals you will find that the wards are quite open, and you cannot expect Eastern women to go to those open wards in maternity cases. So that, Sir, it is very necessary that some provision for maternity cases should be made with regard to these hospitals. Then I have also been pressing for a hospital at Walasmulla. I referred in Finance Committee last year to the necessity for a hospital at Walasmulla. I think that provision for that hospital must be included. This district is full of malaria, and the Administration Report of 1923 says "Malaria is of course a scourge in this district." The Administration Report of 1918 says "cases of parangi and elephantiasis are numerous. Parangi cases are treated with injections at the Tangalla hospital, but many sufferers must find it difficult or impossible to travel from distant villages to Tangalla for treatment. If the disease is to be satisfactorily dealt with, it can only be by sending an itinerating medical officer to pay regular visits to the villages affected with the disease and to administer treatment there." If there is a hospital at Walasmulla these injections can be given there too as it is a parangi area. The Administration Report for 1923 says: "As stated last year a hospital is urgently needed at Walasmulla. A site has been offered free, but I regret that no provision has been made in the Estimates." His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government in his speech before the introduction of the Budget said :—

I am sure that this Council will encourage any well-considered plans which may be devised by the authorities for the improvement of health conditions and agricultural conditions in the backward regions of Ceylon.

Surely Hambantota District is a backward region of Ceylon, and I appeal to this House to follow this dictum of His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government and say that provision for a hospital at Walasmulla should be included in the Budget. I hope the Finance Committee would include the necessary provision. We see, however, that the healthy districts, the planting districts, are attended to very fully, and I submit, Sir, that taking the dictum of His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, the unhealthy and backward districts should be provided for as far as the medical wants are concerned more than the planting districts. I shall read to you, Sir, some of the items which have been included in the Budget for the healthy districts. The Budget includes the following items (page 110 of the Estimates) :—

	Rs.
14. New children's ward, Kandy hospital	30,000
17. New female wards and additions to nurses' quarters, Matale hospital	2,000
20. Quarters for apothecary, Dimbula hospital	2,500
21. New hospital, Watawala	50,000
43. New hospital, Welimada	50,000
44. New hospital, Madulsima	40,000
64. Maternity ward, Deltota hospital	5,000
65. Maternity ward, Madulkele hospital	11,000
66. Additions, Dambulla hospital	21,500
67. Additions, Dimbula hospital	21,800
68. Additions, Pussellawa hospital	40,500
69. Additions, Lindula hospital	7,600
70. Additions, Uda Pussellawa hospital	39,300
71. Maternity ward, Agrapatana hospital	8,000
72. Additions, Dolosbage hospital	26,500
75. Additions and alterations, Deniyaya hospital	17,500

Deniyaya, although it is in the Southern Province, is a planting district, and it is also a healthy district.

	Rs.
82. Infectious diseases ward, Haputale hospital	11,000
83. Additions, Passara hospital	24,000
84. Quarters for the District Medical Assistant, Koslande hospital	8,000
85. Additional ward, Lunugala hospital	6,000
86. Additions, Kitulgala hospital	18,000
87. Additions, Kahawatta hospital	21,000
88. Improvements, Karawanella hospital	3,400

making a total of Rs. 464,600.

These items would show that the European population, including the planting population, are under a lucky star as regards medical facilities. We note that our Tamil brethren also are approaching that lucky star, for we find the following provision on page 110 of the Estimates :—

	Rs.
25. Chavakachcheri hospital	35,000
26. Killinochchi hospital	50,000
28. Quarters for matrons and nurses, Mannar hospital	3,500
31. Trincomalee hospital	50,000

making a total of Rs. 170,000.

Some of these items are re-votes, but they make a total of Rs. 138,500. To come to the unhealthy districts, or districts where the Sinhalese population predominate, the Galle hospital gets one lakh for additions and improvements. Although this hospital serves the people in the Southern Province, it cannot be gainsaid that these additions and improvements are mainly due to the planters of that district. When His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government last visited Baddegama, the planters there pressed His Excellency

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to effect additions and improvements to this hospital with little delay, and I think we should leave out of consideration the item of one lakh for the Galle hospital. Then there is an item of Rs. 11,500 for the dispensary at Horowapotana in the North-Central Province. This item also might be left out of consideration because it was promised at the last Finance Committee meeting. This is only the redemption of a promise, as Rs. 15,000 had been originally promised to the Honourable Member representing the North-Central Province for expenditure on medical needs, and Rs. 3,500 had been previously voted. As regards new hospitals for the Sinhalese permanent population, I have been able so far to find out only two items. One is the new Convict hospital behind Welikada jail (Rs. 63,200), and the other the new Infectious Diseases Hospital, Colombo (Rs. 150,000). But neither of these may be said to serve unhealthy districts, as prisoners would be sent to these from all parts of the Island, and therefore they too may be left out of consideration. So, Sir, you will see that nothing is to be done for the unhealthy districts in the way of attention to the medical wants of the masses inhabiting the Sinhalese Provinces. So I say that Walasmulla hospital ought to be included in the Estimates, and should be given first consideration. The statistics with regard to the population of this area would show that this hospital is a necessity. Further, the number of visits of outdoor patients there in 1924 was 14,713, exceeding even the number at the Hambantota hospital by nearly five thousand. In fact Walasmulla figures exceed those of many hospitals in the Island. There is also another reason why this hospital should be given. It is the duty of the Government by reason of the Convention of 1815 to see that the permanent population of the Island is well looked after. Preference ought to be given to the permanent population, and not to the immigrant labourers. I do not for a moment say that the hospitals in the up-country or the planting districts should not be allowed, but certainly preference ought to be given to such a hospital as the one asked for at Walasmulla.

Again, the hospital buildings in my district are not satisfactory. The hospital at Hambantota is like a cattle shed when compared with hospitals in planting districts. I therefore hope that the Honourable Members of this House when they meet in Select Committee will see that provision is made to meet these wants. As regards the Walasmulla hospital, I may say that one of the hospitals in the planting districts may be postponed till next year and that hospital substituted. Then again I wish to point out that there is not a single matron or nurse in any of the three hospitals in our district, and this is the case in many hospitals in the Island. I trust that the Principal Civil Medical Officer will look into this matter and evolve a scheme for training a large number of nurses. If he does so, I have no doubt that he will be doing a lasting good to the country. It is really necessary that at least there should be one trained matron in every hospital. You will find, Sir, that the salaries given to European nurses are large when compared with the salaries given to Ceylonese nurses. The minimum salary for European nurses is Rs. 3,000, and for Ceylonese nurses Rs. 840. Further, a European nurse gets a uniform allowance of Rs. 225 the first year, and after that Rs. 125 a year, whereas a Ceylonese nurse does not get any such allowance. Again, a European nurse gets a laundry allowance of Rs. 60, and a Ceylonese nurse gets only Rs. 30 as laundry allowance. I submit, Sir, that the pay of the Ceylonese

nurses is insufficient and ought to be raised in order that the department may attract a larger number of nurses. There are many ladies who will be only too glad to take to this noble calling, but they are unable to spend for the course. I suggest that the head of the Medical Department should see that a number of ladies are taken on to be trained as nurses and that they should be paid during the period of their apprenticeship, so that at least their out-of-pocket expenses may be covered. If that is done the department will not have any difficulty in providing every hospital with a matron or a nurse. In January last I happened to visit the Galle hospital, having had a patient there, and I found that the matrons and nurses there were greatly overworked, so much so that a nurse had practically to break rest for seven nights running. I at once made certain representations to Government, and I also made certain suggestions regarding the improvement of that hospital. I hope that some at least of those suggestions would be followed.

I would now come to the item on roads and railways. I think these have an important bearing on food production. What are we to do if we have no roads? It is the roads that are necessary to encourage the food producer. I should like to refer chiefly to agricultural roads. At the Finance Committee held in October last year a certain member wanted to know why there were two sets of roads, agricultural roads and Public Works Department roads. He had no idea of the importance of agricultural roads to paddy cultivation. I explained it then and there and the item was passed. If the railway is extended to a district, it is necessary that subsidiary roads should be opened up from the main roads to the stations. Otherwise the stations would be more or less useless. Similarly, roads should be opened up to the paddy areas when paddy lands are opened up under any irrigation scheme. Merely opening up irrigation schemes would not do. Then, with regard to schemes like the Kirindi-oya scheme and the Walawa scheme, Government should open roads from the main roads leading to the tracts under cultivation. It is these roads that are called agricultural roads, and they are very necessary. I hope that the Council will see that as many agricultural roads as are possible are opened out in the Island. It is the duty of the Agricultural Department as well as the Irrigation Department to see that these roads are opened, because it is the agricultural roads that will help the peasantry who have opened up large tracts in the wilds. Then as regards the other roads, I find that the vote is insufficient. We have to take into consideration the proposed reduction of the taxes, and we should try to balance the Budget so that we may be able to devote as much money as possible to roads. In my district there are three roads recommended for years by the Assistant Government Agents to be taken over by the Public Works Department. I do not want to press on the Council for all the three roads, because I think it is difficult to get a large vote at once. I think I will ask one at a time. One of these roads in point of agriculture and in point of traffic is largely in use, namely, the road from Beliatta to Walasmulla. The District Road Committee has not sufficient funds to adequately spend on the maintenance of these roads. So that it is necessary that one of these roads at least should be taken on by the Public Works Department. Then, Sir, the votes for the District Road Committees are not sufficient, and as regards my area I would suggest the cutting down of the votes for the resthouses and the

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utilization of the money thus obtained on roads. You will find that a sum of Rs. 71,899 has been voted for the maintenance of resthouses in the Southern Province. In these days of motor cars I do not think it necessary to have resthouses at, say, every ten miles. If you analyse the statistics you will find that it is the officials who specially patronize these out-of-the-way resthouses. But even for officials so many resthouses are not necessary now, as generally speaking they could always get back to their destination or even to a particular resthouse in the district in time, and, further, they get motor mileage. Now take Hambantota or Tangalla, where there are two resthouses, one of which was known as the European resthouse and the other as the Native resthouse. The former is now called the first class resthouse and the latter the second class resthouse as a result of certain questions put in this Council. But I fail to see why there should be two resthouses in places like Tangalla and Hambantota. I am told that the second class resthouse is a little cheaper than the first class resthouse, a breakfast at the former costing Re. 1.25 and at the latter Re. 1.50. Then there are several other resthouses in my district, at Ranna, at Walasmulla, Ambalantota, Wirawila, and so on. I would suggest that some of these resthouses should be abolished, so that we may use that money on the improvement and maintenance of roads.

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY:—I do not like to interrupt the Honourable Member, but I think he is under a misapprehension. The figure Rs. 71,889 is not money voted for resthouses, but represents days' labour.

THE HON. MR. V. S. DE S. WIKREMANAYAKE (Southern Province, Southern Division):—It is poll tax money.

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY:—It is not money, but days' labour.

THE HON. MR. V. S. DE S. WIKREMANAYAKE (Southern Province, Southern Division):—Well I do not work on the road; I pay my money. Whatever it is, ultimately it is reduced to rupees and cents. So that a part of this money could be given to the District Roads Committees for the maintenance of roads.

Now I come to the railway. There again we find that our district is neglected. The Hambantota railway extension is not a new project. The trace with regard to this railway was made about thirty years ago. When the question of this railway comes on for discussion in Council I shall be able to quote chapter and verse regarding its importance. But considering all aspects of the question, I would submit that this railway is far more important than the Batticaloa-Nintavur railway. In point of population and agriculture the Hambantota railway ought to get preference. At a meeting of the last Finance Committee, it was decided by eleven votes to eight that this railway should be taken in hand. But on the ground of emergency the Honourable the Acting Colonial Secretary brought up for consideration in Finance Committee a supplementary vote of Rs. 57,500 for the acquisition of land for the Nintavur extension. I fail to understand that there was any emergency about it. We were more or less taken unawares as it was not in the agenda. The majority of the Members then voted for the Hambantota extension, and I submit that provision for the construction of this railway should have been included in the Budget. I am not asking that a large sum should be voted to start with. I would ask the House to

vote only the sum necessary for the acquisition of land, and that is a vote that could be really spent during the year. His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government in his speech opening the Budget omitted to mention the railway extension to Hambantota, but he more or less pressed the extension to Nintavur. Here too I say that our Tamil brethren are coming under that lucky star again.

I now come to the question of the water supply to towns. It is necessary that I should touch upon this question because it concerns my district a great deal. I think Tangalla stands foremost in point of importance with regard to the water supply of towns in this Island. Even after all the heavy rain we have had lately the wells in Tangalla are running dry. I put a question in Council on this subject, and the reply, as usual, was very unsatisfactory. The Government tried to get over the difficulty to some extent by saying that during the last two years there was no serious drought. With regard to the quality of the water, I wish the Government would only send the water to the Public Analyst for analysis. The replies I received to my questions are fresh in the minds of Honourable Members and I need not read them out. In this connection I would refer Honourable Members to the Administration Report for 1919. It says—

Government is aware that the water supply of Tangalla is by no means satisfactory. Various schemes for improving it have been considered from time to time, but so far none has been found to be practicable. The matter is one primarily for the Sanitary Board.

The Administration Report for 1918 says: "Among the most pressing requirements of the district is a permanent solution of the annual difficulty experienced by the people of Tangalla for want of a proper water supply."

At least since 1906, Sir, the question of the water supply for Tangalla has been under consideration by Government. I think, Sir, the Government ought to consider without delay the question of water supply for Tangalla, Chilaw, Anuradhapura, and Hambantota. Even in the Administration Report for 1924 I find that the water supply for Tangalla is included as one of the works required. But the Government reply was that the Amballa scheme was very costly and that borings would be continued. Borings were continued for over twenty years without any results, and I would submit that they would prove to be a failure. I succeeded in convincing His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government of the urgent necessity of a good supply of water for Tangalla during his recent visit to Tangalla. His Excellency said that in North Borneo artesian wells had been tried and found successful, and that it was known that Tangalla would be an ideal place for an artesian well. The boring experiments for an artesian well are being conducted at Pahalagoda, which is a place very much lower in level than Tangalla town. There is a spring well there built by the Dutch, but that water after analysis was always found to be unfit for human consumption. That was the opinion of the Public Analyst. Boring experiments are, therefore, bound to be a failure. Not only would it be a doubtful experiment, but even if successful the water would be found to be bad. But the water of the springs at Amballa was always pronounced to be very good by the Public Analyst, and the level there is about 130 feet above the level of Tangalla town. It reminds one of the seven springs of living water mentioned in the Bible. In every way it would be feasible to go on

with the Amballa scheme, which would cost only three and a half lakhs. That expenditure is after all nothing when compared with the poor population that would be benefited by the supply of water. That scheme would not only supply water to the town of Tangalla, but to Beliatta town as well. I hope the Select Committee would vote this sum, and help the thirsty population of Tangalla and Beliatta to drink the living water of these seven springs.

I am sorry, Sir, that I have taken up so much of the time of the Council, and I am reminded of it by a note from the Chairman. I shall be very brief.

I pass on to the Irrigation Department. I have already referred to the importance of agricultural roads, but I should like to point out the necessity of spending more money on irrigation works. Twenty-three items out of forty-three items in the Budget are devoted to bungalows.

I wish to refer to the item New Residency, Matara, the residence for the Assistant Government Agent. The amount put against this item is Rs. 50,000. I would submit that this is far too much for a bungalow at Matara for the Assistant Government Agent. The Irrigation Department has put up a very fine upstairs building at Tangalla for the Divisional Irrigation Engineer for half this sum. If a building costs Rs. 50,000 at Colombo, a similar building at Matara would not cost the same amount, as at Matara the cost of material and labour would be cheaper. But the estimates of the Public Works Department for a particular type of building are the same for Colombo and Matara, and the extraordinary thing is that there is no saving from the vote when the building at Matara is completed.

I would wish to refer to one other matter mentioned by the Honourable Member who represents the Urban Division of the Central Province. That is, the question of the adulteration of citronella oil. The area under citronella cultivation in Matara and Tangalla Districts is estimated to be 32,880 acres, and during the last year 1,433,381 pounds of oil have been exported. Since 1923 2,829 acres have been opened up in West Giruwa pattu for citronella cultivation, and the extension is going on. The price of citronella about a year ago was about Rs. 3.50, and to-day it is less than Rs. 2. What is this fall in price due to? It is chiefly due to the adulteration of the oil when it is exported to England, and the result is that we are unable to get a good price. Mr. Frederick Lewis told me that he was shown in London a bottle of Java citronella oil and a bottle of Ceylon citronella oil, and he was told that the Java oil was unadulterated, and that the price the firms could offer for the Ceylon oil was about half that of the Java oil. I was also told that a firm which had imported Ceylon citronella oil had to spend a large sum of money to remove the kerosene oil. Therefore I would appeal to the Government to introduce some legislation with regard to the adulteration of citronella oil so that this industry may be encouraged.

THE HON. MR. T. M. SABA RUTNAM (Northern Province, Eastern Division):—I will be very brief, Sir.

Adjournment.

THE HON. MR. T. Y. WRIGHT (European Rural Member):—Sir, I move the adjournment of the House.

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—I should like to know whether it will be convenient for Honourable Members to meet at 9 A.M. to-morrow.

THE HON. MR. E. R. TAMBIMUTTU (Batticaloa Revenue District) :—We would prefer to sit at 2.30 P.M.

THE HON. MR. E. W. PERERA (Kalutara Revenue District) :—Sir, I do not know why there should be this rush and hurry. The usual time has been 2.30 P.M., and surely the Government can help the Members by fixing the usual time.

THE HON. MR. V. S. DE S. WIKREMANAYAKE (Southern Province, Southern Division) :—We who come from the outstations prefer to see that the meetings are finished sooner and not allowed to go on for days.

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—I thought that meeting in the morning would be entirely in the interests of Unofficial Members, many of whom come from outstations, and I would like to fix a time that would be suitable for all. It is a matter entirely for Honourable Members to decide.

THE HON. MR. T. Y. WRIGHT (European Rural Member) :—Some of us have got a great deal of work to do in the mornings.

THE HON. MR. E. W. PERERA (Kalutara Revenue District) :—It was the invariable practice of the last two Councils, Sir, to meet at 2.30 P.M. We have plenty of time to go on with the Budget. The unusual practice of meeting in the morning was introduced only last year. I feel sure that the honourable the official leader of the House is not going farther than other leaders have been going.

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—I leave it entirely to the Unofficial Members.

THE HON. MR. E. J. HAYWARD, C.B.E., V.D. (Commercial Member) :—Most of us, Sir, have something else to do besides Council work, and we would like the 2.30 meeting.

THE HON. MR. H. M. MACAN MARKAR (First Muslim Member) :—I think 2.30 P.M. will be the most convenient hour.

THE HON. THE OFFICER COMMANDING THE TROOPS :—Is that the general opinion ?

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—I move, Sir, that Council do adjourn till 2.30 P.M. to-morrow.

THE HON. THE OFFICER COMMANDING THE TROOPS :—Council is adjourned until 2.30 P.M. to-morrow.

Council adjourned accordingly.