

# DEBATES

IN THE

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF CEYLON,

On Thursday, July 23, 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. W. DURAISWAMY (NORTHERN PROVINCE,  
WESTERN DIVISION).
- THE HONOURABLE MR. E. W. PERERA (KALUTARA REVENUE DISTRICT).
- THE HONOURABLE MR. E. R. TAMBIMUTTU (BATTICALOA REVENUE  
DISTRICT).
- THE HONOURABLE MR. A. C. G. WJEYEKOON (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 BURGHER 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. G. A. H. WILLE (FIRST BURGHESER 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.*

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#### PETITIONS.

##### Petition from T. K. Ayen.

THE HON. MR. C. E. VICTOR COREA (Colombo Town, North) :—  
 I beg to present a petition, Sir, from T. K. Ayen of Puttalam, who says that he was employed in the Puttalam Kachcheri for eighteen years, when, owing to ill-health and old age, he was compelled to retire. The Assistant Government Agent allowed him a gratuity of Rs. 468 out of Gansabhawa funds, but on the matter being referred to the Attorney-General the latter held that it was *ultra vires* on the part of the Assistant Government Agent to have allowed him that amount out of Gansabhawa funds. The petitioner hopes that Government will take his case into consideration and grant him a gratuity from any other funds.

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## Petition from Y. K. Don Charles.

THE HON. MR. C. E. VICTOR COREA (Colombo Town, North) :— I also present a petition, Sir, from Y. K. Don Charles of 72, Dam street, Colombo. The petitioner states that he has been harshly dealt with by the Land Settlement Officer, and he prays that his case be given due consideration.

## NOTICE OF QUESTIONS.

## Speeches in Council.

THE HON. MR. H. R. FREEMAN (North-Central Province) :— I give notice, Sir, of the following question :—

Will the Government be pleased to consider the application of the old, proposed, fifteen minutes' rule to speeches in this Council ?

## The Attidiya Inquiry.

THE HON. MR. C. E. VICTOR COREA (Colombo Town, North) :— I give notice, Sir, of the following questions :—

(1) Will the Government be pleased to state how it happens that the Second Law Officer of the Crown is conducting the defence in a murder inquiry ?

(2) If the Government (or the Police) are reluctant to prosecute the accused in the Attidiya "murder" case, is there any valid reason why the Counsel engaged by the Indian Association for the purpose should not be allowed to conduct the prosecution ?

(3) Is the Government aware that the good name of His Majesty's Government is jeopardized by the attitude that the officials concerned have chosen to adopt in this matter ?

THE HON. THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL :—I rise to a point of order, Sir. It is out of order in this Council to ask questions about a matter which is *sub judice*. The Honourable Member has been pleased to refer to it as "the Attidiya murder case," but the Honourable Member knows quite well that a judicial inquiry is being held into this matter. I submit that it is perfectly out of order to ask a question on the matter.

The question was not allowed.

## QUESTIONS.

## Lease of Land in the Galle District.

THE HON. MR. F. A. OBEYESEKERE (Southern Province, Central Division) :—I rise, Sir, to ask—In regard to the lease for 99 years of 900 acres in the Galle District of lands known as Welanda-wakele in the Talpe pattu, and which lease was auctioned on or about December 4 last—(1) What were the dates of advertisement in the *Ceylon Government Gazette* of this "sale" ? (2) What was the value of the lease per acre as assessed by the Government at the date of lease, particularizing the value of the timber on each acre ? (3) Was this land not virgin mukalana Crown forest ? (4) Who were the officers directly responsible for the value put on the timber per acre ? (5) Was a report furnished by any officer of the Forest Department as to the actual value of the timber ? (6) What was

the value of the timber as stated in such reports? (7) To whom was the "lease" given at the auction? (8) What was the actual price for which the lease was auctioned on the date of auction? (9) Was an additional sum of over Rs. 40,000 paid to Government by the purchasers of the lease within a month or thereabouts of the date of "auction"? (10) What was the amount, and in what circumstances was the extra payment made? (11) Between the date of auction and the date of the additional payment of Rs. 40,000 by the "purchasers" did the Government receive at the Galle Kachcheri, or otherwise, representations indicating the unreasonable figure at which the lease was auctioned in December, 1924? (12) Has the Government taken steps to ascertain how it came about that an unreasonable figure was originally accepted? (13) If so, what has been ascertained? (14) Will Government take adequate steps to ascertain before date of auction of leases or sales of land the real market value of the timber standing in virgin mukalana Crown forests, especially in cases where the right to the timber accompanies the "lease"? (15) In order to prevent loss to revenue by the real market value not being obtained, through large acreages being leased and sold, will the Government in future forbid leases or sales of land in lots of over 100 acres to any applicant whatsoever?

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY:—(1) In *Gazette* No. 7,407 of July 25, 1924, the lease sale was gazetted for September 11, 1924, but the sale was withdrawn; subsequently the sale was again gazetted in No. 7,421 of October 3, 1924, and was held on December 4, 1924.

(2) Premium Rs. 3.60 per acre, calculated at 6 per cent. on Rs. 60 the value of land per acre. The timber was valued at Rs. 10 per acre.

(3) The land was Crown forest.

(4) Mr. F. J. S. Turner, Assistant Conservator of Forests.

(5) Yes.

(6) Rs. 10 per acre.

(7) The lease was purchased by Mr. C. E. A. Dias of Colombo and Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya of Galle at public auction.

(8) At the public auction Rs. 16,124 was realized.

(9) Yes—an additional sum of Rs. 40,619 was paid to Government on January 31, 1925.

(10) The payment of this additional sum was the result of an agreement reached at an interview between Mr. C. E. A. Dias and the Controller of Revenue.

(11) Representations were received by the Controller of Revenue to the effect that after the sale of the lease by public auction at the Kachcheri there had been a resale of it at a considerably enhanced figure among a syndicate at the New Oriental Hotel with a view to the flotation of a Company.

(12) and (13) It was ascertained that the value of the land per acre had been assessed originally before the boom in tea prices had taken effect, and that at the revaluation for the sale of the lease the fact of the boom had not been taken into consideration.

(14) The land in this case is difficult of access, and the market value of the timber on it had nothing to do with the enhancement of the value of the land. The value of the timber *in situ* is always carefully ascertained and added to the premium before a lease of Crown land is sold.

(15) The cutting up of large blocks of Crown land into small lots inevitably increases the expense of survey, is not calculated to encourage the development of any new agricultural enterprises, and might have an effect quite contrary to that pre-supposed by the Honourable Member, namely, where there is a demand for a large block it might put off from bidding the very persons from whom high prices might be expected in competition. In every case the Government must use its discretion to dispose of Crown land in such blocks as are likely to secure the best advantage to itself and to the public.

#### Muslims in Government Service.

THE HON. MR. H. M. MACAN MARKAR (First Muslim Member) :—I rise, Sir, to ask—Will the Government be pleased to state—(a) The number of Muslims employed in each of the following departments as Government servants :—(1) The Civil Service, (2) the Government Clerical Service, (3) the Railway Department, (4) the Survey Department, (5) the Post and Telegraph Departments, (6) the Public Works Department, (7) the Forest Department, (8) the Medical Department, (9) the Department of Agriculture, (10) the Police Department, (11) the Excise Department ; and wherever possible the number in each grade of such Departments ? (b) The percentage of Muslims in the Government service ?

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—Steps are being taken to prepare a statement giving the information desired by the Honourable Member. This statement, when ready, will be tabled.

#### Travelling Allowance to District Medical Officers.

THE HON. MR. T. B. JAYAH (Third Muslim Member) :—I rise, Sir, to ask—Is it a fact that while District Engineers if they travel 400 miles a month are paid a commuted allowance of Rs. 200 a month, District Medical Officers who travel 400 to 600 miles a month are paid only Rs. 75 a month ? If so, will the Government be pleased to state why this distinction is made ?

THE HON. DR. J. F. E. BRIDGER (Principal Civil Medical Officer) :—District Engineers are permitted to draw mileage at the rates and on the conditions laid down in General Order 364 within certain limits fixed by the Director of Public Works with the authority of Government. The limits vary between 300 miles per month in some districts and 600 miles per month in others.

District Medical Officers cannot be treated in the same way because, in the first place, their travelling is partly in connection with their private practice and, secondly, an appreciable part of their travelling consists of short journeys, in towns, for which they would not be entitled to mileage under the Travelling Regulations. Those officers of the Medical Department who are debarred from private practice and whose duties involve regular travelling are paid commuted allowances, for example, Inspecting Medical Officers and Directors of the Anchylostomiasis Campaigns are paid Rs. 300 and Rs. 175 per mensem, respectively, as travelling allowances.

## Dental Institutes.

**THE HON. MR. S. RAJARATNAM** (Northern Province, Central Division) :—I rise, Sir, to ask—What is the estimate for opening dental institutes in connection with the General Hospital, Colombo, and in Jaffna, Galle, and Kandy hospitals ?

**THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY** :—The original estimate for the construction of a dental institute in Colombo amounted to Rs. 115,000, exclusive of the necessary equipment. The present cost would amount to at least Rs. 120,000. No estimates have yet been prepared for the construction of dental institutes in connection with the hospitals at Jaffna, Galle, and Kandy.

## The Kanthalai Tank.

**THE HON. MR. M. M. SUBRAMANIAM** (Trincomalee Revenue District) :—I rise, Sir, to ask—(1) In view of the fact that only two-thirds of the land irrigable by Kanthalai tank is being cultivated this year owing to the insufficiency of water in it, will the Government be pleased to repair the channels and water-courses that convey water from the tank to the fields and thus prevent wastage of water ?

(2) Will the Government be pleased to state whether any scheme for the conveyance of water by channel from Kanthalai tank to Kinia was ever submitted, and if so, will it be pleased to place on the table the estimates prepared for this scheme and all papers connected therewith ?

**THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY** :—(1) The Government is advised that the decision to cultivate only two-thirds of the irrigable land under the Kanthalai tank was made at a meeting, by the proprietors themselves. The tank in March stored sufficient water to irrigate all the irrigable area. The Government channels are in good order, and the water-courses do not need to be repaired.

(2) The answer is in the negative.

## Skilled Workmen on Daily Wage.

**THE HON. MR. F. A. OBEYESEKERE** (Southern Province, Central Division) :—I rise, Sir, to ask—What is the number of skilled workmen employed on a daily wage and those placed on the "cooly list" in the technical branches of each of the Government Departments ? What is the total amount estimated for the payment of such workmen in each Government Department as shown in the Budget for 1925-26 ?

**THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY** :—A statement giving the information desired by the Honourable Member will be prepared and, when ready, will be tabled.

**THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY** :—The answers to the other questions are not yet ready.

## The Supply Bill, 1925-26.

The debate on the Supply Bill, 1925-26, was resumed.

THE HON. DR. J. F. E. BRIDGER (Principal Civil Medical Officer):—Sir, the Honourable Member for the Southern District of the Southern Province in his remarks on the Budget yesterday apparently took exception to the sum of approximately four lakhs of rupees which was going to be expended on what are known as Medical Wants hospitals or hospitals in the planting districts. He also, I understood, rather deprecated the fact that what in his opinion would be sufficient was not earmarked for hospitals in other parts of the country. Well, Sir, the question that Honourable Members have to ask themselves is what is the source from which the sum of four lakhs of rupees is to come. Is that sum to come from the revenue of the country which has been derived from taxation of the community in general? The answer to that question is that it is not. It is not coming from the general revenue of the country. That sum is coming from a particular fund, which has been contributed to by the estates which are going to benefit from these hospitals. That fund is derived from a cess on the export of certain commodities, those commodities being rubber, tea, cacao, and cardamoms, and the amount of that cess annually is put to a fund, and it is through that fund that this particular demand is being met. On September 30, that is the last day of the present financial year, it is estimated that that fund will amount to four and a half lakhs of rupees. It will thus be seen that there is an ample amount from which to meet the expenditure on these hospitals and the improvements to these hospitals.

It might also be said that when these hospitals are completed, the benefits to be derived from them will not only be in the direction of helping estates, in so far as they will help the employees of the estates, who, of course, are principally coolies, but the service of these estate hospitals is a service that is available to every individual resident in the district, whether he belongs to an estate or whether he is a villager. I know that in many of these districts the number of villagers is limited, but that does not alter the fact that these hospitals when provided do not confine themselves to medical attendance on a particular class of individuals. In other words, the benefits obtained from the contributions of estates go to help everyone living in the area where they are situated.

With regard to hospitals in other districts, it would be foolish of me, standing in my place as Principal Civil Medical Officer, to suggest that there is no need for improvements to and the establishment of new hospitals in certain districts in this Colony. They are needed; but what I wish to place before Honourable Members is this, that one has to consider the definite and specific claims of various places. We all know how keen Honourable Members are to press interests that are concerned with their particular districts. That is quite natural; but at the same time one has to consider the varying claims of different places, and one has to put forward a claim which in one's opinion should come before another. Further, I take it that any medical department in any country has to carry out a policy, not of building hospitals with the object of filling them with cases of preventable diseases, but it is the duty of the Medical Department to take such measures as will make it unnecessary to

have admissions of cases of preventible diseases. If a disease is preventible, that disease should be prevented. Hospitals are places which should be constructed for the purpose of cases of accident, cases of organic disease, and cases of difficult labour. Except in the case of very poor persons, I do not think that hospitals should be constructed for ordinary labour cases, but it is quite correct for hospitals to be constructed for difficult cases of labour. Those are the legitimate uses of hospitals. Hospitals should not be constructed to provide for the treatment of cases of disease when those diseases can be prevented, and there need be no such cases.

At the present moment the hospitals in this country are overcrowded. Some cases I have seen even before I became Principal Civil Medical Officer where even the verandahs of the hospitals were overcrowded. When the question was asked "What are the people suffering from"? the answer received was that they were suffering from diseases which they should not have been suffering from, that is, from diseases which should have been prevented. If those hospitals had been established for cases of diseases which could not be prevented by forethought and foresight, those hospitals would be big enough for their needs. With regard, therefore, to the question of meeting legitimate needs, that is, in the direction of making provision for urgent necessities in the way of improvement of hospitals, for instance, and provision for, let us say, maternity wards in already existing hospitals, Honourable Members will recall that the Honourable the Acting Colonial Secretary in his speech in introducing the Budget referred to the fact that there is unallocated a sum of, I believe, approximately, Rs. 1,000,000. I am authorized to state that it will be possible from this source to meet the claims of the more urgent medical needs which do not appear in the Budget.

I have further, Sir, to make an announcement which I consider is a very important one. It is in regard to the construction of the new prison at Ragama. I am authorized to state that as the result of a report received by Government from the Malariologist on the successful results of the anti-malarial measures at Mahara, Government does not propose to proceed with the building at Ragama. As I said, I consider that a very important announcement because of what is behind it. I therefore propose to let Honourable Members know, and through them the general public, what has been done for the prevention of malaria in a very malarious area. With regard to Mahara I would like to state this, that during a period of six months, July to December, 1922, before any anti-malarial measures were inaugurated, the percentage of cases admitted to the Mahara prison hospital was 51·8 of the inmates of the prison, that is, more than half. That was the daily average. Anti-malarial measures were started at the end of 1922. In the first six months, January to June, 1923, we have the average percentage of admissions reduced to 33·5 of the inmates of the prison. For the six months, July to December, 1923, we have 24·59; January to June, 1924, the percentage admitted was 9·3; and from July to December, 1924, the daily admission averaged 5·8. There is another table of figures which in another way shows clearly what has happened. It is this. In the year 1922, 3,377 cases of malaria were treated in the gaol hospital; in 1923, 2,032 cases were treated; and in 1924, 712 cases were treated.



THE HON. SIR J. THOMSON BROOM, Kt. (European Urban Member):—Sir, the Honourable the Colonial Secretary, in introducing the Budget for 1925-26 remarked that it bore a strong family resemblance to its predecessor. This statement I agree with, but in my opinion it bears an even greater impress of fast living than in the case of the former.

I confess I am somewhat at sea in regard to what the financial position of the Colony really is. I have a fairly shrewd idea of what it is to-day, but with the enormous liabilities which will be piled up owing to so many new works being initiated and included in the Budget, involving heavy expenditure in subsequent years before completion, I prophesy that Ceylon will come out again as a borrower within two years. At present about 12 per cent. of the whole annual revenue of the Colony goes in paying interest and providing Sinking Fund in respect of its existing borrowings.

I yield to no man in my love for Ceylon, or in the desire to see it progress. But I see in the Budget proposals too much brick and mortar being provided for all at once, so to speak. I am convinced that the people generally of this Colony would benefit to a greater extent if there was more concentration on roads and the rapid completion of a fewer number of new works. Rome was not built in a day, and a good thing too. We do not want any repetition of the long drawn out delays which have taken place over the completion of the new lunatic asylum, and which is now only nearing completion, with the aid of private firms' assistance. Yet three years ago in this House the then Principal Civil Medical Officer stated that he hoped to be in a position to remove from the present building 1,000 female patients in the October of that year.

That was three years ago, when the present building was overcrowded. What are the conditions to-day? I will not venture to describe them. They are too generally known.

Now before I make my special appeal to Government on this occasion, I wish to say that I was not a Member of this House when the 1924-25 Budget was passed. But I was a Member of Council when the Budget applicable to the previous year went through, and I am now, I find, the only Unofficial Member present to-day who voted for the Salaries Scheme. Those Unofficial Members who then sat with me, present to-day, and who took a different course, will remember the long sittings we had in Committee for many days and nights over the 1922-23 Budget and the Salaries Scheme.

Two statements were submitted on the last evening of our sitting showing what the increased taxation proposals were expected to yield so as to balance the Budget. As we were all tired men after nine days' hard work in Committee, I stated that there was no opportunity, within the few hours then left us, to form any opinion as to whether the new taxation proposals would not yield a larger amount than that estimated. Having lived for some time in the East, where, shall we say, memories sometimes fade rather readily, and being a Scotsman, I obtained a letter to the effect that if the new revenue exceeded the expenditure, such surplus as might accrue would be applied in reduction of the following year's expenditure. As I have told you, I was not a Member of Council when out of surplus revenue which did accrue from the fresh taxation considerable amounts were disposed of before the close of the financial year 1924-25. The new university received a large grant, and the two final instalments in respect of Ceylon's war contribution of

one million pounds sterling to the Imperial Government were paid. I viewed these decisions from the position of an outsider. The two last mentioned payments to the Imperial Government, it was said, were being made so as to benefit by the high remitting rate then obtaining and under rebate of interest. I might here remark that the party who gave me the assurance on behalf of the Ceylon Government as to how any surplus revenue would be dealt with is no longer here, and I notice from a speech, as reported in a local newspaper, that the absent gentleman, according to the Governor-elect, was in earlier days accustomed to think he was running the Government of Ceylon.

Be that as it may, I do not wish on this occasion to make stock out of the departure from a policy which I was given to understand would be followed. I carried out my promise. But I consider it is only justice to myself that I should refer to the assurance given to me. It may be said at this late date that the written assurance I hold was worded somewhat ambiguously. It was in the usual style of a man who loved ambiguous language. But the actual meaning was made abundantly clear to me when the promise was given.

Now, Sir, I will leave that subject and come to the special appeal which I would make to Government. It is in respect to the railway, and the subject is one which I have tried my best to study over a period of ten years in Ceylon. I therefore think that I am entitled to have some consideration given to my present appeal. After the war I pleaded for a better service of trains from the outlying districts contiguous to Colombo as also for reduced fares. I suggested that such areas should be tapped by motor vehicles to be owned by the Railway, which, further, would bring passengers to the nearest rail-head. Remember this was before a single public motor bus was plying on the roads. Neither I nor the idea got any encouragement.

Well, now we are up against what might have been largely avoided in the way of bus traffic on our roads. I hold that to a great extent the bad condition of many of our roads, so far as the poor condition may be attributed to the bus traffic, lies at the door of the railway.

Now what has to be done to check the serious inroads now being made by such traffic on the railway revenue? We must reduce the railway fares at once before we suffer further inroads on the revenue. We cannot hope to recover all the lost traffic, but we may recover some of it and check further losses. To wait another year before doing so would indeed be folly. I made up my mind some time ago to make this appeal to Government. It was subsequently to that decision that I saw that the Railway Advisory Board, which body I induced a former Governor to create, has been considering the matter of reducing fares and re-classification of rates, but their proposals, I gather, have not yet been put before Government. This matter, to my mind, brooks no delay, and I hope Government will sanction a reduction of the second and third class fares from all points below Nawalapitiya, with special consideration to the stations contiguous to Colombo.

I believe the Railway Advisory Board have under consideration first class return fares and rates for reduction.

My estimate of the cut I had in view would cost approximately Rs. 8,500,000. I know that there is no use asking Government to grant such an appeal as I now make without showing also where

the money required is to come from. This matter has been considered by my Unofficial friends, and we are confident of my being able to show how it can be done when the House goes into Select Committee.

I would like to take the opportunity of saying that the present General Manager of the Railway has always received proposals for what is thought to be in the interest of the railway in a most liberal and friendly spirit, and I look forward with confidence to the Ceylon Government Railway, under his control, being eventually placed on a thoroughly businesslike footing.

THE HON. MR. G. A. H. WILLE (First Burgher Member) :—Sir, it so happened yesterday that notwithstanding the impartial bestowal of your glances on Honourable Members, the right wing of this House, I do not use the term in its political sense, had a monopoly of speaking on the Budget; and I am glad that we on this side have been able to encroach on that monopoly to-day. I desire to support very heartily the proposal for reduction of taxation by remission of the taxes mentioned by the Central Province Urban Member. In fact, some of them were mentioned by some of us in the course of last year's Budget debate, but for want of unanimity, and owing to other pressing matters, and it was only some eight months ago, the subject was not pursued. But now we are unanimous so far as I know, the European and other communal Members and the territorial Members being all agreed on the point. Judging by our Budget, we seem to be on a flood-tide of prosperity, and I should like to repeat what I said last year in connection with the current year's Budget, that it is when a country is rich that we must have a poor man's Budget. As the Member for the Southern Province, Eastern Division, reminded us yesterday, we heard last year from Government what I called at the time a chilling statement that it did not intend to remit any taxes; chilling, because it had a tendency to cool our enthusiasm for the new constitution and increased powers under which we came into this Council. We knew our constitutional disability in regard to initiating expenditure or imposing taxes, but there was no such ban in respect of the reduction of taxes. But Government has this year made the same declaration of policy. Now, Sir, can Government have it both ways. It cannot ask the people to fill its coffers when its needs are great, as was the case a few years ago, and also when its exchequer is overflowing as it is to-day? Taxes are undoubtedly among the evils of this imperfect world, although they may be necessary evils, and they can only be justified so far as they are absolutely necessary for the paramount purposes of the state. In the manner in which we are going on, are we ever to hear that word "repeal" which is associated with the greatest financial as well as other reforms of history? Is this Council to be for ever, to borrow an expression from the English constitution, a Committee of supply voting expenditure, but never its complement, a Committee of ways and means to consider how supplies for the year are to be made good?

When the English Chancellor of the Exchequer presents his Budget, proposals for remitting some taxes, even if he has to impose others for special reasons, are a regular feature, and only the other day, in spite of England's great difficulties at the present time, Mr. Winston Churchill had some compensations to offer to the poor by

raising the limit of incomes which are exempt from income tax and remitting sixpence in that tax while imposing some new taxes on luxuries. Controversy there may be on some of the latter items on their merits or on his so-called socialistic schemes of amelioration for the poor, but the point is that there is not a stereotyped policy of *quieta non movere* or let sleeping dogs lie as some might translate it about the English Budget such as there seems to be about ours especially on its income side, although our revenue is abundant. It may be, Sir, that our estimable Treasurer, like the Colonial Secretary, is an overdriven official, and that there is no time to spare thought for making some changes in our sources of revenue, but we who represent the people have to see to it that adjustments of taxation are made from time to time according to the circumstances of the State.

I should like to refer again to one of the matters I mentioned last year, because it has been referred to by one of the previous speakers, but in a way in which I partly disagree with him, and that is the estate duty exacted from poor widows and others. No investigation of figures is needed to deal with this matter, because when justice has to be done, we cannot count the cost, least of all when the revenue is so flourishing, and the total cost of the necessary relief will be a bagatelle to the revenue, while it represents something substantial to individual widows and orphans. Besides, the main principle of the Estate Duty Ordinance that deceased persons' estates shall contribute for the general good in even more than proportion to their value, that is, on an ascending scale, is accepted the world over to-day as a salutary one. What we are concerned with is the incidence of the duty on the poor. Now, not only is the limit of exemption from duty fixed as low as Rs. 1,500 for all persons so that even those widows and orphans who are left with only a few thousand rupees from a Provident Association to invest and live on have to pay duty on it, but the widows and orphans of Government officials, if their pensions are over about Rs. 20 a month, have those pensions capitalized, with the result that they have to pay duty on that fictitious capital value and also have the total assets artificially raised, with the further result that the rate of duty even on the most penurious estate, that is, deducting that non-existing capital is also artificially raised. And yet the Treasurer of the day in introducing the Estate Duty Ordinance said "I maintain that this is not a tax on the poor man, but a tax on the rich man who can well afford it." We had poetry quoted yesterday, and one thinks of the familiar lines which are as applicable to Government as to individuals—

But evil is wrought by want of thought,  
As well as want of heart.

Our officials are not men of less compassionate feelings than we who criticise them. But in this age of hurry, it is easier to keep to the settled groove than to think out new adjustments of sources of revenue, so that there seems to be a psychological reason for Government's reluctance to reduce taxation!

It is this want of thought and vision that strikes one when considering the huge expenditure side of the Budget too. One can, of course, in considering the Budget range from China to Peru, and one Member went very near doing it yesterday in spite of editorial admonitions, but apart from the fact that one does not want to repeat what others have said or perhaps some other may say, I only want to make a criticism

of general application, even though I choose one topic by way of illustration. That topic is that of health in relation to two diseases, tuberculosis and malaria, and in relation to the position of our local medical service. I said last year that I did not think we could in these days frame a Budget which ignored the cry "save the people." And we were glad to find His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government attaching so much importance in his recent address to the physical basis of happy, prosperous lives for the people. But it is easier in practice when framing a Budget for Government to think of buildings than to think of this human aspect of the work with which it is concerned. We hear from our doctors that tuberculosis is spreading, but will our new Principal Civil Medical Officer, from whom we expect a progressive policy, take it upon himself to contend, that whether in staff, special nurses, equipment, or diet and nourishment our consumptive sanatorium and hospital at Kandana and Ragama respectively are anything like as properly conducted as they should be compared with similar institutions in other parts of the world? If they are not, is not the expenditure wasted in the case of such a disease? Why again do we stop short of those farm colonies for convalescents which are the crown of anti-tuberculosis measures and which are so successful in other countries, including our neighbourhood India, both medically and financially? I cannot for want of time develop this matter on the present occasion, but I have made some study of it, and for the present I leave it with the three questions I have asked.

Take again malaria, which is said to be devastating the lives of thousands, and to be the greatest hindrance to agriculture and agricultural trades. We were all delighted to hear the Principal Civil Medical Officer speak of the success of the work done at Ragama, but what I shall say will have reference, not to any particular place to which the Malariologist has given special attention, but to the general conditions in the Island. When at the recent Ceylon Association dinner in London the Chairman said that Government had not in the past been equal to its duty in the matter—I forget the words he used—our late Governor repudiated the charge. But where are we to-day in the face of this serious evil? We are still in the initial research stage, trying to find out the types of malaria-carrying mosquitoes, and their habits of life and of breeding, and far from the stage which is represented by the maxim "Prevention is better than cure" which His Excellency emphasized in his address. Thanks to our new Principal Medical Officer, we now seem to take the matter more seriously, and we are sending six doctors, three at the expense of the Colony and three scholars on the Rockefeller Foundation, to study the malaria question. But why have we been backward hitherto? And that brings me to the question of our medical service and the treatment it has received, for that backwardness and that treatment are closely connected. Our doctors have not been paid as they should be, and are still not so paid. They belong to a learned profession based on a science which is constantly advancing and has made wonderful strides in the last quarter of a century. But they are given what is in that view a comparatively low salary and expected to eke it out by private practice, with the result that they become as assiduous practitioners as possible, naturally trying to provide for themselves and their families, but stagnating professionally, while the stream of medical science hurries past them. That is why with so many

doctors in the Island we have a Malariologist who is not a doctor, and whose work ought to have been sufficiently dear to the hearts of men interested in medical science, to make them Malariologists themselves. I do not blame the men, some of whom are professionally keen in spite of circumstances, but when a Provincial Surgeon, a senior man in his profession, is paid £700 a year on the supposition that he can get some private practice, while the rawest District Engineer starts on £600 a year and receives I think a better rate of travelling allowance, the result is not one to be wondered at. And as if to damp the professional ardour of our doctors, many of the outstation hospitals are not properly equipped for surgical cases. Sir, this is not the occasion to go into the grievances of doctors in detail, and when I speak of grievances I do so from the point of view of their reaction on the usefulness of our medical service to the public, and I will pass on merely asking what His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government thinks of some of the bungalows occupied by medical officers, which he must recently have seen during his tour, compared with the bungalows for others, and for which we are often called upon to pass estimates.

Yes, Sir, we require some thought and vision and comprehensive sympathy in providing for the needs of the country. Some adjustments can be made in taxation, some taxes even remitted, and yet by cutting out certain items of proposed expenditure money saved for the sake of truly necessary and wholesome services. We cannot be too careful with our revenue except where such necessary services are concerned. If we had a true vision of the future, we would see that instead of committing ourselves to large unproductive buildings, we husband our means so that we may establish those departments and industries which would develop the resources of the Colony, and which I specified in the recent debate on unemployment and which the Member for Colombo District also alluded to yesterday. We would also so perfect our arrangements for training our young men in various departments—agricultural, industrial, and technical—that we should not have in the near future an unemployment problem of serious dimensions among the more or less educated classes. Our hydro-electric scheme is to supply that want of coal to which among other causes has been so frequently attributed our industrial backwardness, and strange to say owing to developments in America and Europe, especially the extension in the use of water power and of oil both in transport and industries, it is to water-power rather than to coal that England herself is now called upon to turn her attention to save her in her present situation and for the future. Let us be ready to benefit to the fullest by our scheme in which we are investing millions, and Government should be prepared to spend liberally in that direction when the proposed Committee makes its recommendations. This does not affect the question of the proposed remission of taxes, because many large items which appear in the Budget and are not urgent can wait on the future.

I wish to refer, Sir, very briefly before I close to one other matter in which I have taken some interest and which affects a large number of deserving Ceylonese. It is something to the good that at last the teachers' salaries question has been settled fairly satisfactorily. I say fairly satisfactorily, because there are matters on which adjustments are clearly called for, and when the subject is fully discussed in Finance Committee I trust the Government will

prove sympathetic. A complicated scheme is bound to have defects, and there are points in which the harsh incidence of the scheme in the case of some deserve careful consideration. I hope that the pension scheme which has been so long on the anvil of the Education Department will speedily take definite shape, for when even Honours graduates can look forward only to a maximum of Rs. 400 a month after many years' service except for a few rare special posts, it is clear that the lot of the teachers is not an alluring one. Sir, I have done. It is with no light heart, rather with almost a tremulous sense of responsibility, that one appears in the role of critic in matters of such difficulty as the administration of a country with all its complexities. We realize the difficulties of officials with their day-to-day pre-occupations, often heavy, and their outlook coloured to a large extent necessarily by the departmental angle of vision. But if they will consider our suggestions in Finance Committee as dictated in the interests, as they appear to us, of the country, which both they and we desire to see well-governed and administered, I do not think they will have reason to complain of our criticism.

THE HON. MR. T. M. SABA RUTNAM (Northern Province, Eastern Division):—I represent a division, Sir, in which is included a district which is the most backward in the Island. I refer to the Mullaittivu District. We are a very much neglected people. Let not Honourable Members begin to fear that I am going to bore them with a narration of our wants and grievances. However much I would have liked on this occasion to refrain from referring to all matters of a parochial nature, I feel constrained to refer to a calamity with which this district is threatened. I am authoritatively informed that there is a proposal to remove the Kachcheri and all other Government offices which are now at Mullaittivu to Vavuniya, a village on the railway line. The town of Mullaittivu has been the headquarters of the district, not only during British rule, but also during the Portuguese and Dutch times, as is evident from the Manual of the Wannu written by Mr. J. P. Lewis, a former Government Agent of the Northern Province. From the health point of view, Mullaittivu is a very much superior place. It is an open seaport town, provided with two of nature's greatest gifts—salubrious and pure air to breathe, and wholesome, crystalline water to drink—unlike Vavuniya, with its deadly malaria and metallic impurities of water. At present the people of Vavuniya get their drinking water from the Vavuniya tank, and the railway staff stationed there get their drinking water from Chunakam. Government at great expense had a well bored at Vavuniya, but the water has been condemned as unfit for human consumption. The unhealthy conditions prevailing in Vavuniya will be quite evident from the Census reports, which show that during the period of ten years there has been an increase of only two-third per cent. in the population. To such an unhealthy place an attempt is now being made to remove the Kachcheri and other Government offices. There was a time when there were two Kachcheries—one at Mullaittivu and one at Vavuniya. But the latter had to be abolished in 1898 owing to the frequent deadlocks in the working of the Kachcheri brought about by the illness of the whole clerical staff. Besides this, there are several interests in the maritime pattus which would suffer considerably by the transfer of the headquarters from

Mullaittivu to Vavuniya. I did not expect to have to speak on this subject, but I have received from the Mullaittivu Maha Jana Sabhai a memorial asking me to include this as one of the items in my speech on this occasion. I will read from the memorandum submitted to me. The memorialists say: "The existence of a large fishing industry along the sea coast of Mullaittivu extending over 50 miles (25 miles north and 25 miles south) attracts capitalists from Jaffna, Pesalai, and Negombo, and besides giving employment to local fishers brings large revenue to Government by the sale of a good quantity of salt for fish curing. The absence of the headquarters will not only paralyse the fishing industry, but will also deprive Government of a fair amount of revenue which is realized by the sale of salt, as it would give the fishers and the indigenous population the opportunity of stealing salt from the natural formations along the coast at Mattalan, Alampil, and Chemmalai.

"Mullaittivu and its suburbs have grown in importance, having attracted capitalists to open up over 2,500 acres of land for coconut cultivation, of which about 2,000 acres are in bearing; and there are large stretches of land suitable for coconut cultivation along the coast. To encourage further extension of coconut cultivation and the development of the maritime pattus of this district the construction of the North Coast road from Paranthan to Trincomalee which has been in contemplation for the last several years is indispensable. The removal of the headquarters from Mullaittivu is likely to sound the death knoll to all these improvements.

"The existence of a seaport and Customs at Mullaittivu, the activities of which are at their full swing during the south-west monsoon, requires that wholesome influence and supervision which the presence of an Assistant Collector alone will be able to exercise in checking the smuggling of prohibited articles, the breach of the Customs regulations involving Government revenue, and the importation of infectious diseases clandestinely."

Again, when Sir William Manning paid an official visit to Mullaittivu, the residents of the place presented him with an address, in the course of which they prayed that the headquarters be retained at Mullaittivu. Although we have our own wants and grievances, we have been a very docile people, but this threat which was going to affect us vitally impelled us to action. His Excellency, in reply, told us in clear terms that if the headquarters are to be removed from Mullaittivu it will be to a central station such as Nedunkeni, but never to Vavuniya. The matter lay in abeyance for three or four years, but the threat is now again being held over our heads. In the meantime, however, in accordance with the promise of His Excellency, certain wells were bored at Nedunkeni and surveys made at considerable cost to this Colony.

Merchants and tradesmen have learnt the wisdom of the proverb "Keep thy shop, or thy shop will not keep thee," and in the wildest flight of fancy they would not be equal to imagining that they would be able to do a better business by removing themselves and their stock-in-trade to a distance of a hundred or a thousand miles away from their customers. Similarly, to remove the Mullaittivu Kachcheri from the centre of its activities to the furthestmost boundary of the district is like removing a shop a hundred or a thousand miles away from its customers. The furthestmost limit of the maritime pattus is about ninety miles from Vavuniya. I may



also compare the removal of the Kachcheri from the centre of its activities to its most distant boundary to putting the hub of a wheel too near its rim. Such an arrangement is called in mechanics an eccentric motion. And it is the feeling in the district, Sir, that this movement to transfer the Kachcheri from Mullaivittu to Vavuniya is of the eccentric kind.

I come to the question of cost. That is a subject in which, I am sure, all Honourable Members will take an interest. I am not concerned so much with the immediate expenditure involved in removing the records and furniture and in the payment of travelling expenses of officers and peons and their wives and children. This House, Sir, is more concerned with the ultimate expenditure involved in putting up the necessary buildings at Vavuniya. On this point I will read to you from the memorandum submitted to me by the Mullaivittu Maha Jana Sabha. They say: "If Vavuniya is to be made the headquarters, the old Kachcheri building there is not at all roomy enough for accommodating the full complement of clerks, and a large portion of the public revenue will have to be spent in improving the present building and in putting up new buildings, which is quite unjustifiable in the face of the existence of enough of buildings at Mullaivittu, many of which are of recent construction. As regards quarters for clerks, Government, if it has the paternal consideration for their health and comforts, will have to put up entirely new and well ventilated houses for them owing to the dearth of private houses there, quite unlike in Mullaivittu, where private houses for rent are available and which are now being occupied by them."

I understand, Sir, that the immediate expenditure involved in removing the records, and so on, will not come before the Finance Committee for its consideration, but that the expenditure will be met from the Miscellaneous votes. I also understand that the offices are to be removed forthwith and accommodation found under temporary cadjan roofs, and a vote applied for later on for putting up the necessary permanent buildings at Vavuniya. That is indeed a clever subterfuge, and I take this opportunity to warn Government against adopting such tactics.

In concluding my remarks on this subject, I would ask the Government "What is the necessity for this transfer in such haste and at an unknown cost"? It cannot be on the ground that the nature of the work is such that it can only be done in close proximity to the railway line. The only explanation that strikes one is that the young Civil Servants who are placed there have no company, whereas at Vavuniya they can have the company of planters who go there on week-end trips for shooting and for pleasure. In conclusion, I should like to express the hope that Government will not act in this matter before this Council has had an opportunity of considering the whole question.

Now, Sir, I should like to make a few remarks in connection with the Budget. His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government in his address to this Council laid down the main criterion by which all proposals of Government should be tested. His Excellency said:—

The main criterion by which each proposal as it comes before us should be judged is the extent to which it may help or hinder the beneficial development of this beautiful Island upon lines most conducive to the health, happiness, and prosperity of those who live here.

I feel sure that this House is in entire agreement with this noble sentiment. But when the ways and means are considered, we who are the representatives of the people find ourselves unhappily unable to agree in many important particulars with the general principles upon which the administration of this country is carried on. I do not propose to follow my honourable friends in a detailed criticism of the various items of the present Budget. Furthermore, this aspect of the question will I doubt not be examined thoroughly in the Select Committee. I propose, therefore, to place to-day before this Council and the Government a few general considerations which I hope will be of some use in the desire we all share with His Excellency the Governor of promoting the health, happiness, and prosperity of the people of Ceylon.

I desire to place all the emphasis I can upon the very prosaic subject of food production. When we were faced with the serious food crisis of 1919, both the Government and the people bent all their energies upon stimulating food production in Ceylon, and various ambitious schemes were launched. But now that the crisis is past and gone, all those efforts and schemes have been abandoned, so much so that to-day we continue as before the crisis to be mainly dependent on India for the staple food of the people of this country. All this is unsatisfactory, for no country which is not self-sustaining in the matter of its food and clothing can ever be said to be a safe place to live in. One can understand, and even excuse, the situation if the natural resources of the country make it impossible for it to be self-sustaining in these respects. But in a country like Ceylon, it is—to say the least of it—most discreditable both to the Government and to the people of this country that in spite of the bountiful gifts of nature we are unable to feed and clothe our own people with the products of our own country. I can speak with some intimate knowledge of the Wannī in the Northern Province. The network of abandoned tanks which meets the eye everywhere is an enduring reminder of the prosperous state of these parts in ancient times. It is quite apparent that our greatest undeveloped wealth is in the waste lands of the Wannī. His Excellency himself has assured us in the same address: “that any schemes for making new settlements in regions now vacant should receive our most careful attention.”

This careful attention so generously promised by His Excellency the Governor should exhibit itself in the near future by way of State aid to approved colonists in the Wannī. There is no reason whatsoever why these extensive and unoccupied tracts should not be given free to approved colonists and allowances granted to them till they are able to support themselves with the produce of their own lands. As a further stimulus to food production I would suggest that the Government should cease to levy any water-rate throughout the whole Island till such time as paddy cultivation becomes an established industry in the country. I observe that the estimated revenue from irrigation dues for 1925-26 is only Rs. 125,000. With the surplus balances at our disposal the loss of this amount can in no way inconvenience the Government. But, on the other hand, I verily believe that this relief will give an enormous impetus to paddy cultivation throughout the Island. We are budgetting enormous sums for a palatial Council Chamber and for super-bungalows for the super-men of the services and for ceilings to military quarters in Diyatalawa. These and a host

of other projects of luxury do not appear to me to be a millionth part so important for promoting the well-being of the people of this country as this small measure of relief which I ask for as a stimulus to food production. The kind of people who are likely to be attracted towards these vacant spaces are men who generally lack capital, and that being so, the establishment of agricultural State banks is absolutely necessary if the Government is serious in its desire to reclaim the undeveloped wealth in these waste lands.

In the midst of these considerations it must not be forgotten that all over the Wannu and at great distance from one another there are existing colonists who though acclimatized to the conditions are nevertheless dragging on a miserable existence owing to lack of communication and adequate medical aid. If we are to enter upon a vigorous agricultural policy and if ambitious and beneficial schemes are to be initiated, it is quite apparent that larger and larger sums of money will become necessary for the successful carrying out of such proposals. It therefore becomes incumbent upon us to practise the greatest possible economy in the public expenditure. The present proportion between the revenue and the salaries paid to public servants is nearly 46 per cent. In no civilized or self-governing country in the world is such a high percentage tolerated. We should follow the example of self-governing countries and see that this high proportion is reduced so that more money may be available for nation-building purposes. The Government has at various times professed to give preference to Ceylonese talent in the services of this country wherever it was available. But in the main it has remained no more than mere professions. In very many instances the Government acted most tardily in response to incessant public agitation.

There is one branch of the services for which capable and efficient men are readily available. I refer to the judicial service. I can make bold to say that there is no judicial appointment in this country which cannot be adequately and more efficiently filled than it is now by lawyers of experience in this country. And yet in spite of persistent agitation during the last five years and more, and in spite of the considered opinion of the Bar Council, of which the Honourable the Attorney-General himself is the head, that all judicial appointments in this country should be filled with competent lawyers of experience at the Ceylon Bar, the Government has done next to nothing in this direction. The only response which the Government made to this agitation was the appointment of lawyers to the District Judgeships of Chilaw and Batticaloa, the Commissionership of the Court of Requests, Colombo, and lastly the Magistracy of the Colombo Municipal Court. Why exactly these four places are chosen for this distinction is somewhat difficult to understand, and it passes one's comprehension why the more important stations of Galle and Jaffna were not similarly treated. But this is by the way. The people of this country are watching with keen anxiety the conduct of Government in the matter of these judicial appointments. For there can be no doubt that if a proper scheme were worked out, and all judicial appointments were immediately thrown open to the lawyers of Ceylon, the administration of justice will be conducted with greater sympathy and understanding and far more efficiently and at less cost than it is now. I would commend this to the immediate

and earnest attention of Government, for the people of this country will look upon this as the acid test of the sincerity of the professions of Government regarding the larger appointment of Ceylonese in the public services.

Now, Sir, I would wish to say a word on taxation. It will be generally conceded that small Customs duties on foodstuffs are highly mischievous and objectionable, for while giving very little revenue they greatly hamper trade and impose hardship on the poorer classes. I have heard the previous speakers pleading for reduction of duties in the case of certain articles of food. I am in perfect agreement with those views, but I feel it my duty to say that if the benefit of the reduction is to reach the masses, then the reduction must be large and bold, otherwise it will only result in the dead loss of some revenue to Government without corresponding relief to the consumer at large. I would wish to add that I should not have been a party to the reduction of the duties proposed if the reduction had been proposed in the face of a deficit, or if it was proposed in order to reduce them to impose other taxation upon the country. It is only just and proper that the Government should give the poorer classes a share of the prosperity which the country is enjoying at the present time.

I am sure that in a matter of this kind the Government will not venture to flout the unanimous opinion of the representatives of the people, for if it ventures to do so, it would only be exposing in its nakedness the hollowness of the reformed constitution which was made and re-made for us during the last five years.

Now, Sir, there is another great grievance to which I wish to refer before I resume my seat. It is a grievance which requires the immediate attention of Government if it intends seriously to take to heart the admonition of His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government that they should endeavour to promote the health, happiness, and prosperity of Ceylon. When the Waste Lands Ordinance, No. 1 of 1897, was before this Council, one Honourable Member of this House was constrained to charge the Government with playing the part of a highway robber. To-day from my seat in this Council I find it my most unpleasant duty to charge the Supreme Court of Ceylon with having recently assumed a similar rôle by its revolutionary interpretation of the combined effect of the Ordinances Nos. 12 of 1840 and 9 of 1841. The Supreme Court has held in effect that at least so far as the Kandyan Provinces are concerned, if a piece of land had been at any time, even a hundred years ago, a chena, forest, waste, unoccupied, or uncultivated land within the meaning of section 6 of Ordinance No. 12 of 1840, then, whatever its present condition may be, whether it be a rubber estate or a tea estate worth several lakhs, or a coconut estate held and possessed even by three generations, or whether it be the waluwa of some Kandyan nobleman, occupied by the family from the time of the Kandyan kings, that piece of land belongs to the Crown with all the buildings, plantations, and improvements thereon, no matter how long continued and *bona fide* the possession may have been, unless the occupier can produce a sannas or grant from the Crown.

This revolutionary legacy of the late Chief Justice Sir Alexander Wood Renton to the Government of Ceylon should be promptly repudiated, and I conceive it to be the duty of this Council, in the interests of the people of Ceylon, and in the best interests of the Government itself, to see that the Government is immediately

deprived of these revolutionary and plundering powers. The result of this interpretation is that chena cultivation is discouraged and the villager is deprived of all his highlands, without which he cannot subsist in his village and cultivate his paddy lands.

I plead for the immediate repeal of section 2 of Ordinance No. 9 of 1841, and the prompt return to the saner interpretation of Ordinance No. 12 of 1840 which prevailed from 1840 to 1913. However, I feel it my duty to say in fairness to the Government, that at the present moment the Government, as far as my inquiries go, have not used these powers oppressively. But that is no reason why this engine of tyranny and spoliation should be allowed any longer to disgrace the statute book of this country which I flatter myself I may count among the civilized countries of the world.

THE HON. MR. H. M. MACAN MARKAR (First Muslim Member):—I rise, Sir, to make a few observations on the Budget. Before doing so I may say that, acting on the hint from the Honourable Member for the North-Central Province, I shall not take up much of the time of the House. It gives me great pleasure to support the suggestion made by the Honourable Member for the Central Province Urban Electorate, and that is the reduction of taxation. I am quite in sympathy with the suggestions. I feel bound to say that the taxation of the people, especially of the poor, is a matter that deserves the attention of every Member of this House.

Now, Sir, just a few words on the question of the railway. I have given the matter some serious consideration, and I think there can be no doubt about it that rates and fares should be reduced. I support the percentage suggested yesterday in this House. At the same time I must say that we should have a cleaner, faster, and cheaper service. Very often it has been found that even first class carriages are in a very unsatisfactory state. Then, as regards the bus competition, there is a solution which might be of some advantage to the railway. I refer to faster trains. There should be at least two fast trains to Galle and two to Kandy and back. What I mean by fast trains is trains which can do the journey to Galle in two hours and a half and the journey to Kandy in three hours. This, combined with lower fares, should induce the people who now patronize the buses to revert to the railway.

While on the subject of the railway, I find that according to the commercialization scheme, for the initiation of which we have to thank Sir James Broom, a revenue of Rs. 6,000,000 is expected to be brought in to Government. This amount, on the capital cost of the railway, does not work out at even 4 per cent., taking the capital cost at Rs. 160,000,000. This, I think, is a very unfortunate state of affairs, considering that the Colony has to pay on its public debt interest amounting to Rs. 12,000,000 odd, plus sinking fund. Again, when we calculate that the Colony pays out in interest Rs. 12,750,000 and obtains in interest only Rs. 3,500,000, we find that there is a deficit of Rs. 9,250,000. I really think that the Ceylon Government Railway should pay the full interest on the public debt of the Colony, because it can afford to do it. It is no use merely saying that the railway is to be commercialized; we must act up to what commercialization really means.

With regard to delay in the carriage of goods, I am told that from Galle to Colombo it takes from three to four days. Now, business

men take time and money into consideration. If it takes three to four days to get their goods from Galle to Colombo, it is difficult to imagine how they can succeed. I maintain that if the train services are run on better lines the railway should be able to earn enough to meet the interest on the public debt. This may not, of course, happen this year, but it may a year or two hence.

Next, there is the question of education. I have to thank the Government for giving us a larger grant than they did last year. The amount is about a million more. While doing so, however, I do not think that we can congratulate ourselves on that fact. I have in my mind the large number of illiterate children in the country, not only in Colombo, but in the outstations, especially in the Eastern Province and in some other districts. I would urge upon Government the necessity for establishing schools in every village where there is no school, and thereby educating every boy and girl up to a certain age. At the same time, I might say that there are certain parts of the Island where the people are clamouring for English education, and I think it is nothing but right that the authorities concerned should meet the wishes of the people. I beg of the Director in such cases to convert a vernacular school into an Anglo-vernacular school.

There is one other subject on which I should like to say a few words, and that is the subject of State banks, upon which the Hon. Mr. de Silva and several other Honourable Members touched. I am not directly asking Government to establish State banks, but I would like to refer in a few words to the plight of the middle class business men. These are people who are neither helped by the big banks nor by institutions like the Loan Board or the Savings Bank. They have, consequently, to resort to money-lenders. I will not relate to this House the system of business adopted by money-lenders, because Honourable Members are aware of it. The money-lender charges these people between 20 and 25 per cent. on the money lent to them. There is another means of borrowing, and that is by the mortgage of property at 10 to 12 per cent. outside Colombo. There is a class of money-lender—not the Chetty—who lend at these rates.

Now, take any class of business. I cannot conceive how any business can succeed, when, on the capital used for carrying it on, interest between 12 and 20 per cent. has to be paid. This House, I am sure, will agree with me when I say that no business can succeed on those lines for any length of time. It has been proved that this was the cause of the failure of very many people, both rich and poor; and unless some help is afforded or Government comes to the rescue, those who are now carrying on their business on the lines I have indicated will be in a very bad plight.

I am not directly asking Government to establish State banks, but I appeal to Government to consider the plight of the middle class business man. I have no quarrel with the banks. They are carrying on their business successfully; but at the same time it has to be remembered that the people of the place, especially the middle class business men, do not have the assistance of the big banks, and they should, therefore, have help from the State. I have considered the matter carefully, and I now suggest to the Government that the Ceylon Savings Bank should be made a State bank, and that the various Kachcheries should be made its branches. I am sure that if a Commission were appointed to go into this

matter, its feasibility would be proved, and by falling in with my suggestion the Government would be doing a service to the people of the country.

At this stage the Council adjourned for tea.

On Council resuming

**THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY** :—Before we continue the debate on the Supply Bill, I should like to suggest that we should resume at 2.30 P.M. to-morrow. Arrangements have also to be made in connection with the meetings of the Select Committee for the attendance of heads of departments. Will Thursday next, at 10 A.M., suit Honourable Members? We have already informed heads of departments that the Select Committee will begin its sittings on Monday next, and we shall now have to inform them of the change of date.

It was agreed that the Select Committee should begin its sittings on the Thursday following at 10 A.M.

**THE HON. MR. M. M. SUBRAMANIAM** (Trincomalee Revenue District) :—I rise, Sir, to make a few observations on the Budget. Before doing so, I have to thank His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government for the very thoughtful and reassuring message which he delivered in this House on July 3 last. A careful study of that message will convince everybody that His Excellency is actuated by a genuine desire to help the people of this country. His Excellency said that "the aim of the King's Government is the welfare of His Majesty's subjects and the creation of happy, healthy, and prosperous homes in all parts of his dominions." If that is the creed and the policy of Government, I have not the slightest doubt that the suggestions we make in this House for the furtherance of this common object will have the hearty support of Government.

Now, Sir, so far as taxation is concerned, the Honourable Members who preceded me have addressed the House at some length on the subject. It is the cry throughout the length and breadth of Ceylon that the people are taxed heavily. Every endeavour should, therefore, be made to relieve them to a great extent of this heavy taxation. My honourable friend Mr. de Silva in his admirable speech referred to the remission of certain taxation, such as on curry stuffs, sugar, jaggery, and so on, but I for my part would suggest the removal of all taxes on the necessaries of life. It might be said that the remission of the import duty on rice would not be beneficial to the poor consumer. But I would submit that rice being a staple article of food the tax on it should be removed. I would also suggest that the tax on cotton goods should be removed. In this connection I may also suggest that the tax on liquor and tobacco should be raised, and thus make up for any deficit caused by the remission of the taxes on the necessaries of life. A civilized Government with high ideals should not impose a tax on the necessaries of life.

There is another matter, Sir, about taxation, and on which speakers who preceded me have touched, that is, the recent levy of the estate duty. It no doubt affects the rich, but everyone will, I am

sure, agree with me when I say that this demand is made at a time when the people concerned are least able to bear the strain on their purses : it is collected from the bereaved widow at a time when it should not be. By virtue of the law, the Crown steps in and takes a fair share of the inheritance without any claim of consanguinity or affinity. The heirs at law are asked to wait and take their share after the administration proceedings, while the Crown steps in, and at the moment administration proceedings are started has its share removed from the estate.

In connection with the stamp duty I would draw the attention of the House to the stamp duty on legal documents. During the last thirty-five years the stamp duty has been quadrupled. After Ordinance No. 3 of 1890 three other Ordinances were passed, with the result that we are now called upon to pay four times as much as we did thirty-five years ago. This duty affects both the rich and the poor. Every man should be permitted to vindicate his rights and to obtain justice with the least possible cost. I therefore suggest that some reduction be made in the stamp duty on legal documents.

Now, Sir, I come to a subject about which I feel bound to say that it formed a part of my programme when I entered this Council, namely, that we should make it possible for every man in His Majesty's Crown Colony to have at least one hearty meal a day. I refer to increased food production. Time and again Honourable Members of this Council have alluded to this subject, but a definite course of action has not been adopted. The realization of my hope will only come within the bounds of possibility if the Government would undertake the duty of materially increasing food production with a well-considered plan.

So far as the Trincomalee District is concerned, I am told that many years ago a measure of rice was sold at one *fannam*, that is, six cents. The price to-day is cents thirty or cents thirty-two a measure. Speaking again with regard to the Eastern Province—if history is to be trusted—it was at one time the granary of Ceylon. The District of Trincomalee is favoured by nature. There are fertile lands—lands cultivated in the past with tanks, now breached, which used to feed the fields. But nothing has been done to restore these tanks and bring these lands, which were once fertile, under cultivation again. Even now, Sir, under these limited conditions we are in a position to export paddy to the north. A large quantity of paddy is exported from Trincomalee to Jaffna. It appears to my mind that the only way to improve matters is to resuscitate the Food Production Department and make it work in co-ordination with the Agricultural Department.

It may be said that the officers of the Agricultural Department have not been of sufficient help to the people. I should, on the other hand, also state that the people have not made proper use of the members of the Agricultural Department. It is true that the officers of the Agricultural Department are not very much in touch with the people. What I would suggest is that these officers should be made to work, not so much in the towns, but in the villages, upon plots of land, introduce new methods of cultivation, cultivate lands side by side with the villager, and make the villager follow the improved scientific methods of cultivation. I would, in this connection, suggest that the Government should on its own account open up large tracts of lands under tanks. This will not be at all



a new matter, because the Government is already engaged in commercial enterprises. They are running the railway, and they have the salt monopoly. And in order to promote food production, why should not Government on its own account open up large tracts of land, following scientific lines of cultivation, on which the Agricultural Department is able to give advice, use pure seed paddy, and thus help the peasantry? By doing this the Government will not only be benefiting the people, but will also instil into the minds of the peasantry improved methods of cultivation. There can be no difficulty whatever so far as money considerations go, for Government can employ prison labour. Besides, there is an agricultural expert in the Province to supervise cultivation and direct activities.

I come now to a subject of great importance, and which in my opinion is of equal importance as food and raiment, I mean the administration of justice. There are districts where the revenue officers, be they the Assistant Government Agent or the Government Agent and his Office Assistant, attend to the judicial work as well. It is a very unsatisfactory system, and I would earnestly ask the Government to separate revenue from the judiciary. It is perhaps known that public prosecutions receive form and shape in the Kachcheri factory; and it is not at all desirable that the person in charge of the Revenue Department should be called upon to discharge judicial duties when matters connected with Kachcheries come before the courts. It might be assumed that from the moment he gets on the bench he forgets the information he received at the Kachcheri and that he will discharge his judicial duties conscientiously.

But, there is another aspect of the question. The Supreme Court with characteristic fairness and independence has accentuated the desirability, not only of a judicial officer being above bias, but also being free from the suspicion of bias. I believe it was Sir Winfield Bonser who, speaking on the question of bias, clearly indicated that it was undesirable that revenue officers holding staff office, such as Superintendents of Police, Chairmen of District Road Committee, and so on, should adjudicate on facts connected with matters which have already come under their notice. We have a bloated Budget, and it is possible in Select Committee to perform what I might call a reasonable surgical operation that would leave us sufficient money to appoint Senior Judicial Officers to act on District Court benches, preferably men connected with the bar, who, I have no doubt, will be able to discharge their duties quite satisfactorily both to the Government and to the public. I might add that if men from the bar are selected there will be very little work for the Appellate Courts.

Sir, there is another aspect of the question. I ask, Is it reasonable for Government to burden one officer, for instance, the Assistant Government Agent, with so much work? This officer is also the Chairman of the Local Board, Chairman of the District Road Committee, Master Attendant, Police Magistrate, Commissioner of Requests, and District Judge. Is it in the interest of the public to ask such an officer to devote his attention to all these multifarious duties? Will it be possible for him, I ask, to do credit to his work and give satisfaction to Government? This is a matter that requires reform, and I hope that reform will be effected in the near future. I have not the slightest doubt that the Honourable the Attorney-General, who is so eminently qualified to advise

Government, will take the necessary steps to effect that reform which I am now asking for. Speaking with regard to the district which I represent, we have been agitating for a separate judicial officer for many long years—I think I might say for the past twenty-five or thirty years. There was an occasion when this matter came to a point, when the Assistant Government Agent instituted a fairly big case against a contractor, and the Office Assistant was asked to take non-summary proceedings. I happened to appear in that case, and we protested against the Office Assistant hearing the case. The matter went before the Attorney-General, who was kind enough to send an officer from another district to record proceedings. That officer, I believe, is the present Principal Collector of Customs. He sat at a stretch for fourteen days at one time, and some seventeen days two or three months later. My request is therefore not a new one. It has engaged the attention of Government before this.

While we have been agitating for a separate judicial officer, a Village Tribunal has been called upon to function in the town. It was given to us unasked. I shall discuss that matter later in this Council. For the present I request the Honourable the Official Members to consider the suggestions we have made and to satisfy our needs. It is only by giving due consideration to these important suggestions that they will be helping to create happy, contented, and prosperous homes.

THE HON. MR. F. A. STOCKDALE, C.B.E. (Director of Agriculture) :—Sir, during the discussion on the Budget there have been from several Honourable Members various suggestions in regard to agricultural matters, and I take this opportunity of dealing with some of the points which have been raised. It has been suggested that the Agricultural Department is remote from the people and is not in touch with the people. I would ask Honourable Members to consider agriculture generally in this Colony. It consists of those agricultural industries, such as tea, rubber, and coconuts, which export their produce to other countries, and from which this Colony derives a considerable amount of revenue and it consists of the agriculture of the villagers, mainly paddy and several minor products. In dealing, therefore, with agricultural questions it is always necessary to view the two aspects separately.

What I understand from Honourable Members is that they consider that sufficient attention has not been paid to village agriculture, whereas the department has concentrated largely on the planting industry. That is not absolutely correct, because if Honourable Members will look at the Budgets of the last few years they will see that increasing sums have been spent by the Agricultural Department, and also through the Irrigation Department, on matters of village agriculture. I admit that more can be done, particularly in regard to paddy, and I think that Honourable Members may be assured that Government recognizes that this is possible. Government has agreed to increased provision in its Budgets in recent years for the repair of village tanks, and Honourable Members will see that larger sums have been spent annually under that head. Recently the Finance Committee suggested to Government that a sum of half a million rupees should be earmarked out of the surplus balance for dealing with elias and channels.

It has been stated by the Honourable Member for the Colombo District that that money was voted in March, and that up to the present nothing had been done.

**THE HON. MR. D. B. JAYATILAKA** (Colombo District) :—I did not refer to that in connection with agriculture. It was in another connection that I referred to it.

**THE HON. MR. F. A. STOCKDALE**, C.B.E. (Director of Agriculture) :—If the Honourable Member for the Colombo District did not refer to it, it was referred to by some other Honourable Member. I had the remark in my notes as having been made by the Honourable Member for the Colombo District. In any case, the decision taken at that meeting was as follows: "It was decided that the proposal should be referred to the Government Agents to decide whether the money could be usefully spent and how the expenditure could be controlled." I am authorized to state that that has been done, and that reports from the Government Agents have been received. On that matter Honourable Members must realize that in the past State expenditure on the irrigation of paddy has been concentrated on the dry zone. It is there that water is essential. The Irrigation Department has not given much attention to paddy cultivation in the wet zone, where the problem is not one of irrigation but one of drainage, particularly in the Western Province. All the Government Agents have referred to this matter of drainage, particularly the Government Agents of the Western Province and Southern Province, who stated that the clearing of the channels and elas are large problems bound up with proper drainage and the protection of lands from floods. It is therefore necessary to consider those schemes as a whole and to have expert engineering advice in dealing with the work. They consider that further investigation is necessary—investigation such as has recently been carried out in regard to the Bolgoda and Kal-oya Schemes and Muturajawela. If that is to be done, it is necessary for the Legislative Council to agree to the increase of staff of the Irrigation Department. You will see in this connection in the Estimates provision for two additional Irrigation Engineers, one temporary Irrigation Engineer, and six Sub-Inspectors. If this Council desires Government to embark on a policy of clearing elas and channels, it is necessary to consider sympathetically the proposals which Government are putting forward for increasing the staff of the Irrigation Department.

The Honourable Member for the Southern Division of the Southern Province suggested that more scope should be given to Food Production Committees, and that these Committees should be granted funds to spend on irrigation matters. The Honourable Member suggested various items that these Committees should be allowed to deal with, namely, the clearing of elas, new irrigation works and drainage of channels, colonization schemes, and provision of pasture land. There are at present Food Production Committees in various parts of the Island, and there is no reason why the matters mentioned by the Honourable Member should not be brought before those Committees. It is perhaps not possible for me to say whether the funds should be spent by those Committees rather than by the departments individually concerned; but it is a matter which will receive consideration. I personally think that it will be far better to leave the spending of the money to the departments concerned,

and that the Committees should consider themselves advisory to the officers in the districts concerned. But that is a matter on which probably Honourable Members will have views different to myself.

The Honourable Member for the Northern Province, Eastern Division, also touched on the question of food production. He referred to the question of opening lands in the Wannu and State aid to colonists. These suggestions have been before the Committee which is considering the Karachchi Scheme, and that Committee will shortly be submitting a report in which it is suggested to Government that certain concessions be offered to colonists under that scheme in view of the difficulties under which they have to work. The question of State aid to colonists was also considered by that Committee, but not in any detail. It is a matter of some importance and it is a matter to which I have given a certain amount of attention during my service in Ceylon, and it is a matter in which I am keenly interested. But I think that so far as the rural population is concerned, State aid in the way of funds could be better handled through Co-operative Societies than through any other medium. It is necessary for Government and this Council to decide in what way the co-operative movement can be strengthened. With a view to the movement being strengthened the Government has deputed an officer to study the system in India, and later to proceed to certain countries in Europe. In those countries State banks have been working with more or less success for some time, but the general trend of opinion in regard to State aid in India and other countries of the East is that the co-operative movement forms a medium through which the rural population can be helped more greatly than in any other way. I believe that the efforts which have been made in this direction in the Eastern Province have not escaped the notice of Honourable Members. What has been accomplished in the Eastern Province should be possible in other parts of the country; and I believe that if these societies are strengthened and central banks are formed much could be done to help the financing of the rural population.

Before I sit down there is one other point to which I would like to refer, and that is the question of the adulteration of citronella oil. The matter was brought up by the Honourable Member for the Central Province Urban Electorate. He asked that the Government should take steps to introduce legislation to prevent the adulteration of citronella oil. The question of the adulteration of citronella oil has been under consideration for many years. It was brought to the notice of Government certainly twenty years ago; but the trade in citronella oil recognizes a certain amount of adulteration with kerosene, and practically all citronella oils exported from Ceylon are exported with a certain amount of kerosene added. Two years ago another adulterant was used, namely, alcohol. A large quantity of cheap gin was imported from the Dutch East Indies, and a large shipment of citronella oil with this adulterant was exported. This gave rise to considerable difficulty. The shipments were refused entry both into the United States and Europe. That adulterant is now not used, if my information is correct. Therefore, the only question that remains is adulteration with kerosene. That, as I said before, is recognized by the market, and it does not seem to me necessary to consider legislation without very careful thought. The matter was referred to the Board of

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Agriculture, and the Board decided that they would not go into the matter until the Low-country Products Association had dealt with the question. We are still awaiting a report on the matter, and when that is received it will be brought up again before the Board of Agriculture.

THE HON. MR. A. H. E. MOLAMURE (Ratnapura Revenue District):—I rise, Sir, to make a few observations on the Budget that has been placed before this House. If one were to look into the figures contained in this book, one would come to the conclusion that this Colony is very prosperous, especially if one were to compare these figures with the figures of, say, ten years ago. But I would ask Honourable Members of this House not to be misled by this apparent prosperity. I submit that the prosperity of a country is not shown by its revenue. The criterion of the prosperity of a country should be the prosperity of the masses. If any Honourable Member of this House will get up and say that the poorer classes of this Island—the masses—are prosperous, I shall then be willing to admit that the country is prosperous. But the fact that the Budget is able to show a huge revenue does not at all prove that the country is prosperous. I further submit for another reason, that the Government is wrong in calling this country prosperous. Some years ago when the country was almost on the verge of bankruptcy, heavy taxation was imposed on the poor man. The sporting spirit of the Ceylon public came into play, and without murmur or protest we accepted the taxation, because we realized that we were helping the Government to run this country. I now ask the Government to show their sporting spirit and do away with at least those taxes that were imposed on the country at that time. Instead of doing that, what is the Government doing? A large revenue is derived from this country, but where is the money invested? It is invested in English banks, to fill their already over-filled vaults. The money is not invested in this country. Every cent of it should be invested here in such a way as to enable the poorest people to reap some benefit from it. That, I submit, would be good administration and honest administration.

On the question of the reduction of taxation, certain items were mentioned. The Honourable Member for the Urban Electorate of the Central Province has suggested the elimination of some and the reduction of others, but I regret to say that a tax which should be removed has not been touched upon. I was unfortunately not present at the discussion among the Unofficial Members when this subject was dealt with. Had I been present I should have mentioned it. I refer to the heavy taxation imposed on the clothing of the poor. The matter is a very important one. Years ago, when the revenue of the Colony was not even half of what it is to-day, it was possible for a fair damsel to clothe herself and exhibit that natural beauty, which is a gift of all Ceylonese females, at the expense of a rupee or a rupee and fifty cents. To-day a man has to spend at least three or four rupees to cover his bare nakedness. I submit that this is very hard on the poor, and as long as the poor have to pay such large amounts to find clothes for themselves, I do not consider the country prosperous. The tax on cotton goods is one that should be done away with. The necessity for doing away with it is as great or even greater than the necessity for doing

away with the tax on foodstuffs. I say this especially because the poor man, if he wants to, can grow his own foodstuffs, but I hope that in the future he will be able to find his own clothing too.

There is one other matter with regard to agriculture that I would like to mention. Ceylon is mainly an agricultural country, and the Department of Agriculture was established with a view to improving agriculture. But one of the main requirements for the carrying on of the agriculture of the country is grossly neglected—not only neglected, but rendered a burden to the poor man. I refer to cattle. The question of pasture lands was brought up in this House by my predecessor, the Rev. Mr. Botejue, and it was discussed. Years have passed, and I regret to say that nothing has been done. I say that it is up to Government, even if they do not supply us with pasture lands, to protect their own roads from cattle trespass. It is the duty of Government to prevent cattle from getting on to their roads, and not to legislate with a view to punishing people—sometimes very heavily—for so-called trespassing on Government roads. I submit that all public roads of the Ceylon Government and rail roads should be fenced. In England the railway companies fence their roads, and if a bull or cow is run over by a train it is the company that has to pay the damage, and not the owner of the bull or cow. Under the unfortunate state of legislation in this country, it is the poor villager who has to pay a fine if his bull is run over by a train. Besides paying a fine, he has to dance attendance at the police station, and perhaps a week hence he is taken up on a warrant and produced before a Police Magistrate and fined Rs. 10. And this is for having allowed perhaps a little calf worth Rs. 2 to trespass on the rail road. Government roads are public roads, and if the Government expects to keep them safe for traffic, it is up to them to do it, and not to expect the public to contribute towards it by fines.

On the question of education there is just one point I should like to mention. The question has been brought up here and very strongly advocated. Education is really wanted, but I do not advocate the widespreading of English education among the villagers. I regard it as highly dangerous indiscriminately to ill-educate the youth of this country. What I submit is that greater encouragement should be given to vernacular education in the villages. More vernacular schools should be established in the villages. There is an Ordinance dealing with compulsory education in which provision is made for imposing fines on parents who neglect to send their children to school. This is another source of revenue to Government. It is not perhaps realized that schools may be situated four or five miles away from the children's homes, and that the children have sometimes to cross what are called *edandas* at very great risk to life. That is not how education should be encouraged. Every village should have its own school. The Government should provide every village with a school and a trained teacher. It is only then that I will admit that Government is doing its duty towards the country.

I had intended touching on a few salient features of the Budget, particularly on the question of salaries. The hour is late, but I must, as no other speaker has referred to it, impress upon Government the absolute undesirability of employing unpaid servants. It is a crying shame that, in these days of advancement, when everything is progressing rapidly, we should have unpaid headmen. I refer to

the Kandyan Korala and the Kandyan Arachchi. They are not paid. The Muhandiram of the low-country districts is paid a very good salary. I do not think that he is worth very much more. Yet, he gets a very good salary, but the Kandyan Korala, who has to perform the same duties, sometimes under very much more trying circumstances, and in districts with less facilities for travelling, has to do so on practically nothing. He is paid, not as Korala, but as Inquirer—a tacked-on job—Rs. 29 a month. How can the Government by any stretch of imagination expect such a man to lead an honest life on this wretched pittance? The Government is only encouraging dishonesty. If a Korala is paid a decent salary, say, about Rs. 100 a month, he would be able to live above board. There would be no necessity for him to be dishonest or to harass the poor villager in order to eke out his existence. The case is the same with the Arachchi. I submit that the Government should take up this matter at once, and even in the present Budget make provision for the payment of unpaid headmen and thus remove the stigma attaching to it.

I hope that the Government will accept what I have said, not as said in a spirit of antagonism, but in the spirit of a humble citizen giving advice which he knows to be good; and I hope that the Government will co-operate with us, the unofficials, extend to us the hand of sympathy, and carry out at least the major portion of the suggestions—the really good suggestions—that have been put forward by the Unofficial Members of this House.

THE HON. MR. P. B. RAMBUKWELLE (Central Province, Rural):—I rise, Sir, to offer a few observations on certain aspects of the Budget which has engaged the attention of this Council, and in doing so I must necessarily confine my remarks more or less to matters which interest the constituency of the Province which I have the honour to represent. I have, with great attention, listened to the numerous speeches made by Honourable Members both yesterday and to-day, and, Sir, I must acknowledge my indebtedness to the Honourable Member for the District of Mullaittivu for the way in which he referred to the combined effect of Ordinance No. 9 of 1841 and No. 12 of 1840. He has, with characteristic ability, portrayed the hardships and sufferings of villagers who are crushed under the combined influence of these two Ordinances, supported by a Supreme Court judgment. I need not say more on that beyond expressing the hope that Government would seriously consider the suggestion of my honourable friend and have those disabilities removed from the doors of the suffering villagers.

The Honourable Member for the Southern Division of the Southern Province yesterday levelled some criticism against the Medical Department for proposing to build certain hospitals in the healthier districts of this Island, namely, the planting districts. I am sorry to see that the Honourable Member is not here at the moment, but I should like to assure him that even in salubrious climates people do fall ill, and when they fall ill they require medical attendance. In opposing the building of hospitals in those parts of the country the Honourable Member in an exhaustive speech advocated a hospital at Walasmulla. I concede that my honourable friend did make out a case for a hospital at Walasmulla, and I for one would heartily support him in his demand. In this connection I should like further to draw the attention of this

House to the Administration Report of the Government Agent of the Central Province for last year. In that very able report the Government Agent refers to certain other hospitals which are an urgent need in the Kandy District. He has put down among the more urgent requirements a hospital at Madugoda and a hospital at Watawala. The latter is, I believe, to be an accomplished fact, but the hospital at Madugoda is a longfelt want. Madugoda is a place on the confines of Bintenne—the Wannī of the Central Province—and not far away from numerous villages which are ravaged by the scourge of parangi; and it is not too late for this Council and the Government to seriously consider the suggestion of the Government Agent of the Central Province in regard to a hospital at Madugoda.

I should also like to draw the attention of the Government to the Civil Hospital at Kandy. The hospital is a very ancient institution in the ancient capital of the Island. The buildings are very old, and some are now about to collapse. The equipment too is quite out of keeping with the present requirements of Kandy and the surrounding districts. In this connection I should like to read a few extracts from the "Ceylon Observer" of April 14, 1925, referring to the Kandy hospital. The article says: "Loud and long has the cry been raised—by the public, by the District Planters' Association, by the very officers in charge—that, for an institution of the importance of the Kandy hospital, its accommodation has been quite inadequate for a long time, and its equipment obsolete and antiquated." The article proceeds to discuss various schemes, and further says that "It has been a circumstance of every-day experience that the Kandy hospital is both insufficiently staffed and inadequately equipped. In the first place, the officer-in-charge has to-day too many and varied duties to perform. This being so, the time has undoubtedly come for the Kandy hospital to have a properly qualified surgeon attached to its staff, thereby giving the officer-in-charge more time to devote to administration." Finally, the article winds up: "With the Kandy hospital better equipped, the necessity would be eliminated for paying patients to undertake a long and tedious journey to Colombo to enter the General Hospital."

In an editorial on the same subject, the Ceylon Observer says: "It is common knowledge—as our correspondent points out—that the Kandy hospital is both insufficiently staffed and inadequately equipped, while it also lacks such accommodation as an institution in the capital of the hill-country is expected to command. And yet the fact, though admitted, has been permitted to be in evidence for many years past, with the result that the public have been seriously inconvenienced. It is, therefore, good news our correspondent sends us, namely, that a scheme has been set on foot for extending the hospital accommodation and strengthening the staff, and at the same time providing the most modern equipment. This decision has come none too soon; and we look forward to seeing the Kandy hospital transformed from a sadly out-of-date institution to a thoroughly up-to-date one."

Having read this, in vain did I peruse the pages of this bulky volume to see whether estimates were provided for a new hospital in Kandy. An item of expenditure has been included for a children's ward. However, it is to be hoped that Government would make a note of it to provide Kandy with a modernized hospital in the near future.



I now come to a very real problem that we here and people outside have to contend with. Previous speakers have referred to the problem, and I take this opportunity, Sir, to supplement those remarks with a few words of mine. It has been said in and out of this Council that Ceylon should be self-supporting in the matter of foodstuffs. It has been so often said, and repeated, that people are very nigh tired of hearing this in theory. What has been done in practice? Hundreds and thousands of tons of rice are imported into the Island from foreign parts. How long are we to depend on foreign countries for the supply of our foodstuffs? In the event of failure of crops, or famine, or disturbance in those countries, what are we to do? I have not the slightest doubt that it is the poor people of this country who will suffer. We had the experience of a rice crisis not many years ago, and in the light of past experience it is to be hoped that the Government would not hesitate to adopt the various measures for the increase of food suggested by Honourable Members of this Council. I should like to throw out a small suggestion in regard to extending irrigation. It has been said, and well said, that the vast unexplored tracts of land in the North-Central Province and surrounding areas could be better explored for the purpose of obtaining further foodstuffs. The scourge of malaria has settled there, and until that is removed it is almost impossible to make the land productive. I would suggest as an alternative or secondary scheme that all minor irrigation schemes should be pushed through as early as possible. Every local area should be made self-supporting as much as possible. New schemes should be laid out and taken in hand without delay.

In this connection I should like to mention two minor irrigation schemes, namely, the Bodi-ela in the Nuwara Eliya District and the Gurulupota scheme in the Kandy District. It would not cost more than Rs. 10,000 to divert the Maha-oya, and if this is done, over 2,000 acres of land can be made available to the poor people of the district.

I should now like to refer to roads, only for the purpose of bringing to the notice of Government two important matters. I have asked a question, Sir, regarding the Ragalla-Kurundu-oya road. It is a road which runs through a very important district—the Walapana district which is an unexplored district of the Central Province, but which can be made available to settlers if the road is pushed through. I hope this will be done as early as possible. Three miles of the road were opened, and the work was then stopped in spite of many representations from various bodies and individuals.

I should also like to refer to another important matter, and that is a bridge over the Mahaweli-ganga at Lewelle on the eastern side of Kandy. This is an important matter, and it is fast becoming as famous as the now famous Kalladi bridge. The people of Dumbara who use the ferry there have constantly petitioned Government and asked for a bridge. The Government, I am informed, did, at a certain stage, agree to dismantling the existing bridge at Gampola when the new one is ready and refixing it at Lewelle at a cost of Rs. 30,000 or Rs. 40,000. Correspondence passed between the Central Government and the Municipal Council of Kandy; and I am informed—if I am wrong I hope the Government Agent of the Central Province, who is also Chairman of the Municipal Council of Kandy, will correct

me—that the Government expected the Municipal Council of Kandy to take over a moiety of this expenditure. The Municipal Council of Kandy, in its turn, says that it should be permitted to collect a toll if it is to contribute anything towards the erection of the bridge. Between the Government and the Municipal Council of Kandy the people of Dumbara are patiently waiting for the bridge. The Government must not haggle with the Municipal Council of Kandy over the expenditure in connection with this bridge. It is the duty of the Government to see that the people have their roads and communications in proper order and to their satisfaction. It is hoped, Sir, that the Government will not long delay establishing a bridge at Lewelle.

Now, Sir, I should like to refer in a few words to the subject of education, which has been touched on by the Honourable Member for Ratnapura and the Honourable the First Muslim Member. The Honourable Member for Ratnapura said that the villager should not be taught English. If that is to be so it will be ill-educating the villager, and I am therefore at variance with my honourable friend. There is a widespread desire among the youth of the country to acquire a knowledge of English. They find themselves unable to secure employment without a knowledge of English; they find that the man who has acquired a knowledge of English is preferred to the man who has not. It is, therefore, incumbent upon the Government to make it possible for the youth of the country to acquire a knowledge of the English language and to provide the means for equipping themselves for the struggle for employment. Now, Sir, as a remedy I should like to suggest that vernacular schools should be converted into Anglo-vernacular schools. In the Administration Report of the Central Province, I find that there are fifty-two vernacular boys' schools, while there are only five Anglo-vernacular boys' schools. I am afraid that in other parts of the country too there must be a large number of vernacular boys' schools, but these could, without much expense, be converted into Anglo-vernacular Government schools; and I should like to definitely say that the Government must not act in a niggardly manner in the matter of spending money on the education of the youth of the country.

THE HON. MR. J. STRACHAN (Director of Public Works):— I should like to say a few words, Sir, with regard to some of the remarks offered by Honourable Members. The Honourable Member for Colombo District asked Government to treat labour sympathetically. I think that it is the duty of every department to treat labour sympathetically. So far as the Public Works Department is concerned, its work depends largely on labour. The Honourable Member also mentioned that very few promotions were made, although there was a classification of various grades. I do not think that is exactly correct, if I may say so. Promotions have been made, and there is one instance where 123 men in the Port Commission Department were promoted. This occurred quite recently. The Honourable the Principal Collector of Customs will correct me if I am wrong. It is quite possible, and it is natural, that occasionally some men from outside a department fill particular posts. That is a thing we should try to avoid. With regard to the question of employing non-Ceylonese, so far as my information goes, in my own department—and here again I am supported

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by the Honourable the Principal Collector of Customs—we find great difficulty in getting sufficient Ceylonese labour, although I must say that the percentage of non-Ceylonese in the Factory and Port Commission is not as great as the figures which were quoted by the Honourable Member for the Colombo District yesterday.

THE HON. MR. D. B. JAYATILAKA (Colombo District) :—I referred to the number in the Railway Department. I received the figures for all the departments, and I quoted the figures for the Railway workshops.

THE HON. MR. J. STRACHAN (Director of Public Works) :—The percentage in the other departments is not so high.

THE HON. MR. D. B. JAYATILAKA (Colombo District) :—That is quite true.

THE HON. MR. J. STRACHAN (Director of Public Works) :—The Honourable Member for the Central Province Urban Electorate referred to money voted for buildings which the Public Works Department could not spend. I should like to make a short statement on that. Last year the Budget was considerably delayed. The Supply Bill was passed by the Council late in November, 1924, that is, nearly three months later than the usual time. Thus the actual period available for spending the money voted was reduced to nine months. That reduced 25 per cent. of the spending capacity of the department. In addition, after the Budget was passed, and we knew that certain works had to go through, we had to engage extra staff. Some we could not get until July—this month. Further, it is as well to organize beforehand, so that once you start you can go on uninterrupted. It is better to take time and organize first. Still further, there was considerable delay in acquiring the necessary land in several cases. It is not always possible to immediately get land required for public works. If we could persuade landowners to give us their land free of cost, we could go on without delay.

The anticipated unexpended money under Public Works Extraordinary this year is approximately Rs. 1,300,000 out of a total vote of Rs. 8,335,000. It is only right that I should give Honourable Members the reason for this. Some of the large items making up this amount are, first, the Infectious Diseases Hospital, Rs. 80,000. I hope this is going to be a saving. The next is the Council Chamber. We are not going to spend up to the amount granted by the Finance Committee by the sum of Rs. 250,000. The job is a big one, and requires careful thought and handling, and here again the usual difficulty was experienced in starting a big job. On the raising of road routes to Colombo an unexpended balance of Rs. 60,000 is expected. This is due to the Government's inability to get the land. The San Sebastian Canal will give Rs. 195,000, and the Negombo Water Supply Rs. 250,000. With regard to the latter, it has unfortunately happened that they were not in a position to go on with the work. There will also be an unexpended balance of

Rs. 100,000 on the Nuwara Eliya Electric Lighting Scheme. This was due to my decision that it was preferable to go slow with the work. The sum of Rs. 35,000 stands against the New Convict Hospital. The Honourable the Principal Civil Medical Officer will not, I am sure, blame me, as the delay was caused by altered requirements. Lastly, a sum of Rs. 35,000 is expected to be unexpended on the Barracks for Forcshore Police, Kochchikadde. The Public Works Department is not to blame for this.

The total amount voted for the Public Works Department for the year 1924-25 was Rs. 16,430,000, out of which we will not spend Rs. 1,463,000, that is, 9 per cent. Now, as I have said before, the financial year was three months old when the Budget was passed. On the items which I detailed to Honourable Members there will be unspent Rs. 1,160,000. Deducting from that 25 per cent. of the total vote, the savings amount to only Rs. 303,000. Last year we sanctioned 1,200 estimates, and if Honourable Members will divide the amount of the savings by that number, they will find that it works out at Rs. 250 per estimate. I do not think that Honourable Members will expect estimates to be worked up to the hilt, and I certainly hope that they will not be. Now, the money saved is not lost. What the department does not spend it can get back next year, the Finance Committee having the power to vote the money out of the surplus balances of the Colony.

The Honourable Member for the Southern Division of the Southern Province referred to the Ragama prison, but, as the Principal Civil Medical Officer mentioned, that item will come out of the Supply Bill. We shall, however, ask for a certain sum for the repair of the existing buildings at Mahara. The Honourable Member also said that he would prefer Head Overseers to District Engineers. That is a point which need not be debated here. The Honourable Member may convince me of it in Finance Committee. He said that District Engineers now had motor cars, and consequently they could do much more work than when they kept horses. When horses were used for travelling the expenditure of the department was something like Rs. 4,000,000, it is now Rs. 20,000,000, and I think that Honourable Members will agree with me that traffic has increased since then.

The Honourable Member also referred to the new Customs-house. He said that the Public Works Department had spent only Rs. 24,000 in 1924-25, and he asked how it was possible to spend what was asked for this year. Honourable Members can take it from me—and I have done some public work—the amount being expended this year is only for the preliminary work of clearing the ground. Next year we shall get on to the serious work of sinking foundations, and so on. The Rs. 1,000,000 voted for the Council Chamber will be spent, and I am afraid over-spent, on steel, piling, and stone. With regard to the Rs. 1,000,000 for minor roads, the Honourable Member said that Rs. 100,000 was allocated on population, and he assumed that the Rs. 1,000,000 was not allocated on the same basis. With regard to that, I might say that a tentative allocation was submitted by the Committee on roads, but it was decided that before anything was done an Engineer should go round and inspect every road in every district. When that report is ready a recommendation will be made to Government.

I am sorry that the Honourable Member is not here, but he also made a reference with regard to assistance from the road tax. If

the House will refer to the Estimates for 1925-26, page 92, sub-head 6, they will see there items amounting to Rs. 97,055 for maintenance of roads in the Katugastota district. Below that total is the item "Deduct value of days' labour Rs. 7,055." What that really means is that out of this vote which is annually recurrent for roads the Public Works Department get Rs. 90,000, and in addition they get Rs. 7,055 out of commutation tax funds. I think I am authorized to state that the Government propose to amend the Ordinance and relieve Road Committees of their contribution to Government. Consequently, out of the vote for the Public Works Department Rs. 7,055 will have to come from the ordinary vote under this head, that is to say, the total sum of Rs. 97,055 will have to come from the ordinary vote. I mentioned that district as an illustration. So far as the whole Island is concerned, the vote would be increased by Rs. 350,000 under Public Works Annually Recurrent, and the Road Committee would have that sum to spend on minor roads and works. In certain cases, of course, the Government give what is called grants-in-aid. These will be found on page 89 of the Estimates, items Nos. 43 to 50. The amount involved is Rs. 85,000. If the Rs. 350,000 is not collected from the Boards, they would not get the Rs. 85,000, but they would still have Rs. 265,000 for carrying out their work.

The Beliatta-Walasmulla road stands high on the list of roads, and if the money is available it will no doubt be considered. One Honourable Member made a comparison of the cost of buildings. He stated that in Tangalla a bungalow could be built for Rs. 35,000, whereas in another place it was going to cost Rs. 50,000. The cost of a bungalow depends on many things. First, there is the site, and then the accommodation, and so on. With regard to the Tangalla water supply, it is high on the list of waterworks. But that is a subject which can be considered in Select Committee.

Before I sit down I should like to mention that the Kandy hospital scheme has received the consideration of the Public Works Department. In Select Committee Honourable Members will see a long list of roads, hospitals, waterworks, and electric lighting schemes for which estimates were never sanctioned. If sanction is given to them, the work could be proceeded with. I hope Honourable Members will be very sympathetic about roads. In addition, I am now faced with a suggested expenditure of Rs. 22,000,000 for fencing the Public Works Department roads against trespassing cattle.

THE HON. MR. G. E. MADAWALA (North-Western Province, Eastern Division):—Sir, I wish to associate myself with what has been said by the Honourable Member for the Ratnapura District with regard to the payment of Koralas. I find from the Estimates that the Koralas of the Central, North-Central, and Uva Provinces are paid, but the Koralas of the North-Western and Sabaragamuwa Provinces are not paid. In ancient times, when the Koralas were appointed they were remunerated in a certain way: all their lands were exempted from taxes. After the removal of the paddy tax their position was not improved by Government, and in addition to their work they have to perform various duties. I submit that the case of the Koralas of these Provinces ought to be considered. It would be seen from the Budget that increased amounts are provided for

the payment of duty allowance, travelling, and other expenses for officers of the Land Settlement Department. These increases have been provided owing to the fact that additional officers are to be appointed for the settlement of lands during the ensuing year. I submit, Sir, that this settlement work is very urgently required if land is to be developed and agriculture is to advance. It is absolutely necessary that every land should be settled as expeditiously as possible. I find from the Administration Report of the Land Settlement Officer that he proposes to deal with certain areas, and that he has allocated certain areas for the Government Agent to deal with. I would submit that it is in the thickly populated areas, rather than the areas where the population is small, that land should be settled first. In the dry zone, as in the case of the North-Central Province and the Wannai districts, there is no dispute between the Crown and the subject with regard to chena land. I think the land in these areas is admitted to be Crown land. But it is not so in the case of the chena land in the wet zone, where there is dispute between the Crown and the subject as to the ownership of these lands. So far as the Settlement Officers are concerned, they have, as I have said, allocated to the Government Agent the settlement of those lands. It is the attitude of the Government Agents with regard to these lands that has completely changed, and it is with regard to this change of attitude that I wish to offer a few remarks. I will not go into the question of the ownership of chena lands in ancient times; nor will I go into the question of appurtenances, although the Government had at times acknowledged the right of the subject to appurtenances in all areas in the Kandyan Provinces. In a great many instances, before the passing of the Waste Lands Ordinance the Government always recognized the rights of the subject to chena lands. It was asserted with great vehemence, when the Waste Lands Ordinance was introduced into this Council, that the object of Government was not so much to get the lands from the villagers, but to safeguard the interests of the villagers against the encroachments of capitalists and speculators. When petitions were presented to Government at the time by the people of the North-Western Province, His Excellency Sir West Ridgeway in reply said:—

I am to add that Government see no reason for depriving the North-Western Province of the advantages of the Waste Lands Ordinance, which provided a cheap and expeditious method of settling disputes. A Settlement Officer will be appointed as soon as possible, and his instructions will be to deal with all the questions brought before him in a conciliatory and generous spirit.

Again, speaking at Galle, Sir West Ridgeway said:—

And I think you must know that the Government have no wish to avail themselves of quibbles, or to take away from any man land which may be morally his, but to which he may not be able to prove his legal right.

At Anuradhapura he said:—

Government does not wish to take land for itself which is not strictly its own.

Then at Kurunegala he said:—

Settlement work will in future be mainly in remote villages almost entirely controlled by picked men, who will pursue a *fixed and a continuous policy*. The object of the Government, I think you must know, is not to seize the villagers' lands. On the contrary, we wish to be as generous as possible. All we wish to know is whether the land belongs to Government or to villagers.

To a deputation, His Excellency Sir Henry Blake speaking on the same subject said :—

They (the Government) did not want villagers to dispose of their lands to outsiders. It was when villagers got rid of their lands that the Government had to step in.

Sir West Ridgeway addressing the Chiefs of the Central Province enunciated the policy of Government when he said :—

The policy of the Government was to be generous as regards land disputes. It was not that the Government wished to take the land for itself, but that it wished to settle land disputes as quickly as possible.

When the question came before the Legislative Council, His Excellency Sir Henry McCallum said in the course of his remarks :—

Everything will be done to bring to the knowledge of villagers, not only of the North-Western Province, but of Ceylon generally, that Government are willing and are taking up a national work in pushing forward the matter of land settlement to a satisfactory conclusion, and that they need not expect any harshness at our hands, but that we will treat them with every consideration we possibly can.

Now, Sir, after these declarations the Government settled lands on villagers on more or less equitable terms. The people were allowed to plant lands with permanent products, and there was no restriction against their so doing. Not only the villagers, but the capitalists and the speculators who purchased lands and who based their claims on the village title, were permitted to effect permanent improvements on the lands. I may say that the speculator and the capitalist were even more generously treated than the villager, because they had to pay Rs. 7.50 to Rs. 10 an acre, while the villager was never charged less than Rs. 15 an acre. Now all the lands of most of the capitalists have been settled, and it is the villagers' lands that remain unsettled. The Administration Reports of the Government Agents for the North-Western Province will show you that without let or hindrance people were allowed to put down permanent plantations on chena land up to the year 1923. But suddenly, in 1924, it was discovered that the period of prescription against the Crown was thirty-three and a half years. This year an innovation has been started, and the Government is prohibiting the people from putting down permanent cultivations on their chena lands. I submit, Sir, that this is not justice. It was against the speculator that the Government declared that it was its intention to safeguard the villager. But the speculator was allowed to put down permanent plantations, and when it comes to the villager's turn the Government says "No, you will be prosecuted if you do so." On this basis the settlement of the lands was carried out. The people had a moral title to the land, although the legal title may have been defective. In reply to a question put by me, the Honourable the Colonial Secretary said that Government was very desirous that people should plant, but that people must pay a fee to the Government and obtain permission from the Government. I submit, Sir, that this is a great breach of principle. Here the Crown is forcing the subject to admit the right of the Crown to the chena land before he is given permission to put down permanent cultivation. Is this an act of a Government which was desirous of safeguarding the interests of the villager? The concessions given to the capitalists are denied to the villagers.

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY :—I must really deny that, Sir. We have not given privileges to the capitalists. I know perfectly well that we do not do it. They are more hardly hit than the villagers. That is my experience. We ask them sometimes to pay the improved value of the estate.

THE HON. MR. G. E. MADAWALA (North-Western Province, Eastern Division) :—But the Honourable the Colonial Secretary cannot deny the fact that the people who derived title from the villagers and planted land were not prosecuted in the Police Court as villagers are. That is the reason why I say that Government should make every effort to augment the staff of the Land Settlement Department and bring the work of settlement to a final conclusion as soon as possible. The Crown forces the villager to admit Crown title, and, on the other hand, if he does not admit he is not allowed to improve the land ; and if he plants he will be prosecuted. If he does not plant at the end of thirty years or so the Crown will say that the land is mukalana. So you will see, Sir, that the villager is between two fires. On the one hand he must admit the right of the Crown, and if he does not do that the land is described as mukalana years after. I would, therefore, earnestly ask the Government to allow the villagers the same concessions allowed to capitalists and speculators, who are outsiders. These concessions should be allowed to villagers if the Government is that humane Government it pretended to be years ago. It is only then that the trust between the villager and the Government will be preserved. Otherwise it is not likely that the people will in future trust what is said by the Government, by Governors, and by the Colonial Secretaries. Hitherto Government has done nothing to help the villager, although Sir Henry Blake had stated that Government did not want the villagers to dispose of their land to outsiders. The speculator and the capitalist are in a better position than the villager. I trust that the Government would ease the position of the villager and grant the necessary facilities and concessions.

I wish now to come to another subject. I should like to say, Sir, that a bridge over the Maha-oya is an absolute necessity in the Kurunegala District. The Planters' Association at the last meeting strongly pressed on the attention of Government the necessity of a bridge over the Maha-oya. This bridge will not only serve the North-Western Province, but the Sabaragamuwa Province as well.

As regards hospitals, I may refer to the great need felt for a hospital at Anamaduwa. I believe the Government Agent of the North-Western Province has for many years recommended the establishment of a hospital at Anamaduwa in the centre of the Demala Hatpattuwa. The people there are stricken with parangi, and I would submit that a hospital at Anamaduwa is an absolute necessity for the district.

THE HON. MR. S. RAJARATNAM (Northern Province, Central Division) :—Though the hour is late I wish to say a few words, Sir, on the second reading of the Budget. I think the Honourable Member representing the District of Colombo said yesterday that Indian labour should not be encouraged or employed in the Railway workshops. I thought that the Government would not have taken



him seriously on this point. As I find the Director of Public Works has taken note of the same and has replied in detail, I am sorry that I have to make a few observations. The Indian National Congress, the Ceylon National Congress, and other public bodies want that the Indians should have equal rights in all parts of the British Empire, whether it be in Canada, Africa, Australia, or any other part of His Majesty's dominions. But when it concerns Ceylon, why should the *ex-President* of the Ceylon National Congress take up this uncharitable and inconsistent attitude? I cannot really understand what is going to happen. We say India is our motherland, and we look to India for our food. We have wrongly shut out the sons of our motherland from the Civil Service. We do not now want them even in a workshop. It looks as if we are saying "Let the Indians be latrine coolies and estate coolies and no better." I am afraid, Sir, the time may come when perhaps the Indian Government, as a result of Indian opinion, will say "Goodbye, gentlemen in Ceylon, no food for you, no labour for you." Are we really prepared for such a contingency? The Honourable Member for the Colombo District said yesterday that our tradition was something different, and that we treated all alike, whether they be foreigners or Ceylonese. I ask where has that tradition gone? I for one do not think the attitude of the Honourable Member is in keeping with that tradition. Equal chances must be given to all, and it is a question perhaps of the survival of the fittest.

Now I should like to touch on one or two points in regard to the Supply Bill. I think it is clear that in Ceylon we are having top-heavy administration, as will be seen from the report of the Retrenchment Commission (Sessional Paper III. of 1923). That Commission pointed out that the real cause of the administration being top-heavy was due to the expenditure on personal emoluments and overhead charges and not so much to the number of officers. I think the remedy for this state of affairs has been prescribed by that very Commission. They say that there should be a fixed pay for all officers, and those officers whose domicile is not in Ceylon should be paid a non-pensionable overseas allowance. That I think is being done in India now. Such a procedure will be of great value to Ceylon as, firstly, it will be a source of great economy; and secondly, it will certainly give a chance to many Ceylonese to be employed in the higher rungs of the Public Service. The Government is determined to continue their Salaries Scheme for five years, and the time for revision of the scheme will arrive in 1927. But let us not wait till then. It is far better for us to start our campaign early, so that by 1927 we will be in a fit position to carry out the suggestions of the Retrenchment Commission to pay all officers on a certain basis, and give an overseas allowance for those whose domicile is outside Ceylon.

Next, I should like to say a word or two on a point already touched upon by some Honourable Members, and that is with regard to judicial appointments and the Civil Service. In 1914 or thereabouts there were about 104 Civil Servants in Ceylon, and subsequently that number has risen to 150. We all know that these Civil Servants are very hardworking men, but in many instances they are without work. I may cite as an instance of economy the case of Sir William Twynam when he was Government Agent of Jaffna. He had only one Office Assistant to assist him in his work, and he had leisure to attend to many public questions

as well as to preside occasionally—and the public calls on his time were many—at public functions. He had only one Office Assistant, but now there are two Office Assistants and one Cadet. If we analyse and see the work these officers have to do, it would be found that they have hardly any work to do.

The next point I wish to press on the attention of this Council is that judicial appointments must be filled from the Bar. If judicial appointments are filled from the Bar the advantages would be manifold. In this connection I wish to read the following extract from the "Law Times" (Journal) of November 8, 1924 :—

Speaking at the annual dinner of the Warwickshire Law Society last week, Sir Ernest Pollock, the Master of the Rolls, dwelt upon the administration of our law, and upon the way in which it is viewed by members of the profession in foreign countries. At the Peace Conference he sat upon a legal commission upon which twelve countries were represented by lawyers, and he tells us that "All of them looked with envy and admiration at the English law system." The two features that particularly appealed to lawyers abroad were, firstly, the selection of Judges from the Bar and creating the Bench as a branch of the Civil Service; and secondly, the flexibility of the administration of the law owing to the absence of codification. On the first of the matters there can be no two opinions. The independence of the judiciary is the country's greatest safeguard, and that Judges should form part of the executive is unthinkable.

This extract shows that the point practically touched upon by some of the speakers to-day has been very forcibly and clearly put by Sir Ernest Pollock and the lawyers of twelve countries. It is far better, Sir, in the interests of justice to help the independence of the judiciary. The judiciary should have nothing to do with the Civil Service. When I say this, I do not want to be misunderstood. I do say, Sir, that the members of the Civil Service have discharged their duty fairly well in the past. But what I contend is that the system of filling judicial appointments from the Bar is good and economical, because men with fairly good prospects at the Bar can be attracted to judicial posts if their pay is going to be anywhere between Rs. 6,000 and Rs. 12,000 a year. Thus the number of the Civil Service appointments can be reduced. My idea is that there should be no more than 80 Civil Servants. We could put in an equal number of Ceylonese and Europeans to the Civil Service, so that what we are clamouring for to-day, namely, that there should be equal opportunities to Ceylonese and Europeans for performing administrative duties, would be automatically carried out. I trust that this suggestion of mine would receive the favourable consideration of Government. Before I leave this point I wish to refer to the fact that a few years ago we had a Civil Service Examination held in Ceylon. A Committee that was appointed recommended that there should not be two classes or grades of Civil Servants in Ceylon, and that there should be only one class. The result was that the examination that used to be held in Ceylon was abolished. I would request the Government to consider the desirability, now that we have a University College, of holding simultaneous examinations, both here and in England, for the Civil Service, so that the youth of the country whose means are not high may have the opportunity of competing at this examination. If this suggestion is adopted, it would only be necessary for the question papers to be sent here; and the test applied would be the same as that in England.

Now I should like to pass to another class of officers who are doing onerous duties in the risky business of dealing with money. They

are known as Assistant Shroffs. There are about a hundred of them in Ceylon. I may be mistaken as to their number. Whatever the number may be, they are employed in the Railway, the General Treasury, and in some Government departments in the various Provinces. Their position is safe as long as the Chief Shroff is there, but the moment their chief retires, or unfortunately passes away, these men are practically turned out into the streets. Is this, I ask, fair? Is such a method in existence in any part of the British Empire? I want the Government to consider whether these officers who perform such onerous and responsible duties should not be employed permanently by Government and placed on a pensionable basis.

Now I should like to touch on a point which has been perhaps very much in the forefront of late. I am referring to the question of total prohibition and the Excise policy of Government. In 1921, Sir, this House accepted a resolution moved by my honourable friend Mr. Duraiswamy, who was then representing the Northern Province. That motion was as follows:—

That in view of the prevalence of public opinion in favour of total prohibition of the use of alcoholic and intoxicating liquors and drugs, except for medicinal purposes, this Council desires that Government should so direct its Excise administration as to attain total prohibition within a reasonable time.

This motion, Sir, was debated in Council, and in the course of the discussion His Excellency Sir William Manning, who was presiding, laid down the policy of Government in very clear and unmistakable terms. He said:—

There are just one or two small points that I should like to make. Last morning I had a visit from the great temperance advocate who is now touring this Island. Honourable Members will understand whom I mean. In the course of a short conversation with him, I pointed out to him a fact which I believe he had not fully realized when he came to Ceylon. I told him that as far as I was aware—he would correct me if I was wrong—there was no part of the British Empire where local option had been so fully developed as it was in Ceylon. It was not a question of the revenue which the Colony was making. It was a question as to whether the people desired that there should eventually be total prohibition of the sale of liquor in this Island. I could not help remarking to him that such total prohibition would be an extremely difficult matter, because there existed almost in the backyard of the majority of the inhabitants of this Island opportunities and means for making a drink which was intoxicating. He saw with me what the difficulty was. He agreed with me that we were doing what we thought best for the abolition of the sale of intoxicating drinks. I told him that a motion was about to be moved in Council on this subject, and that the line which Government would take would be that we should be governed by the will of the people, and that we shall be so governed . . . . .

Now, I do not wish it to be understood, as possibly the Controller of Revenue may have made the Council understand, that Government is actually opposed to this motion . . . . .

If the Honourable Member intends to press his motion to a division, I shall ask the Official Members not to vote, because the feeling of Government is that we should be guided by the will of the people in all matters in connection with this trade.

That resolution was passed and was accepted by the Government in 1921, and His Excellency Sir William Manning, who was then guiding the destinies of this Island, laid down a principle as regards the Government policy with regard to matters of domestic legislation. But, I ask, is the Excise Department carrying out that policy indicated in the resolution accepted by this House? His Excellency

the Officer Administering the Government has told us in his Message that 20,000 tappers will be out of job if tapping for toddy is stopped. But, Sir, are we, for the sake of 20,000 people, going to sacrifice the interests of about 1,000,000 of the people of the country? I cannot understand how a sentiment like this came to be expressed by His Excellency who knows the history of the British Empire. Has not the British Empire sacrificed so much in connection with the slave trade? Have they not put a stop to piracy? It would never have been argued that if piracy or the slave trade had not been stopped so many people would have been deprived of their jobs. Jaffna's attitude towards drink is definite. It feels that total prohibition is not an impractical thing in view of America's achievement. In 1917 there were twenty-five arrack taverns, we have only six to-day; and in 1917 there were one hundred and twelve toddy taverns, to-day there are only twenty. This is not all. When the Government was pleased to give us a referendum about two years ago to remove the foreign liquor retail shops we closed them all, and the Government has closed the only remaining one in the Jaffna District at Point Pedro. Now there are only these toddy and arrack taverns and one foreign liquor tavern, one hotel licence, and a few resthouse licences, some of which the Government, owing to our representation, has promised to close down. We failed this year to close one toddy tavern and one arrack tavern because we got 55 per cent., and we failed to close two toddy taverns, two arrack taverns, one foreign liquor tavern, and one hotel licence because we got 57.6 per cent. After all these achievements, Jaffna is disappointed, because an unlimited quantity of foreign liquor is able to find its way into Jaffna.

Now, I wish to touch on another important subject—education. As far as the proposed University is concerned, my idea is, Sir, that the federal system should be employed. There should be a University College in every important town, and these should by federation form the University. This suggestion may not be favourably received, because I am aware that the Government and many people who are more competent than myself think that the method employed should be the unitary method. Colombo, Sir, should hardly be the seat of the University. Take, for example, the case of India. There a University was established in Calcutta because that town was the capital. But after forty years it has been found that it was a blunder, and that the University should have been started in a place where the atmosphere and surroundings were more congenial to University life. So, Sir, sultry Colombo should not be the place for our youths to study. A cooler place would afford much better opportunity for hard study. In Colombo the distractions are many, and the professors cannot be expected to be with their students except during the class hours. The constant association of the professors with the students is of the greatest value to University life, and professors should give of their best, not only in the class room, but even outside. If about forty acres of land are going to be acquired for the purpose of the University, it would be economical to get it outside Colombo, say, in the up-country, and for the same money acres and acres of land might be bought. So that when the University is established a township will grow, and if we do not sell the additional land available but lease it to people who want it for various purposes, as is done,

I understand, in the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, the income thus derived may go towards maintaining two or three chairs. The University, as I say, should be started in a really healthy and good place.

Next, I wish to say a word or two as regards general education. I would urge on this Council and the Government the desirability of having more vernacular education. I may say that in this Island education is imparted following more or less the Minute of Lord Macaulay—to create “a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, words, and intellect.” It may perhaps be said that I am trying to run down the present system of education pursued here. That is not my intention. I may also quote an extract from Lord Macaulay’s letter to his father in 1896. He said :—

The effect of this education on the Hindus is prodigious. No Hindu who has received an English education ever remains sincerely attached to his religion. Some continue to profess as a matter of policy, but many profess themselves pure Deists and some embrace Christianity. It is my firm belief that if our plans of education are followed up, there will not be a single idolator among the respectable classes in Bengal thirty years hence.

This shows clearly what his Minute was expected to do.

I am afraid, Sir, our system of education seems to be a continuation of this old system.

I wish to refer next to the question of teachers’ salaries. I am glad to see that certain salaries schemes for teachers—though there are a few anomalies—have been tabulated, and I trust that the Government would do its best in this direction.

Another point that struck me is that after the new Code came into operation the children in the Northern Province are not taught as they should be. I have no quarrel with the teachers, but I think that the Director and the Board of Education must see to it. Children must be taught, and not be made to carry exercise books and text books and to go neatly dressed before the inspector. I say that children should be well taught in these schools.

I must express regret at the remark made yesterday by an Honourable Member who said that the Tamils are in luck’s way. But his statement does not stand analysis. As far as hospital facilities are concerned we cannot be said to have got anything. A hospital which we handed over to Government about seventeen years ago has not got that support we expected from Government. Beyond putting up four beds and two latrines and giving two nurses nothing has been done, and I cannot understand the remark of the Honourable Member for the Southern Division of the Southern Province that the Tamils have come under a lucky star.

I wish also, Sir, to refer to the indigenous system of medicine. In spite of the external favour shown to the Western system of medicine the Ayurvedic system is holding its own. If Government assists us to encourage this system and to grant diplomas to qualified men, in the course of a few years we shall have experienced Ayurvedic physicians instead of the quacks we meet at times.

In conclusion, Sir, I wish to refer to the question of State banks. The Director of Agriculture said that Co-operative Credit Societies were preferable to State banks in the matter of encouraging food production. The co-operative credit movement has been in existence in Ceylon for many years. Two lakhs have been allowed

for these societies. But what are we to do with these two lakhs if we are to cultivate all the land lying barren? The Government expects to sweeten the ocean with a drop of milk. I think State banks should be started in preference to Co-operative Credit Societies, and if that is done, so many men who really require assistance, as the Honourable the Muslim Member pointed out, could also be helped.

**Adjournment.**

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