

THE RIGHT HON'BLE SIR JOHN ANDERSON, P.C., G.C.B., G.C.I.E.
Governor of Bengal on April 1, 1937.
Relinquished charge : November 26, 1937.



THE LATE RIGHT HON'BLE LORD BRABOURNE, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., M.C.

Assumed charge : November 27, 1937.
Relinquished charge to act as Viceroy and Governor General : June 25, 1938.
Resumed charge : October 24, 1938.
Died : February 23, 1939.



SIR ROBERT NIEL REID, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., I.C.S.

Assumed charge : June 25, 1938 ; relinquished charge : October 24, 1938.
Assumed charge for the second time : February 24, 1939 ; relinquished charge : June 12, 1939.



H. E. Sir John Woodhead, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S., Acting Governor of Bengal

Assumed charge : June 12, 1939.

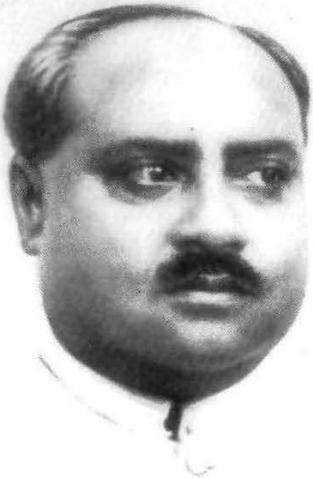
The Ministry

The Chief Minister.



The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, Chief Minister of Bengal and Minister for Education and Publicity Departments.





The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin, K.C.I.E.
Home Minister.





THE HON'BLE NAWAB KHWAJA HABIBULLAH BAHADUR, OF DACCA MINISTER FOR LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRIES.



THE HON'BLE MR. HUSEYN SHAHEED SUHRAWARDY
- *MINISTER FOR COMMERCE AND LABOUR AND*
RURAL RECONSTRUCTION.







THE HON'BLE MR. PRASANNA DEB RAIKUT
—MINISTER FOR FOREST AND EXCISE.



THE HON'BLE MR. MUKUNDA BEHARY MULLICK
MINISTER FOR [illegible] AND
RURAL INDUSTRIES.



THE HON'BLE MR. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN
MINISTER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH, MEDICAL,
AGRICULTURE AND VETERINARY.

372



Government of Bengal

Publicity Department

Two Years of Provincial Autonomy in Bengal

Being a report of the work done
by the Government of Bengal from
1st April 1937 to 31st March 1939

Published by the Director of Public Information, Bengal
August 1939

Superintendent, Government Printing
Bengal Government Press, Alipore, Bengal
1939

4-5

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL
LIBRARY.
RAJA RAMMOHANPUR

R
354.5414
W516t

Published by the Superintendent, Government Printing
Bengal Government Press, Alipore, Bengal

Agents in India.

Messrs. S. K. Lahiri & Co., Ltd., Printers and Booksellers, College Street, Calcutta.

Messrs, Thacker, Spink & Co., Calcutta.

Customers in the United Kingdom and the Continent of Europe may obtain publications either direct from the High Commissioner's office or through any bookseller.

STOCK TAKING - 2011

24946
18 SEP 1968

PREFACE.

The activities of the Government of Bengal during the sixteen months following the assumption of office by the present Ministry on the 1st April 1937, were briefly set forth in a résumé which was published in August 1938. The main object of that short narrative was to place before the public facts and figures to prove that the Ministry had consistently striven to implement every item of the programme which had been drawn up by them on the eve of their acceptance of office. Since that résumé was published, a constant stream of press-notes and communiques has been issued by the Publicity Department to keep the public informed of the various activities of Government. The *Bengal Weekly* and the *Banglar Katha* which came into existence early in November 1938, and which have a wide circulation all over the Province and even outside, have afforded further facilities to the public to remain constantly aware of what Government were doing for the all round progress of the Province and its people.

In the present compilation will be found detailed information regarding the activities of every department of Government under the present regimé during the two years of provincial autonomy which ended on March 31, 1939.

Facts have been presented without any attempt at exaggeration and they will tell their own tale. Whether it is a record of achievement or failure it is for the impartial reader to judge. It will perhaps be futile expect recognition of the achievements of this Ministry from those who believe in the moral soundness of the motto "All is fair in love and war" and who are not open to conviction. But truth must necessarily have an appeal wider than its opposite. This volume is therefore placed in the hands of

the public with confidence and in the hope that despite the turmoil of political controversy and the dust of prejudice the record of work it unfolds will not pass unheeded.

It may be added that although the period which has been reviewed in this report concludes with the end of March 1939, its scope has been extended in some places beyond that date to bring it more up to date, particularly with regard to matters on which decisions had been taken before March 31, 1939.

ALTAF HUSAIN,
Director of Public Information, Bengal.

August, 1939.

CONTENTS.

	Page.
THE PROGRAMME OF THE MINISTRY	xi-xii
TO THE RESCUE OF THE MASSES : LEGISLATIVE MEASURES : Amendment of the Tenancy Act—Reduction of rate of damage in rent suits—Improving tanks—Insurance against famine—Preventing increase of rent	1-4
EXECUTIVE MEASURES : Illegal exactions checked—Certificate procedure suspended—Grievances of khas tenants investigated—Rent reduction—Revenue Commission—State control of fisheries—Rent remissions—Measures for flood relief—Huge sums sanctioned for loans and relief—Loan realization policy liberalized	4-9
ECONOMIC REHABILITATION OF AGRICULTURISTS : Debt legislation at work—Huge amounts scaled down or extinguished—Further improvements planned	9-12
REORIENTATION OF THE AGRICULTURAL POLICY : Expansion of departmental activity—Agricultural education—Improvement of livestock—Bringing improved methods home to agriculturists—Publicity and propaganda—Marketing : bill introduced—Financial aid to cultivators—Agricultural research and experiment—Long staple cotton—Subsidiary employment—The problem of jute and paddy—Further measures to stabilize jute price	12-22
VETERINARY POLICY: Prevention and control of cattle diseases—Help to local bodies—Steps to train Indians—College staff strengthened—Special scholarships created	22-25
PROGRESS OF EDUCATION: Financial settlement with Calcutta University—Additional help to Dacca University—Grants to private colleges—Grants restored—More money for secondary education—Training of secondary school teachers—Board of Secondary Education contemplated—Expansion of primary education—Training centres for teachers—More money for girls' education—New girls' college—Special steps to encourage Muslim education—Special provisions for Scheduled Castes—Impetus to oriental education—Stipends for caste Hindus—Development of physical education—Youth welfare scheme—Scope of physical welfare work widened ..	25-36
RURAL UPLIFT WORK: Principles underlying the plan—Liberal grants for rural welfare projects—Campaign against water-hyacinth—Public opinion mobilised—Detailed plan of operations—Activities during the Water-Hyacinth Week—Results—Co-operation of the Press—A bigger campaign proposed ..	37-46
SYSTEM OF MEDICAL RELIEF REORGANISED: Improvement of Sadar hospitals—Control of adulterated drugs—Improvement of medical schools—Scholarships to Scheduled Caste and Muslim students—Improvement of nursing arrangements—Grants to non-Government institutions—Nutritional survey—Fighting malaria—And kala-azar—And small-pox—And tuberculosis—And leprosy—Maternity and child welfare—The Bengal Nurses Act—Rural public health re-organisation scheme—Programme of work in hand—Improvement of rural water supply	46-58
IRRIGATION PROBLEMS: Inter-Provincial Flood Conference—Interim Committee appointed—Small schemes—Larger irrigation projects—Other important schemes—Departmental re-organization—Road fund works	58-64

	Page.
CO-OPERATIVE DEPARTMENT:	
Some important steps—Interest rates reduced—Loans by Provincial Bank —More efficiency of management—Training of officers—Debt settlement speeded up—Better supervision and control—Safeguard against defalcation—New legislation—Development of handloom industry—Land mortgage banks—Reconstruction of agricultural credit movement —Co-operative conferences—Result of the policy of cautious expansion —Sugarcane growers' union—Fishermen's societies—Paddy sale societies —Rural reconstruction societies	64-68
INDUSTRIAL POLICY:	
Training in textile industry—Development of silk industry—Furthering industrial research—Three more schemes: Industrial survey—Development of cottage industries—Other small industries	68-72
WORK DONE BY THE EMPLOYMENT ADVISER	72
RETRENCHMENT:	
Fresh avenues explored—All-round economies—Saving of Rs. 14 lakhs expected—Revision of contract rates: Cheaper buildings—Forest Department economies—Steady increase in nation building expenditure—A review of economic measures	73-79
THE PROVINCIAL BUDGET:	
Special features of the budget for 1938-39—Special features of the budget for 1939-40	80-85
RADICAL LABOUR POLICY:	
Encouraging sound trade unionism—Extension of Factories Act—Better amenities for labourers—Labour welfare department—Maternity Benefit Act—Strikes—Other labour problems—Bengal Jute Ordinance, 1938—Training in mercantile marine—Supply of cheaper electricity ..	85-91
ADMINISTRATION OF LAW AND ORDER:	
Release of State prisoners, detenus and terrorist prisoners—Relations between the police and public improved—Choukidary Enquiry Committee—Penal reform—Urgent schemes taken in hand—Re-organization of jail staffs—Improvement in clothing and equipment	92-99
FOREST POLICY:	
Departmental re-organization—Forest Committee—Conservation of forest—Afforestation in central Bengal—Preservation of wild life—Grievances of forest border tenants remedied—Cultivation of cinchona	99-102
EXCISE POLICY:	
Total prohibition the ultimate goal—Policy of minimum consumption with maximum revenue—Salt industry	102-104
JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT:	
Official Receiver's Act—Civil court staff reorganization—Relief to clerks—Convenience of witnesses—Money-lenders Bill—Working of civil courts investigated—Steps to remove congestion	104-105
EDUCATIVE PROPAGANDA:	
Use of films—Work of touring parties—Exhibition van—Posters and leaflets—National Welfare Units	106-109
GOVERNMENT AND THE PRESS:	
Press Room in Writers' Buildings—Revision of advertisement policy—The *Bengal Weekly* and the *Banglar Katha*	110-112
CONCLUSION	112-11?

APPENDICES.

Page.

APPENDIX A :

Some speeches delivered by Hon. Ministers which explain the policy being pursued by Government in respect of nation building departments as well as for the maintenance of law and order : Agriculture—Medical—Public health—Education—Rural credit—Industries—Rural reconstruction—Irrigation—Debt conciliation—Law and order—Agricultural education—Co-operative credit and debt relief—Bengal's industrial future—Survey of many problems—Landlords and tenants—Future of ex-detenus 117-178

APPENDIX B :

Special articles contributed to the columns of the *Bengal Weekly* by the Hon. Chief Minister and other Hon. Ministers on the completion of two years of Provincial Autonomy in Bengal 181-196

APPENDIX C :

Articles published, papers read and addresses delivered by Hon. Ministers or high officials of Government engaged in the study of special problems : —Bengal's river problem and her economic welfare—River problems in Bengal—Some aspects of prison reform in Bengal—Problems of rural hygiene and their solution—Agricultural marketing in Bengal .. 199-260

APPENDIX D :

Committees appointed by Government up to March 31, 1939, to investigate different problems concerning welfare of the people :—The Choukidary Enquiry Committee—The Jute Enquiry Committee—The Paddy and Rice Committee—The West Bengal Re-afforestation Committee—Madrasah Education Committee—Scheduled Caste Education Committee—Primary and Adult Education Committee—Dacca Medical College Committee—The Damodar Canal Enquiry Committee—Tenants' Rights and Protection Committee—Rents Reduction Committee—Committee to investigate the necessity of establishing a college of pharmacy in Bengal 263-283

APPENDIX E :

Detailed statement of rural projects, district by district, for which the present Government have sanctioned grants on the recommendation of District Magistrates up to March 31, 1939 287-302

APPENDIX F :

Acts of the Provincial Legislature, 1937-38, and Bills introduced by Government and passed by the Assembly in the February-April session, 1938 .. 305-310

APPENDIX G :

An account of the measures adopted by Government for the welfare of the aboriginals in Maldah—Uplift of aboriginals in Mymensingh .. 313-321

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

	Following page.
Governors of the Province since the inauguration of the Provincial Autonomy :	
The Right Hon'ble Sir John Anderson.	
The late Right Hon'ble Lord Brabourne.	
Sir Robert Neil Reid.	
His Excellency Sir John Woodhead.	*Preceding Title page.*
The Ministry	*Ditto.*
The Ministers at work during the Water-Hyacinth Week :	
The Hon'ble Mr. N. R. Sarker at Mymensingh.	
The Hon'ble Maharaja S. C. Nandy at Murshidabad.	
The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin at Pabna.	
The Hon'ble Nawab Musharruf Hussain at Howrah.	
The Hon'ble Mr. Tamizuddin Khan at Faridpur.	
The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy at Comilla.	
A typical crowd of workers	48
The Hon'ble Mr. N. R. Sarker leaves to present his budget for 1939-40.	
The Hon'ble K. Sir Nazimuddin and the Hon'ble Nawab Musharruf Hussain at work in office.	
The Hon'ble Maharaja S. C. Nandy initiating work on the Bhairab cut.	
His Excellency Mr. H. J. Twynam, former Chief Secretary and Secretary, Publicity Department.	
Mr. E. N. Blandy, Chief Secretary and Secretary, Publicity Department.	
The Hon'ble K. Sir Nazimuddin among ex-detenus.	
The Hon'ble the Home Minister watching the pottery making.	
The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy and the Hon'ble Sir B. P. Singh Roy on tour.	
The Hon'ble Mr. Tamizuddin Khan at Faridpur	80
The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq broadcasting from the screen.	
The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq laying the foundation stone of the Dacca Agricultural Institute.	
The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq laying the foundation stone of a new college.	
The Hon'ble Chief Minister opening an exhibition.	
The Hon'ble Chief Minister with a visitor : The Hon'ble Chief Minister and the Government Chief Whips	128
The Industrial Museum :	
The Hon'ble Mr. N. R. Sarker explaining its object.	
The Museum and its different sections.	
The Hon'ble Nawab K. Habibullah Bahadur welcoming guests at the opening function	160
Rally of District Physical Organisers.	
A glimpse into their work in the villages.	
The Lady Brabourne College for Girls (temporary premises).	
His Excellency Sir John Woodhead laying the foundation stone of the permanent buildings	208

Following page.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy explaining at a mass meeting his Rural Reconstruction Scheme.

The Man Behind the Plough—Whose welfare is the Bengal Ministry's chief concern.

A typical scene when Hon'ble Ministers are on tour.

Government's aboriginal welfare work 256

Hon'ble Speaker.

Hon'ble President.

The Hon'ble Mr. M. B. Mullick passing under a 'triumphal arch' in Midnapore.

Opening of a *khal* by voluntary labour.

Two irrigation works.

The masses behind the Ministry :

A Cox's Bazar scene

A Faridpur scene

A Mymensingh scene

A picturesque scene from Sandwip 288

THE PROGRAMME.

The following programme was laid down by the Ministry on the eve of their assumption of office:—

(1) In view of the fact that the land revenue system, known as Permanent Settlement and the land laws of Bengal have arrested the economic growth and development of the province and have adversely affected the national outlook of the people, a Committee of Enquiry be immediately appointed to devise ways and means to get them replaced by a more equitable system and laws suitable to the needs and requirements of the people.

(2) Amendment of the Bengal Tenancy Act with a view (*a*) to reducing rent by fixing a maximum for each class of land; (*b*) to repeal the provision relating to enhancement of rent in the interests of the tiller of the soil; (*c*) to recognise right of mutation of names and division of holdings without fees; (*d*) to annul the landlord's rights of pre-emption; (*e*) to abolish *nazar salami;* (*f*) to provide criminal remedy for all exactions, *e.g., abwabs, etc.;* (*g*) to take such other steps as may be necessary for the relief of the peasant.

(3) Amendment of the Public Demands Recovery Act specially to mitigate the rigours of the certificate procedure.

(4) To devise ways and means of freeing the cultivators from the crushing burden of indebtedness.

(5) Amendment of the Co-operative Societies Act so as to make it really conducive to the economic advancement of the people.

(6) Immediate introduction of free compulsory primary education without taxation of the poor who are unable to bear the burden.

(7) Reduction in the cost of administration.

(8) To control the price of jute through (*a*) limitation of production; (*b*) marketing boards; (*c*) other suitable measures;

(9) Resuscitation of dead and dying rivers and khals through local manual labour.

(10) To undertake measures of public health and rural sanitation.

(11) Repeal of tobacco tax and taxes on the necessities of life.

(12) Repeal of repressive laws and release of political prisoners and detenus, consistent with public safety.

(13) To devise ways and means for solving the unemployment problem.

(14) Amendment of the Calcutta University Act and the establishment of a Board of Secondary Education in Bengal.

(15) Amendment of the Calcutta Municipal Act."

Two Years of Provincial Autonomy in Bengal.

TO THE RESCUE OF THE MASSES.

The first and foremost concern of the Ministry ever since they assumed office has been the improvement of the lot of the tenants and the agriculturists of the Province who form an overwhelming majority of its population. During the past two years they have adopted various legislative and executive measures directed towards that end.

The Tenancy Act has been amended conferring extensive boons on the raiyats in various shapes, a Famine Insurance Fund has been instituted, the increase of rent has been prevented, illegal exactions have been checked, the certificate procedure in privately owned estates has been abolished and even in Court of Wards estates it has been suspended, grievances of *khas* tenants have been investigated, steps have been taken towards the reduction of rent considerable rent remissions have been granted and a Commission has been appointed to investigate the entire land system of the Province. Below are set forth the more important of these measures in detail:—

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES.

Amendment of Tenancy Act.

The first step towards this was taken by introducing a Bill to amend the Bengal Tenancy Act. The Bill was passed by both Houses of Legislature and came into force with effect from August 18, 1938, on being assented to by His Excellency the Governor.

The principal changes effected by the Amending Act are the following:—

(1) Landlord's transfer fees and their right to pre-emption have been abolished. Right of pre-emption has been given to co-sharer tenants of occupancy holdings. [Sections 26D, 26E and 26F have been repealed and a new section 26F has been substituted for the old section 26(26)F.] Right of appeal has been given from an order made in pre-emption proceeding under new section 26F.

(2) All the provisions of the Act relating to enhancement of rent have been suspended for a period of 10 years with effect from the 27th of August 1937.

(3) Tenants have been given the right to get immediate possession of diluviated lands of tenures or holdings on their re-appearance within 20 years of the date of diluvion and in such a case the landlords would not get more than 4 years' rent. Diluvion has been expressly made a ground for abatement of rent.

(4) Tenure-holders have been given the right to surrender their tenures. All classes of under-raiyats have been given the right to surrender their holdings.

(5) The right of private landlords to use the certificate procedure for realising their rents has been abolished.

(6) Under-raiyats with right occupancy have now the same right of transfer as occupancy-raiyats.

(7) Under-raiyati leases can now be created for an unlimited period.

(8) The provisions of Chapter VII applicable to under-raiyats have been given retrospective operation.

(9) All usufructuary mortgages on occupancy holdings subsisting on or after the 1st August 1937, entered into before the commencement of the Amending Act of 1928, shall be deemed to have taken effect as complete usufructuary mortgages for a period not exceeding 15 years and such mortgages shall be extinguished on the expiry of the said period. Greater facilities have been given to occupancy-raiyats to regain possession, under certain conditions, of mortgaged holdings.

(10) Increased facilities for the subdivision of tenures or holdings have been given. Division of tenancy or distribution of rent may be made now up to Rs. 2 in the case of tenures or Re. 1 in the case of holdings. An order under section 88 is now appealable.

(11) Rate of interest on arrears of rent has been reduced from 12½ per cent. to 6¼ per cent. per annum. Section 67 now applies also to interest or arrears of *patni* rent.

(12) Realisation of *abwab* by the landlord or his agent has been made punishable with fine. An appeal lies to the District Judge against an order imposing a fine and the order of the District Judge on such appeal shall be final.

(13) Landlords have been given the right to institute suits for portions of arrears of rent instead of for the whole amount. This will save many tenants from the burden of decrees for four years' rent at a time. Landlords cannot now bring another rent suit until after nine months from the date of the institution of the previous suit.

(14) The definition of "holding" has been given retrospective effect and now applies also to holdings created before the Amending Act IV of 1928.

(15) Service of special summons shall now ordinarily be effected, by registered post with acknowledgment due.

(16) Rent decree cannot be executed until the expiry of 60 days from the date of the decree.

(17) No interest is to be paid from the date of the decree if the decretal amount be paid in full within 60 days from the date of the decree.

(18) Provision for deposit of half the decretal amount in the case of applications setting aside *ex parte* rent decree under sub-clause (*ii*) of clause (*k*) has been omitted.

Reduction of rate of damage in Rent Suits.

As a result of reduction of the rate of interest on arrears of rent from 12½ per cent. to 6¼ per cent. a Bill was introduced to reduce the rate of damage to be awarded by Court in a rent suit from 25 per cent. to 12½ per cent. The Bill as passed by both Houses of Legislature has since become law on being assented to by His Excellency the Governor.

Improving Tanks.

The distress in Murshidabad and other districts in 1935-36 had brought the question of improvement of tanks which are the principal sources of irrigation in those places to the forefront. These tanks have become shallow through gradual silting and failure on the part of their owners to re-excavate them. On account of deficient rainfall in 1934 and 1935 a large majority of them dried up completely with the result that extensive areas were left uncultivated. Acute distress followed and public resources had to be drawn up to keep men and cattle alive. In order to mitigate the effect of drought in future, the Ministry considered it necessary to make special provision for the re-excavation and proper maintenance of old irrigation tanks and bunds. With this aim in view the Bengal Tanks Improvement Bill has been introduced, which provides first of all for the issue of a notice on the owners of silted up tanks and bunds, asking them to execute the necessary repairs. If the owners do not comply with the notice, the Collector may then empower a private person, a local authority or a co-operative society to carry out the repairs and recover the cost in easy instalments from the persons benefited. The Bill has been passed by both Houses of the Legislature.

Insurance against famine.

A Bill to provide for the establishment and maintenance of a fund called the Bengal Famine Insurance Fund for expenditure upon relief of, and insurance against, famine and distress caused by serious drought, flood, earthquake and other natural calamities was passed by both the

Houses with slight modifications and has become law. As a result, the Provincial Government have contributed Rs. 10,00,000 for the initiation of the fund in 1938-39 which will be built up and maintained at Rs. 12,00,000 by annual contributions of Rs. 2,00,000.

Preventing increase of rent.

In the last session of the Legislative Assembly a Bill was introduced further to amend section 52 of the Bengal Tenancy Act, 1885, under which the rent of a tenure or holding can only be increased if it can be proved that there has been an actual increase of area. The object of the proposed legislation is to prevent any increase of rent (which it is possible to effect fraudulently under the existing provisions of section 52 *ibid*) where there has been no actual increase of rent of the tenure or holding. The Bill was passed by both Houses of Legislature and has since been assented to by His Excellency the Governor.

EXECUTIVE MEASURES.

Illegal exactions checked.

Having regard to the fact that in some districts illegal *abwabs* are still being exacted from tenants with or without the approval of the landlords themselves, all District Officers have been asked to explain to the landlords the desirability of discontinuing the realisation of *abwabs* and taking effective action to prevent their agents from doing so with a view to promotion of more cordial relation between landlords and tenants.

Certificate procedure in Court of Wards estates suspended.

Orders have issued to suspend, for a period of two years with effect from the 1st of Baisakh 1345 B.S., the use of certificate procedure in fresh cases for recovery of rent from the tenants in Government and Court of Wards' estates. In respect of cases filed prior to that date for recovery of arrear rent from tenants in Government and Court of Wards' estates orders have issued to all District Officers concerned to administer certificate procedure with the utmost moderation.

Grievances of khas tenants investigated.

A special officer was appointed to enquire into the grievances of tenants in Government estates and to suggest methods by which the administration of khas mahals can be improved. The officer has since submitted his report which is now under the consideration of the Board of Revenue.

Towards reduction of rent.

The average incidence of rent paid by all grades of tenants in the province works out at Rs. 5-14 nearly per acre of cultivated land. A committee consisting of both officials and non-officials has been appointed to enquire into the existing rates of rent in the Province with a view to devise ways and means for the proper reduction of rent where considered necessary.

The Ministry having received numerous representations that the realisation of the enhanced rents which took effect from the 1st April 1937 in Jalamutha, Majnamutha and other temporarily settled private estates in khas management in Contai subdivision of Midnapore district would result in great hardship to the tenantry and being of opinion that at the present price levels the enhanced rents should not be collected, directed the suspension of the enhancements amounting to Rs. 84,576. Similar enhancement in temporarily-settled private estate No. 2816 in that district has also been suspended.

Operations under section 112 of the Bengal Tenancy Act in the partially-excluded areas of Mymensingh district have been undertaken with a view to adjusting rents paid by the aboriginal tenants.

Revenue Commission.

A Commission has been appointed to examine the existing land revenue system of Bengal with the following personnel:—

Chairman.

Sir Francis Floud, K.C.B., K.C.M.G.

Members.

Sir Bijay Chand Mahtab, G.C.I.E., K.C.S.I., I.M.O., Maharajadhiraja Bahadur of Burdwan.

Mr. M. O. Carter, M.C., I.C.S.

Khan Bahadur Saiyed Muazzamuddin Hossain, M.L.C.

Khan Bahadur Maulvi Hashem Ali Khan, M.L.A.

Khan Bahadur M. A. Momin, C.I.E.

Dr. Radha Kumud Mookherjee, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D., M.L.C.

Mr. Brojendra Kishore Roy Choudhury.

Sir F. A. Sachse, Kt., C.S.I., C.I.E.

Secretary.

Mr. M. O. Carter, M.C., I.C.S.

The following are the terms of reference to the Commission:—

Generally, to examine the existing land revenue system of Bengal in its various aspects, with special reference to the Permanent Settlement; to estimate the effect of the system on the economic and social

structure of Bengal; and its influence on the revenues and administrative machinery of the Provincial Government; to appraise the advantages and disadvantages of the existing system and to advise what modifications, if any, can and should be made, and in what manner, and in what stages they should be effected. In particular, to examine the following questions:—

(1) To what extent are the underlying principles of the Permanent Settlement of value to the social and economic structure of Bengal? Have those principles been defeated by the commercialization of cultivating rights in land and, if so, to what extent would it be possible and expedient to reassert them by revising the process of commercialization?

(2) Comparing permanently-settled estates with temporarily-settled estates and Government estates, and comparing also the general level of rents in other Provinces and the economic condition of cultivators in Bengal with their condition in other Provinces, what is the case for adjusting the general level of rents of agricultural land in Bengal in one direction or another?

(3) How has the existing machinery for fixing fair and equitable rents in Government and temporarily-settled estates in Bengal worked and how can it be improved? Are there adequate grounds for setting up an organisation for fixing fair rents for cultivators throughout the Province at regular intervals? On what principles should the fixing of fair rents proceed? Is a general fixing of fair rents possible without a radical alteration of the existing land revenue system?

(4) Would it be financialy and economically sound to fix the rents of cultivators in perpetuity?

(5) Is it practicable and advisable for Government to acquire all the superior interests in agricultural land so as to bring the actual cultivators into the position of tenants holding directly under Government? If so, what would be the probable cost of such an operation, how long would it be likely to take, and what would be its probable consequences on the economic, financial, administrative, and social structure of the Province? Would it be practicable to maintain the actual cultivators in the position of direct tenants of Government and, if so, by what method and what would be the implications of such a proposal?

(6) How far has subinfeudation among landlords and raiyats affected their economic position as holders of land and to what extent can such position be improved by restrictions on subinfeudation?

(7) To what extent can the credit value of holdings be raised and the borrowing facilities of cultivators improved by reducing the fragmentation of proprietary interest in holdings and by the maintenance of reliable records of title?

(8) Does the existing procedure in Civil and Revenue Courts for realisation of rents operate efficiently and without undue hardship to tenants? What are the defects of the existing procedure, and what measures should be taken to remedy those defects?

State control of fisheries.

An experienced revenue officer was appointed to enquire into the condition of fisheries in Bengal with a view to explore the possibility of their State control and if on the analogy of Bengal Tenancy Act, occupancy rights therein could be conferred on fishermen. The officer has since submitted his report which is now under the consideration of Government.

Three special officers have been appointed to enquire into the question whether it is advisable to start operations under section 112 of the Bengal Tenancy Act in selected localities of the province.

A Committee has been appointed to enquire into the question of rights of tenants in the non-agricultural lands in the province with a view to legislation for their protection from eviction at the will of their lessor.

Rent remissions.

In view of damage done to crops by cyclone in Noakhali and Bakarganj and by flood in Khulna, orders were issued to the Collectors of those districts to carry out, as quickly as possible, a survey of the loss of crops for the purpose of assessment of remission of rent of the khasmahal tenants and to pass orders for remission, as promptly as possible, in anticipation of formal sanction. Accordingly remissions of rent and cesses were allowed to the extent of Rs. 2,28,451.

Special officers for aboriginals.

With a view to ameliorate the condition of the aboriginal tenants Special Officers have been appointed in the districts of Malda, Bankura

and Midnapore and in the partially excluded areas of the Mymensingh district. Further it is proposed to appoint a Special Officer for the purpose in the district of Dinajpur. Details of the work done for the uplift of these aboriginals will be found in Appendix C.

The floods of 1938.

Owing to the advent of an early monsoon in 1938 with unusual severity there was an abnormal rise in the water-level of the principal rivers of the province with the result that as many as 15 districts were in the grip of flood or its after effects and much damage was caused to crops.

To meet the situation Government took all possible steps to alleviate the distress of the people. Strong Relief Committees were formed representing all shades of opinion including the Congress in all the affected districts. Relief operations were carried on with the utmost care and anxiety, in consultation with non-official bodies, such as, District Boards and charitable organisations. Extra officers were drafted to the affected areas and Government placed all available resources at the disposal of Divisional Commissioners in order that the work of organising relief measures might be carried out with the greatest possible despatch.

Unprecedented sums sanctioned for loans and relief.

During the year 1938-39 agricultural loans, gratuitous relief, etc., were given on a liberal scale to relieve distress caused by the recent floods and other natural causes. The grants sanctioned were as follows:—

	Rs.
For agricultural loans	56,48,619
For land improvement loans ...	13,747
For gratuitous relief	3,83,015
For test relief work	4,30,208

Since April 1, 1939, up to the time of writing this report, the following further sums have been sanctioned:—

	Rs.
For agricultural loans	28,37,840
For land improvement loans ...	16,360
For gratuitous relief	79,200
For test relief work	6,77,000

It may be mentioned that such a huge amount had not been sanctioned for distribution as agricultural loan in any year within living memory.

Land improvement loans amounting to Rs. 41,385-10-10 advanced between 1919 to 1920 and 1927-28 and agricultural loans amounting to Rs. 84,694-9-3 distributed between 1927-28 and 1931-32 in the district of Bakarganj were remitted in the year 1937-38 as it was found that the tenants who were already overburdened with debts to co-operative banks and mahajans, could not be expected to repay those loans in the near future.

Policy of loan realisation liberalised.

The whole policy regarding realisation of agricultural loans was examined and instructions previously issued to District Officers were revised in order to follow a more liberal policy in future.

It was directed that collections should ordinarily commence immediately after the main crop has been harvested and marketed. Where the main crop is *aman* paddy, collections should start early in January and cease by the middle of March. Where jute is an important crop, collections may appropriately be made in October-November.

When the main crop is a definite failure, instructions have been issued to suspend the whole instalment under rule 15 of the rules under the Agriculturists Loans Act.

But when the main crop is not a failure but is distinctly poor, collection should proceed, but with liberal remission of interest, and without the use of certificate procedure.

Where, however, the main crop is good, and the majority of the debtors are believed to be in a position to repay the full instalment, collection should be vigorously pursued, but undue pressure on debtors should be avoided and certificates should be issued very sparingly and only in cases where there is contumacious refusal to pay after a good crop has been harvested.

ECONOMIC REHABILITATION OF AGRICULTURISTS.

The Ministry realised that the uplift of the tenantry and the agriculturists could not be achieved without their economic rehabilitation. They were pledged to the people by the terms of the programme which they had set before them on the eve of assumption of office, "to devise ways and means of freeing the cultivators from the crushing burden of indebtedness". No time was, therefore, lost in setting about to implement to the full that solemn undertaking.

A start had been given in this respect by the previous Government who had passed the Bengal Agricultural Debtors Act through the old Legislature on the initiative and efforts of a Minister of the present Ministry who had been a member of the previous Government. Some Boards were established experimentally in 16 districts of Bengal in the autumn of 1936 but they only began functioning in earnest in February 1937 after the excitement of the general election was over.

Debt legislation at work.

The year 1938 marked a further progress in the establishment of Boards. In 1937, there were 1,752 Boards at work in 20 districts of Bengal. By the end of 1938 the number had been nearly doubled by the establishment of 3,228 ordinary Boards and 116 Special Boards in all the 25 plain districts of Bengal. The same progress was being maintained in the year 1939 also and in course of 3 months a few more Boards were added, their numbers coming up to 3,291 Ordinary and 125 Special. These Special Boards have some new features. Their jurisdiction extends over the whole of a subdivision, so that even where an Ordinary Board has not been established in a union, the debtors residing there may file an application before the Special Board. Another set of Special Boards has been established dealing with cases of debtors who are also applicants for a loan to Land Mortgage Banks. The object is to save duplication of work in the scrutiny of the debts, property and surplus income of a debtor-applicant before a Land Mortgage Bank and a Debt Settlement Board. This step should also enable the debts of these debtors to be settled on very favourable terms by cash payments from loans obtained from the Land Mortgage Banks. Up to the end of March 1939, ten Central Bank Special Boards have been established experimentally to deal with cases of debtors to Co-operative Societies. The immediate relief given to debtors who are on the point of being sold up in execution proceedings is evident from the fact that 71,913 suits or proceedings before Civil and Revenue Courts had been stayed up to the end of June 1938.

In order to enable Boards to take penal action against creditors who fail to submit their statement of claims within the prescribed time all Boards have been vested with powers under section 13 (2) of the Act, by virtue of which they may declare the amount of debt due to be as stated by the debtor in his application. That this power has not been abused is borne out by the fact that although up to 30th June 1938, there were 1,13,624 cases of failure to submit timely statements of claims, only in 624 cases the penal order had been passed and that the number of appeals filed against such order is only 162 of which only 90 have been allowed. Further, to enable an individual debtor to file an application for settlement when his co-sharers wilfully or out of

apathy fail to join, all Boards have been vested with powers under section 9 (*2*) and have thus been enabled to settle the amount payable by an individual debtor of the joint debt. During 1938, 109 Ordinary Boards were empowered under section 19 (*1*) (*b*) and no complaint was received that the power was being misused.

Huge amounts scaled down or extinguished.

In the year 1938, 5,85,011 applications were filed and 1,55,606 cases disposed of as against 51,864 of the previous year. Of the cases disposed of, awards were made in 98,424 cases for payment of Rs. 1,47,51,795 as against the creditors' claims of Rs. 3,04,48,415 showing a reduction of more than 52 per cent. of the amount of claim. Even before the Bengal Tenancy Amendment Act came into force, the Boards were able to persuade creditors amicably to restore to debtors lands held under usufructuary mortgage in 13,928 cases up to the end of June 1938. The total number of cases filed up to the end of 1938 was 1,012,463 out of which cases involving claim of Rs. 3,73,01,448 were settled at Rs. 1,82,01,939. The work of Thakurakona Debt Settlement Board in Netrokona subdivision requires special mention, as the Board finished its labours by the close of the year having disposed of all cases filed before it. 478 cases were disposed of by this Board in which the claims were Rs. 2,69,197 which were settled at Rs. 86,415; and no other cases remained pending.

Till the date of writing this report it is estimated that debts up to about five crores of rupees have been scaled down all over Bengal and during the next few months another twenty-six crores of debts are expected to be tackled.

Glaring instances of the tyranny of the usurious system of rural credit have come to light as a result of the operation of these Boards, but also it is gratifying to record that instances of generosity shown by creditors in accepting amicable settlements are not few. Debts have either been extinguished on very nominal cash payment or scaled down to such proportions that the debtors will have no difficulty whatsoever in paying them from their surplus income, which all Boards have been instructed to calculate very carefully. The Boards have prevented sales of land of actual cultivators and have thereby saved them from being brought to the position of landless labourers or rather economic serfs—a tendency which Government consider it their duty to check. On the other hand, owing to the reduction of the heavy burden of previous indebtedness to an amount which the debtors can pay, the instalments settled by the Board are generally being realised to the relief of the creditors whose capital was frozen.

Further improvements planned.

Experience gained in the working of the Boards has shown that certain amendments of the Act are necessary in order to secure a more rapid disposal of cases, to preclude non-agriculturists from being treated as debtors under the Act and to empower Boards to deal with cases involving usufructuary mortgages. An amending Bill has been drafted and introduced in the Legislative Assembly which referred it to a Select Committee. The report of the Committee has been published and the Bill will come up for consideration in the next session of the Assembly. The Bill also makes it clear that for purposes of notices to civil courts for stay of proceedings, execution proceedings are to be deemed pending till the sale is confirmed. As far as has been possible within the frame work of the existing Act, Rules were amended during the year so as to encourage more rapid disposal of cases by providing for vice-chairmen to be appointed for Special Boards, by allowing simultaneous issue of notices under sections 12 and 13, and by allowing any one member of a Board to transact purely routine business.

It is gratifying to note that in spite of the complexities of the Act, which are inevitable in a province where the land system is so complicated, the Boards are working satisfactorily, dealing out justice to the people in a manner which they appreciate. It is impossible to estimate the money value of the work of more than 16,000 gentlemen who have ungrudgingly placed their services for this arduous task and the grateful thanks of Government are due to them.

REORIENTATION OF THE AGRICULTURAL POLICY.

Closely allied to all the measures recounted in the foregoing pages were other measures taken by the Ministry towards a complete reorientation of their agricultural policy. Since their assumption of office they have formulated a comprehensive policy and programme for the Agriculture Department which is expected, in time, completely to revitalize the agricultural system of the province, making agriculture once more a paying proposition and bringing back prosperity and cheer to the homes of Bengal's teeming millions. According to that policy the department will devote special attention to the following matters:—

(*a*) improvement of the yield and quality of crops at present grown by the agriculturists;

(*b*) introduction of new and more remunerative crops and crops which give more valuable food return to the grower; and

(*c*) establishment of necessary organisation to secure better prices to the agriculturists so as to sustain the improvement in (*a*) and (*b*).

Expansion of Departmental Activity.

The programme provides also for the development and expansion of the departmental activities under the following broad heads:—

(1) Agricultural education.

(2) Animal husbandry.

(3) Demonstration.

(4) Publicity and propaganda.

(5) Marketing.

(6) Grant-in-aid.

(7) Agricultural research.

(8) Subsidiary employment.

The main lines of development contemplated and the progress so far made in each of the above heads are explained below:—

Agricultural Education.

This comes under two principal heads—

(*a*) *Improvement of, and providing facilities for, secondary agricultural education.*—The only secondary school now in existence is the Dacca Agricultural School which is the principal source of supply of staff of the demonstrator class. It is proposed to improve the standard of teaching given in the school and to have more schools of this type and with that end in view arrangements are being made for the replacement of the two teachers of Subordinate Agricultural Service, Class II, in the Dacca Agricultural School by men of the Subordinate Agricultural Service, Class I, and to convert the Bhutnath Agricultural School at Chinsura into a Government Secondary School of the standard of the Dacca School.

(*b*) *Facilities for higher agricultural training in Bengal.*—The need for such training in Bengal is very acute. Apart from the question of imparting higher agricultural training for the purpose of improvement of agriculture in the province generally, such training is necessary for supply of men with the necessary qualifications and training for the higher posts of the department as the importation of men of other provinces having no experience of Bengal crops and conditions has proved very unsatisfactory. The Basanta Kumar Agricultural Institute, Rajshahi, established during 1936-37 and the Daulatpur Agricultural Institute started after the present Government assumed office are the only existing institutions above the secondary school standard and they afford only a partial solution to the problem. It has therefore been decided to establish an Agricultural Institute of considerably higher standard capable of turning out men suitable for

the posts under the two Provincial Agricultural Services and the Subordinate Agricultural Service, Class I. The scheme has made considerable progress and the building portion of the Diary Section of the Institute was completed during 1938-39 and the Diary and Animal Husbandry portion of the Institute has already started functioning. Provision has been made in the budget for 1939-40 for the appointment of a Diary Chemist for evolving better methods for the preparation of milk by-products, and also for giving instructions to students in Diary Chemistry. It is expected that the construction of buildings for the Institute proper will be completed by the end of 1939-40 so as to enable the Institute to be started in the early part of the year 1940-41. Pending the opening of the Dacca Agricultural Institute a scheme for imparting training to agricultural graduates with a view to making them qualified for the Subordinate Agricultural Service, Class I, has been given effect to. Another scheme for grant of stipends to students for prosecuting post-graduate studies at the Imperial Agricultural Institute at New Delhi has been approved. Provision has also been made in the budget for 1939-40 for training of 3 students in Agriculture in the United Kingdom by awarding scholarships.

Improvement of Live-Stock.

It is proposed to create a separate Animal Husbandry Branch which will consist of officers with veterinary as well as agricultural training under the administrative control of the Live-Stock Expert, who in turn will work under the guidance of a Departmental Board of Animal Husbandry with the Hon'ble Minister as Chairman and the Director of Agriculture and the Veterinary Adviser, among others, as members. The main proposals in connection with the organisation of the new Animal Husbandry Branch are :—

(*1*) *To consolidate and expand the work now being done or shortly to be taken up under schemes financed wholly or in part out of the Government of India's rural uplift grants.*—As the Government of India's first grant has practically been expended and as the schemes to be financed out of the second grant will cover a period of three years only it is in contemplation to continue the work done under all these schemes and to make permanent the temporary posts created under them as trained staff is available, so that by the cold weather of 1940 there will be a permanent cadre for animal husbandry work. Posts of two live-stock officers were made permanent in 1937-38 and those of 10 assistant live-stock officers have been made permanent in 1938-39. Provision has also been made in the budget for 1939-40 for making permanent five more live-stock officers and for the purchase of 300

more Hariana bulls to keep up the quality of stock now being produced in the districts where stud bulls are at service, and to replace deaths among the imported bulls. It is proposed ultimately to have one live-stock officer and two assistant live-stock officers for every district.

(2) *To augment the supervising staff.*—In order to cope with the increased activities effectively as schemes multiply and the area covered increases it is proposed to appoint one Assistant Live-Stock Expert to assist the Live-Stock Expert. The post of the Assistant Live-Stock Expert has already been sanctioned and arrangements are being made to recruit a candidate for the post.

(3) *To appoint 78 stockmen gradually.*—Their pay will be Rs. 15—30 p. m. who will look after the improved stock and their progeny, assist in the castration of undesirable bulls, report cattle diseases in the area, etc. Twenty stockmen have been appointed during the year 1938-39 and provision for 20 more has been made in the budget for 1939-40.

Bringing improved methods home to agriculturists.

Demonstration.—Under this head the following main schemes are included:—

(1) *Increase in the number of demonstrators.*—It is the aim of the Ministry ultimately to have one demonstrator for every thana and with that end in view it is proposed to increase the number of demonstrators at the rate of at least 10 per annum as trained men are available for the purpose from year to year. Accordingly ten additional demonstrators were appointed in 1938-39 and provision has been made for 10 more in the budget for 1939-40.

(2) *Provision of a demonstration farm for each district.*—It is proposed gradually to establish demonstration farms in each of the five districts that are still without them, viz., Midnapore, Chittagong, Noakhali, 24-Parganas and Jessore. Construction of buildings for a demonstration farm at Midnapore was taken up during the year 1938-39 and the budget for 1939-40 includes provision for the completion of the scheme, as well as for the land and building portions of the scheme for the establishment of a demonstration farm at Chittagong.

(3) *Increase in the number of District Agricultural Officers.*—It is proposed to create three additional posts of District Agricultural Officers for Howrah, Midnapore and Mymensingh for proper supervision of farm and demonstration work. The appointment of a District Agricultural Officer at Howrah has been made. Provision has also been made in the budget for 1939-40 for the appointment of a District Agricultural Officer at Bogra.

24946
18 SEP 1968
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL. LIBRARY. RAJA RAMMOHANPUR.

(4) *Demonstration in cultivators' fields.*—For effective demonstration in the cultivators' fields it has been decided to increase the normal demonstration grant of Rs. 9,000 by Rs. 18,000 per annum and necessary provision has been made for this in the budget for 1939-40. Provision was also made in the budget for the year 1938-39 for subsidizing cultivators for cultivation on improved methods on their lands. The provision has been repeated in the budget for 1939-40. A comprehensive scheme of demonstration has been approved and is being worked up to.

(5) *Establishment of union board farms.*—The union board farms which had been started with the Government of India's first grant for rural uplift but were abolished with the expiry of that grant did good work. Ninety-six union board farms were accordingly established out of provincial revenues in 1938-39 and provision has been made for 22 more such farms in the budget for 1939-40. It is proposed to maintain them at Government expense for three years after which it is expected that they will be self-supporting. They will serve as intermediate centres for seed supply and demonstration.

Publicity and propaganda.

A Propaganda Officer for the Agriculture Department was appointed during 1938-39 for the conduct of well-organised propaganda and publicity work in order to effect improvement of the contact between the department and the actual cultivators and for co-ordination of the propaganda now being done individually by the District Agricultural Officers and the demonstration staff. The revival of the "Bengal Agricultural Journal" has been taken in hand.

Marketing: Bill introduced.

The importance of the marketing of agricultural produce can hardly be exaggerated. The marketing staff appointed under the grant of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research have been carrying on an extensive survey and have already collected valuable information about several important agricultural commodities. They have also been carrying on grading of hides, eggs and oranges. But the survey will take a pretty long time to be completed and Government were anxious to start the work of grading and development with the information already collected as a result of the survey while further survey on other agricultural products is carried on. Accordingly three grading stations for eggs were established on a provincial basis during 1938-39 in order to supplement the work that is being done by the staff appointed under the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research Scheme. An additional Assistant Marketing Officer has also been

appointed this year. There was a provision of Rs. 25,000 in the budget for 1938-39 for the establishment of regulated markets on a voluntary basis pending necessary legislation for the purpose. All preliminary arrangements for the establishment of one such market had been made and the scheme was ready for sanction but it was abandoned because on further consideration Government decided that it would be better to wait until suitable legislation had been framed to ensure better prospects of success. Accordingly an Agricultural Produce Markets Bill has been prepared and introduced in the Legislative Assembly which has circulated it for eliciting public opinion. A comprehensive scheme of marketing is also under consideration and it is expected to give effect to it on a provincial basis in the year 1940-41. Meanwhile as the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research Scheme ends in December 1939, it is proposed to continue the staff appointed under the scheme on a provincial basis till the comprehensive schemes comes on the field and for this necessary provision has been made in the budget for 1939-40. It is under contemplation to constitute a separate Department of Marketing ultimately.

Financial aid to cultivators.

It is proposed to render financial assistance to the cultivators in the following forms:—

(*a*) Grant of subsidy to selected cultivators for experiments on new crops.

(*b*) Subsidising seed stores in cases where such stores are not organised by the Agricultural Department.

(*c*) Award of prizes to the best exhibits in agricultural and cattle exhibitions.

The provision made in the budget for 1938-39 for the above items has been utilised and necessary provision for the same including a provision of Rs. 9,998 for subsidies to cultivators for demonstration of flax has been included in the budget for 1939-40. Other forms of financial assistance to the cultivators are under consideration.

Agricultural Research and Experiment.

It was realised that the laboratory and the equipment for research needs improvement and the research staff needs augmentation. Accordingly the construction of an additional laboratory building at Dacca at an estimated cost of Rs. 20,000 was taken up and has been completed. Arrangements are being made to put up additional equipment therein during the present year.

Additional research staff has been appointed on the Botanical side this year for proper investigation of a number of important minor crops, principally lentils, fodder, cotton, oil seeds, mustards and groundnuts, and provision has been made in the budget for 1939-40 for the following new schemes of experiment and research:—

(1) Provision of extra staff under the Economic Botanist for the investigation of medium and deep water paddies. The successful evolution of these types is of enormous economic value to the province.

(2) Extra staff for investigation of plant diseases. This subject is one of great practical and economic importance.

(3) Appointment of a Physical Assistant under the Agricultural Chemist to assist in the study of such phenomenon as pan formation and other physical phenomena of great practical importance.

(4) Establishment of a statistical section to improve the department's statistical records and systematise the results of various experiments and researches.

(5) Scheme for flax demonstration.

(6) Scheme for the multiplication of mustard seed.

(7) Scheme for the continuance during the year 1939-40 of the existing horticultural research scheme, hitherto financed out of the grant of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research, the local Government bearing half of the cost thereof. A comprehensive scheme for the establishment of a horticultural research station on a much larger scale and entirely on a provincial basis is now under examination and it is expected to introduce it during the year 1940-41.

Long Staple Cotton.

A five years' scheme of experiment in the cultivation of long staple cotton on a fairly large area was started this year in collaboration with the Bengal Mill-Owners' Association who are bearing a large part of the expenditure. Necessary provision has been made for continuance of the scheme in the budget for 1939-40.

Subsidiary employment.

The question of providing subsidiary employment to cultivators so as to reduce the period of their enforced idleness to the minimum and to improve their financial condition is engaging the serious attention of the Department. The possibilities of poultry, goat-breeding and

fruit farming have already been under investigation and provision has been included in the budget for 1939-40 for a scheme for poultry farming. A scheme for goat-breeding is now under consideration and it is expected to introduce it during the year 1940-41. When the comprehensive scheme of horticulture is given effect to it will be possible to provide a subsidiary occupation of fruit-growing to the cultivators. The Dairy Farm at Dacca which has been recently opened will afford facilities to subsidiary industries like the production of dairy produce such as ghee, dahi, curds, etc., and the Director of Agriculture, Bengal, has a scheme in hand for giving demonstration of such industries in the mofussil.

The problem of jute and paddy.

The Ministry have set themselves seriously to the task of securing a fair price to the cultivators for the two principal crops: jute and paddy.

Propaganda for voluntary restriction of the jute crop so as to ensure a reasonable price for jute by keeping the supply within the demand is being carried on since 1934. This, together with other causes, has resulted in an increase of the price of jute. As a preliminary to a more comprehensive scheme for stabilising the price of jute, experiments in the method of random sampling for estimating the area and yield of jute grown in Bengal together with experiments to evolve an economical method of making a complete census are being carried on in collaboration with the Indian Central Jute Committee and preliminary survey work has been started in the latter part of the year 1938-39. The result of this work is expected to facilitate the preparation of reasonably accurate jute forecasts which is of great importance to the industry generally as well as to the growers. The work is also expected ultimately to furnish the data without which it is impossible to devise any particable scheme for in the budget for 1939-40 for continuance of the census work.

A provision of Rs. 25,000 was made in the current year's budget for establishment of a regulated jute market on a voluntary basis pending necessary legislation for the compulsory regulation of jute markets but as stated elsewhere the scheme of a voluntary market was abandoned as it was thought that a regulated market on a voluntary basis was not likely to be successful and that legislation was necessary before any reasonable prospect of success could be assured. An Agricultural Produce Markets Bill for the purpose of compulsory regulation has therefore been prepared and introduced in the Assembly.

Two separate *ad hoc* committees have been set up for going into the whole question of jute and paddy production. Their investigations are

now nearly complete and it is expected that their recommendations will be available very shortly. The Ministry will frame their definite policy in regard to jute and paddy after consideration of the recommendations of the two committees.

Further measures to stabilize jute price.

While this report was in the proof stage further important decisions were taken by Government which aimed at the arrest of the sudden fall in the price of jute during the current season and stabilising its price in future. Two communiques issued by Government, one on August 5, 1939, and the other on August 11, 1939, are quoted below in full. At the time of going to press with this report two Ordinances have been promulgated. The first has fixed the minimum price of baled jute in the Calcutta futures markets, at Rs. 36 and the second has fixed the price of hessian in the Calcutta hessian futures markets at Rs. 8-14.

The first communiqué read:—

"The price of jute has fallen so suddenly in the Calcutta market recently that the Government of Bengal think it advisable to acquaint the public in general and the jute-growers in particular with the actual state of affairs. In the opinion of the Government of Bengal there is likelihood of a considerable demand for raw jute in the near future. The price of jute at the end of the last season rose to the highest point which has been reached for several years. This was due to the fact that at that time there was very little of the old crop left. It is apparent that the price of the new crop cannot be the same as the price which the old crop fetched towards the end of the season when there was very little of that crop on the market. But at the same time the demand for jute is so considerable that it is expected that the agriculturists should get a reasonable price for their jute crop this season. Already about one anna of the new crop has been brought in and sold and the agriculturist has obtained a good price for this portion of his crop. Although owing to the recent rains there were hardly any transactions in jute in the villages themselves and there were no purchases or sales, the price of jute in Calcutta has been brought down by certain persons who without having jute in their possession are offering jute in the Calcutta Market at prices lower than that prevailing in the villages and lower than what appears to be justified by the demand for jute on the one hand and the estimated crop on the other. Most of these men are speculators or middlemen and they are depressing the market in the expectation that the price of jute will fall lower and lower, that this fall will frighten the agriculturist into selling his jute at low rates, and that they will then be able to purchase the jute at a low rate from the agriculturist and sell it later on when the price is bound to rise.

The Government of Bengal take this opportunity to advise the agriculturist not to be alarmed at the fall of prices in the Calcutta market. He should refrain at the present moment from bringing the new crop to the market in large quantities, he should not sell his crop until he gets a fair and reasonable price, and he should until he gets that price try and keep away from the market and if circumstances compel him to sell his jute then he should just sell enough jute to meet his unavoidable requirements. If the agriculturists make an effort to hold on to their jute and to release it gradually and not be frightened into selling their jute at whatever prices they can secure there is likelihood of their securing a reasonable price for this season's crop over a considerable period of time. The Government of Bengal are anxiously watching the situation and are going to make every effort to see that the price of jute is not lowered below a reasonable figure which is neither warranted by the demand for jute on the one hand nor by the supply on the other."

The second communiqué read:—

"The Government of Bengal have noted with satisfaction that their advice to the agriculturists regarding the true position of the jute trade has not only resulted in an immediate arrest of the decline in prices, but has also succeeded in raising the price of jute. In order to ensure that the price of jute is not depressed in future by excessive supply, the Government of Bengal have decided to adopt the principle of compulsory regulation of jute acreage, and are taking measures to introduce legislation with a view to restricting it for the next season. In furtherance of this policy, they are in communication with the neighbouring provinces of Assam and Bihar and have every reason to believe that they will obtain their fullest co-operation is an endeavour which is calculated to benefit the agriculturists of the three provinces. In their policy of compulsory regulation, Government will be guided by stocks at the end of the season and by a forecast of the demand. They are examining the question of providing substitute crops for the cultivators, who will be compelled by legislation to restrict the acreage. The Government of Bengal at the same time are taking steps to establish regulated markets, to standardise weights and measures, and are examining the possibility of providing warehousing facilities.

The question of the necessity or desirability of maintaining or regulating future's markets in raw jute and in hessian is also engaging the attention of Government, and they propose appointing at an early date a committee of enquiry to investigate this question and to make recommendations. Meanwhile, Government propose to take steps to ensure that the price of baled jute does not fall below Rs. 36 in the market of the East India Jute Association commonly known as the 'Fatka' market, or in other similar markets which deal in raw jute futures.

Government are examining the necessity of similarly fixing a level for the price of hessian which is quoted in the hessian Fatka markets, and may, if necessary, take measures accordingly. They trust that these measures will stabilise the price of jute and will prevent speculators from depressing the price of jute and compelling it to fall below a reasonable level. Should these measures fail to have their effect and secure a reasonable price to the cultivator for the jute produced by him, Government will take such further steps as they consider desirable.

Government are also exploring the question of fixing a minimum price for jute in the mofussil and making it effective. For this purpose Government propose immediately to take steps to have this question examined including the financial implications of such a measure to the provincial revenue."

The Ministry's concern for the ryot and their determination to help him to get a fair price for his produce will be amply proved by these measures which they have adopted.

VETERINARY POLICY.

As a necessary corollary of the policy of "Better Agriculture" and "Better Cattle" which has prompted Government to take the steps outlined above, they have also reoriented their Veterinary policy. They recognised from the outset that they must not only make available to the cultivator better agricultural live-stock but also provide means for the proper treatment of their cattle and for the prevention of disease as far as practicable. With this end in view they have accepted the policy that responsibility for the prevention and control of contagious cattle diseases rests entirely on Government, whereas the local bodies are responsible for provision of adequate hospitals and dispensaries for the treatment of sick and wounded cattle. Hitherto it has been the practice to make District Boards responsible for the entire veterinary work of the province, Government bearing only one-third of the average cost on account of pay including local allowance and leave and pension contributions on account of both the disease control as well as hospital and dispensary staff. This system has been found highly unsatisfactory as the local authority have not been able to employ a sufficient number of trained men and the dual control over this inadequate staff has greatly hampered efficient work. The wastage among the cattle through preventible contagious diseases has been enormous and the financial loss to the cultivating classes has consequently been very large. Government have, therefore, decided to assume responsibility without further delay for control and treatment of contagious diseases and, for this purpose, to have an adequate staff under their sole control.

Prevention and control of cattle diseases.

Bengal has a cattle population of over 3 crores and should obviously have a very large staff for the prevention and control of contagious cattle diseases. Assuming that one Veterinary Assistant Surgeon can take charge of 10,000 cattle—a figure which is in excess of modern accepted standards—Bengal would require over 3,000 Veterinary Assistant Surgeons which it is impossible to consider now. The Cattle Conference held at Simla in 1937 under the patronage of His Excellency the Viceroy strongly recommended to Provincial Governments to make the most effective use of the existing staff by provincialising all veterinary staff employed in rural areas for control of contagious diseases. It is accordingly proposed to take over immediately the staff of 89 Itinerant and 15 Itinerant *cum* Stationary Veterinary Assistant Surgeons and to place it under the sole control of the Director, Civil Veterinary Department. These 104 men will form the nucleus of the disease control staff of Government.

Help to Local Bodies.

The District Boards and Municipalities have inadequate resources and it is impossible for them to provide adequate hospitals and dispensaries for the sick and wounded cattle of the province without any assistance from Government. At present these local authorities employ 16 Veterinary Assistant Surgeons purely on hospital and dispensary duties. It is proposed to allow these local authorities to have these 16 Veterinary Assistant Surgeons as well as the 15 Veterinary Assistant Surgeons, who will replace the 15 Stationary *cum* Itinerant Veterinary Assistant Surgeons to be taken over under Government control, on the existing contributory basis. It is further proposed ultimately to assist the local authorities to employ veterinary staff to be employed on hospital and dispensary duties on the same contributory basis up to a maximum for the present, at least, of one Stationary Veterinary Surgeon per subdivision. This would mean Government ultimately providing on the existing contributory basis, a further additional staff of 53 (84-31) Veterinary Assistant Surgeons.

Moreover the policy of Government in the past has been to encourage the employment by local bodies of two Veterinary Assistant Surgeons per subdivision, one Itinerant and one Stationary. This has been found on experience to be a very low standard. It is accordingly proposed to accept the minimum standard of 2 Itinerant Veterinary Assistant Surgeons per subdivision for control of cattle diseases. The

number of Itinerant Veterinary Assistant Surgeons required therefore is 168 for all subdivisions except those in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. It will therefore be necessary to appoint ultimately 63 additional Itinerant Veterinary Assistant Surgeons. As a result of the increase in the number of both Itinerant and Stationary Veterinary Assistant Surgeons it will also be necessary to increase the number of (1) Inspectors by 4 for supervising the work of the Veterinary Assistant Surgeons and (2) leave reserve Veterinary Assistant Surgeons by 16. It is proposed gradually to work up to this number as trained staff becomes available.

It is proposed to give effect to the scheme during 1939-40 so far as it relates to the bringing under the complete control of Government the 104 Itinerant Veterinary Assistant Surgeons (89 purely Itinerant and 15 Itinerant *cum* Stationary) referred to above and to the creation of 15 additional posts of Stationary Veterinary Assistant Surgeons on the existing contributory basis. For this an additional provision of Rs. 67,152 has been made in the budget for 1939-40.

For civil veterinary administration purposes the province was hitherto divided into two ranges, Western and Eastern, each in charge of an Assistant Director. This arrangement was not conducive to good administration on account of the charges being unwieldy for purposes of proper supervision. It has accordingly been found necessary to rearrange the charges into three ranges, Northern, Eastern and South-Western, each in charge of an Assistant Director and a new Assistant Director with necessary staff under him has been appointed during the year. The existing 2 Indian Veterinary Service Officers in this province, viz., the Director, Civil Veterinary Department, and the Principal, Bengal Veterinary College, being due to retire in 1940 and 1943, respectively, it was found necessary to recruit an officer with M.R.C.V.S. qualification in the Bengal Higher Veterinary Service as an under-study to the Director. Accordingly a post of Deputy Director of Civil Veterinary Department in the said service has been created and a suitable appointment made to it during the current year.

Steps to train Indians.

It is extremely difficult to fill up the vacancies in the Provincial Services under the Department for want of men with requisite technical qualifications. The policy followed in the past has been to make direct recruitment only in the Subordinate Service out of the veterinary graduates produced by the Bengal Veterinary College and then to promote them gradually to the topmost posts. The result is that barring the two European Officers, one an F.R.C.V.S. and one an M.R.C.V.S., holding the two I.V.S. posts of Director and Principal and the two M.R.C.V.S. officers who have recently been appointed as

Deputy Director and Vice-Principal, all the Provincial Officers in the Department are men with no higher qualifications than the diploma of the Bengal Veterinary College. Apart from the fact that they lack the higher technical qualifications necessary for an adequate discharge of the duties attached to the higher posts in the Department, men promoted from very low positions by gradual promotion are often not suited to the requirements of these higher posts. It has therefore been considered desirable that at least a fair proportion of the provincial posts should be filled by direct recruitment but it is not possible to make direct recruitment unless there are men with suitable higher qualifications for the purpose. Accordingly provision has been made in the budget for 1939-40 for the grant of three scholarships, one of which is reserved for a Muslim, and the other for a Scheduled Caste to enable suitable men to take the M.R.C.V.S. Diploma in the United Kingdom.

College Staff strengthened.

The training imparted in the Bengal Veterinary College in the basic sciences of Chemistry, Physics, Botany, and Zoology which are essential for a proper understanding of the special veterinary subjects taught in the College has hitherto been given by officers without special qualifications for the teaching of those subjects. The existing staff is also inadequate for the intensive tuition of students in small groups which is essential for the standard of training now required. It is therefore proposed to appoint additional Assistant Lecturers for tuition work in certain important veterinary subjects and part-time lecturers specially qualified for the teaching of the basic sciences mentioned above. The budget for 1939-40 includes provision for appointment of one Assistant Lecturer and two part-time Lecturers for the present.

Special scholarships created.

In order to meet the deficiency in the number of students of the Muslim and Scheduled caste communities passing from the Bengal Veterinary College every year provision has been made in the budget for 1939-40 for awarding 20 stipends of Rs. 12-8 each out of which 15 will go to Muslims and the rest to Scheduled Caste students.

PROGRESS OF EDUCATION.

In few other spheres perhaps have the constructive achievements of the present Government been more remarkable than in the sphere of Education, a department over which the Hon'ble Chief Minister himself presides. The problems of higher, secondary and primary education have alike engaged attention. The needs of the two Universities have been considered and met, individual collegiate and secondary

institutions have been liberally assisted, the problem of more and better trained teachers has been tackled, unprecedented sums have been earmarked for Scholarships and Stipends, epoch-making steps have been taken for the advancement of female education, and the burning question of free primary education has been solved by a decision to enforce the Primary Education Act throughout the Province. Often, the Ministry had to contend with the hostility of both man and nature but they determinedly held fast to their ideal. That they have taken long strides forward towards their goal during the comparatively brief period of two years, despite what seemed at times to be insuperable difficulties, can be denied by no impartial observer.

Financial Settlement with Calcutta University.

In giving an account of the work attempted by Government since April 1937 in the field of Education mention should first be made of the revision of the financial settlement with the Universities of Calcutta and Dacca. Under the terms of the previous settlement with the Calcutta University, Government undertook to pay to the Calcutta University Rs. 3,60,000 per annum on condition that if in any year the University's receipt in the fee fund exceeded the standard figure of Rs. 11,72,000, Government grant for that year would be reduced by half the amount of the excess, the necessary adjustment being made at the time of sanctioning the grant for the following year. Under the settlement the effective grant to the University was a little more than 2 lakhs plus the amount for special purposes. Protests were voiced both in the Legislature and in the Press against the settlement under which Government were said to be reaping the benefits of the prosperity of the University. Government accordingly deputed a Special Officer further to investigate the matter. On his recommendation a satisfactory financial arrangement was concluded with the University and Government sanctioned a block grant of Rs. 4,85,000 from the year 1937-38. Under this settlement the University will be in a position to develop its activities.

Additional help to Dacca University.

The finances of the Dacca University were also far from satisfactory and in the budget for 1938-39, a sum of Rs. 1,02,346 was provided in addition to the statutory grant of Rs. 5,50,000. The grant has been repeated in 1939-40.

Grants to private colleges.

In the budget for 1938-39 an additional allotment of Rs. 39,500 (recurring) was provided for giving maintenance grants to non-Government Arts Colleges.

The budget for that year also included a sum of Rs. 80,000 (recurring) on account of restoration of the cut on the lump provision for furniture and equipment, etc., grants to private colleges which are annually distributed through the Calcutta University.

In the budget for 1939-40 there is a total provision of about Rs. 4 lakhs for building grants to certain private colleges, e.g., St. Xavier's College, Karatia Saadat College, Brojomohan College and other institutions.

There is also a provision of over Rs. 60,000 for "other grants" to colleges.

Grants restored.

The present Government have restored grants in the case of four out of six non-Government High English Schools whose grants had been withdrawn by the previous Government during the civil disobedience movement.

More money for Secondary Education.

In the field of secondary education additional recurring provision was made in the budget for 1938-39 for the purposes noted below:—

(1) Rs. 1,01,800 (recurring) for grants-in-aid to Boys' secondary schools.

(2) Rs. 76,063 (recurring) for grant-in-aid to Girls' secondary schools of which Rs. 5,400 is meant for particular girls' schools.

(3) Rs. 68,000 (recurring) for building grants to non-Government secondary schools. Besides this Rs. 33,893 was provided for specific projects (non-recurring).

(4) Rs. 3,000 (recurring) for furniture and equipment grants to to non-Government secondary schools. Besides this Rs. 1,163 (non-recurring) was provided for Wesleyan Collegiate School, Bankura.

(5) Rs. 10,000 (recurring) for provident fund grant for non-Government secondary schools teachers in non-pensionable service.

The following additional recurring provisions have also been made in budget for 1939-40 for recurring grants to non-Government secondary schools:—

	Rs.
(*i*) Additional provision for grant-in-aid to non-Government Secondary Schools for Girls	1,00,000 (Recurring).
(*ii*) Additional provision for grant-in-aid to non-Government Secondary Schools for boys	1,00,000 (Recurring).

Since the Ministry came into office recurring provision for building grants to Secondary Schools has been gradually restored to its original figure of about one lakh of rupees.

In addition to the above there is a non-recurring provision of over Rs. 1,00,000 for building and furniture grants to specific institutions in the budget for 1939-40 including a capital grant of Rs. 27,000 to Maharaja Cossimbazar Polytechnic Institute.

Training of Secondary School Teachers.

The dearth of adequately trained teachers is also felt in every secondary school. To solve this problem the University has devised a scheme for giving facilities to graduate teachers of certain aided H. E. schools to study privately under certain conditions. To assist in this scheme Government made arrangements to give grants to not more than 50 schools for purchase of necessary books and for other expenses.

In this budget for 1939-40 provision has been made for the renewal of the award of the two State scholarships for the training of Indian teachers in the United Kingdom.

Board of Secondary Education contemplated.

The question of establishing a Board of Secondary Education for the whole province was taken up by Government and they held a series of conferences with the authorities of the two Universities and the representatives of the different groups in the Bengal Legislatures. The results of these deliberations have been embodied in a Bill, drafted by a senior educational officer, which is now under the consideration of Government.

Expansion of Primary Education.

The introduction of free and compulsory primary education without taxation of the poor who are unable to bear the burden was a part of the programme of work of the Ministry. Government admit after due deliberation that levying some kind of cess is unavoidable. The Ministry have, therefore, decided to go ahead with the establishment of School Boards in the districts where they have not been formed as yet and the imposition of cess in areas where it is not being realised.

At present the districts may be classified thus:—

(1) The districts having both District School Boards and Cess, viz., Mymensingh, Dacca, Tippera, Noakhali (Cess from 15th April 1939) and Chittagong (Cess from 15th April 1939) Jalpaiguri (Cess from 15th April 1939) and Howrah (District School Board from 1st April 1939 and Cess from 15th April 1939.)

(2) The districts having District School Boards with Cess imposed but the order for its realisation temporarily suspended, viz., Chittagong, Noakhali, Faridpur, Pabna, Bogra, Rangpur, Dinajpur, Nadia and Murshidabad.

(3) The District having a District School Board but no cess, viz., Birbhum.

(4) The districts with no District School Boards (and consequently no Cess), viz., Bakarganj, Rajshahi, Malda, 24-Parganas, Jessore, Khulna, Burdwan, Bankura, Midnapore and Hooghly.

In order to introduce the Act throughout the province Government have decided as soon as the economic situation permits to cancel the suspension order for the realisation of Cess in the 7 districts mentioned in (2); impose Cess in Birbhum mentioned in (3) and establish District School Boards and also impose Cess in the 10 districts named in (4) above. There are some aspects of the problem of universal primary education which are now engaging the closest attention of Government and for the solution of which Government will adopt such measures as are calculated to bring into operation the Bengal (Rural) Primary Education Act of 1930 in the whole of Bengal.

Five lakhs for three districts.

The aditional provision of Rs. 5 lakhs provided in the Education budget for 1938-39 has been sactioned during the year for the improvement of primary education in the districts of Mymensingh, Dacca and Tippera, which have taken upon themselves to pay the Cess, in order to see that free primary schools under the Act are set up in these districts in the course of the next few months. This additional provision of Rs. 5 lakhs has been repeated in the budget for 1939-40 and will be distributed among districts in due course in consideration of their requirements of grants from Government.

Training centres for Teachers.

Steps are also being taken for the establishment of Training Centres with effect from January 1940 in the districts of Mymensingh, Dacca and Tippera where the realisation of Cess is being continued. A sum of Rs. 66,700 has been provided for the purpose in the budget for 1939-40 against a scheme involving an ultimate expenditure of Rs. 18,58,500.

More Money for Girls' Education.

The question of extending the facilities for the education of women and girls has engaged the serious attention of the Ministry. Then policy is to encourage private enterprise in this regard by grants in aid. In pursuance of that policy an additional sum of Rs. 70,663 (recurring) was provided in the budget for 1938-39 for giving maintenance grants to girls' secondary schools. Besides this there was a provision of Rs. 3,600 for grant-in-aid to Kamala Girls' High School, Calcutta.

There was a total provision of Rs. 1,01,893 (non-recurring) in the budget for 1938-39 for building grants to non-Government secondary schools. A large share of this grant was paid to girls' secondary schools.

In the budget for 1939-40 a further extra provision of Rs. 1,00,000 has been included for maintenance grants to girls' secondary schools. Also Rs. 95,720 (non-recurring) has been earmarked in the same budget for building grants to non-Government secondary schools for girls, including Rs. 50,000 for Gokhale Memorial School for girls. An additional sum of Rs. 6,000 has been provided in the budget for grant-in-aid to the college section of the Kamrunnesa Girls' High School, Dacca. Additional provisions of Rs. 3,000, Rs. 3,600, Rs. 4,200, Rs. 2,400 and Rs. 4,200 have been made for grants-in-aid to the Narisikha Mandir, Dacca, Banipith Girls' School, Calcutta, Ananda Vidyapith, Dacca, Saroj Nalini Industrial School, Calcutta, and the Vidyasagore Bani Bhavan, respectively.

A sum of Rs. 60,000 was provided in the budget for 1938-39 for the adaptation of the Christ Church building, for providing additional accommodation for Bethune College. Work up to the value of about Rs. 10,000 was executed last year. It is expected that the work will be completed during the financial year 1939-40.

A sum of Rs. 2,00,000 has been provided for a new building for the Eden High School for Girls, Dacca, in the budget for 1939-40. The work will soon be undertaken.

New Girls' College.

A new Women's College (Lady Brabourne College), chiefly intended for Muslim girls, has been established. The estimated capital cost involved in the foundation of the college is Rs. 11,89,000 and the estimated recurring expenditure during the year 1939-40 is Rs. 71,388. The recurring expenditure will increase in the coming years when the II, III and IV year Classes as well as I.Sc. Classes are opened. At present the college has been started with only one class, the First Year Arts. Suitable hostel accommodation for Muslim girls has also been provided in the College premises.

Two State Scholarships for Indian women have been created from 1939 for advanced studies in the United Kingdom.

The question of girls' education in rural areas also attracted the attention of Government and they have provided in the budget for 1939-40 an additional sum of Rs. 57,600 for new grants-in-aid to deserving girls' primary schools in District Board areas.

As regards primary education in municipalities, Chittagong occupies the foremost place among them as arrangements have already been made for the introduction of free and compulsory education of boys in the municipality. Steps are being taken to introduce free and compulsory education for all girls of school-going age within the municipality with effect from 1940-41. The costs involved in these schemes are being shared by Government and the municipality on a half-and-half basis. Government have also provided an additional sum of Rs. 21,204 in their budget for 1939-40 for the purpose of the establishment and maintenance of free primary schools in the municipalities of Hooghly-Chinsura, Darjeeling, Gaibandha, Bogra, Bankura and South Suburban area.

Special steps to encourage Muslim education.

In connection with the Ministry's policy to provide special encouragement for the education of the Muslim Community the following points may be specially mentioned:—

(1) There being no provision for maintenance grants to old scheme madrasahs an allotment of Rs. 30,000 has been provided for the purpose of grants to such madrasahs.

(2) The normal provision of recurring grants to high and junior madrasahs (for boys and girls) under the reformed scheme of studies has been increased from Rs. 2,26,900 to Rs. 3,68,838. The allotment will further be augmented by Rs. 50,000 from 1940-41.

(3) The normal provision for building and furniture grants to madrasahs has been increased from Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 25,000.

(4) A capital grant of Rs. 25,000 has been sanctioned for the Calcutta Muhammadan Orphanage.

(5) A capital grant of Rs. 10,000 has been sanctioned for the Suri Girls' Maktab.

(6) Additional provision of Rs. 15,000 has been sanctioned for special scholarships to Muslim students.

(7) Nine additional scholarships of the total value of Rs. 3,960 per annum have been sanctioned for Muslim girl students.

(8) The *Fiqh* and *Usul* title classes in the Calcutta Madrasah have been made permanent.

(9) The Intermediate Classes attached to the Chittagong Madrasah have been made permanent.

(10) Two State scholarships for Muslim students have been provided to the value of Rs. 24,146 in addition to existing scholarships from the Lytton Fund and the Muhsin Fund.

(11) Posts of certain Physical Instructors have been created for Government madrasahs at a cost of Rs. 4,546.

(12) The percentage of free studentships granted to Muslims in Government Colleges has been raised.

(13) Sixty free seats have been created for Muslim students in the Baker, Taylor and Elliott Hostels, Calcutta, and seat rents in those hostels have been reduced to some extent.

(14) Two additional buses have been provided in the Sakhawat Memorial School for Muslim Girls', Calcutta, at a cost of Rs. 8,536.

(15) Provision has been made for the teaching of Arabic, Persian and Urdu in some of the Government Colleges where this did not exist previously.

(16) A scheme for raising the status of the Hooghly Madrasah to that of an Islamic Intermediate College has been sanctioned with effect from July, 1939, at an ultimate cost of about Rs. 22,000 per annum.

(17) A separate college for girls, as already noted on page 34, has been established.

Special Provisions for Scheduled Castes.

The interests of Scheduled Castes have also been specially looked after. One State Scholarship for Scheduled Caste students for study abroad has been created by Government. A recurring provision of Rs. 29,160 has been sanctioned for scholarships and stipends for students belonging to the Scheduled Castes. A lump provision of Rs. 5,00,000 has, in addition, been allowed for affording them further facilities for education. Provision has been made for the creation of special stipends for girls of the educationally backward classes. A Special Officer belonging to the Scheduled Caste community has been appointed to look after the educational needs of the Scheduled Castes and he has been working under the direct supervision of the Director of Public Instruction.

Impetus to Oriental Education.

The necessity for giving impetus to Sanskrit education as imparted in *tols* has not been overlooked. A special additional provision of Rs. 10,000 per annum has been allowed for grant-in-aid to indigenous Sanskrit *Tols* in the province. Rs. 5,000 (recurring) has been provided for Buddhist *Tols* for the first time in the Education Budget. A recurring grant of Rs. 25,000 has also been sanctioned to the Viswa-bharati at Santiniketan.

Stipends for Caste Hindus.

A special provision of Rs. 20,000 has been sanctioned for scholarships for Hindus other than Scheduled Castes. A provision of Rs. 10,000 has also been made for special stipends for non-Muslims.

Development of Physical Education.

Side by side with other educational problems the problem of the physical education of the youth of the Province has also engaged the earnest attention of the Ministry. For the first time in the history of the Province a comprehensive Youth Welfare Scheme has been devised and put into operation. The College of Physical Education has been made permanent and provision has been made for Rs. 2,50,000 for the development of Youth Welfare work in the Province apart from the continuance of the existing grants to the Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, Bratachari and other activities.

Youth Welfare Scheme.

According to the Ministry's Youth Welfare Scheme Youth Welfare Councils have been established in 24 districts and 26 District Organisers have been appointed to guide the activities of the District Councils and to look after the welfare of the youths in those districts. The drill masters in schools are being replaced by trained physical instructors and already 19 such physical instructors have been appointed. The District Organisers, who may be described as preachers of a new cult of health and strength, are at work in every part of the Province infusing a new zeal for physical betterment among the youth of the nation. They are opening out centres, training primary school teachers, organising sports

and athletic activities. Reports indicate that in many places they hav been able already to kindle such enthusiasm as encourages the hope tha ere long the scheme will attain a success beyond all expectations.

Refresher Course and a "Send-off".

In October-November 1938 a Refresher Course was held at the College of Physical Education in Calcutta which was attended by 120 qualified graduate instructors from different parts of Bengal. At the close of their course a demonstration of their work was given before His Excellency the late Lord Brabourne, the Hon'ble Chief Minister and other Hon'ble Ministers. The function was also intended to be a 'send off' to the 26 District Organisers of Physical Education who were about to proceed to the districts allotted to them and take upon themselves the work of reviving the cult of physical fitness among the youth of the province.

The Late Lord Brabourne's Speech.

Presiding over the function, His Excellency the Governor delivered a most inspiring speech and said:—

"I have come here, not merely to see this display,—much as I was looking forward to it and much as I have enjoyed it,—but also to see the men who are being trained here. Let me say, at once, that I congratulate both the organisers and you who have taken part in this demonstration, on a display well worth seeing.

It must be a proud day for you Mr. Buchanan, and all who have worked for the Youth Movement in Bengal are grateful to the Chief Minister for the progress that he has made possible in this sphere in the short space of time since he presented his first Education Budget to the Legislature.

I cannot, moreover, let this occasion pass without a word of sincere thanks to General Lindsay who has done so much to help and encourage this movement, and to Sir Manmatha Nath Mukherji and his Committee, the first fruits of whose labours we see to-day.

But above all, I want to take this opportunity of giving a 'send off' to you, the District Organisers, who are shortly going out into the Province to a new task fraught with great possibilities. You have been trained, all of you, and thoroughly trained, in the technical side of your work, and every one of you, I am glad to say, has academic qualifications which will put him in a position to meet, on equal terms, school-masters, parents and others with whom his work will bring him into contact. There is one quality, however, for which in the main, you must depend upon yourselves: the quality of leadership and

enthusiasm and, if I may so describe it, the missionary spirit. If I thought there was one among you who did not believe and believe wholeheartedly in the value of the work you are going to do, I would suggest, without hesitation and in the friendliest possible manner, that he should, at once, set about finding some other job. In fact, however, I have little fear on that score. You are pioneers in a new venture and your own fitness and keenness,—the health and the happiness that your training has brought into your own lives,—is enough guarantee that you will want to pass on the message to others.

There are all kinds of positions in life in which a man can display the spirit of leadership, and in stressing the opportunities that lie before you I am not belittling in the least the work of those whose leadership lies solely or predominantly in the intellectual or academic sphere. You, however, have a special opportunity because the activities you have set out to promote are activities that have an appeal, or a potential appeal, to every boy and every normal young man. Youth, whether it knows it or not, wants to be fit and to enjoy living. It wants loyalties, healthy adventure and a sense of achievement. All these things you can help to supply. Your mission is not simply to create athletes, not merely to produce the broadest chest or the most imposing pair of biceps; it is, by developing the cult of physical well-being, of healthy recreation, of stimulating rivalry and good fellowship, to launch a movement that will give the boys and young men of this Province a new interest in life, a new interest in their own health and the healthiness of their surroundings—a movement from which may arise a robust, cheerful and resolute outlook on the difficulties of life and the world in which the younger generation is growing up.

Pioneers as you are, you are not going forth alone and unsupported into a wilderness. It is not for me to forecast what the future policies of Ministers may be; but I can say with assurance that if you well and truly lay the foundations of your work, if you can kindle among the rising generation the spirit of health and the joy of living, you will have started a movement that must grow from strength to strength and cannot fail to win the lasting support of all those who have at heart the welfare of Bengal.

Nor will you be single-handed in your task. My Government have already taken steps to set up in the districts to which you are going, councils with which you will be closely associated—organisations in which there will be room for all those who are prepared to give of their time, their influence, or their resources for the welfare of the young. There are, already working in the Province, voluntary associations concerned with hygiene, with rural reconstruction or with the well-being of youth in one or other of its forms:

it will be your mission, with the help of the influential support which we believe will be forthcoming, to work in the closest sympathy and co-operation with organisations which have for their aim the rousing of the spirit of self-help, the development of the will to health and happiness and the uplift of generations yet to come.

Whatever be your difficulties, keep always before your eyes the goal that you are set on—that the youth of Bengal, clear-eyed and clean limbed, cheerful and disciplined, may partake of the richness of life and know more fully the happiness of living."

Scope of Physical welfare work widened.

With the assistance of trained teachers, whose number is fast increasing, it has become possible for the Education Department to widen the scope of its physical welfare work and the following schemes have been sanctioned by Government:—

(*a*) In schools physical education will be promoted by travelling District Organisers who will assist teachers in all grades of schools, through explanations and demonstrations, to introduce the most up-to-date ideas upon the subject of physical education, and organise short training courses for collected groups of teachers.

(*b*) The problem of medical inspection and tiffin supply are being tackled as far as is possible in the beginning, by providing funds for these purposes to schools which have appointed qualified physical instructors. This will give a three-fold scheme of medical inspection, tiffin supply, and physical education, which can gradually be extended to other schools.

(*c*) The problems of after-school youths are to be tackled by the formation in every district of Youth Welfare Council, composed of officials and non-officials. The Secretary of each Council will be the District Organiser of Physical Education, who, as a touring officer, can build up close co-ordination between village movements and the Council, and can provide expert assistance in promoting its work.

(*d*) At first, the object of the Councils will be to attract young people of all classes by the promotion of physical recreations and health-giving activities, and by the formation of village sports clubs. Later, when the clubs have been established, it is intended to utilise them as centres for the introduction of all possible forms of individual and social welfare, such as village uplift work, social service, adult education, unemployment training centres, and similar other activities.

Registration.

With a view to alleviating unemployment among Madrassa Passed Maulvis and to afford greater facilities for the registration of Moslem marriages and divorces, Government have adopted a policy that all Muhammadan Marriage Registration offices with an average annual income of Rs. 1,200 and over should be split up, the parent office to be left with an income of about 2/3rd of its original income and new the office or offices to be carried on with an income of about Rs. 400 a year. Offices which fall vacant on account of death, retirement, etc., are also to be split up into as many offices as can be carried on with an average annual income of about Rs. 500 each. As a result of this policy, sanction has been accorded to the opening of 33 new offices.

District Advisory Committees have been formed in each district of the province, to include Moslem members of the District Board, Secretaries of recognised associations, M.L.As., M.L.Cs., and other gentlemen, for the selection of candidates for the posts of Muhammadan Registrars and Kazis and for advice on questions relating to the working of the Muhammadan Registrar and Kazi's Act.

It has been decided that Muhammadan Registrars should be required to retire at the age of 65.

RURAL UPLIFT WORK.

Rural uplift work forms an important phase of the activities of the Ministry. An all-round improvement of rural areas and an all-round uplift of the rural population is the aim of their policy. In a comprehensive speech the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the department concerned revealed the scheme which Governmnt intend shortly to launch with a view to achieving these objectives. That speech is fully reproduced in Appendix A. Below is set forth in a summary fashion the steps already taken by Government in this respect.

In order to ensure better co-ordination and continuity of effort and to bring the District Officers into closer touch with this work it was decided to establish a more uniform system throughout the province and with this end in view organisations have been set up in the districts which *inter alia* provide for activities under the following heads:—

(1) Improvements in the condition under which the rural population live.
(2) Improvements in methods of agriculture.
(3) Improvement in nutrition.
(4) Improvements in facilities for physical recreation.
(5) Improvement in facilities for mental recreation.
(6) Improvements in cottage industries.

The scheme has been in operation since September 1937 and the results so far achieved are encouraging.

A post of Director of Rural Reconstruction was created and an Indian Officer of the I.C.S. with experience of district administration appointed to the post with effect from the 18th March 1938. The principal functions of the officer are—

(1) co-ordination of rural reconstruction work throughout the province,

(2) collection and dissemination of information regarding schemes of uplift undertaken or projected in the province or elsewhere and necessary publicity in connection therewith,

(3) touring with the object of assisting and advising local officers in all matters pertaining to rural uplift, and

(4) collection and collation of reports and references from local officers for the information of Government and for general publicity purpose.

A special grant of Rs. 1 lakh was made available during the year 1938-39 for augmenting the resources of Distirct Officers to enable them to make contributions to projects of rural uplift falling under the heads mentioned in paragraph 1 above. The object of this provision was to stimulate local interest in rural reconstruction on the basis of self-help and to enable local officers to give prompt assistance to specially deserving projects in their districts. A provision of Rs. 3 lakhs has been made for the purpose in the budget for 1939-40.

Principles underlying the plan.

Government's plan for the expansion of the existing plan of rural reconstruction in Bengal which will be put into operation this year will be worked on the following principles:—

(*a*) The fundamental unit will be the village association.

(*b*) Work will be carried out under the control and supervision of District Officers.

(*c*) Paid staff will be employed in the villages for organisation and for propaganda.

(*d*) Provision will be made for training of staff and workers.

(*e*) Work will be carried out in the closest possible co-operation with local bodies.

(*f*) Financial assistance, where necessary, by Government towards schemes taken up will be given in the form of contributory grants.

A provision of Rs. 2½ lakhs has been made for the purpose in the budget for 1939-40.

Instructions have been issued meanwhile to the Commissioners and District Officers depicting the general structure of Government's rural reconstruction schemes and they have been advised to carry out the preliminary arrangements.

Liberal grants for rural welfare projects.

In order to facilitate the preparation of the ground for organised rural reconstruction, Government decided, as a preliminary step, to devote a considerable sum to supplementing the discretionary grants of Commissioners and District Magistrates. Their discretionary grants have accordingly been liberally increased. Government have expressed their desire that any real grievance that may come to the notice of Commissioners and District Officers during their tours or otherwise should, as far as possible, be met fully and promptly. District Officers have also been asked to take the fullest advantage, specially during the touring season, of such opportunities as are afforded to them by these funds, of studying the needs and problems of local people, preparatory to the introduction of comprehensive schemes of Rural Reconstruction.

On the recommendation of District Officers liberal grants have been made and are still being made for various rural welfare projects, a complete list of which will be found in Appendix E.

Campaign against water-hyacinth.

One of the decisions of far-reaching importance taken by the Government of Bengal during the period under report was to launch a province wide campaign against the water-hyacinth pest, otherwise known as the Lilac Devil. The campaign was conducted during the last week of April, 1939, commencing on the 23rd of the month. The week was known as the Bengal Water-hyacinth Week, 1939.

Water-hyacinth is a serious menace to the well-being of the province. Its ravages are too well known to the people of Bengal to need detailed description. It interrupts communications, damages crops, kills fish, contaminates drinking water and affords a breeding ground for mosquitoes. The annual loss to the province from the pest can be estimated at several crores. The damage that it causes is infinitely out of proportion to the almost negligible uses to which it can be put.

Public opinion mobilized.

Public opinion was roused and public co-operation ensured by propaganda in advance in which the Hon'ble Chief Minister and the Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture and Public Health took the lead. The Hon'ble Chief Minister issued an appeal in which he, *inter alia*, observed as follows:—

"Water-hyacinth is one of the deadliest enemies of Bengal. It multiplies so rapidly and spreads so widely that unless it is completely exterminated it will be difficult to preserve the health and prosperity of the province.

"The only practical means of eradicating it is to launch a mass attack upon it simultaneously in every part of the province.

"This is why we have decided to observe a Water-hyacinth Week".

The Hon'ble Chief Minister invited the co-operation of all sections of the public for the success of the campaign against water-hyacinth.

The Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture and Public Health, also broadcast an appeal for co-operation over the radio through the courtesy of the authorities of the Calcutta Broadcasting Station.

As a result of the deliberations of the previous Government legislative measures were adopted in the form of the Bengal Water-hyacinth Act, 1936, which declared water-hyacinth a noxious weed, made it an offence knowingly to harbour it, required collection and effectual destruction by the occupier and provided for penalties for non-compliance. The pest, however, continued to grow and commit its ravages.

It was realised by the present Government that spasmodic efforts here and there would not bring about any permanent result; and they accordingly decided upon a concerted effort to be made simultaneously throughout the province and in co-operation with the province of Assam (from which the weed is brought down by the currents of the big rivers) with a view to eradicating the pest within three or four years, if not through a simple drive by the people themselves, assisted and guided by Government officers. In this decision Government were encouraged by the splendid results which had been achieved in many parts of Bengal in the sphere of rural uplift activities undertaken voluntarily by local inhabitants.

Propaganda was started in the beginning of the cold weather of 1938. On 2nd April, 1939, a conference was held in Calcutta in which the Hon'ble the Chief Minister and the Hon'ble the Minister-in-charge of Agriculture appealed to the legislators and non-official leaders of the districts who had assembled and through them to the public to co-operate wholeheartedly in the campaign.

Appeals and letters inviting co-operation were also issued by the Director of Rural Reconstruction, Bengal, under instructions from Government, to all local bodies and organisations connected with social service. The District and Subdivisional Officers also issued letters to zemindars, and to local organisations and associations inviting their co-operation.

In order to create enthusiasm for the Week's activities among the student population and through them the public, an essay competition was also organised. The students and also outsiders were allowed to complete, in groups. This essay competition achieved unexpected success.

The Director of Rural Reconstruction made extensive tours in the districts in which water-hyacinth is a serious problem, met officials and non-officials in conferences, discussed the local plans with them and addressed public meetings.

The whole scheme was one of self-help. So far as big beels were concerned, Government sanctioned Rs. 20,000 for contribution towards construction of barriers and for refreshments for workers.

In each district holidays were observed on the days on which the "Week" was celebrated.

Hon'ble Ministers participate in the work.

During the "Week" the Hon'ble Ministers toured extensively in areas which by previous arrangement they had allotted to themselves, took part in the actual removal of the weeds, demonstrated the dignity of labour and inspired the people by their lofty example. The effect of their tours on the success of the week cannot be overestimated.

Organisation and preliminary arrangements were completed in reasonable details sometime before the commencement of the "Week". In some districts and subdivisions they were carried out in minutest details; lists were prepared of all *dobas*, ditches, tanks and *khals* where water-hyacinth existed; and each affected spot was allotted to a squad or platoon.

Detailed plan of operations.

The following report by a District Officer of the preliminary arrangements carried out in his district is typical of what took place practically in all the districts in which the weed was a problem:

"Comprehensive survey was made of all areas covered by water-hyacinth and a committee consisting of officials and non-officials was formed for the whole district with the District Magistrate as its President well in advance of the week of actual operation. A similar committee was constituted also for each subdivision having the Subdivisional Officer as its President with a legion of subsidiary committees for thanas, unions and villages. The object of forming these committees and their duties and functions were clearly explained to all members. An intensive propaganda was then carried out throughout the district by lectures, wide publication of leaflets and posters received from Government and printed locally and through local newspapers and exhibition of slides in cinema houses. Appeals were issued to all leading landholders, heads of local bodies and educational institutions, secretaries of clubs and associations and other important persons in the district—irrespective of caste, creed or political persuasion, to enlist their sympathy and support.

"A comprehensive list of the areas affected by the pest was prepared. These areas were divided into blocks and the blocks into the sub-blocks in such a way that each affected area could be successfully tackled by the volunteers already enlisted for the purpose. One officer was placed in charge of an entire thana and one or two officers in charge of each block, according to the magnitude of the work that was to be done. The Presidents, members and clerks of Union Boards, the Chairmen, members and clerks of Debt Settlement Boards and members of *Pallyunayan Samitis* (Rural Uplift Societies) and other village associations, were entrusted with the duty of helping the block officers by supervising the work of volunteers.

"In order to diffuse knowledge among students about water-hyacinth an essay competition was held under the direction of Government.

"An appeal was issued to the public to supplement the Government grant for the refreshment of volunteers by making suitable contributions.

"Thus all steps were taken and every measure adopted to make the week a success".

Activities during the Week.

All classes and sections plunged themselves into the task with earnestness and zeal.

The Hon'ble Mr. N. R. Sarker, Finance Minister, in his statement to the Press remarked:—

"At all the centres I inspected, I noticed considerable enthusiasm."

The Hon'ble Sir B. P. Singh Roy, Revenue Minister, said:—

"I found that great enthusiasm prevailed among people, belonging to all sections of the community, irrespective of their age, caste or creed and political bearings, about the eradication of water-hyacinth. They all appeared to have greatly appreciated the Government's move in the matter and were willing to co-operate. The officers too were very enthusiastic and I was glad to find that they had succeeded in collecting practically the whole countryside round them for taking part in eradication of water-hyacinth."

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, said:—

"In my opinion the Water-hyacinth Week has been a great success. Everywhere I found the people working together in hundreds and thousands in order to eradicate the pest. Social service organisations, Boyscouts, Bratacharies, school boys and even school girls co-operated fully and deserve thanks. The work done by some of the school girls at Bogra was even better than the results achieved by the boys.

"The Water-hyacinth Week has however taught the people a great lesson, namely, that they can achieve their own salvation by co-operation and mutual goodwill and joint action.

"The whole of the affected area was divided up and placed under the supervision of Government officials and it is indeed very encouraging to find that officials and non-officials worked together and the co-operation was complete."

The Hon'ble Nawab Musharruff Hossain said:—

"How delighted I was when I saw bands of youngmen working throughout the district removing water-hyacinth from low-lying areas in the abnormal heat then raging in Bengal."

The Hon'ble Mr. M. B. Mullick said:—

"I was agreeably struck by the enthusiasm that was shown by the local people including students in eradicating the pest."

Results.

In judging the results of the "Week", certain hard facts have to be borne in mind. The fight was with an enemy which grows and expands with extraordinary rapidity. It is the experience of many in Bengal that tanks cleared of water-hyacinth, not only once but twice or thrice, are again filled up with the weed.

The problems of beel areas and big rivers are so vast that several intensive drives will be required before any substantial result can be

expected. In fact some of the beels in Bakarganj district could not be tackled during the last Water-hyacinth Week owing to insurmountable difficulties; and local officers reserved them for attack during the rainy season.

In many areas dried up water-hyacinth plants got so stuck into the dry and hard earth that it was extremely difficult to pull them out. Very often they had to be scraped off by means of spade or at places the land had to be ploughed to loosen the earth and then the dried up weeds with their roots were removed.

In spite of these and various other drawbacks, the success achieved was remarkable. The moral effect of the week's campaign was universally recognised as of great value.

"Grand", "tremendous", "unparallelled", "unprecedented", are some of the words which have been used even in unexpected quarters to describe the nature of the success.

On this point it is worthwhile quoting a few of the numerous reports on the activities during the Water-hyacinth Week.

The Commissioner of the Presidency Division wrote:—

"The reports of the District Officers show that the campaign has been very successful. The pest has been cleared from the extensive areas in every district and there was enthusiastic response from almost every quarter.

"Apart from the success achieved in removing the pest, the campaign was of great value in rousing enthusiasm for joint and voluntary work for the attainment of a common object.

* * * * * *

"Enough, however, was achieved by the enthusiastic co-operation of everyone to prove that the annual 'Week' is a thoroughly sound proposition."

The District Magistrate, Mymensingh, wrote:—

"It is gratifying to note that in many places people forgot all distinctions of caste and put their shoulder to the wheel for the common good of the community. The work provided a common platform for all to meet and helped to bring about, though temporarily, the much-desired peace and harmony among the various sections of the people.

"Considering everything the response made by the people was more than what was expected and although a lot still remains to be done, the results achieved so far are truly remarkable."

The District Magistrate, Murshidabad, wrote:—

"The result achieved was beyond expectation. Though it cannot be said that the weeds have been totally cleared out of this district,

yet it can be assumed that the people have realised their united strength and they have set about thinking that complete eradication of the pest will not be an impossibility in the near future, if similar drives are organised consecutively for a few years."

The District Magistrate, Bakarganj, wrote:—

"In conclusion, everyone is asking: why was there no one who, in the early days of the pest, conceived this brilliant notion of a Hyacinth Week? People hardly believe that such results could have been achieved *by themselves*, and there is in many places a demand for regular campaign of this nature. In one subdivision alone, over 1,100 tanks are known to have been cleared."

Co-operation of the Press.

Newspaper reporters and correspondents sent numerous reports to the Press which were published for over a month in Calcutta newspapers. Many reports could not be published for want of space.

A report about Kurigram which was sent to a Calcutta newspaper by its local correspondent described the results achieved there, in words which apply more or less equally to every area where the drive was conducted. He said:—

"The very look of the landscape changed at Kurigram.

"The water-hyacinth expedition has been crowned with wonderful success in this subdivision. All the pools and 'beels' which were so long the breeding and nursing abode of the pest have been cleared and as a consequence transparent water is glittering in the place of dark deeplaid water-hyacinths. If similar attempts are repeated next year at the right time water-hyacinth will be a thing of the past."

Many reports of this nature appeared in Calcutta newspapers.

A leading Calcutta newspaper wrote editorially as follows:—

"After many years of eyeing the hyacinth askance and telling one another that something ought to be done about it, after many years of wondering whether botany or chemistry could be pressed into service as deliverers, it has been decided to rely on the primitive mechanics of pulling it up, with the roots if possible. The physical energy expended last week must have been many hundreds of thousands of foot-pounds above Bengal's average. Let the Government have the credit of the occasion. No previous Government roused the province against the pest in the same way. No previous Government got commissioner and zemindar and sheristadar and litigant and school boy into the water together to pull up a weed. The exercise if at first

painful to some must have been generally beneficial; everywhere muscles must now be stronger and wind longer because of it. Nor was it without civic value that different classes of the people worked together for a few days for a common cause."

About one thousand medals and a large number of certificates were distributed to persons who did very good work during the Water-hyacinth Week.

During this rainy season (1939) local drives are being organised by District and Subdivisional Officers, and the Director of Rural Reconstruction is holding conferences to tackle the problem of beel areas effectively and to prevent water-hyacinth weeds which flow down the big rivers from entering into fields through small rivers, khals and other inlets.

A bigger campaign proposed.

Encouraged by the results of the last Water-hyacinth Week, Government are contemplating to observe a Rural Reconstruction (destruction of water-hyacinth will be one of the many sided activities for Rural Reconstruction) and Adult Education Fortnight from about the end of February to the second week of March, 1940. If Government definitely decide on this campaign, it will be organised even more intensively and more effectively than the last Water-hyacinth Week.

SYSTEM OF MEDICAL RELIEF REORGANISED.

The problem of providing a satisfactory system of medical relief for rural areas, a most important and at the same time a most difficult task, has been engaging the consideration of Government for some years past. It was in the year 1922-23 that a policy was introduced of grants of subsidy to newly established thanas and village dispensaries at the rate of Rs. 500 for a thana and Rs. 250 for a village dispensary to give an impetus towards the establishment of rural dispensaries in larger number. This policy has been very helpful in increasing the number of such dispensaries.

Starting with Rs. 15,000 only in 1922-23, the provision for the purpose increased to Rs. 1,10,000 in 1936-37. In the next year, that is, in 1937-38 Government provided a sum of Rs. 1,20,000 for grants to these dispensaries, but the total grants distributed amounted Rs. 1,24,250 and money was found for all rural dispensaries. In the year 1938-39 the provision was increased to Rs. 1,30,000 against which the expenditure stood at Rs. 1,37,750. This benefited 331 village and

107 thana dispensaries many of which would not perhaps have been brought into existence or would perhaps have to close down without this grant. The provision for this grant has been further increased to Rs. 1,50,000 during the year 1939-40.

Since the assumption of office by the present Ministry a more liberal policy has been followed in respect of such grants and money has been found for *all* the dispensaries which were recommended as eligible.

Improvement of Sadar Hospitals.

This is also intimately connected with the scheme of medical relief in rural areas. Although the question of improvement of Sadar Hospitals through the aid of Government grant was mooted long ago in 1927 nothing could be done in this direction before the present Government came into office. They drew up a scheme for the improvement of Sadar Hospitals providing for capital grant towards the improvement of buildings and equipments to these institutions with a view to raising the standard of medical relief available in these hospitals.

A provision of Rs. 3 lakhs was also made in the budget for 1938-39 for distribution to local authorities on condition (1) that the balance of the amount required should be found from local sources, and (2) that the recurring expenditure involved in these improvements should be met by the local authorities in which the management of these hospitals vests. A capital grant of Rs. 92,600 has been sanctioned for the sadar hospitals named below:—

	Rs.
(1) Suri	8,000
(2) Midnapore	9,000
(3) Krishnagar	12,000
(4) Jessore	30,000
(5) Faridpur	25,000
(6) Hooghly-Imambarah	8,600

and the balance of the budget provision for 1938-39 has been carried over to the budget for 1939-40, as systematic examination of the individual schemes could not be completed during the preceding year.

Control of adulterated drugs.

The question of control of adulterated drugs had been engaging the consideration of Government from some time before the inauguration of the new constitution but it was the present Government who utilised the facilities already available in the School of Tropical Medicine, for

testing adulterated drugs. The three laboratory departments of Pharmacology, Chemistry and Bacteriology in that School have been strengthened by appointing additional staff. A nucleus of a provincial laboratory for drug testing has thus been set up. Further improvements will be gradually made as found necessary.

Improvement of Medical Schools.

The responsibility for the proper maintenance of the State Medical Schools vests in Government. The Bengal Council of Medical Registration found serious faults in the arrangement of teaching as well as in accommodation, etc., in most of the schools. To remove the defect a scheme for improvements to bring the schools up to the proper standard has been under consideration of Government and they have since decided to undertake the following improvements during the current year:—

(1) Construction and repairs, etc., of buildings of the Lytton Medical School, Mymensingh, at an estimated cost of Rs. 50,000.

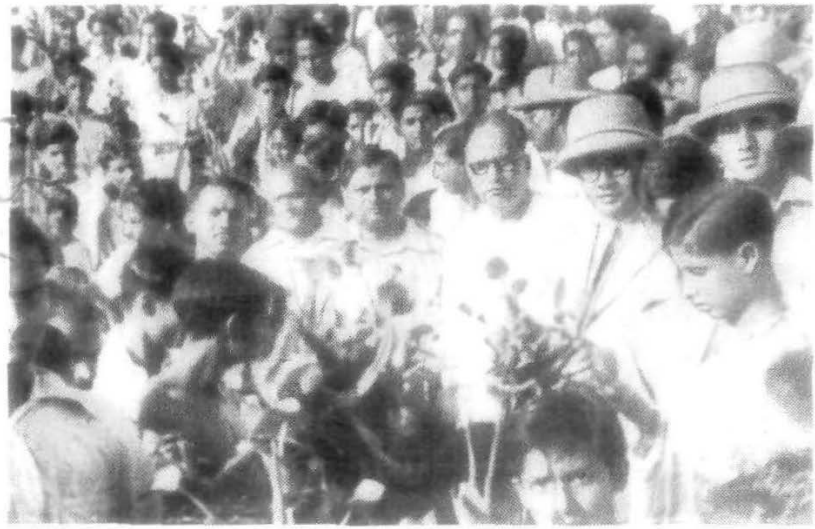
(2) Revision of teaching arrangements in the four Medical Schools of Burdwan, Jalpaiguri, Chittagong and Mymensingh. A grant of Rs. 38,908 recurring has been provided for improving the unsatisfactory standard of teaching in these schools *inter alia* by provision of separate teachers for teaching separate subjects. This will obviate the necessity of one teacher teaching two or more incompatible subjects and ensure efficiency.

Scholarships to Scheduled Caste and Muslim students.

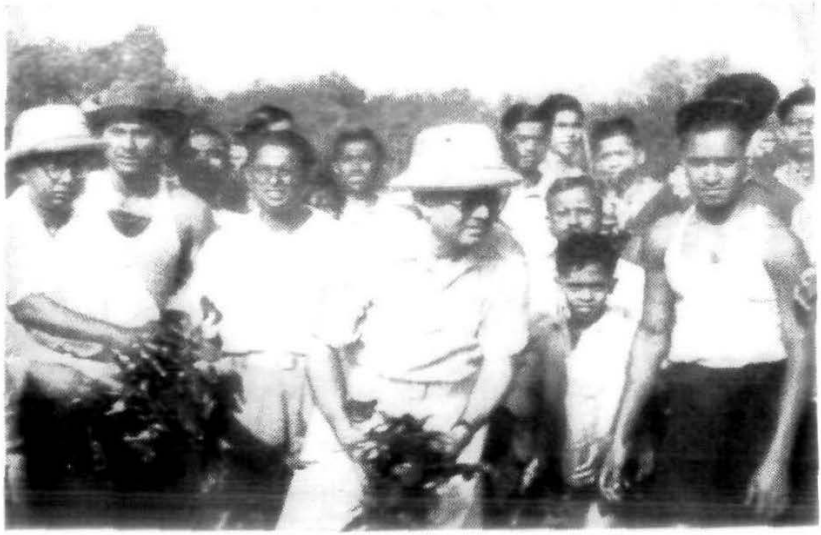
Government fully realise that the principal reason which had prevented the students of the Muslim community and of the scheduled castes from taking advantage of medical education was general poverty of the parents and guardians. With a view to encouraging medical education among these communities and thereby making a proper representation of each major community in the medical administration and profession possible, about 45 special scholarships for Muslim students and 19 for scheduled castes and backward communities, ranging in value from Rs. 30 to Rs. 15 per mensem have been created involving an ultimate expenditure of Rs. 35,000 for the Muslim students and Rs. 17,280 for the Scheduled castes students.

Improvement of nursing arrangements.

In a properly equipped modern hospital the place and importance of nurses cannot be overlooked. Hitherto nursing arrangements in mufassal hospitals have been hardly adequate or satisfactory. The Ministry have given their consideration to this problem and steps are being taken to effect improvements. They are also fully alive to the



THE HON'BLE MR. N. R. SARKER WITH A HUGE CROWD ENGAGED IN CLEARING WATER-HYACINTH AT MYMENSINGH.



THE HON'BLE MAHARAJA S. C. NANDY PARTICIPATING IN THE CAMPAIGN AT MURSHIDABAD.





THE HON'BLE KHWAJA SIR NAZIMUDDIN GIVING A START TO THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST WATER-LOGGING AT PABNA



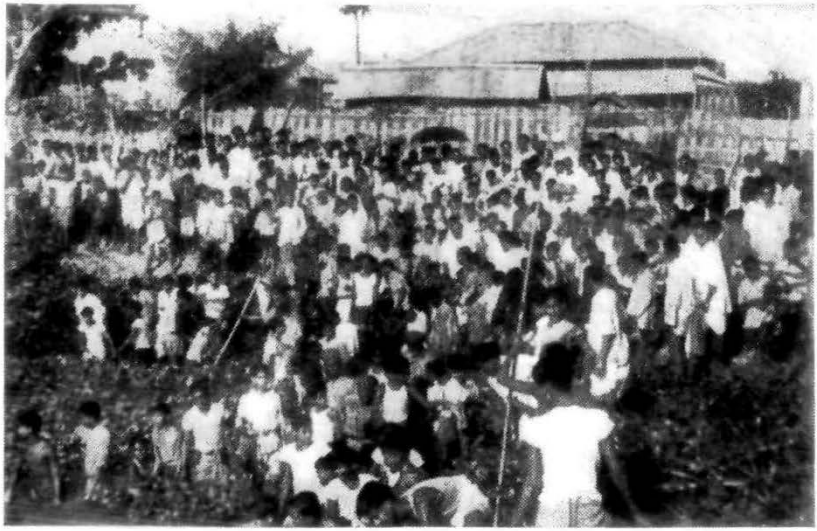
The Hon'ble Nawab Musharruf Hossain proceeding to take part in the Campaign against Water-Hyacinth at Damjur (Howrah).



The Hon'ble Mr. Tamizuddin Khan clearing Water-Hyacinth with his own hands at Faridpur.



The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy at Comilla just before he participated in the Campaign.



A typical crowd of workers who participated in the Water-Hyacinth Week all over Bengal.

inadequacy of the nursing arrangements in the Campbell Hospital, the biggest pauper hospital in the metropolis, and have realised the necessity of providing for an adequate and properly trained nursing staff for this hospital where the majority of the poorer classes ailing from various diseases receive treatment. A scheme has been drawn up and is under consideration of Government. An expenditure of about Rs. 2,86,000 for construction of quarters, etc., for additional nurses to be employed under the scheme has been sanctioned. Arrangements for improved nursing in the Dacca Mitford Hospital, the most important State hospitals outside Calcutta, are being made and necessary provision for the purpose has been included in the budget for 1939-40.

Grants to non-Government institutions.

(*i*) *Grants to Tuberculosis Hospital and to Sadar Hospitals for treatment of T. B. patients.*—Increased attention is being directed since the the present Ministry assumed office towards measures which are of help in combating the seriously and rapidly spreading disease of Tuberculosis. A capital grant of Rs. 1,36,000 has been made to the Jadavpur Tuberculosis Hospital for extension and improvement of the only institution of the kind in Bengal. Grant to Sadar Hospitals for 5 years for the present at the rate of Rs. 15,000 per annum with an ultimate expenditure of Rs. 75,000 for providing better nourishment and treatment of patients suffering from Tuberculosis have been approved and the scheme has been given effect to. As Tuberculosis patients require to be well fed with nourishing food and expensive medicines are often required this scheme, it is hoped, will help the patients greatly.

(*ii*) *Maternity.*—The maternity beds in the Calcutta Hospitals are insufficient to meet the need of carrying mothers and a project for a maternity hospital in the Carmichael Medical College was liberally helped with a capital grant of Rs. 1,50,000. Rupees 49,000 has also been paid to Ramkrishna Sishumangal Pratisthan of Bhowanipore (a maternity Home having a children's clinic as well) towards construction of the buildings of the Pratisthan. Ziaganj Zenana Mission Hospital in the district of Murshidabad which attends to the needs of the womenfolk in the mufassil, also received a capital grant of Rs. 4,612 for effecting certain improvements.

(*iii*) *Leper Hospitals.*—Besides the Albert Victor Leper Hospital at Gobra which was a Government institution till August 1935 and which gets an annual grant of Rs. 60,000, two more leper Homes at Bankura and Raniganj are in receipt of Government grant amounting to Rs. 17,200 annually from the pre-Reforms period. In addition to these grants the present Government have made a grant of Rs. 2,000 capital and Rs. 3,000 recurring to the Premananda Out-door Leper dispensaries at Calcutta for treatment of lepers in the city. A

recurring grant of Rs. 1,680 has also been sanctioned by this Government to the Kalimpong Leper Hospital.

(*iv*) *Grant to Indian Institute of Medical Research.*—A capital grant of Rs. 10,000 has been paid to this institution for purchase of furniture, books and equipment for the laboratory of the Institute. This Institute carries out original researches in medical science and thus conduces to the advancement of knowledge and at the same time to the promotion of public health directly or indirectly. Government realised the utility of the work done by the Institute and made it possible for the Institute to become more efficient and useful by making the above grant.

(*v*) *Grant to Chittaranjan Seva Sadan.*—The Chittaranjan Seva Sadan has been doing excellent work. It is maintained solely by public contributions and contributions from the Calcutta Corporation. A children's hospital has also been opened. It serves all creeds and classes not only in Calcutta but also outside Calcutta. In recognition of the good work done by the Seva Sadan a capital grant of Rs. 2,50,000 has been decided to be paid to the institution this year.

(*vi*) *Grant to the Association for Prevention of Blindness in Bengal.*—The Association is doing valuable work by way of propaganda and prevention of blindness by actual treatment by running travelling eye dispensaries in mufassal areas. These travelling eye dispensaries are doing work which has proved to be of great value and is greatly appreciated by the public. In order to enable the Association to run 3 travelling eye dispensaries in the province for a term of 3 years for the present a grant of Rs. 15,000 per annum for three years has been provided for.

(*vii*) *Special grant for improvement of nursing.*—A recurring grant has been provided for improvement of nursing in the Victoria Hospital, Darjeeling, especially as this is a very suitable centre for the training of nurses.

Nutritional survey.

The Ministry undertook a nutritional survey for Bengal in 1937-38, that is, soon after coming into office. The Nutrition Advisory Committee appointed by the Indian Research Fund Association drew attention to the need for a preliminary survey of the state of nutrition in relation to dietary habits. An officer of the Public Health Department was selected and deputed to Coonor for receiving training for the purpose. The officer has returned from training and necessary staff has been recruited. A preliminary survey of the field, which is to be spread over four years, would, it is expected result in a proper understanding of the broad principles of the problem of nutrition as it

affects the people of the province, assisted by the investigation which is being conducted on an All-India basis. The Ministry trust that, as a result, the existing knowledge of the principle of proper nutrition would become generally known to the people, so that it may be put into practice as far as circumstances may fairly warrant.

Fighting Malaria.

The problem of malaria is undoubtedly the most serious Public Health problem in this province. Hitherto attempts have been made to tackle the problem by (*a*) free distribution of quinine through dispensaries and district boards and (*b*) making grants-in-aid to local authorities for minor local anti-malarial measures to be carried out by these bodies.

The normal quinine grant of Rs. 1,40,000 was increased by Rs. 60,000 in the budget for 1937-38 making a total of Rs. 2 lakhs. In the budget for 1938-39 a total amount of Rs. 4 lakhs was provided for free distribution of quinine with the object *inter alia* of reaching effectively those numerous cases which do not come to the hospitals and dispensaries. Another amount of Rs. 4 lakhs has been similarly provided in the budget for 1939-40. A more effective and popular method of distribution is also under the consideration of the present Ministry.

As regards grants to local bodies for minor anti-malarial measures it has been proposed that the grants for anti-malarial measures should be made available for expenditure on comprehensive anti-malarial projects of a more or less permanent nature to be approved by the Public Health Department, for example, flushing schemes, irrigation schemes, anti-larval measures and other schemes which help directly or indirectly in eradicating malaria. It has been decided by Government that in regard to these anti-malaria grants arrangements should be made to secure continuous progress and lasting results. Several comprehensive anti-malarial schemes are under examination in the Public Health Department and a grant of Rs. 3 lakhs has been provided for expenditure for anti-malarial measures.

With the object of ensuring prompt preparation and proper execution of large anti-malarial schemes it is proposed to appoint a trained Malaria Engineer with an adequate staff. The cost would be met out of the grant of Rs. 3 lakhs.

A comprehensive malaria survey is being conducted so that the incidence of the disease and the direct and indirect causes which lead to its outbreak, increase or recrudescence in particular areas may be definitely ascertained with a view to launching remedial measures. The survey is expected to be completed at an early date.

The Ministry continued to combat the Ludlowii menace in and about Calcutta by undertaking survey and control measures on an extensive scale round about the city in collaboration with the Corporation of Calcutta and other local authorities and local concerns. Necessary provision of funds was made in 1938-39 and has been repeated in 1939-40.

And Kala-azar.

The provision for kala-azar grant has been raised from Rs. 70,000 to Rs. 1 lakh, for a period of three years for the present, Rs. 10,000 out of the additional amount being ear-marked for kala-azar specifics. This is an auxiliary grant to local authorities which has been of great assistance in combating kala-azar. A scheme for control of kala-azar in the Darjeeling district has been inaugurated in the current year. Under this scheme the opening of 18 treatment centres in affected areas is contemplated. Ten rural medical officers and 2 sanitary inspectors with other subordinate staff are being appointed. The staff will also undertake survey and preventive work especially in connection with the spread of infection from and to the adjoining States, viz., Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim. The scheme will be operated by the District Board of Darjeeling under the supervision of the Director of Public Health. Provision for expenditure for the current year amounting to Rs. 5,309 has been made.

And Small-pox.

In order to render larger financial assistance to the local authorities in their campaign of vaccination and re-vaccination in rural areas, the Ministry restored the portion of the grant which was retrenched, viz., Rs. 5,000.

The Ministry propose to create the post of a Superintendent of Vital Statistics and Vaccination. It will be his function to correlate and analyse the considerable amount of statistical information available in the Public Health Department with a view to taking effective preventive measures in time against diseases like small-pox, malaria, etc. Statistical research work which is likely to yield valuable information will also be possible with the appointment of this officer.

And Tuberculosis.

The following is a summary of measures which Government have adopted or propose to adopt to fight the tuberculosis menace:—

A comprehensive scheme for campaign against tuberculosis has been prepared and is now under examination. Lady Linlithgow's appeal for the King-Emperor's Tuberculosis Fund has attracted public interest and is expected to give the movement a very great impetus.

As a preliminary step with a view to settling the lines on which anti-tuberculosis work on a comprehensive scale should be undertaken, the Ministry propose to conduct a tuberculosis survey in typical areas in order to gauge the extent of its prevalence as well as to collect comparative data regarding the prevalence of the disease in different localities and among different classes according to sex, occupation, conditions of living, etc. The survey work will be done in close collaboration with the Indian Research Fund Association. Necessary provision has been made in the budget.

It is essential in any anti-tuberculosis campaign that medical officers and officers of health should be trained in early diagnosis of cases and the methods of modern treatment. Accordingly provision has been made for training in tuberculosis work, for medical and health officers at an ultimate expenditure of **Rs. 25,000.**

Provision for an ultimate expenditure of Rs. 75,000 has also been made in the Medical Budget for grants to the Sadar Hospitals towards better nutrition and treatment of tuberculosis cases admitted into the Sadar hospitals.

A capital grant of Rs. 1,36,000 has been provided in the budget for assisting the Jadabpur Sanatorium in acquiring lands for extension of accommodation. This is the only Sanatorium in the province and is doing good work.

There being no climatic sanatorium in the province it has been decided to establish a sanatorium on the best site available irrespective of cost and a token provision of Rs. 1 lakh has been made in the relevant budget for buildings. For the establishment of such a sanatorium Babu Ram Kumar Bangore has generously made a donation of Rs. 2,80,000 which now amounts to Rs. 3 lakhs with accrued interest.

An additional grant of Rs. 10,000 has already been made to the Tuberculosis Association to enable this body to carry on its work.

And Leprosy.

A comprehensive scheme for controlling leprosy has been prepared in the Public Health Department and is now under examination by Government. A lump grant of Rs. 50,000 has been provided with a view to partial introduction of the scheme.

Besides the grants paid to the British Empire Leprosy Relief Association and Mission leper homes in Bengal and the Kalimpong Home it is proposed to make suitable grants to the clinics in Calcutta run by the Church Missionary Society which are doing excellent work.

Maternity and Child Welfare.

The Ministry have adopted and propose to adopt the following measures for maternity and child welfare activities:—

(1) Provision for adequate nursing and training of Indian nurses in Campbell Hospital,—Rs. 2,86,000 has been provided in this year's budget for necessary buildings and equipments.

(2) Increase of annual grant by Rs. 7,000—the amount by which it was retrenched owing to financial stringency, for maternity and child welfare work consisting of *dai* training and grants to Dacca Maternity Centres and to the Bengal Health Welfare Committee.

(3) Grant to Indian Red Cross Society for a training school for health-welfare workers to be increased to Rs. 10,000 from Rs. 5,000 per year for 3 years at present.

(4) The appointment of a specialised medical woman as a Lady Superintendent with necessary staff for co-ordinating and promoting the activities of the various services, educating public opinion, investigating the cause of large number of maternal and infantile deaths and suggesting means to improve present conditions.

(5) Grants-in-aid to the following institutions:—

(*i*) Ram Krishna Sisu Mangal Pratisthan—a non-recurring grant of Rs. 49,000.

(*ii*) Servants of Humanity Society—non-recurring grant of Rs. 1,200.

(*iii*) Carmichael College Maternity Hospital—Rs. 1,50,000.

(First instalment of Rs. 75,000 has been paid. Second instalment has been provided in the next budget.)

The Bengal Nurses Act.

The Bengal Nurses Act which has begun to operate fully, will, it is expected, improve the services of nurses, midwives and health visitors to a considerable extent.

Rural Public Health Reorganisation Scheme.

Comprehensive proposals for reorganising rural public health activities including the provisions of adequate rural medical relief, school medical inspection, medical relief for school children and systematic health education of children and adults along with provision for Maternity and Child Welfare service have been framed and are under examination. A lump amount of Rs. 1,50,000 has been provided in the budget, for initiating the scheme. It may be observed that this reorganisation scheme when fully given effect to would involve a recurring expenditure of several lakhs of rupees.

It may be observed that complete organisation for the control of public health cannot possibly be set up in a year or two; comprehensive measures for control and eradication of epidemic and infectious diseases require careful planning apart from the most important question of finance which must take time.

Programme of work in hand.

Besides the works already accomplished, the Ministry have decided to undertake the following measures of improvement in the sphere of medical relief and administration:—

(1) *Rural medical relief.*—The work accomplished in this direction has already been referred to. With a view to spreading the facilities of medical relief more widely and to bring it nearer to the door of the villager, Government have under their anxious consideration a comprehensive scheme of rural public health organisation. This scheme provides for establishment of a rural dispensary as a centre of medical and public health activities for a moderate and well defined area with a medical officer, trained in public health, in charge. This scheme when given effect to will thus co-ordinate both preventive and curative sides of medicines. Such a scheme will, however, require some time to take a definite shape but it is proposed to partially initiate this scheme in the ensuing year in selected areas on an experimental basis, for which necessary provision of Rs. 1,40,000 has been made in the Public Health Budget.

(2) *Recurring grants to Sadar Hospitals—Scheme for improvement of Sadar Hopitals.*—In connection with the question of improvement of Sadar Hospitals a moderate scheme was drawn up by the Medical Department in three parts:—

(*1*) Capital grants in aid to local authorities for enlargement and improvement of Sadar Hospitals including nursing arrangements.

(*2*) Contribution towards improvement of the standard of medical relief by providing Assistant Surgeons where only Sub-Assistant Surgeons are employed.

(*3*) Recurring aid to the local authorities and hospital committees by abandonment of the charges for the salary of one Government Medical Officer in each hospital.

Part (*1*) of this scheme has already been given effect to, as mentioned before. The other two parts of the scheme are under serious consideration of the Medical Department in consultation with the Finance Department. This scheme when fully given effect to, will

provide adequate medical attention and relief on modern lines not only for the people at the headquarters but also for those residing in the rural areas as people in the muffassal will naturally be attracted to these improved hospitals nearer home thereby relieving the congestion in the Calcutta Hospitals to some extent.

(3) *Opening of Eden Hospital Extension Block.*—The Eden Hospital Extension Block of the Medical College Hospitals was built several years back and has been lying vacant for financial reasons, although the need for more accommodation for maternity cases is overwhelming. In 1936 a block of 10 beds, subsequently raised to 12, was opened on a paying basis. Steps are being taken to open the remaining beds in the Extension Block on a paying basis, and it is expected that the beds will be opened very shortly. The plans and estimate of the nurses' quarters for additional nurses required for the purpose are under preparation.

(4) *Eden Sanitarium, Darjeeling.*—The Improvement of the Eden Sanitarium, Darjeeling, has been under contemplation of Government for some time past. The entire capital cost of the scheme estimated at Rs. 80,000 has been provided in the budget for 1939-40.

(5) *Establishment of a General Council and State Faculty of Unani and Homeopathic medicines.*—Following the establishment of a similar Council for Ayurvedic Medicine, it has been decided to establish Councils for Homeopathic and Unani medicines also. The draft statutes for these Councils have been prepared and a Committee consisting of 18 members has been appointed to consider the statutes for the proposed General Council and State Faculty of Unani Medicine.

(6) *Improvement of standard of education in Medical Schools.*—The question of raising the period of the course in the Medical Schools from 4 years to 5 years with a higher standard of preliminary qualification has been mooted and is under consideration of Government.

(7) *Provision of Hostel accommodation for the students of Medical College and Schools.*—The students of the Medical College and Schools suffer great inconvenience for want of hostel accommodation. Houses are rented as attached messes for the Medical College and there is no hostel accommodation for any of the Medical Schools in Bengal except Burdwan. It is therefore proposed to build hostels for the Medical College and the various schools.

(8) *Centre for training Indian nurses.*—A scheme of improvement in the nursing in the Campbell Hospital with the object of establishing a large training centre for Indian Nurses has been framed. Government are committed to this scheme, as already stated, by provision of funds for construction of nurses' quarters and its epuipments. The scheme is being scrutinised by Government and is approximately estimated to involve additional ultimate recurring expenditure of Rs. 73,000.

(9) *A school of Dentistry and Dental Hospital.*—The proposal for a school of Dentistry to be established and maintained by Government was dropped on financial grounds. It is, however, proposed that the Calcutta Dental College should be recognised by Government. As soon as the Bengal Dentists' Bill is enacted and the Dental Board comes into existence the question of recognition by Government of the Calcutta Dental College will be considered. It will be, perhaps, necessary to give financial assistance, capital and recurring, to the Calcutta Dental College so that it may run efficiently and meet the public demand.

(10) *Establishment of a Climatic Tuberculosis Sanatorium in Bengal.*—Government have under their serious consideration a scheme for establishment of a climatic sanatorium for Tuberculosis. A private gentleman has made a donation of nearly Rs. 3 lakhs for this purpose. The cost should not, however, be a determining factor and Government are in quest of a suitable site. As soon as a proper site is selected the work will commence. A provision of Rs. 1 lakh has been included in the budget for 1939-40 for this purpose.

Improvement of rural water supply.

The Ministry, soon after they assumed office set about seriously to tackle the problem of rural water supply and malaria, two of the most outstanding problems of the rural areas.

In the budget for the year 1937-38 the rural water-supply grant was increased from Rs. 2 lakhs to Rs. 3 lakhs 50 thousand, of which Rs. 2 lakhs 50 thousand was recurring and Rs. 1 lakh was non-recurring. The block grant for rural water-supply was raised in 1938-39 to seven and a half lakhs, to finance a comprehensive programme for the solution of the rural water-supply problem. The loan policy of Government has been also considerably liberalised to encourage the local authorities to take loans with a view to tackling the problem of rural water-supply on a comprehensive scale, and adequate provision of funds for the granting of loans was made. The present loan policy is being further examined with a view, if possible, to render it more attractive and even less burdensome.

The Ministry propose to undertake a comprehensive survey of the whole province in order to ascertain the actual needs regarding water-supply in each district. With this object it has been decided to create a rural water-supply subdivision under the Chief Engineer, Public Health Department, Bengal. The duty of the staff would be to make a survey of rural water-supply in various districts where necessary and also to examine and advise whether the proposed sources of water-supply are suitable and are according to approved specifications and whether the arrangements made for maintenance of those sources are effective.

Necessary action is being taken by the Public Health Department towards preparation of a comprehensive programme for rural water-supply with the assistance of the District Board and local representative Water-supply Committee and it is contemplated to execute the programme within a period of 3 to 5 years. The Ministry are determined to tackle the problem of rural water-supply effectively within a short compass of time.

IRRIGATION PROBLEMS.

The irrigation problems of the Province, large and small, have engaged the serious attention of the Ministry and of the departmental experts on whom they naturally rely for the evolution of practical schemes of solution. The Hon'ble Minister in charge has personally devoted considerable time and labour to the study of these problems, particularly the River Problem of Bengal, as will appear from a paper on the subject which he read at the Calcutta University Institute (see Appendix C). Some of these problems have been solved, schemes to solve others are under examination, while the most outstanding problem which concerns the control of Bengal's rivers is one which three neighbouring Governments have in common.

Inter-Provincial Flood Conference.

An Inter-Provincial Flood Conference was held at Lucknow on January 5, 1939, to consider the question of floods in the Gangetic plain. It was attended by 21 representatives of Bengal, Bihar and the United Provinces Governments, including the Railway. The Conference appointed a Technical Sub-Committee which dealt with the genreal problem of floods and also with particular problems which, in its opinion, required immediate investigation.

Interim Committee appointed.

One of the recommendations made by the Technical Sub-Committee was that a Ganges River Commission should be constituted for the purpose of dealing with all questions concerning the conservancy of the Ganges river basin. As the constitution of the Commission would have taken time, the Sub-Committee recommended that in the meantime, a small interim Committee consisting of one Chief Engineer of each of the three provinces referred to above and a Railway and a Forest representative may be appointed. Its recommendation has been accepted by

the three Provincial Governments, who have agreed to the appointment of the following interim Committee:—

Mr. T. M. Lyle, C.I.E., Chief Engineer, United Provinces, Irrigation Branch—Chairman—Representative of United Provinces Government.

Mr. W. G. Came, I.S.E., Deputy Chief Engineer, Public Works, Department (Irrigation)—Representative of the Government of Bihar.

Mr. S. C. Majumdar, Chief Engineer, Irrigation Branch—Representative of the Government of Bengal.

Mr. E. A. Smythies, I.F.S., Chief Conservator of Forests, United Provinces—Forest Representative.

Mr. J. R. Izat, Chief Engineer, Bengal and North-Western Railway—Railway representative.

Mr. A. P. Watal, I.S.E., Executive Engineer, Irrigation Branch, United Provinces—Secretary.

The Committee will have power to co-opt additional members when necessary. It will collect and study the necessary data and recommend immediate remedial measures. It will also make proposals regarding the constitution and functions of the proposed Ganges River Commission.

The Committee will determine its headquarters.

To begin with the lesser problems first.

Small Schemes.

A list of small irrigation projects for every district to meet local needs has been prepared and a Superintending Engineer has been specially deputed to examine them. Provision for five such schemes in the districts of Midnapore, Malda, Nadia, Dacca and Faridpur was made in the budget for the year 1938-39 and work has been started on them. The budget for the year 1939-40 provides for another such scheme in the district of Murshidabad. These six schemes are as follows:—

Name of scheme.	Estimated cost.
	Rs.
1. Excavation and repairs to Khairabani bundh and silt clearance of the channel from Aulia bandh, district Midnapore	4,364

This part of the country—about 3,000 acres—is suffering from periodical failure of crops due to insufficient rainfall. The scheme is intended to afford irrigation facilities to the land of the villagers.

	Rs.
2. Ranju bundh scheme, district Malda ...	3,893

The Ranju Bil to the north of the bundh is a basin in which the water from the catchment area to the north of the bundh collects. The land to the north of the bundh is cultivated by Santals who grow *Haimantic* paddy. The object of the scheme is to acquire the bund under the Bengal Embankment Act, II of 1882, and to improve it by providing a sluice and a weir to regulate the passage of flood-water from Tangon over the bund above these works and to restore water for *boro* cultivation lower down.

	Rs.
3. Flushing of the Bhatui river in the district of Nadia	21,376

The scheme aims at improving the Bhatui river in thana Chuadanga, district Nadia, by proper flushing with water of the Mathabhanga river for the improvement of the sanitary condition of the villages through which the river passes. The Hon'ble Chief Minister personally inaugurated the scheme and cut the first sod.

	Rs.
4. Re-excavation of the Jaliabari khal in the Faridpur district	30,536

The Kumar river is deteriorating through adverse physical conditions. With a view to formulating a scheme for its improvement extensive investigation and guage observations are now going on. A scheme for excavating Jaliabari Khal has been undertaken. This will effect a connection between the Sitalakhya and the old Kumar rivers from Kalyanpati to Kamalpur by re-excavating a silted up channel and joining the existing bils with suitable cuts for the drainage of Kajildanga, Maura and other smaller bils for improvement of the sanitary condition of the locality and for providing a straighter communication between the two rivers.

	Rs.
5. Re-excavation of the Salda bil khal in the Dacca district	4,964

In the absence of a proper drainage channel the bil gets filled with water and affects crops of an area of about 2 square miles. The bil is not drained dry even in late December when the Sonakhali river is low. The re-excavation will establish a drainage connection to the said river.

	Rs.
6. Flushing the Kana More river in the Murshidabad district	15,441

The Kana More is a branch of the More river. Its bed has been silted up and no water flows through it except when the mother river is in high floods. Consequently the health of the locality has deteriorated. The proposal is to flush the Kana More river by connecting to it an existing channel from the river More.

Larger Irrigation Projects.

With regard to the bigger question of the resuscitation of dead and dying rivers, Government undertook and completed during the year 1937-38 a contour survey of Western and a part of Central Bengal. The contour survey in the remaining part of Central Bengal was also taken up during the following financial year.

A detailed estimate of the Hooghly-Howrah Flushing Scheme was prepared during 1938-39. It is hoped that Government will soon be able to arrive at a decision on this scheme.

Two other big schemes, namely, the More and the Darakeswar schemes are under preparation:—

The Darakeswar Reservoir Project aims at irrigating about 1,75,000 acres of high arable lands in the Bankura and the Burdwan districts which have hitherto suffered acutely on account of poor or irregular rainfall during the period when a supply of water into the fields were most needed. The scheme comprises a reservoir at Suknivasa and also an anicut (two if necessary) a little distance down Bankura. Besides the above, a main canal with its numerous distributaries and other associated works, viz., bridges, cross drainages, regulators, inlet and outlet pipes, etc., will have to be excavated. The scheme is being now scrutinized to see how far its cost can be reduced.

The More Reservoir Scheme aims at irrigating nearly 4,61,000 acres of arable lands in the Birbhum and Murshidabad districts which also suffer at times due to similar shortage of rainfall. The scheme comprises a reservoir at Messanjore, an anicut at Khatanga, two main canals running across the country on both the banks. Numerous distributaries, village channels, bridges, regulators, outlets, and inlets will have to be constructed along with them. This scheme is under preparation.

Other important schemes.

The following important schemes were taken up during the year 1938-39:—

Improvement of the lower Bhairab, district Jessore.—A scheme costing Rs. 2,17,000 for the improvement of the lower Bhairab has been sanctioned and the work has been taken up. This aims at drawing 1,000 cubic feet of water per second from the Kumar through a channel which

will cut across the Nabaganga, follow the Beng, the Chitra, the Mongolpota Khal and the Majdia Baor and finally discharge into the Bhairab at Haibatpur. The Hon'ble Maharaja Srish Chandra Nandy personally inaugurated the scheme and cut the first sod.

Flood protection on the right bank of the Damodar river, district Burdwan.—There is a large area of low land on the right bank of the Damodar river between Vasnan and Subaldah. The main crop cultivated in this area is *aus* which is often damaged even by low floods. With a view to control these floods which enter the fields through spill channels in the earlier part of the harvesting season, a detailed survey of the affected area including contour levelling was made and on the data collected a scheme was prepared. Work on the scheme, which is expected to cost Rs. 1,16,500, has begun.

Re-excavation of the Satkhira khal, district Khulna.—The Subdivisional town of Satkhira is situated on the fringe of the Sundarbans. It has no railway connection, and communication by road is poor owing to to the riverine character of the surrounding country. Waterways are therefore of the greatest necessity in this locality, but the khal on which the town is situated is partially silted up and loaded boats find difficulty in plying through it during low water. The health of the town has also deteriorated considerably owing to the silting up of this khal. To improve navigation as well as sanitation, a scheme for the re-excavation of this khal at an estimated cost of Rs. 38,000 has been sanctioned and the work has begun.

The budget for the year 1939-40 provides for the following other important schemes also:—

Scheme.	Ultimate cost.
	Rs.
Jhargram Irrigation project, Midnapore ...	2,47,160
Widening the bed of the Kaliaghye river from Langolkota to Sewlipur, Midnapore	85,931

Ghuni-Jatragachi scheme, 24-Parganas.—An extensive low area east of Calcutta is subject to water-logging due to the death of its drainage channel, the Bidyadhari river. A scheme to drain this area into the Kulti outfall channel now under construction by the Calcutta Corporation has been prepared. If funds are available this scheme which is likely to cost Rs. 88,000 will be taken up after the Kulti outfall cannel is fully excavated.

Rural reconstruction Schemes in Bengal financed out of the Government of India's grant and local contribution.—Besides the schemes

mentioned above a good many minor drainage and flushing schemes and schemes for improvement of existing village communications including existing waterways have been taken up in almost every district of Bengal out of the Government of India's 1st and 2nd grant for rural reconstruction in Bengal and of the local contributions realised for the purpose. Some of these schemes have been completed and others are in progress.

Comprehensive list of irrigation needs.—A comprehensive list of irrigation needs in each district of Bengal arranged in order of urgency has been detained from the Commissioners of Divisions and has been technically examined by a senior officer of the Department. A supplementary list of schemes recently received is now under examination.

Departmental reorganisation.

In consideration of the longfelt need for the reorganisation of the Irrigation Department, provision has been made in the budget for the year 1939-40 for the continuance of the temporary Development Circle and the creation of a temporary Division at Mymensingh. The reorganised staff will take up the preparation of some urgent irrigation projects. Areas in Eastern and Northern Bengal where very little could be done hitherto for want of staff, will henceforth receive more attention.

Road Fund Works.

The Government of Bengal have been receiving, since 1930-31, subventions from the Government of India Central Road Fund to be spent on road development. The previous Government realized the necessity for a comprehensive scheme upon which their policy of road development should be based and so in 1934 decided to appoint a special officer to draw up and report on such a scheme. Mr. A. J. King, O.B.E., I.S.E., was appointed for the work.

The terms of reference drawn up by Government were very wide and the report took longer to prepare than was anticipated, with the result that road development work was somewhat slowed up generally and when the present Government came into office in April 1937 there was an unspent balance of 43 lakhs in the Road Fund.

In the budget for 1937-38 provision was made for Rs. 22,88,000 for Road Fund Works, but owing to difficulties in getting schemes sanctioned and delay over land acquisition it was not possible to spend more than Rs. 11,16,780. In April 1938 Government appointed a

special officer to expedite progress on Road Fund Works. The budget provision for 1938-39 for such works was 25½ lakhs approximately and it is anticipated that the expenditure will between 20 and 21 lakhs.

Several new projects will be started in the present financial year (1939-40) when it is expected that 30 lakhs will be spent on Road Fund Works.

CO-OPERATIVE DEPARTMENT.

On co-operation depends mainly the revival of rural credit and therefore, in the Co-operative Department the policy followed by the Ministry has been one of consolidation and cautious expansion. As a result of consolidation, there was improvement in the financial position of the Provincial Bank in that the bank not only worked with a balanced budget during the last 2 years but also made a cash profit after meeting all expenses, of Rs. 81,000 in 1936-37 and Rs. 97,000 in 1937-38. This has enabled the bank to declare a small dividend to its shareholders which was stopped since 1930. Many of the central banks also improved their financial position. Noticeable improvement in collection was made by 20 Central Banks. But there was a set back in 1938-39 due to unprecedented floods which affected about 16 districts in the Presidency.

Some important steps.

For consolidation of the position of the movement the following important steps have been taken by the present Ministry:—

(*a*) *Interest rates reduced.*—The lending rate of the Provincial Bank to Central Banks has been reduced from 8 per cent. to 5 per cent. and the rate charged from the borrowing members of village societies has been similarly reduced from 12½ per cent. to 9⅜ per cent. Substantial remission has been given in respect of outstanding arrear interest. Period of repayment for loans has been extended to 10 years or more. The rate of interest on the members of Land Mortgage Banks has been brought down to 8⅜ per cent.

(*b*) By amicable arrangement with the depositors the borrowing rate of the Central Banks from deposits has been reduced to 3 per cent. in most Banks.

(*c*) *Loans by Provincial Bank.*—Notwithstanding serious handicap due to the immobility of their investments in Central Banks under which the Provincial Bank is working at present that Bank has not altogether stopped advancing short-term loans to the Central and other Banks. Altogether Rs. 33,000 was advanced as short-term loan in 1936-37 and Rs. 2·73 lakhs in 1937-38. These loans were advanced

to 21 Central and other Banks. The repayment of these loans are considered satisfactory as almost all the Banks have paid off their instalments with interest. Two Banks only have asked for time till the next harvest as the last harvest in their areas were wholly damaged by flood. These loans were given by the Central Banks to good and honest members of village societies.

(*d*) *More efficiency of management.*—For more efficient management of the Central Banks, Departmental Officers have been lent to them on their requisition to serve as Chief Executive Officers. The position is showing signs of improvement in most of the Banks where such officers have been lent, e.g., Kushtia, Hatiya, Mymensingh, Rangpur, Natore and Malda.

(*e*) *Training of officers.*—The Officers of the department have been given a full course of co-operative training at the Dum Dum Training Institute. The last batch of officers will pass out of the training class in May this year. Arrangement has also been made to train up about 800 supervisors and secretaries of the Central Banks from June 1939 onwards. Thereafter, it is proposed to train the office-bearers of 20,000 village societies.

(*f*) *Debt settlements speeded up.*—For speedy settlement of the debts of the co-operative members, Special Co-operative Debt Settlement Boards have been created in the area of Central Banks. Similar Boards have also been created to facilitate the work of the Land Mortgage Banks.

(*g*) *Better supervision and control.*—For better supervision and control of the societies the charge of the Assistant Registrar and the Inspector has been reduced by increasing the number of these Officers. Ordinarily 12 to 15 hundred societies only have been allotted now to one Assistant Registrar and 200 societies to one Inspector.

(*h*) *Safeguard against defalcation.*—The proposal for separation of audit from administration and placing the audit under the control of the Chief Auditor of the Department has been given effect to in several districts and will be fully implemented after the officers are discharged from the training class. This measure is expected not only to improve the quality of audit but will also serve as an effective safeguard against defalcation.

(*i*) *New legislation.*—The Bengal Co-operative Societies' Bill is now before the Select Committee who have made considerable progress and hope to finish their work very soon. Great importance is attached to the enactment of the Bill by the Official and non-Official Co-operative Workers.

The provisions of the Bill have been drafted in a manner which will enable Government to check abuses in Co-operative Societies and extend state aid to societies by direct loans, by subsidy or by guaranteeing debentures issued by the Central Banks. It may be noted that under the existing law Government have no power to extend such aid to Co-operative Societies and the contemplated Bill, when passed into law, will enable them to do so and thereby effect a far-reaching improvement upon the existing state of things.

(*j*) *Development of handloom industry.*—For better supervision and control of the Co-operative Industrial Societies and for development of handloom industry, an Industrial Assistant Registrar has been appointed who with his staff has succeeded in improving the quality of hand woven textiles and increasing the output of these societies.

A women's branch for development of handloom industry has been organised by starting a Women's Industrial Home at Dum Dum. The staff for this organisation has been supplied out of Government of India handloom grant.

(*k*) *Land Mortgage Banks.*—The 5 Land Mortgage Banks established in the Presidency have worked fairly satisfactorily although their progress has inevitably been slow because of the necessity of making a minute examination and scrutiny into the assets and repaying capacity of members applying for loans. During 1937-38 the annual instalment due from the members of these Banks was Rs. 28,000 principal and Rs. 35,000 interest. The collection on account of principal was Rs. 33,000 and on account of interest also Rs. 33,000. The excess collection of principal is due to advance payment of instalment.

A scheme for the establishment of Land Mortgage Banks in other districts of the Presidency is now under the consideration of Government.

(*l*) *Reconstruction of agricultural credit movement.*—A comprehensive scheme for reconstruction of the entire agricultural credit movement by rehabilitation of the financial position of the Central Banks and for affording further facilities to these Banks to supply short-term credit to the agriculturists is now being examined by Government. Up to the time of writing this report a sum of 13½ lakhs has been already advanced by Government to the Provincial Bank to enable the Co-operative Banks to advance short-term loans to the agriculturists.

(*m*) *Assistance to Co-operative Organisation Society.*—The Bengal Co-operative Organisation Society, the only non-official body of the entire co-operative movement was in a moribund condition for some years. It has been reconstructed with financial assistance from Government with the result that the monthly Journal "The Bhander" issued

by the society has been considerably improved and it is now in a position to disseminate various useful knowledge and information for the benefit of the large body of the members of co-operative societies and general public.

(*n*) *Co-operative Conferences.*—A large number of Co-operative Conferences were held last year in various parts of the province. The Hon'ble Minister in charge of Co-operative Department attended all these conferences, studied local conditions and encouraged people to improve their faith in co-operation and exhorted them to work honestly in pursuance of co-operative principles for improvement of their economic condition.

Result of the policy of cautious expansion.

As a result of cautious expansion the number of societies of all classes have increased from 24,221 to 24,282 or by ;25 per cent.

The movement has extended its activities during the last year in the following important directions, viz.—

(1) *Sugarcane Growers' Unions.*—Two Sugarcane Growers' Co-operative Societies' Unions consisting of 60 Growers' Co-operative Societies have been organised at Gopalpur and Setabganj in the districts of Rajshahi and Dinajpur. Necessary staff for the management of these societies has been provided from the Government of India grant out of sugarcane excise duty. The entire short-term loans necessary for purchase of cuttings have been supplied by the Provincial Bank.

(2) *Fishermen's Societies.*—Two Fishermen's Societies on a large scale have been organised at Chittagong and Noakhali for securing a fair price to the *bona fide* fishermen for their catches. The middlemen's profits have been entirely eliminated by the working of these societies, the societies taking charge of the sale of the catches. The Chittagong Fishery Society took a loan of Rs. 45,000 from the Provincial Bank in October 1938 and the value of the catches during the last 5 months is estimated to be more than Rs. 65,000. The society has already repaid the greater portion of the Provincial Bank loan. Another fishery society on a big scale has just been registered at Goalundo to control the catches in the Padma. One Officer of the Department has been trained in Fishery in Madras.

(3) *Paddy Sale Societies.*—A serious attempt has been made in the Parbatipur area of the Dinajpur district to link up credit with marketing; as a result a paddy sale society on a large scale has been established at Parbatipur, of which the members of the credit societies affiliated to the Dinajpur Central Bank have become members for the purpose of marketing their produce. The arrangement is to sell the produce

of the members at the best possible price and repay their loan to the Central Bank from the sale proceeds of their produce and refund the balance to them. This scheme has worked so far very satisfactorily. The members are getting annas 6 more per maund of paddy than they were getting during the last 3 or 4 years. It is contemplated to introduce this scheme in the areas of other Central Banks where there is prospect for the success of such scheme.

(4) *Rural Reconstruction Societies.*—A large number of rural reconstruction societies—about 500—was organised on co-operative basis during 1937-38. Some of these societies have done very satisfactory work by excavating irrigation khals, tanks for drinking water and village roads by voluntary labour. Some of them have introduced subsidiary occupation in the agricultural and cottage industry field for their members. Government have recently given an impetus to this side of the movement by sanctioning a staff of 10 Inspectors to supervise the working of these societies. The possibilities before these societies are very great and it is hoped that the staff appointed exclusively for this purpose will be able to mobilise the rural people and guide them in the village welfare work.

INDUSTRIAL POLICY.

The policy and programme of the Industries Department evolved under the present Ministry have been so planned as to ensure a balanced development of the industries of the province by devoting attention to the simultaneous improvement of all the principal factors involved as far as practicable, so that progress in any important direction should keep pace with progress in all other equally important spheres. Measures have accordingly been initiated to provide for a steady development and expansion of the activities of the Department under the following main heads:—

(1) Improvement and development of technical and industrial education.

(2) Systematic conduct of research and experiment; establishment of a Research Board.

(3) Industrial survey.

(4) Improvement of methods for the collection and dissemination of industrial intelligence including principally information relating to internal trade and local industries.

(5) Development of existing small and cottage industries.

The activities and achievements of the Department under the heads enumerated above during the present regime are summarised below:—

Training in textile industry.

Mill operatives' Training Course.—The Bengal Textile Institute at Serampore provides facilities for training youngmen in the technique of weaving with a view to fitting them up for independent professions and also enabling them to fill responsible positions in the mills. As a step towards a further expansion of these facilities, it is in contemplation to start a mill operatives' training course at the Institute for the purpose of affording such training to the youngmen as may make them fit for employment in the various jute mills of the province. A scheme to this effect has been prepared and the machinery which has been purchased has arrived from abroad and is in process of being erected. It is hoped that it will be possible to give effect to the scheme early next year.

Research Section.—Two schemes for the extension of Dye House and establishment of a Research Section at the Textile Institute have also been sanctioned. In view of the great possibilities of dye-industries in the province these schemes are expected to produce quite far reaching results based on experiments and research.

Training in leather industry.—Another scheme of major importance has been sanctioned during the current financial year for enlarging the scope of training in respect of the leather industry of the Province and it is expected that the scheme when brought into operation will bear quite fruitful results.

Development of silk industry.

With regard to the silk industry of the province, measures are being adopted to reorganise its three productive branches, namely:—

(*a*) Production of better-yielding and disease-free cocoons.

(*b*) Improved reeling of raw silk.

(*c*) Better and more efficient methods of weaving.

The three stages are inter-dependent. The more the weaving, the more the consumption of raw silk; the more the consumption of raw silk, the more the reeling; and the more the reeling, the more the rearing of cocoons. The Department of Industries has taken simultaneous measures for effecting improvements in all the three stages of production. Without going into details about the various items of the work that have been undertaken with a view to attaining the objectives set forth above mention may be made of the establishment at Malda of a modern reeling institute which is equipped with the latest type of

reeling machinery in order to improve the quality of reeling amongst the silk reelers of the province.

A Conditioning House has been established at Howrah which will test raw silk and effect standardisation so that the sellers will know the quality of the silk they have produced and hence the price they may expect to get and the buyers will know what they are purchasing.

Reorganisation of the Silk Weaving and dyeing Institute at Berhampore.—Provision has been made in the next year's budget for another important institution at Berhampore. When reorganised it will be one of the latest and most up-to-date silk technological institutes where indigenous silk workers as also those who have an interest in the silk industry can work hand in hand for the development of the industry and consequent economic benefit of the whole province.

Furthering Industrial Research.

A Board under the designation of the Bengal Industrial Research Board has been constituted with the object of utilising the existing resources of the province and of devising ways and means for coordinating and harnessing them so as to create a dynamic effort in the prosecution of research to benefit existing industries or to bring new ones into existence.

Three more schemes: Industrial Survey.

Three more important schemes that were put into operation during the year are the appointment of the Industrial Survey Committee, the establishment of the Industrial Intelligence Section and the starting of the Industrial and Commercial Museum with Moving Exhibitions :—

(*a*) *Industrial Survey.*—A Committee has been constituted with eminent scientists, economists, industrialists and businessmen to make a thorough investigation into the existing conditions of large, medium sized, small and cottage industries in order to assess their future possibilities and also to suggest lines of new development.

(*b*) *Industrial Intelligence and Statistics.*—The establishment of the Intelligence Section can be regarded as a very important development of the Department of Industries, for without a fully equipped Statistical Section the Department was feeling very much handicapped in the matter of compiling industrial data which are so very necessary for any progressive industrial planning. The functions of the Section are briefly to carry out industrial surveys of individual industries and individual districts, to compile inter-district trade statistics, to prepare periodical reports on the compiled data and to provide industrial information to enquirers from within and without the province. The utility of this section will increase much more when the Industrial Survey Committee will have made its recommendations and outlined the possibilities of further industrial expansion, for it will then have to

collect and disseminate industrial facts and materials more intensively and extensively.

(c) *Industrial and Commercial Museum and Moving Exhibition.*— The inauguration of an Industrial and Commercial Museum and moving exhibition can also be regarded as a remarkable achievement of the Department, the object being to give the desired impetus to the existing industries of the province. The Museum is designed to be the rallying ground for all types of industrial products and thus present to the public a complete picture of the industrial achievements and possibilities of the province. It also provides suitable charts, maps and pictorial representations of many economic facts and figures, along with models of industrial plants and machineries. A well-equipped library is also going to be organised as an annexe to the Museum. The Moving Exhibition has been organised to move from place to place in order to educate the public on the industrial problems of the province and to make the people industrially-minded.

Development of cottage industries.

It has been the policy of the Department to stimulate the improvement and development of small and cottage industries by means of—

(1) *Research and Experiments* carried out by the expert officers of the Department with a view to evolving and perfecting new and improved processes of manufacturing such industries as weaving, tanning, brass and bell-metal, cutlery, pottery, umbrella-making, etc., etc.

(2) *Peripatetic weaving schools and demonstration parties* engaged in intensive development of the several of the productive industries of the province mentioned above mainly in the rural areas,

(3) *Provision of credit facilities to industrialists* who are financially handicapped in the absence of any comprehensive industrial banking system through the medium of the Bengal State Aid to Industries Act and the Industrial Credit Syndicate, and

(4) *Creation of a market for the products of such industries* by substantial grant-in-aid to non-official organisations, such as, the Bengal Home Industries Association and the Good Companions.

The policy outlined above is not only being continued but has also been intensified in several directions. Not only has the number of Peripatetic Weaving Schools been increased, but also demonstration parties have been established for the purpose of demonstrating the improved processes of manufacturing silk-reeling, jute weaving and coir-weaving industries.

Other small industries.

Measures have also been initiated for effecting suitable improvement by reorganisation of the agencies employed for the propagation of hand-loom weaving with a view to enabling the hand-loom weavers to keep pace with the progress of time. Proposals for taking up other small industries, such as, hand-made paper, watch-repairing, manufacture of jam, jellies and lozenges, etc., are under consideration.

WORK DONE BY THE EMPLOYMENT ADVISER.

Anxious to explore ways and means of solving the problem of middle-class unemployment, the Ministry have appointed an Employment Adviser with effect from 8th August 1938. The following duties have been entrusted to him:—

(1) Preparation of a Handbook giving details of opportunities of employment in the various departments of the Governments of India and Bengal and in semi-Government institutions, such as, Railways, Steamer Companies, District Boards and Municipalities, etc.

(2) Preparation of another Handbook giving details of opportunities of employment in the various branches of industry, trade and commerce in this Province.

(3) Sending information regarding new recruitments in Government departments, semi-Government institutions, the two Universities and appropriate institutions.

(4) Generally giving advice to individuals seeking employment with a view to put them on the right track.

The Employment Adviser has been carrying on his duties under (3) and (4) above and has completed the draft of the Handbook which is expected to be printed soon. He has also undertaken the preparation of the Handbook under (2) above and fairly complete data have already been collected for several industries. It is in contemplation that along with the preparation of this handbook, he should also undertake the collection of figures of middle class unemployment in Bengal with special reference to age, duration of unemployment, educational qualifications, etc., which will be of assistance in tackling the unemployment problem in the province on a more scientific basis.

Pending the publication of the second handbook a series of bulletins are being issued by him giving details of opportunities of employment for Bengali youths, industry by industry. The stream of enquiries that pour in after the publication of each such bulletin shows the great interest which they are arousing among those for whom they are meant.

RETRENCHMENT.

Since their assumption of office the Ministry have gone into the question of the reduction of the cost of administration. In this connection it is well to remember that the scope for retrenchment in this province is much smaller than in any other comparable province. The previous Government, faced with financial crisis consequent on the Meston Award, appointed two Retrenchment Committees in course of two decades in 1922 and in 1932 and effected considerable economies in expenditure. The rates of pay in various services were reduced by them to levels far below those prevailing in other provinces. Leave rules were deliberalised and rules relating to travelling allowance were tightened up.

Fresh avenues explored.

The Ministry on assuming office set about immediately to tackle this problem in right earnest and appointed a senior member of the Indian Civil Service to carefully re-examine all those recommendations of the Swan Committee which had been rejected or partially accepted by the late Government with a view to exploring all possible avenues of retrenchment. As a result of such recommendations, reduction in expenditure to the extent of nearly three lakhs has been effected.

All-round Economies.

Expenditure in the Police Budget during 1938-39 was reduced by over Rs. 6 lakhs as compared with the expenditure in 1936-37 as a result of the recommendations of the Special Committee appointed to report on the reorganization of the Police Department.

It has been decided to reduce the cadre of the Bengal Civil Service (Executive) from 322 to 232 and to entrust Sub-Deputy Collectors with many of the duties now performed by Deputy Collectors. A saving of about Rs. 2½ lakhs is expected as a result. It has been decided to further reduce the scales of pay of all services under the rule-making power of this Government except those whose maximum does not exceed Rs. 100. The maximum of Rs. 1,000 will be reduced to Rs. 800 and of Rs. 750 to Rs. 650 a month and so on—posts with higher maxima being in general reduced by a bigger fraction than those with lower. Reduction in pay scales will automatically produce a corresponding reduction in the pensionary charges.

Saving of Rs. 14 lakhs expected.

An ultimate saving of about Rs. 14 lakhs is expected from the second revision of pay scales which is now under examination. In addition to this, Government have decided to reduce the maximum ordinary pension from Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 4,000 a year, and to abolish the higher maximum limit of pension—at present Rs. 6,000 a year—which can be earned in certain services and posts.

Government have further decided to extend the privilege of retirement after 25 years of service at the option of the incumbents and the liability of being retired after that period at the option of Government to all Government servants to whom their pension rules will apply.

Revision of Contract Rates: Cheaper Buildings.

In the Department of Communications and Works every effort has been and will continue to be made to reduce expenditure. It has been decided to amend the rules in order to make it obligatory on the part of the officers of the Department to accept the lowest tenders in all cases through a new system of regulating the maintenance in each Division of a list or lists of approved contractors which would both minimise the chance of nepotism and impart a sense of security to the contractors against any act of discrimination. The schedules of rates for the different circles have also been revised in the light of the prevailing market rates and the District Boards' schedules of rates have been obtained, and the reason for differences is being investigated.

It is under the contemplation of the Department that all new buildings to be erected in future for the residence of officials or for use as offices will be of a cheaper type.

Forest Department economies.

In the Forest Department a scheme of reorganization of the Cinchona Department has been taken up and it is expected that there will be a considerable saving of expenditure when the scheme is put into operation.

Steady increase in nation-building expenditure.

It is important to note in this connection that revenue receipts in 1937-38 were higher than those of 1936-37 by 86 lakhs. But the

receipts in 1938-39 were less than those of 1937-38 by over 24 lakhs. In spite of such fluctuation in receipts expenditure on nation-building departments have gone up steadily, the expenditure in 1938-39 being greater than in 1937-38 by 50·40 lakhs.

Government are still engaged in examining all possible sources of wastage and extravagance in administration with a view to avoid them. Apart from the negative methods of reduction in personnel and reduction in emoluments Government are actively investigating a positive approach to the problem of constructive retrenchment by increasing the efficiency of the services.

It is recognized that retrenchment can hardly go very far towards improving the finances of the province. In the first place a democratic Government has a tendency to prove rather expensive. In the second place retrenchment of expenditure in many cases merely means postponement of expenditure and is not thus a real saving. Regarding cuts in salaries it will have to be remembered that Government have no jurisdiction, for the present, in the matter of salaries in the higher grades of services.

A review of economic measures.

A review of the economy measures of the Government of Bengal was prepared and circulated for the information of the members of the Bengal Legislatures in March 1939. The review gives a comprehensive idea of the measures already undertaken by the Government of Bengal and shows what further action has been taken on those proposals of the Swan Committee Report of 1932, which were previously not accepted or only partially accepted by Government and the present position as regards those proposals. According to the review the following economy measures have been adopted or are under examination by the Government of Bengal:—

The measures may be broadly classified as follows:—

(1) Revision of scales of pay.

(2) Reduction of maximum pension.

(3) Revision of special pays and allowances.

(4) Revision of cadres of the different services.

(5) General economy measures, *e.g.*—

(*a*) Examination of all the forms with a view to adopting cheaper quality of paper or to abolish them, if possible.

(*b*) Reduction in the cost of Government publications, *e.g.*, the Civil List.

(*c*) Scrutiny of the contingent expenditure of all departments.

(*d*) Delegation of powers.

(*e*) Abolition of unnecessary returns and reports or diminishing their frequency.

(*f*) Suggestion Box.

(6) Detailed scrutiny of the working of each department with a view to minimising expenditure.

(1) *Revision of scales of pay.*—The budgeted expenditure on pay only in the budget of 1939-40 is as follows:—

(In thousands of rupees.)

	Voted.	Charged.	Total.
Pay of officers ..	1,53,73	88,97	2,42,70
Pay of establishment ..	3,49,52	9,91	3,59,43
Total ..	5,03,25	98,88	6,02,13

This is out of a total budgeted expenditure of Rs. 14,64,56,000.

Pay scales were revised in 1934. These revised scales were applied to persons appointed or reappointed to Government service or promoted outside the ordinary line of service after 21st July 1931, and when fully effective, will mean an annual saving of Rs. 50,31,000.

A second revision of scales of pay has been undertaken since the acceptance of office by this Government. Pays of Rs. 100 or less are being left untouched in order to avoid hardship. The proposals of the Finance Department are ready and are being considered by Government in consultation with other departments. These proposals if accepted will effect an ultimate saving of about Rs. 14 lakhs.

That a considerable portion of the Province's Salary Bill is outside the scope of these revisions will appear from the following. The total salary bill of the Government may be classified as follows:—

	(In thousands of rupees.)
(1) Amount drawn by Government servants drawing pay at the rate of Rs. 100 or less per month ...	2,75,90
(2) Amount drawn by those whose monthly pay is above Rs. 100 but not above Rs. 200 ...	81,95
(3) Amount drawn by those whose monthly pay is above Rs. 200 but not above Rs. 500 ...	1,00,15
(4) Amount drawn by those whose monthly pay is above Rs. 500 but not above Rs. 1,000 ...	69,28
(5) Amount drawn by those whose monthly pay is above Rs. 1,000	74,85
Total ...	6,02,13

Of this total almost the whole of the "charged" Rs. 98·88 lakhs is outside the scope of revision because the pays in question are not reducible by authority in India; and the large sum of Rs. 2,75,90,000 is outside its scope by reason of the decision not to reduce pays of or below Rs. 100 per month. The second revision therefore operates upon Rs. 227 lakhs out of a total salary bill of Rs. 602 lakhs. Even in that limited sphere it does not become immediately operative to the full extent as the new scales cannot be made applicable to persons appointed to Government service before 1st April 1937.

It is believed that this second revision if accepted will reduce pays to the minimum that is consistent with efficiency. The only other province in India which is known to have completed a second revision is Madras.

(2) *Reduction of maximum pension.*—Government propose to reduce maximum pensions from Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 4,000 a year and to abolish the higher maximum of Rs. 6,000. Orders are likely to issue soon.

(3) *Revision of special pays and allowances.*—These were revised in 1934, a percentage cut being applied throughout. A further revision is now being attempted on the merits of each case.

(4) *Revision of cadres.*—The work to be done by services under the control of the Government of Bengal has been scrutinised with a view to isolating duties of a routine or unimportant nature, which can be delegated or transferred to lower services, only important duties being retained for the higher services. Such delegation has in many cases reduced the total volume of work. In this way it has been possible

to reduce the cadres of higher services increasing where necessary the cadres of the lower services. Thus formerly the cadres of Deputy Collectors and Sub-Deputy Collectors were 322 and 449 respectively. They are now being changed to 232 and 536. The following cadres have also been reduced as shown below:—

Name of service.	Old cadre.	New cadre.
Superintendents of Excise ..	21	16
Inspectors of Excise	61	52
Assistant Engineers (Irrigation) ..	21	16
Inspectors of Police, Calcutta ..	65	56
Sergeants, Calcutta	217	208
Military Assistant Surgeons ..	16	10
District Kanungo Service ..	59	46
Indian Service of Engineers ..	23	17

A proposal that the number of Divisional Commissioners and Deputy Inspectors-General of Police should be reduced is being examined.

The post of Secretary to the Board of Revenue has been removed from the list of posts reserved for the Indian Civil Service.

As an illustration of the large economy which is expected to result from a reduction of the cadre of the higher services, the following calculation in respect of the reduction in the number of Deputy Magistrates may be seen:—

		Rs.
Annual cost of old cadre—		
B. C. S. 322		17,67,780
B. J. C. S. 449		12,94,736
		30,62,516
Annual cost of new cadre—		
B. C. S. 232		12,73,680
B. J. C. S. 536		15,45,610
		28,19,290
Annual savings		2,43,226

(5) (*a*) *Forms.*—Each variety of forms is being individually examined with a view to introducing a cheaper quality of paper. The examination is made as the printing of a particular form falls due. The examination is in progress. One thousand six hundred eighty forms have been examined up to now. Forty-two forms have been abolished altogether.

(5) (*b*) *Government Publications.*—The new Civil List is a typical example of this line of economy. All unnecessary matters have been

removed from the new Civil List. The paper and the types have been changed. The economy on the Civil List alone amounts to Rs. 3,800 per annum.

(5) (*c*) *Contingent expenditure.*—The contingent expenditure of each department is being scrutinised with a view to isolating fixed charges, e.g., municipal taxes, etc., from variable charges, and to find out the percentage of the variable charges to the total budget allotment of the department. The scrutiny is in progress and as soon as the examination is over, data will be available for finding out an approximately correct correlation between the variable contingent expenditure and the total budget allotment of a department, regard being had to the nature of the work. A lump general cut is unscientific and puts a premium on extravagance, as it is equally severe to extravagant departments and to departments practising a good deal of economy.

(5) (*d*) *Delegation of powers.*—It appears that in several cases financial power has been unnecessarily centralised, resulting in an increase in the volume of work to be done by each office through which proposal for incurring an expenditure has to pass. The financial powers of each authority have been thoroughly scrutinised with a view to their delegation consistently with control and economy and a delegation manual is under preparation.

(5) (*e*) The necessity of all returns and reports is being scrutinised strictly. Fifty returns have already been abolished and the frequency of 9 has been reduced.

(5) (*f*) *Suggestion Box.*—It is a device to interest the clerks and the officers who run the departments in proposals for economy. A locked box is placed in each office. Clerks and officers are invited to put suggestions for economy in it, with the name of the author of the suggestion in a sealed cover. The box is opened at regular intervals by the head of the office. The sealed cover containing the name of the author of the suggestion is opened only when the suggestion is accepted. If the suggestion is not accepted, the cover containing the name is destroyed, without opening it.

(6) *Scrutiny of the working of Departments.*—The chief basis for doing this is the Swan Committee Report. The recommendations of the Swan Committee in so far as they have not been already accepted are being examined again.

Economy measures adopted by other Provincial Governments or recommended to them are also examined carefully with reference to local conditions. Attempts are made to find out new avenues of economy in all possible ways.

THE PROVINCIAL BUDGET.

1938-39.

About 3¾ crores of rupees were provided in the budget estimates of 1938-39 for expenditure on nation building activities and the actual expenditure on such activities amounted to 3½ crores. The following were some of the more important features of that budget:—

(1) Provision for an increased expenditure of over 24½ lakhs for the creation of 2,000 New Debt Conciliation Boards in addition to over 2,800 Boards already existing.

(2) Provision of additional 2¼ lakhs for placing the Co-operative Department on a more satisfactory basis.

(3) Provision for the deputation of two officers to Punjab to study the practical working of the movement there.

(4) Provision of 5 lakhs for the improvement of primary education. and provision of 2 lakhs 50 thousand for youth welfare work.

(5) Provision of 78 thousand for training of teachers for primary schools out of a total ultimate expenditure of 18¾ lakhs for the scheme.

(6) Provision of Rs. 10,000 for the deputation of 3 officers of the Education Department to study the methods of primary education in foreign countries.

(7) Additional grants of 1½ lakhs to non-Government Secondary Schools, 70 thousand to Madrasahs, 70 thousand for girls schools and 5 thousand for junior Madrasahs for girls.

(8) Provision of 2 lakhs out of an estimated cost of 5 lakhs for the Lady Brabourne College for Girls.

(9) Provision of Rs. 60,000 out of a total estimated cost of about 1 lakh for the extension of the Bethune College.

(10) Provision of 50 thousand for special scholarships for Muslim students, 30 thousand for scheduled castes students and 8 thousand for State scholarships to Muslims and members of scheduled castes for higher studies in foreign countries.

(11) Provision of Rs. 1,50,000 out of a total estimated cost of Rs. 4,71,000 for the establishment of an Agricultural Institute at Dacca.

(12) Provision of 16 thousand for Union Board demonstration farms and 39 thousand for a District Agricultural farm at Midnapore.

(13) Provisions of 1 lakh for a jute census, ½ lakh for jute restriction propaganda and 25 thousand for taking necessary preliminary steps in connection with the establishment of a regulated market for jute.

(14) Provision of 6 thousand for an egg grading scheme.

(15) Provision of 10 thousand for opening a dairy section at Dacca Farm.



THE HON'BLE MR. N. R. SARKER, FINANCE MINISTER, LEAVING HIS HOUSE FOR THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, ON FEBRUARY 15, 1939, TO PRESENT THE BUDGET FOR 1939-40





o Ministers at work. *Left*, the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin, K.C.I.E., is seen considering the recommendations of the Terrorist Prisoners Advisory Committee. *Right*, the Hon'ble Nawab Musharruf Hossain, who is in charge of the Jail Department



THE HON'BLE MAHARAJA N. C. NANDY, MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND WORKS [illegible] ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE BRIDGE [illegible] AT JOGIGHOPA



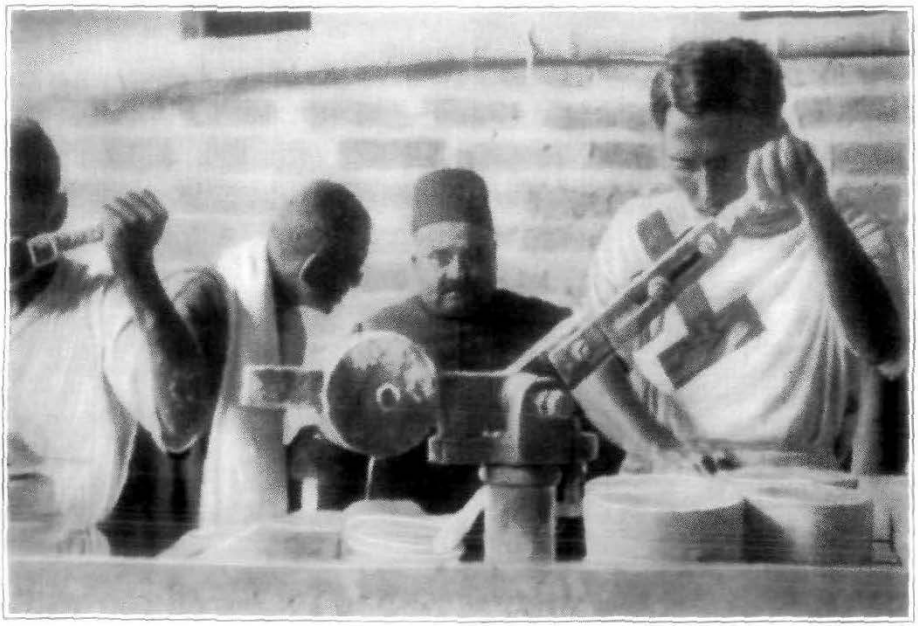
His Excellency Mr. H. J. Twynam, C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S., acting Governor of Assam since February 24, 1939, who was Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal and Secretary to the Publicity Department since its inception.



Mr. E. N. Blandy, c.s.i., c.i.e., i.c.s., Chief Secretary and Secretary, Publicity Department, since February 24, 1939.



THE HON'BLE KHWAJA SIR NAZIMUDDIN, HOME MINISTER, AMONG EX-DETENUS AT BELGHURIA POTTERIES WHERE MANY OF THEM HAVE BEEN TRAINED IN THIS USEFUL INDUSTRY.



THE HON'BLE HOME MINISTER WATCHING THE PROCESS OF THE POTTERY MAKING.



The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, Minister for Commerce, Labour and Rural Reconstruction, is seen with a section of the local leaders during a tour to Pabna.



The Hon'ble Sir B. P. Singh Roy, Minister for Revenue at Port Canning where he spoke urging both landlords and tenants to adjust their differences amicably.



THE HON'BLE MR. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN, MINISTER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH, MEDICAL AND AGRICULTURE WITH OFFICIALS AND NON-OFFICIALS AT FARIDPUR.

(16) Provision of 25 thousand for reorganization of the Bengal Tanning Institute.

(17) Provision of 81 thousand for further extension of the Government Weaving Institute at Serampore.

(18) Provision for the continuance of 28 industrial demonstration parties at a cost of about a lakh.

(19) Provision of 50 thousand for the organization of an Industrial and Commercial Museum.

(20) Provision of 7½ lakhs for Rural Water Supply in addition to 2⅛ lakhs on a contributory basis.

(21) Provision of 4 lakhs for free distribution of Quinine.

(22) Provision of 3 lakhs for anti-malaria scheme and 38 thousand for anti-Ludlowi survey and control measures in and around Calcutta.

(23) Provision of 1 lakh for the establishment of the climatic sanitarium for tubercular patients and of 1 lakh 36 thousand for Jadavpur Hospital and 33 thousand for Tuberculosis Survey.

(24) Provision of 50 thousand for the Control of Leprosy.

(25) Provision of ten thousand for the establishment of Union Board Dispensaries.

(26) Provision of 35 thousand for maternity and child welfare work.

(27) Capital grant of 49 thousand to Ramkrishna Sisumangal Pratisthan for Children Welfare activities.

(28) Provision of 30 thousand for the creation of a model health unit, of 1½ lakhs for the reorganization of rural public health units and 38 thousand for the improvement of rural sanitation.

(29) Provision of 1 lakh 89 thousand for irrigation surveys.

(30) Provision of 1½ lakhs for improved communications in villages.

1939-40.

In the budget for 1939-40 out of an estimated total expenditure amounting to Rs. 14,65,00,000 as much as Rs. 4,02,17,000 has been allotted to Nation Building Departments, distributed as follows:—

			Rs.
Education	...	...	1,73,68,000
Industries	...	...	16,58,000
Agriculture	...	...	20,08,000
Medical	...	...	62,12,000
Public Health	...	...	48,52,000
Co-operation	...	...	15,49,000
Rural Indebtedness	...	...	21,12,000
Veterinary	...	...	6,56,000
Irrigation	...	...	38,02,000

Besides the above a total sum of Rs. 3,71,500 has been provided under other heads on account of rural reconstruction and economic development and improvement of rural areas.

The following are among the special features of the current budget:—

(1) For supplementing local efforts for the improvement of primary education in areas where the primary education cess is being realised, Rs. 5,00,000.

(2) For grants to primary schools for girls in non-School Board areas, Rs. 57,000.

(3) For extension of free primary education in municipalities, Rs. 21,000.

(4) For training of teachers for primary schools, Rs. 1,50,000.

(5) For refresher courses for primary school teachers, Rs. 2,000.

(6) For starting a Purdah College in a rented building from next session, pending completion of its own building, Rs. 71,000.

(7) Towards the cost of buildings for the Lady Brabourne College, Rs. 2,00,000.

(8) For buildings for the Eden High School, Rs. 2,00,000.

(9) For the Gokhale Memorial School, Rs. 50,000.

(10) For the Saleha-Ishaque High School at Sirajganj, Rs. 15,000.

(11) Additional grant for various female educational institutions such as the college section of the Kamrunnessa Girls' School, the Nari Sikhya Mandir, the Saroj Nalini Industrial School, etc., aggregating to Rs. 20,000.

(12) Recurring grants to Girls' High Schools, Rs. 1,00,000.

(13) For the extension and improvement of the Bethune College, Rs. 15,000.

(14) For teaching of two new subjects, viz., Geography and Elementary Science, in Schools for girls, Rs. 15,000.

(15) For the construction of a new Muslim Hall for the Dacca University at an ultimate total cost of two lakhs fifty thousand,— Rs. 1,00,000.

(16) For the St. Xavier's College as capital grant, Rs. 1,50,000.

(17) For the Burdwan Raj College as capital grant, Rs. 1,25,000.

(18) For supplementing the amounts which may be available locally for raising the Karatia College to a first grade college, Rs. 67,000.

For improvements to the hostels attached to the same college, Rs. 7,000.

(19) For the City College, Rs. 50,000.

(20) For the construction of Muslim hostels attached to the Broja Mohan College at Barisal, Rs. 30,000.

(21) For a building grant to the Maharaja of Cossimbazar Polytechnic Institute, Rs. 27,000.

(22) For the Prafulla Chandra College, Bagerhat, to enable it to pay off some old liabilities, Rs. 10,000.

(23) For improvements in the teaching arrangements of the Islamia College and the Presidency College and for the holding of tutorial classes in order to prepare candidates for the All-India Competitive examinations, Rs. 24,000.

(24) For assistance to the Viswa Bharati, Rs. 25,000.

(25) For practical training in Astronomy in Government Colleges, Rs. 10,000.

(26) For the teaching of Geography and Elementary Science in Government and non-Government Secondary Schools for boys, Rs. 61,000.

(27) For additional recurring and capital grants to non-Government Secondary Schools for boys, Rs. 1,35,000.

(28) For grants to Madrasahs, Rs. 86,000.

(29) For grant to Sanskrit *tols*, Rs. 10,000.

(30) For grants to Buddhist *tols*, Rs. 5,000.

(31) For capital grant to the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, Rs. 5,000.

(32) For scholarships and stipends to enable poor students of all communities to prosecute their studies, Rs. 8,80,000.

(33) For two state scholarships for Indian women to enable them to study abroad, Rs. 7,820.

(34) For special scholarships for Muslim students at the Ahsanullah School of Engineering at Dacca, Rs. 1,200.

(35) For scholarships for the training of studies in agriculture in the United Kingdom, Rs. 14,000.

(36) For scholarships for technical and industrial training, Rs. 10,000.

(37) For rural water-supply, Rs. 10,32,000.

(38) For free distribution of quinine, Rs. 4,00,000.

(39) For anti-malarial schemes, Rs. 3,00,000.

(40) For reorganisation of rural public health units, Rs. 1,40,000.

(41) For promoting maternity and child-welfare activities, a grant to the Chittaranjan Seva Sadan amounting to Rs. 2,50,000.

(42) For the establishment of new maternity and child-welfare centres in rural areas on a contributory basis, Rs. 50,000.

(43) For grants to such existing centres, Rs. 35,000.

(44) For the improvement of Sadar hospitals, Rs. 2,06,000.

(45) For grant to the Association for the Prevention of Blindness in Bengal to enable it to maintain 3 travelling eye dispensaries, Rs. 15,000.

(46) For the establishment of a Waterways Board, Rs. 2,50,000.

(47) For the reorganisation of the Development Circle so as to enable it to drawn up urgent irrigation projects in Eastern Bengal, Rs. 92,000.

(48) For irrigation surveys and other schemes estimated to cost ultimately more than four lakhs, Rs. 74,000.

(49) For the continuance of 28 industrial demonstration parties, about Rs. 1,00,000.

(50) For reorganisation of 18 temporary peripatetic weaving schools, Rs. 30,000.

(51) For a grant to the Saroj Nalini Memorial Association, Rs. 30,000.

(52) For grant to the Calcutta Blind School, Rs. 20,000.

(53) Provision has also been included for the revival of mining classes in the coal-fields, and for research and training in the manufacture of articles of common use.

(54) For the establishment of a District Agricultural Farm at Chittagong, Rs. 58,000.

(55) For the promotion of the cultivation of flax, Rs. 10,000.

(56) For the selective multiplication of mustard, Rs. 8,000.

(57) For researches in connection with multiplication of fodder seeds, Rs. 3,000.

(58) For the establishment of a horticultural station, a station for grading hides and for staff for marketing, Rs. 18,000.

(57) For the importation of Hariana bulls and Hariana cows for the purpose of improving live-stock, Rs. 53,000.

(60) For the establishment of poultry multiplication centres, Rs. 50,000.

(61) Provision has been also made for additional staff for animal husbandry and for carrying out a census of cattle.

(62) Regarding Debt Conciliation, Rs. 21,12,000 are to be spent for expenditure on existing Boards and creation of new Boards.

(63) Rs. 2,00,000 have also been provided for the building of a new Reformatory School.

(64) Rs. 2,50,000 as lump grant for Rural Reconstruction.

RADICAL LABOUR POLICY.

In view of the fact that Bengal is a land of labourers and cultivators and, therefore, the prosperity of the province depends on the prosperity of labourers and cultivators, the Ministry have established a Labour Department with the sole duty of promoting the welfare of the labourers and safeguarding their interests. The Department is in charge of a Labour Commissioner who is ably helped by an Assistant Labour Commissioner. The post of Labour Commissioner, was however, so long combined with that of Joint Secretary to the Department of Commerce and Labour. Government have recently sanctioned the separation of these two posts and the appointment of a wholetime Labour Commissioner in order to enable the latter to have more time to render ameliorative services to the working classes and to maintain cordial relations between the employers and the employed. Government have also appointed a Labour Officer to help the Labour Commissioner.

The Ministry came into power when a huge jute mill strike was actually in progress, a large number of labourers were suffering acutely for want of employment and there seemed no way of an honourable settlement. The Minister of Labour supported by the Hon'ble the Chief Minister brought about an honourable end to the strike. Not one person was dismissed by reason of the great strike. The Hon'ble

Minister made it clear that he proposed taking up the cause of labour, whether there is a strike or not; and since then the Department of Labour has been ceaselessly working to bring about better conditions in labour circles.

Encouraging Sound Trade Unionism.

Government have recognised that the labourers must get a fair deal from the employers, from the Government and from society as a whole and their place in the economic structure must be adequately recognised. In order that the labour population should be able to organize itself on sound lines taking its stand on just and reasonable demands or pursue its disputes with the employers to a successful conclusion, and in order also that the labourers may have a correct notion of their relationship with the employers and their proper place in the economic wealth production Government are promoting and encouraging the formation of trade unions run for the benefit of the labourers on sound and reasonable lines and are granting these trade unions not only their own recognition but also securing for them the recognition of the employers. The policy of Government is to see that representations made by these trade unions on behalf of the labourers, which Government expect will be reasonably put forward, are given adequate and sympathetic consideration and the labourers are not victimised or in any way harshly dealt with on account of their participation in the trade union movement. This forms the keystone of the policy of Government and the Minister of Labour looks forward to the day when the labourers will be properly organized and will be able to protect their legitimate rights and obtain amelioration of their condition by constitutional means. The Minister of Labour is using all his influence and his power to see that the labourers are given adequate facilities and opportunities to organize themselves.

Extension of Factories Act.

For the benefit of all classes of labourers the Government have accepted the principle of extending the provisions of the Factories Act to small unregulated factories. The proposal of the Government of India for extending the Factories Act to unregulated power-driven factories for the purpose of preventing exploitation of younger workers and their employment under unhealthy and dangerous conditions is under the consideration of this Department. Government further have recognized that the conditions of service in various industries are not well understood, or fixed. They, therefore, propose enquiring into

the conditions of service in the various industries one by one and setting them down in writing so that the employees may know definitely where they stand in regard to their employers. Government propose to ensure that there is more security in service, that dismissals are only made for adequate reasons, that employment is made as far as possible through employment registers or exchanges, that bribery and corruption are stamped out, that the labourers are well treated by the employers and that gradually such good feeling is established between the employers and the employed as would enable both parties to recognize their mutual interdependence on each other and lead to a feeling of cordial co-operation. Much has already been achieved in these respects and many employers have already revised their attitude towards the labourers. It is indeed a matter of gratification to the Labour Department that bribery and corruption have been practically stamped out and a careful watch is being kept to prevent their recrudescence.

Better Amenities for Labourers.

The Minister of Labour is also trying his best to see that there is an improvement in the general conditions of living amongst the labourers and that the employers of large factories and industries take steps to improve their condition and thus spend more on their labourers apart from the wages that they give. It is however obvious that the industry cannot be burdened with charges which it is unable to bear and which will lead to losses and to its being closed down, as this would really be against the interests of the labourers themselves. The Government, therefore, are at first insisting that the employers should form contact with their labourers and should make every effort to understand their needs and should always be approachable to their labourers, and be ready to listen to their grievances.

It is gratifying to find that the Indian Jute Mills Association as well as some other big industrial firms and employers of labour have accepted this policy and have appointed Labour Officers whose duty is to form better contact with their employees and to listen to their grievances. They are also overhauling the conditions of service in the interests of labourers. The Minister of Labour hopes that in course of time such of the employers as have not come into line will appoint these Labour Officers, will form closer contact with the labourers, will give adequate medical relief to them, will make better provision for their housing, security of their service, freedom from wrongful dismissal, give facilities for the education of the labourers and their children, secure pensions and gratuities for such labourers as have worked with them for a long time and constantly attempt to improve the condition of their labourers

Labour Welfare Department.

Government have also opened a Welfare Department and are encouraging and making grants to such organizations as are ready to promote the welfare of labour, such as the formation of Better Living Societies, the education of children and of adults, sanitation and hygiene amongst the labourers, giving free treatment and dispensing of free medicines, formation of nursing associations, promotion of recreational facilities, encouragement of thrift, campaign against drink, gambling and vice, etc. They are encouraging the establishment of anti-tuberculosis and social hygiene clinics in labour areas and it is hoped that if the experiment is a success they will spread such organizations throughout Bengal.

Government are also considering the question of encouraging housing for the labourers and if necessary, laying down standards of accommodation for such labourers as have to suffer considerably for want of proper accommodation. They are also considering the question of having insurance sickness societies, promoting education, providing better sanitary arrangements in labour areas, rescuing labourers from indebtedness and delivering them from the clutches of the Mahajans, establishing and supervising Co-operative Stores for cheap and good articles such as the labourers usually require, establishing Savings Banks and Co-operative Credit Societies, promoting life insurance schemes and similar measures.

Maternity Benefit Act.

The Royal Commision on Labour in India had observed in their report that the time was ripe for the introduction of legislation throughout India for making a maternity benefit scheme compulsory in respect of women permanently employed in industrial establishments on full time process. They suggested that a more general extension of the scheme already in operation in Bombay and Central Provinces should be made. The Labour Ministry of this Government introduced a Bill which was passed by both Houses and on being assented to by His Excellency the Governor, has become the Bengal Maternity Benefit Act (IV of 1939). Under the provisions of this Act no employers shall knowingly employ a woman in any factory during the four weeks immediately following the day of her delivery and no woman shall work in any factory during the four weeks immediately following the day of her delivery and every woman employed in a factory shall be entitled to, and her employer shall be liable for, the payment of maternity benefit at the rate of her daily earnings calculated according to the provisions of the Act.

Another Bill under the name and title of the Bengal Workmen's Protection (Amendment Bill), 1938, for the protection of workers from the rapacity of money lenders, etc., is under preparation.

Strikes.

In July 1938, the Labour Commissioner and the Assistant Labour Commissioner were appointed Conciliation Officers under the Indian Trade Disputes Act. During 1938 they kept themselves in constant touch with all strikes. In 7 cases their intervention resulted in settlement of the disputes in favour of the workers.

The following strikes call for special mention :—

Strike at the Kulti and Hirapur Workshops of Messrs. Indian Iron Steel Co., Ltd.—Government appointed a Board of Conciliation with Mr. T. H. Ellis, I.C.S., as Chairman, and Mr. K. C. Mahindra and Mr. M. Homi as members representing, respectively the employers and the workmen of the said Company. The board have submitted their report which has already been published.

Strike at the Pottery Works of Messrs. Burn & Co., Ranigunj.—This strike involved 1,400 men and dragged on from 26th April 1938 to 12th August 1938. To settle the dispute Government appointed a Board of Conciliation consisting of Mr. A. Hughes, I.C.S., Labour Commissioner, Bengal, as its sole member. After a detailed investigation he reported that the dismissal of the 4 workers which had caused the strike was not justified as the allegations against them were neither proved nor disproved. In his findings he stated that the strikers could not claim wages for the strike period as they had struck work without notice. Some time after the publication of the report the strikers resumed work.

Strike at the Bata Shoe Factory.—On 4th January 1939, about 1,700 workers commenced a stay-in-strike demanding certain improvements in the conditions of their service. The Assistant Labour Commissioner visited the place the next day and succeeded in persuading the men to leave the factory premises. Negotiations for a peaceful settlement were held up by a resort to picketing which was started to prevent the loyal workers from going to work. On the 9th January, the Secretary of the Trade Union held a meeting in defiance of orders under section 144, Cr. P. C., promulgated with a view to prevent a breach of the peace. His arrest led to a clash between the strikers and the Police. The latter had ultimately to resort to firing which resulted in injuries to 4 strikers. A magisterial enquiry held subsequently came to the conclusion that the action was justified. A settlement was reached on the 16th January and work was resumed on the 19th January 1939. The terms of settlement provided *inter alia* that none of the strikers would be victimized, the rent of the workers' quarters would be reduced from five to three annas per week, medical aid would be given free to all those drawing not more than Rs. 7 per week and that a Provident Fund would be started. Re-appointment of retrenched hands in future vacancies and a compensation of Rs. 4 for each of the

270 workers discharged on the discontinuance of the right shift were also assured. The Company framed rules for the organisation of a Union of the workers.

Jute Mills Strikes.—On the 11th November 1938, six workers of the Standard Jute Mill were dismissed by the Manager on the ground of indiscipline. Opportunity was at once seized by certain labour leaders who, since the promulgation of the Bengal Jute Ordinance had been attempting to organise a general strike of the jute mill operatives in Bengal. Their activities led to a certain section of mill hands in the Tittagarh area to go on strike resulting in a stoppage of work in seven mills and involving about 30,000 workers. About 1,600 labourers who were mostly Madrasis and regarded by the management as consistently troublesome and who had refused to resume work after the mills had restarted, were dismissed. Four mills were concerned in the dismissal of the Madrasis. Normal work was resumed from 2nd January 1939.

Other Labour Problems.

The Labour Commissioner and the Assistant Labour Commissioner dealt with 153 cases of minor disputes as shown in the Table below:—

Statement of cases dealt with by the Labour Office from April to December 1938.

Number of complaints received—		
Dismissal		71
Bribery		12
Wages		23
Miscellaneous		71
Total ..		177
Number of complaints disposed of—		
Successful		42
Unsuccessful		52
Excluded		42
Transferred to other offices		17
Total ..		153
Pending		24

The amendment of the Rules under the Indian Trade Disputes (Amendment) Act is being considered with a view to providing better facilities of work for the Conciliation Officers. Rules are being framed

for the recognition of genuine Trade Unions for a more effective representation of the cause of the workers. The amendment of the Regulations under the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926, is also under contemplation with a view to encourage the growth of genuine Trade Unions and to make provision for a stricter check against mal-administration of their funds. Government have through the Board of Economic Enquiry, Bengal, decided to undertake an enquiry into the family budgets of the working classes in the Province.

Bengal Jute Ordinance, 1938.

To prevent a serious fall in prices in the jute industry the Bengal Jute Ordinance was promulgated on 9th September 1938. The Ordinance produced a salutary result in maintaining prices at an economic level and in stabilising the conditions in the industry. After six months the jute mills entered into a voluntary agreement to control their output which was expected to serve the same purpose as the Ordinance. The Ordinance was accordingly withdrawn with effect from the 19th February 1939.

Training in Mercantile Marine.

Government have sanctioned the creation of two additional scholarships to assist parents or guardians who are not in a position to pay the full fees to send their boys to the Indian Mercantile Marine Training Ship "Dufferin" in Bombay. It is expected that these two scholarships with the existing one, each of which is of the value of Rs. 25 per month and tenable for three years will help those impecunious parents who propose to send their boys to the "Dufferin" for training as cadets and officers for employment in Mercantile Marine Vessels.

Supply of cheaper electricity.

Government have defined their policy of supplying cheap electricity throughout the Province with the object of developing industries, providing facilities for irrigation and other rural needs.

In pursuance of this policy Mr. S. W. Redclift, Electrical Adviser and Chief Electric Inspector, Bengal, was placed on special duty from 1st December 1938, for a period of four months, to make an electrical survey of this Province and to investigate the ways and means for the supply of cheap electricity not only in towns but also in rural areas. Mr. Redclift has made the survey and studied the possibilities of cheap electric supply in comparison with the methods adopted in other Provinces in India and has prepared his report which will soon be considered by Government.

ADMINISTRATION OF LAW AND ORDER.

Release of State Prisoners, Detenus and Terrorist Prisoners.

On their assumption of office the Ministery initiated and steadily pursued a policy of gradual release, consistent with public safety, of persons who had been placed by the previous regime in detention without trial. The Ministry found that there were 16 persons under restraint under Regulation III of 1818 and 2,083 under the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1930. All these persons have been set at liberty.

In connection with the terrorist convicts—

(*i*) all such prisoners were repatriated from the Andamans and brought back to Bengal;

(*ii*) the classification of all such prisoners was reviewed and all *Bhadralog* terrorist prisoners were reclassified where necessary in division II;

(*iii*) temporary special jails were closed down and the prisoners accommodated in modern cellular accommodation;

(*iv*) Government examined individual cases of prisoners and on their own initiative prematurely released 124 terrorist convicts in the exercise of their clemency;

(*v*) In pursuance of an announcement made by the Hon'ble Home Minister in the Legislative Assembly on February 22, 1938, an Advisory Committee was appointed with the following personnel to examine individual cases of the remaining 242 prisoners and make recommendations to Government about them.

(1) Rai Surendra Nath Guha Bahadur, lately a Judge of the High Court, Calcutta ... *President.*

(2) Khan Bahadur A. M. L. Rahman, M.L.A.

(3) Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, M.L.A.

(4) Mr. Birat Chandra Mandal, M.L.A.

(5) Maharajkumar Uday Chand Mahtab, M.L.A.

(6) Mr. Lalit Chandra Das, M.L.C.

(7) Mr. Curtis Millar, M.L.A.

(8) Maulvi Syed Abdul Majid, M.L.A.

(9) Mr. J. R. Blair, C.I.E., I.C.S.

Rai Sahib Bhabesh Chandra Ray, B.C.S., Assistant Secretary, Home Department ... *Secretary.*

The Committee held 24 sittings up to July 31, 1939, and on their recommendations 140 out of the remaining 242 terrorist convicts were prematurely released by Government. Since then further releases have taken place and the number of those still in prison has proportionately dwindled.

Under the Bengal Suppression of Terrorist Outrages Act, the number of persons under various forms of minor restrictions was, when the Ministry came into power, 355, but they have now all been restored to full liberty. Similarly, while the number of associations under ban was 218, the number has now been reduced to 39. The ban on these associations, it should be explained, was because of their connection with or active support of terrorist activities.

The Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act has not been used; and there have been only two cases of processions and assemblies being prohibited within specified areas, and in both instances action was taken under the Calcutta Police Act (Bengal Act IV of 1866). No strike has been prohibited or declared illegal under the Indian Trade Disputes Act.

In March 1939 Government decided to withdraw the ban on the novel *Pather Dabi* by the late Dr. Sarat Chandra Chatterji. Since then Government have permitted the public staging of a dramatised version of the book.

Relations between the Police and the Public Improved.

The policy of the Ministry with regard to the administration of the Police Department may be summed up in the words: Maximum efficiency and maximum courtesy towards the public.

The Hon'ble the Home Minister has repeatedly stressed upon the Police force the indispensability of their securing public confidence and public co-operation. In his speech delivered at the Police Parade held at Dacca on July 19, 1938, the Hon'ble Home Minister said: "On the one hand the police must inspire fear into the hearts of all evil-doers. On the other the police should be the best friend of the law-abiding citizens and should be respected and admired by them. If the maintenance of law and order in the province is to be a pleasant and spontaneous process, then the police must exercise great tact, resourcefulness, sympathy and forbearance in performing their exacting and frequently unpleasant duties. The police must necessarily be entrusted and invested with extensive powers; but these powers must be regarded as a sacred trust reposed in the police by the Government and the people; it is possible to be strict and firm without ceasing to be courteous and kind. For reasons which it is not necessary to discuss here, there is, undoubtedly an impression in the mind of the public that the police are haughty discourteous and unsympathetic. I am very anxious that this unfortunate impression must be removed from

the mind of the public completely and expeditiously: this is of the utmost and of primary importance. The remedy lies solely in your own hands, for no one else can help you in removing this unfavourable impression. In several of my speeches in the Legislative Assembly have referred to this problem, and I feel so strongly about it that I do not mind reverting to this subject again on the present occasion..... .....As men who have undergone rigorous and prolonged training, you are familiar with the word discipline which implies loyalty and subordination to your superiors, efficiency in the discharge of your duties, and absolute control over your body; to me however the word discipline means something far more: I regard mental and spiritual discipline as being equally, if not more, important than physical discipline. Spiritual disciplines must teach you how to exercise power not for its own sake, but for the sake of achieving the great ideal which you must have before you as a police force; if you act in the spirit of public service, if your acts prove that you are actuated by the high and noble motives of loyal service to the Government and the country which you serve, then I can assure you of the fullest support from myself and from all other official superiors against unjustified attacks and perverted criticism of your actions. In this connection, I would also like to remind the public that no police in the world can be successful unless it receives help and co-operation from all sections of the public, individually and collectively. The public must recognise that the police are their friends, and the recognition must be not only in words but in deeds. If every action of the police is misjudged, if it said in season and out of season that the police are heartless monsters of iniquity, if it is assumed, axiomatically, that the police never act fairly and honestly, that they are always perverse and mischievous, then the police can never succeed in their effort to help the public and to establish harmonious relations with them.

The allegation of corruption amongst the police is also one of the causes which makes the police force unpopular, and I should like to exhort every member of the force to do his best to remove this stigma which spoils the fair name of the police. Members of the force can rest assured that Government will show no mercy to those who are found guilty of corrupt practices, at the same time it must be fully realised by all that no amount of vigilance and disciplinary action on the part of the Government or the officers of the police will be of much avail in eradicating this evil unless and until the public also realise their own responsibility in this matter. There cannot be any corrupt practice unless there are two persons involved, the corrupter and the corrupted; there can be no case of bribery until there is a man who offers bribe as well as a man who takes it. It is quite easy to understand that a person in difficulty will be tempted to have recourse to bribery in order to escape the consequences of some foolish or criminal action; but if public opinion mobilises itself against this evil and

condemns it in unmistakable and unequivocal terms, if the culprit knows that by offering a bribe he will become a social outcast and his friends and supporters will withdraw all assistance and support from him and will brand him as a moral delinquent of the worst type, then he will think twice before he seeks through bribery an easy but reprehensible way out of his difficulty. If we can develop and strengthen public opinion in this way, then it needs no prophet to say that the devil of corruption will be soon exercised out of Bengal."

Addressing the Calcutta Police force at the Calcutta Police Parade on November 16, 1938, the Hon'ble Home Minister again stressed the point. He said: "There is one aspect of police work, however, which is so vitally important that I make no apology for referring to it again. I refer to the attitude and behaviour of the subordinate ranks of the police towards the ordinary citizen. To the ordinary citizen, as distinct from those who can be characterised as being in the upper walks of life, the constable and other subordinate ranks of the police are the very embodiment of authority. It is of the first importance that such a position should be appreciated by every member of the force. Courtesy and tact are the characteristics of the best Police forces in the world. I will never agree that they should not be equally characteristic of every member of the Calcutta Police. I cannot too strongly insist that while on occasions the use of force is justified such occasions are definitely of rare occurrence. It is a vital mistake to imagine that harshness and a lack of consideration for the feelings and convenience of others on the bulwark of an efficient police officers and I am glad to learn that this is continually being stressed by your officers both during your training and throughout your service."

There has been a marked improvement in the relations between the Police and the public during the past 2 years. Local officers are holding an increasingly large number of co-operation meetings in the villages with very good results.

With a view to increasing the popularity of the Police force and also in some measure solving the unemployment problem Government have stopped recruiting non-Bengalees as constables in the unarmed branch of the force. Only Bengalees are now eligible for such appointment except in the Darjeeling district. In 5 districts experiments are also being made with the employment of Bengalees in the armed branch. One platoon per range in the armed branch has accordingly been allotted to Bengalees.

Chowkidary Enquiry Committee.

With a view to overhauling the system of rural police Government appointed a Chowkidary Enquiry Committee. (See Appendix D—for personnel and terms of reference.)

The Committee after issuing a comprehensive questionnaire on the subjects referred to them, divided into groups which, between them, visited every district in Bengal except Darjeeling and the Chittagong Hill Tracts. During their tours a large number of witnesses, both non-official and official, were examined and visits paid to thanas and Union Board offices. The Committee had not completed its work by the end of the period.

Penal reform.

Soon after the Ministry came into office they took up the question of Penal Reform in Bengal. Their policy in this matter is one which aims at the humanising of the prison system where it is called for without loss of deterrent effect. They realise that reform in this sphere must be a process of compromise, a balance of opposing factors inspired by and directed towards an ideal. They found that problems of the most far-reaching nature were confronting the department. The provision of new staff, alteration of methods of recruitment, the provision of facilities for training, alterations and additions to buildings, and a number of questions involving careful planning, and the preparation of detailed, and in some cases complicated, estimates were necessary.

They issued a questionnaire on jail reform (see appendix) in order to take advantage of the collective wisdom of all persons who have studied or been brought into contact with the criminal population or the anti-criminal organizations. The questionnaire invited suggestion *inter alia* on jail buildings, their design, lay out and adequacy, classification and segregation of prisoners, the composition and training of jail staff, jail industries, education, physical training, diet, clothing and after-care work. A large number of replies to the questionnaire was received, classified and reduced to workable material and the problems to which they have directed attention have been examined. As a result a variety of points have been selected for reform and detailed proposals with estimates are being worked out by the Inspector-General. They will be examined departmentally and if accorded administrative approval will be put forward for allotment of funds in the next and succeeding budgets.

An experienced officer of this Government went round penal institutions in the United Kingdom, another undertook the study of special schools for juvenile delinquents and a third was deputed to study and report on the extension of adolescent education in Central Jail which had been introduced by this Government.

Urgent Schemes taken in hand.

Meanwhile, provision has been made in the budget of 1939-40 for schemes of urgent importance, and in particular to provide treatment and education for young prisoners. It is proposed to build a new Reformatory and Industrial School in the vicinity of Calcutta with accommodation for 500 students and with the intention of extending the Bengal Children's Act to a wider area than at present. The scheme involves an initial expenditure of about Rs. 6½ lakhs with an additional recurring expenditure of about Rs. 20,000 and should go a long way towards solving the vital problem of the correct initial treatment of young offenders. In the Borstal Institution at Bankura educational facilities for the boys have been improved, and provision has been made in the budget for establishing a hand press in the school as an additional industry for teaching printing to the boys. Educational classes under paid teachers already exist for young prisoners in the Alipore and Berhampore Jails. Similar provision is now being made in the Presidency, Midnapore, Dacca and Rajshahi Central Jails on a permanent basis.

As a step towards improving supervision, provision has been made for the appointment of whole-time Superintendents in the Mymensingh and Comilla Jails, and other improvements which have been introduced are the issue of mustard oil to prisoners for inunction, the provision of increased facilities to prisoners of Divisions I and II for outdoor games, and more facilities to prisoners of all classes for indoor games. New waiting rooms have been provided in Mymensingh and Alipore, new worksheds in Midnapore and improvements in the sanitary accommodation in a number of other jails.

Another step forward, leading to beneficial results, is the sanction to the appointment of lady teachers to impart moral instruction to female prisoners on the same lines as the voluntary instructors already sanctioned for male prisoners. Bengali warders are now being entertained in increasing numbers.

So much has been done, but much more is now on the anvil.

After studying the replies to the questionnaire detailed estimates and schemes have been asked for in the following directions.

Superintendents have been asked to report on new buildings or structural alterations necessary to secure more effective segregation of juveniles and adolescents from convicts or known offenders while under trial. They have also been told to report on additional accommodation necessary for more effective isolation of suspected infectious cases or prisoners suffering from infectious diseases. The Inspector-General has been asked to put up estimates and plans for new buildings at Midnapore, Comilla and Suri to provide special

accommodation for lepers and tuberculosis prisoners, and the Superintendents have been instructed to report on additional accommodation necessary for segregation, observation and treatment of lunatics and mental defectives. In addition, plans and estimates have been called for to connect all jails to local pipe water-supply systems in order to secure the elimination of jail labour on raising water for domestic purposes, and to make possible the introduction of a system of flush sanitation to eliminate the employment of convicts on conservancy duties. Estimates have also been called for connecting jails with the local electric supply, which may have a considerable bearing on voluntary education classes after hours.

Reorganisation of Jail staffs.

In addition to buildings, the jail staff is also coming in for consideration. The Inspector-General has been asked to examine and put up specific proposals on the following points:—

(1) Training of whole-time Superintendents.

(2) Provision of avenues of promotion for Jailors and Deputy Jailors to the rank of Superintendent.

(3) Training of Deputy Jailors on appointment and by means of refresher courses.

(4) Training of warders and provision of avenues of promotion for them to clerkships.

(5) Provision of a minimum educational standard for the recruitment of warders and the establishment of a training school for warders and other ranks of the prison staff.

He has further been ordered to examine the strength of the cadres to provide for a more adequate leave and training reserve and to ensure that both superior staff and warder staff have sufficient time for recreation and study. He has been directed to report on the entertainment of trained staff for mental defectives and lunatics, and provision of trained staff for physical training duties with convicts as well as with the warder establishment.

It was found that while there are some very satisfactory industries for long-term prisoners in Central Jails, a good deal more might be done to introduce in the district jails, petty industries which might offer a subsidiary means of livelihood to prisoners discharged locally, as well as meet a local market demand. The Superintendents have, accordingly, been instructed to examine the question and introduce such industries in consultation with their Boards of non-official visitors.

The Inspector-General has also under examination the possibility of introducing simple recreational games which can be carried out in

a small space for certain classes of prisoners and the advice of the Director of Physical Training will it is hoped be available in this respect.

Improvement in Clothing and Equipment.

It is also proposed to make certain alterations in clothing and equipment. Among them the chief items are as follows:—

(1) Provision of long trousers either in addition to the existing issue of shorts or in lieu of one pair of shorts.

(2) The lining of blanket kurtas with cloth or cotton to prevent irritation.

The cost of these innovations is now being worked out by the Inspector-General of Prisons who has also been asked to estimate for the provision of cotton bed-sheets to all prisoners, which will not only increase their comfort but will enable them to wrap themselves up and obtain a certain amount of protection against mosquitoes. As an additional measure of protection the issue of anti-mosquito oil to prisoners is being examined.

FOREST POLICY.

Departmental reorganisation.

A reorganisation of the Forest Department was undertaken on the lines of the recommendations of the All-India Forestry Conference held in December 1937. Since the introduction of Provincial autonomy, fresh recruitment to the Indian Forest Service has ceased. Arrangements have now been almost completed to form the Higher Provincial Service from which the superior posts in the department will in future be filled. The Government of Bengal have participated in the scheme evolved by the Government of India in consultation with the Provinces to secure uniformity in the training of recruits to the High Provincial Forest Service which is formed to replace the Indian Forest Service. Two candidates selected in consultation with the Public Service Commission have accordingly been deputed from this Province for training at the Forest Research Institute and College at Dehra Dun, with a view to their appointment to the service.

Forest Committee.

In view of the progressive denudation of forests in West Bengal and resultant effects on the soil, agriculture and river systems, a

representative committee of officials and non-officials has been appointed to investigate into the facts and to make recommendations to Government as to the remedies which should be applied to prevent this grave threat to the prosperity of the country-side. The area of the enquiry will comprise the districts of Bankura, Birbhum, Burdwan and Midnapore. The work of the Committee is well under way and it is hoped that they would be able to conclude their labours and furnish Government with their findings very shortly.

Conservation of forests.

The policy of Government is to conserve all valuable forests, as far as possible, whether public or privately-owned, in order to maintain local and provincial supplies of timber and fuel, and to protect the countryside against flood and drought. With this end in view Government have taken over management of certain private forests in East Bengal by agreement with, and at the request of, the proprietors.

Afforestation in Central Bengal.

An officer of the Bengal Forest Service was deputed to investigate into and report on the extent of the existing forests, the areas suitable for afforestation, etc., in the district of Nadia and other adjoining districts. His report has since been received and is under consideration.

Preservation of wild life.

The question of preservation of wild life which has become very acute, is also engaging attention. Some of the rarer species of animals and birds have already become extinct, and it is feared that, if proper steps are not taken in the near future, many other valuable and beautiful species may disappear. This Government have already agreed to adhere to the Draft All-India Convention that has been drawn up on the basis of a resolution adopted at an All-India Conference for the preservation of fauna in this country. Pending actual conclusion of the Draft All-India Convention, this Government have undertaken the examination of the more urgent measures proposed therein. The Rhinoceros Preservation Act has been passed into Law. Government have also under consideration important changes of law, by way of amendment of the Wild Birds and Animals Preservation Act, 1912, in order to tighten up the control over the destruction of fauna, particularly bird life, in this province. Pending formulation of specific legislative measures, game sanctuaries are being formed under the

existing provisions of the Indian Forest Act and the rules thereunder, in so far as opportunity and circumstances permit. The formation of a game preservation division to control the sanctuaries is also engaging attention. Such sanctuaries, when established, will not only preserve the more beautiful forms of wild life, but will also be a source of instruction and diversion to the public, who will be able to see these animals and birds in their natural state.

Grievances of Khasmahal Tenants on forest borders remedied.

The grievances of khasmahal tenants living on the forest border in Chittagong have been engaging the attention of Government. The following measures have already been sanctioned in the Cox's Bazar area :—

(1) isolated patches of protected forests surrounded by cultivation and away from the forest reserves are to be disforested, and handed over to the khasmahal for conversion into grazing grounds, etc.,

(2) abolition of the practice of issuing fuel permits also to those who apply for grazing passes, and

(3) formation of villalge vigilance committees to educate people against transgressions of forest laws, etc.

Cultivation of Cinchona.

The following is a brief résumé of the work of the Cinchona Department during the period from the 1st April 1937 up to the end of March 1939 :—

Third plantation.—A scheme for the opening up of a third cinchona plantation in the Rongo Block of the Kalimpong Forest Division in the district of Darjeeling was given effect to as an experimental measure for 5 years with the object of increasing the supply of bark and production of quinine in order to meet the anticipated larger demand for Government quinine in the near future. The working of this plantation is in progress and, if the experiment proves to be a success, it may be possible to open out further plantations in the district.

Quinine factory.—The quinine factory was equipped with additional up-to-date machinery for increased manufacture of highly purified quinine salts, viz., quinine hydro and bihydro-chloride salts for supply to the trade through commercial agents.

Amenities for workers.—A play field was provided for the workers of the cinchona plantation at Munsong with a view to extending certain

amenities of life to them, as they are compelled to live in an isolated place far away from any town.

Encouraging private capital.—A proposal of the Darjeeling Planters' Association to cultivate cinchona in their abandoned planted areas was agreed to in principle, as this will facilitate the sinking of private capital in cinchona cultivation.

A proposal for the introduction of smaller capacity quinine treatments through post offices, viz., packets containing 10 tablets of 4 gr. and 2 gr. each for treatment of adults and children is under the consideration of Government.

The reorganisation of the Cinchona Department is also under consideration.

EXCISE POLICY.

Total prohibition the ultimate goal.

The present Government have declared total prohibition to be the ultimate goal of their excise policy. As a beginning of that policy they decided to introduce an experiment in prohibition in the district of Noakhali with effect from 1st April 1938. All the liquor shops in that district have been closed. The department are examining the results.

From the figures below it will be seen that compared with the 3 major provinces, the gross excise revenue of Bengal is the lowest, although the population of this province is the biggest:—

	Rs.
Madras (1937-38)	4,01,91,319
Bombay (1936-37)	3,22,66,332
United Provinces (1936-37).. ..	1,57,42,585
Bengal (1937-38)	1,54,91,209

Comparative figures showing the consumption of excisable articles during the years 1911-12, 1926-27 and 1937-38 are given below. They show that the fall in consumption of country spirit has been by 32 per cent., ganja and bhang by 75 per cent., charas by 50 per cent. and opium by 60 per cent.

1. Country spirit (L. P. Gallons.)

1911-12	...	...	...	7,96,784
1926-27	...	...	...	6,27,962
1937-38	...	...	...	5,39,253

2. Ganja. (Seers.)

1911-12	...	...	...	1,24,684
1926-27	...	...	...	67,678
1937-38	...	...	...	33,493

3. Bhang. (Seers.)

1911-12	...	...	...	32,691
1926-27	...	...	...	16,299
1937-38	...	...	...	8,875

4. Charas. (Seers.)

1911-12	...	...	...	1,599
1926-27	...	...	...	2,578
1937-38	...	...	...	771

5. Opium. (Seers.)

1911-12	...	...	...	66,783
1926-27	...	...	...	39,792
1937-38	...	...	...	26,190

The average taxation of ganja, charas and bhang in this province is the highest of all the provinces and that on country spirit and opium is also higher than in several provinces.

Bengal, therefore, is progressing in the path of gradual and effective prohibition.

It should be remembered that while indulgence in alcohol and drugs should be discouraged by all means it is not possible to change all at once the habits and customs of the people. Particular regard has to be paid to the customs of the aboriginals, among whom drinking is a social and religious custom of antiquity. In a campaign for prohibition, persuasion must be tried first of all, as a preliminary to compulsion, and the display of force should be avoided as far as possible. Hasty legislation is likely to affect adversely the social, economic and administrative life of the province.

Policy of minimum consumption with maximum revenue.

The present Government have been maintaining the policy of "minimum consumption without maximum revenue" which is built upon the prolonged experience of previous Governments. While permitting consumption in moderation, the present policy imposes effective restriction limiting consumption to the minimum requirements.

The licensing and location of excise shops are controlled by Licensing Boards constituted in all the districts of the province. These boards are *ad hoc* bodies representing various non-official interests and have been vested with statutory powers. They are working satisfactorily and have given public opinion an effective voice in the administration of the Excise Department. In the selection of licensees it is the declared policy of Government to give preference to educated men.

Salt Industry.

In regard to salt the policy of Government is to encourage the development of the salt industry in this province. In pursuance of this policy two officers of the Forest and Excise Departments were deputed to investigate into the possibilities of the manufacture of salt on a commercial basis in the Sundarbans.

Experimental salt factory.—The recommendations of the special officers have been examined and steps have been taken to the establishment of an experimental salt factory in the Sundarbans. Necessary provision has accordingly been made in the budget. It has been decided that the establishment and running of the factory should be carried out by the Industries Department who have been requested to prepare a scheme in consultation with the Excise Commissioner. The question of subsidies to private salt producing concerns and of the appointment of a special officer has been kept in abeyance pending results of the experimental factory.

Government of India's decision.—In October 1938, the Government of India decided that the administration of salt in Bengal should be taken over by them with effect from 1st April 1939. A representation was made against this decision. But the Government of India have reiterated their previous decision in the matter.

JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT.

Official Receiver's Act.—Successive audit reports having disclosed unsatisfactory working of the Office of the Official Receiver, High Court, Calcutta, the Calcutta Official Receiver's Act has been passed taking over the office under the control of the Government with a view to secure more effective control and management of the office.

Civil Court Staff Reorganisation.—The scheme for the reorganisation of the staff of the Civil Courts has been completed and has come into operation from the 1st April 1939.

Relief to Clerks.—A scheme has been framed for giving relief to Civil Court clerks to suitably cope with the rush of work owing to the large number of suits and cases instituted on the 1st open day of the Bengali Year and for smooth carriage of work in that connection. Rs. 5,000 has been provided in the budget of 1939-40 for this purpose.

Convenience of Witnesses.—In the budget for 1939-40 a sum of Rs. 75,000 has been provided for the construction of several witness sheds attached to courts.

Money Lenders' Bill.—A comprehensive Bill has been introduced in the Legislature for the regulation of money-lending, registration of

money-lenders and the prevention of usury. It has been passed by the Assembly and awaits consideration by the Council.

Working of Civil Courts Investigated.

Owing to persistent complaints regarding increase of work and paucity of staff in the civil courts a Special Officer was deputed to investigate into the working of the civil courts and to suggest means for the employment of staff on a suitable standard of work in civil court offices with due regard to efficient work, administration, local conditions and economy. Mr. R. F. Lodge, I.C.S. (now Hon'ble Mr. Justice Lodge), who was deputed for the work submitted his report and on his recommendations orders have issued adopting for the civil court staff a scheme for automatic annual adjustment to requirements on a practical and uniform standard which was hitherto different in Eastern and Western Bengal districts. The main outline of the scheme is that there shall be a permanent staff for each district of various grades dependant partly on the number of permanent courts and for the rest fixed by Government. The remainder of the staff will be temporary but the effect of the rules is that the main incidence of the temporary character, of these posts is that the holders will be liable to discharge if the calculations do not justify retention. The adjustment of excess staff is proposed to be made by discharge of temporary men, if any, and then by absorption as vacancies occur.

Steps to Remove Congestion.

On the tamadi day every year in April a large number of rent suits and a proportionately larger number of other suits are instituted in the civil courts in every district. This results in congestion of work in the courts and the very nature of the work brings on some amount of strain on the normal staff. With a view to removing congestion and giving relief to civil court clerks, a scheme was formulated and it was given a trial in the district of Dinajpur under the able guidance of Mr. T. B. Jameson, I.C.S., the District Judge of the district. The trial having met with an amount of success and with a view to further improving the scheme, it has been decided to experiment it on a wider scale in all the civil courts of the province. This scheme involves additional expenditure for employment of temporary hands with an eye to giving assistance to the civil court clerical staff in their work of registration of plaints filed and also enabling them to complete this part of the work without delay which has all along been subject of comment by the public in general. This scheme is also expected to have the ultimate effect of further expediting the disposal of these rent suits in general. A provision of Rs. 5,000 for this purpose has been included in the budget for 1939-40.

EDUCATIVE PROPAGANDA.

The Government of Bengal have always been alive to the usefulness of films as a medium of educative propaganda. They have at present 10 Cinema parties, excluding two in reserve, constantly touring in the districts and also a fully equipped Exhibition motor van which tours in the cold weather.

Nature of films used.

The following details will show the nature of the educational films which the Government of Bengal now use and the extent to which they employ films as means of educating the rural population :—

Nature of films and size.	Number of reels.	Length in feet.
(1) Films on health subjects dealing with maternity and child-welfare ; prevention and cure of Malaria, Tuberculosis, Small-pox and Cholera ; production and distribution of quinine, Control of Leprosy, Care of the child, village sanitation and women's role in National Health.	36	31,920
(2) Films on industrial subjects dealing with industrial training for youths, cutlery and brass works, weaving coir industry, silk industry, training in home industry, art, pottery, etc.	17	13,727
(3) Films on agricultural and veterinary subjects dealing with sugarcane cultivation, tobacco cultivation, jute restriction, cattle welfare training in veterinary science, etc.	13	10,855
(4) Films on educational subjects dealing with physical culture, educational exhibitions, ideal schools, Primary Education, Borstal school and aftercare works, disadvantages of illiteracy, adult education and teachers' training, etc.	13	12,316
(5) Films on Public works and irrigation dealing with canal irrigation systems, re-excavation works, road construction, etc.	10	7,930
(6) Films on co-operative movement dealing with co-operative colonisation, Rural Reconstruction on a co-operative basis, Co-operative milk supply, Co-operative irrigation, Co-operative fisheries, etc.	14	11,678
(7) Films on Rural Reconstruction work such as activities of union boards, water-hyacinth destruction, all-round village improvement, etc.	9	9,185
(8) Films on topical subjects such as tours of His Excellency the Governor and the Hon'ble Ministers in connection with nation building activities and other interesting events of local interest.	22	15,004
Total ..	134	1,12,615

All these films are of the 35 m.m. size and have been specially prepared at the instance of Government by local firms of producers.

In addition, the Government of Bengal have also in stock 19 reels of 16 m.m. films, similarly prepared.

Over and above these locally made films the Government of Bengal have a stock of 29 reels (35 m.m. size) of foreign films on health subjects and 6 reels on industrial and agricultural subjects, and a further stock of 16 reels of 16 m.m. films on similar subjects.

Work of Touring Parties.

During the last two years the Government Cinema parties touring in the villages gave the following number of shows:—

1937	1,687
1938	1,735

and the total attendance at these shows was as follows:—

1937	1,852,424
1938	1,950,232

During the cold weather seasons the touring cinema parties were deputed to local exhibitions wherever possible. Their work was supplemented by the staff at Calcutta who held 37 demonstrations in Bengal during 1938-39 which were attended by about 50,000 persons.

The State of Hill Tripura invited the assistance of this department and a party was deputed which held four demonstrations in the fair held at Agartala which were attended by about 6,000 persons.

For *purdah* ladies three special demonstrations were held at the Muslim Institute, Calcutta, during 1938-39 which were attended by a large number of ladies and girls. A special feature of the work of the parties during the year was that the Midnapur party carried on anti-leprosy propaganda in Bankura for two months. The film on leprosy was seen by 25,000 persons in that area where the disease is known to be endemic. This has prepared the ground for the vigorous campaign against leprosy which is now being organised by the British Empire Leprosy Relief Association in that district. A demonstration on leprosy was also held at Titagarh in connection with leprosy survey done by the Bengal Branch of the Association.

Exhibition Van.

The Exhibition Van worked for six instead of five months during the year 1938-39. The District Magistrate of Midnapur by a special request kept the van in his district for one more month. The van held 110 demonstrations during the year working in Midnapur, Jalpaiguri, Dinajpur, Rangpur and Bogra districts. About two lakhs of people including women and children attended the demonstrations.

Posters and Leaflets.

Exhibits on public health were lent to fifteen exhibitions including the Calcutta Health Week. No less than 50,000 posters and over one lakh of leaflets on health were distributed to schools, health organisations and exhibitions, during the year.

National Welfare Units.

The Government of Bengal are so keen on the use of Cinema for educative purposes that they have decided to increase these 10 parties to 21 (including two in reserve) and depute one party to each district—the smaller districts having one for each two. The new Units will not, however, be mere cinema parties, but will aim at all-round national welfare. Each will have a wholetime Doctor and a Compounder on the personnel, together with a medicine chest. The Units will also serve the purpose of moving exhibitions, travelling in specially designed bullock vans or boats as local conditions require. The majority of these Units are expected to be out in the districts in September, 1939. The staff is being trained and appropriately designed vans are being built. It is intended that these units should work on the following lines.

General purposes of the Unit.—The primary purpose of the Unit is to bring knowledge and medical aid to the villagers. The country people will be attracted both by the possibility of seeing a free show as well as by the desire for medical advice or aid. When the villager has been attracted to the Unit, the Unit is intended to perform three main functions:—

(*a*) To gather information regarding the medical, economic and agricultural needs of the people.

(*b*) To supply medical aid and advice on individual or general health matters designed to prevent local diseases.

(*c*) To instruct the people in self-help and in rational means of improving their condition, and interest them in the improved methods of agriculture and better living generally through lectures, and display of cinema films and exhibits.

Melas and Exhibitions.—In addition to its normal round of visits to the villages every opportunity will be taken to make the Unit the nucleus of occasional local exhibitions, which will be arranged in as many different parts of the district as possible, and where this can be done conveniently, arranged so as to synchronise with market days and *melas.*

The Unit will carry some exhibits and a large number of posters and charts. Any exhibits available locally will be added to them,

particular attention being given to the selection of charts and exhibits which deal with matters of local interest. Exhibits will also be obtained from local schools, industrial, agricultural or other associations, which will at once show the work being done by them,. The Public Health and Agriculture Departments, in particular, through their officers in the districts will make the fullest possible use of the Unit, and of the gatherings which it attracts, for the specialised educative propaganda most needed in that particular area. So far as the Department of Agriculture is concerned, for instance, it can be arranged for the Unit to display improved varieties of seeds, ploughs, and other agricultural implements.

Methods of work.—Exhibits will be described and instruction imparted in language easily intelligible to the local people. The main burden of this work will naturally fall on the personnel of the Unit itself, but it is intended that the local administrative officers of the various Departments of Government, as well as the officers of District Boards, should, from time to time, visit or accompany the Unit in order to take advantage of the opportunities which it will afford, of addressing large gatherings of people on the work of those Departments, and the best manner in which the local people can co-operate and reap the greatest possible advantage.

The personnel of the Unit itself will deliver simple addresses on improved methods of agriculture, cattle-breeding, cattle diseases, sericulture, the co-operative movement, village sanitation, maternity and child welfare, hygiene, adult education, unnecessary expenditure on show and ceremonies, and wasteful litigation. Short and simple talks on the application of science to modern life, such as for instance, the wireless, and the cinematograph projector itself, electricity for pumps and irrigation, the motor engine for transport, etc., will also form subjects of such lectures.

When demonstrations are being given of the use of new agricultural implements, every opportunity will be taken to get the older *matbars* to try the new machines themselves, and also to encourage respectable *bhadraloks* to do so, in order to remove prejudice against new innovations, as well as prejudice against manual labour.

Medical aid.—The first care of the medical officer will be to provide medical aid to the village people as far as possible. During the stay of the Unit in the village the medical officer will undertake the treatment of villagers, advise those suffering from chronic diseases, and will often be able to arrange in consultation with the local charitable dispensaries and hospitals for their treatment after his departure. During the course of this work he will also try to find out and record the medical characteristics of the area, and the prevalence and distribution of the main diseases, and he will advise the people on the measures desirable in each village to improve the public health generally and prevent disease.

GOVERNMENT AND THE PRESS.

Government are fully conscious that under a democratic system the Press and the public are entitled to be apprised of their day to day activities. They have, therefore, not only made every endeavour to cultivate and maintain friendly relations with the Press but they have also set up a separate Department whose primary duty is to supply the newspapers with accurate information regarding Government policy and activities.

Press Room in Writers' Buildings.

Increased facilities have also been provided for representatives of newspapers in the shape of a Press-room in Writers' Buildings which is intended for the use of journalists. The Press-room was opened on January 27, 1939, by the Hon'ble the Chief Minister at a special function arranged for the purpose which was attended by representatives of almost all newspapers and news agencies. The speech delivered on the occasion by the Hon'ble the Chief Minister fully explained the policy which had guided Government to take this step. He said:

"There is an impression abroad that the Government want to shut out news from the Press, but I hope that the inauguration of the Press-room will be a proof positive that the very contrary is the truth. It does not infrequently happen that false news finds its way to the Press. It has also been noticed that often absurd stories are given currency in the Press on the strength of 'reliable' information I hope that all these sources of 'reliabl information for the propagation of untruth will be effectively checked by personal contact between the members of the Press and the officers of the Publicity Department of the Government. Whenever any news reaches the Press they will be at liberty to come to the Press-room to test the accuracy of that news from the officers of the Publicity Department who will be ready and willing to help them. I hope that henceforth there will be no occasion for the newspaper writers to rely on rumours and unauthorized information."

"Gentlemen, in some quarters I am regarded as an arch hangman of journalism in Bengal. I can say most truthfully that I appreciate as much as anybody else the immense importance of friendly relations between the Government and the Press. We do not resent criticism, on the contrary we welcome helpful criticism but certainly we also repel insinuation and unjust suppression of facts. We hope that the step we are taking to-day will inaugurate a new era in the relations

between the Government and the Press. And that while, on the one hand, the Government will have no occasion to complain of unsympathetic treatment at the hand of the Press, the Pressmen will also find that the Government realise the importance of free journalism and helpful criticism and of giving help to the Press to get at truth on all occasions and under all circumstances."

"The Press-room is meant for the exclusive use of the Press in the Bengal Secretariat. Members of the Press can come here and meet officers of the Publicity Department and in the course of friendly intercourse they will be able to get any news which they want and which Government may be in a position to supply to them. The room has been fitted with a telephone and a typewriter and such other furniture as may be required by those who frequent the Press-room. For the convenience of Pressmen who come to the room a whole-time orderly has also been provided who will be at their service during office hours."

Revision of Advertisement Policy.

Another important step taken by this Government as a gesture of goodwill towards the Press was the revision of the previous Government's policy with regard to the distribution of Government advertisements. Advertisements are now distributed to newspapers without any discrimination and irrespective of the editorial policy which they pursue.

The "Bengal Weekly" and the "Banglar Katha".

In pursuance of their desire to take the public into full confidence and place before them correct information about the policy and programme which they are following, Government have also brought out two weekly newspapers one in English and another in Bengali under the name of the *Bengal Weekly* and the *Banglar Katha*. These papers are distributed to a very large number of persons all over the province besides being offered for public sale. The distribution list of the former stands at present at 6,000 and that of the latter at over 20,000. In a special article contributed to the first issue of the *Bengal Weekly* the Hon'ble the Chief Minister explained the reasons which had prompted Government to bring out these weeklies. In course of that article he said: "It has occurred to Government that there should be at least

one small journal devoted to the task of explaining as clearly as possible Governmental activities and Government policy and removing misapprehensions which may be caused in the minds of the people by the activities of the hostile Press. In doing so it is proposed to keep in view of the following cardinal principles :—

(1) We will not state anything but definite facts, and even where we express our opinion we will do so without using the language of acrimonious debate.

(2) We will try to correct as mildly as possible the misapprehensions regarding Governmental activities which may be caused in the minds of the people.

(3) We shall try to explain to the people what we have been doing on their behalf and what we intend to do, and in any case if we feel that we cannot accede fully or in part to popular demands, we will indicate very briefly the reasons why we have found ourselves unable to do so.

(4) We shall try to respect the feelings and opinions of those who differ from us in any respect and try to introduce in the realms of journalism an atmosphere of peace and harmony in dealing with all matters affecting the interest of the various classes and communities inhabiting the province."

CONCLUSION.

Since their assumption of office Hon'ble Ministers, particularly, the Hon'ble Chief Minister, have made extensive tours all over the Province explaining to the people the implications of Provincial Autonomy and the policy of the present Government. They have listened to the people's grievances, participated in important local functions, such as, industrial and agricultural exhibitions, opened schools, colleges or hospitals and laid the foundations of others to come. Wherever they have gone their visits have occasioned the greatest enthusiasm among local inhabitants who have been quick to realise that under the new dispensation the administration of their country rests in the hands of their own chosen representatives. The Hon'ble Chief Minister, specially, has been given ovations the like of which it has seldom been the lot of any public man to receive. The pictures published with this report will give some idea of the popular enthusiasm which the Hon'ble Ministers' visits aroused and the huge

gatherings which were inevitably attracted to the venues of public meetings which they were scheduled to address. It is evident that the very large measure of good which the present Government have been able to achieve for the people of Bengal in general and for the masses in particular, during the past two years, an account of which has been given in the preceding pages, has produced the desired reactions on the people on whose behalf and for whose benefit the province is now administered by them. If, with but two milestones passed, such is the record of Bengal's first autonomous Government, the public can rest assured that by the time the third is reached there will be a richer record of achievement to unfold.

Agriculture.

In moving that a sum of Rs. 15,78,000 be granted for expenditure under "Agriculture" during the year 1939-40, the HON'BLE MR. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN made the following speech in the Bengal Legislative Assembly on March 9, 1939:—

"We all know that ours is a predominantly agricultural country and therefore the one main problem before us is how to improve the agriculture of the province. The problem of problems really is the chronic poverty of our masses and circumstanced as we are we naturally look up to agriculture for the solution of this main problem. So far as the Government of Bengal is concerned, its policy and programme about this main problem was set out by the Nawab Bahadur of Dacca in his budget statement last year. That programme may be outlined briefly under nine main heads:—

(1) agricultural education,
(2) demonstration,
(3) research,
(4) publicity,
(5) cattle improvement,
(6) marketing,
(7) subsidiary employment for agriculturists,
(8) assistance to cultivators, and
(9) consolidation of holdings.

So far as agricultural education is concerned, there is no adequate provision in our province for the purpose and apart from the inadequacy of the provision whatever provision there is, is not of a sufficiently high standard. Therefore our young men have very often to go out of the province for the purpose of agricultural education. It is apparent that such education is not always fully useful on account of the fact that conditions in Bengal are different from conditions in places where these students get their education. It is therefore essential that our young men should be trained in Bengal for agricultural work. With this end in view Government have decided to start an Agricultural Institute at Dacca and in fact Government have already taken action on that decision. This Agricultural Institute will train men for the Higher Agricultural Service of the Province. It will also train animal husbandry workers and thirdly this institution will also train a certain number of men who want to take up scientific farming as a profession. The total estimated cost of this institute is Rs. 4¾ lakhs. Of this amount Rs. 1½ lakh has been provided in the current year's budget and Rs. 2 lakhs in the next year's. Honourable members probably know that the foundation of the Institute has already been laid and the work of construction has commenced.

It is expected that the work of construction will be finished early in 1940 and I hope that the Institute will be in a position to start work in the early months of the year 1940. But the establishment of one

Agricultural Institute at Dacca will not meet the requirements of the province. It will also be necessary to start more educational institutions and it has been decided to start more secondary schools on the model of the Dacca Secondary Agricultural School. As one of the first steps towards the realisation of this scheme, it is proposed to provincialise the Chinsura-Bhupnath Agricultural School which is now a private institution. Then, Sir, it is also proposed that a certain number of our students should be sent abroad for the purpose of acquiring higher agricultural education. And so far as the present budget is concerned there is provision for sending three students to the United Kingdom for training in Agriculture and Animal Husbandry. So far as demonstration is concerned, a scheme of a more or less comprehensive character has already been prepared. That scheme includes the establishment of at least one District Agricultural Farm in every district and secondly the establishment of a Union Board Farm in each Union and thirdly the appointment—

I am now showing the scheme that has been adopted by the Government and I want to show next how far the Government have gone to implement that scheme. Otherwise it will be useless to talk only about theoretical matters.

And secondly, as I was going to say, the establishment of a Union Board Farm in each Union and thirdly the appointment of a demonstrator in each thana. So far as District Farms are concerned, almost all the districts have got one farm each. In the current year, a scheme has been sanctioned for the establishment of a District Agricultural Farm at Midnapore and the next year's budget contains provision for the establishment of another Agricultural Farm in the district of Chittagong. As regards Union Board Farms, 96 such farms have been hitherto established and it is proposed that during the next year another 22 such farms will be established. As regards demonstrators, 101 of them have been working since the last constitution and during the current year 10 have been appointed and 10 more are proposed to be appointed during the next year. Sir, I admit that the additional appointments are not quite satisfactory in number. Why that is so can easily be guessed. I have already said that at present there is no adequate provision for giving training in agriculture in our province. Unless we can train a sufficient number of men, it is not possible to start new Demonstration Farms in the Union Board areas. Therefore I expect that when additional provision is made for training our young men it will be possible to accelerate the pace of appointing demonstrators and also of starting Union Board Farms. There is one aspect of the question which is really important. So far as demonstration is concerned we have hitherto done really very little in comparison with what we should have done. In this connection it will be interesting to note the opinion that was expressed by Sir John Russel in his recent report. That opinion was also placed before the House by the Nawab Bahadur of Dacca last year. He indicated that demonstration in India is lagging behind research and that greater efforts must be made to bridge the gap between the research station and the cultivators' fields. Sir, when these Union Board Farms are established in all the unions and when a sufficiently large number of demonstrators is appointed, then only it will be possible to carry the results of the research stations to the homes of the cultivators. That is very important and Government will try their best to accelerate the pace of this improvement Then there is also provision in the present budget for distribution of prizes to cultivators for successful cultivation of crops according to

improved methods and also for giving subsidies to selected cultivators subsidies for private seed stores. So far as research is concerned, the for introduction of improved methods on their own plots, as well as research station at Dacca has been doing very good work and as honourable members probably know already better and higher yielding varieties of jute, paddy, sugar-cane and some other crops have been evolved. I admit, Sir, that it is necessary to extend the activities of this research station and Government are quite alive to this question and adequate steps are being taken to extend its activities. Besides this, the present budget includes provision for the following new schemes of experiments and research :—

(1) scheme for demonstration,

(2) scheme for the multiplication of mustard seeds,

(3) scheme for the continuance of a horticultural station in Bengal, and

(4) continuance of the scheme for the cultivation of long staple cotton.

As regards publicity, I admit, Sir, that we have been doing very little for the last few years. What was done previously was also abandoned probably by way of retrenchment. It is now proposed to give greater attention to publicity work. Without proper publicity it is not possible to bring to the people of Bengal the results that are obtained by research which naturally costs so much money to the province. Therefore the importance of publicity cannot be overemphasised.

As regards our cattle improvement scheme, it is proposed that an animal husbandry branch will be established, and in fact a start has already been given. Honourable members know that the schemes for cattle improvement have been introduced in 22 districts out of the Government of India grant for rural uplift. The policy of the previous Government in regard to the establishment of a herd of Sindhis has been abandoned by the present Government, as these did not prove suitable to this province; and they have decided to continue with the Hariana breed. Steps have been taken in this direction to replace the Sindhi herd by the Hariana breed, and a sum of Rs. 53,120 has been provided for this purpose in next year's budget.

The improvement of poultry which forms a part of the animal husbandry work has also engaged the attention of the present Government. Prior to the new constitution the work in this direction was very meagre. The present Government have realised that the improvement of poultry will offer an important source of income to the cultivator, and a scheme for the improvement of poultry multiplication centres has been approved by Government at a total estimated cost of Rs. 85,225 and provision has been made in the next years' budget for the purpose.

So far as marketing is concerned, I may say that the work on marketing practically began in 1935 with the financial assistance received from the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research under a Senior Marketing Officer with a small staff. This work is so far limited to the marketing survey of the principal agricultural commodities and grading of eggs, oranges, etc., and in order to supplement the work done with the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research grant,

four egg-grading stations have been started this year on a provincial basis. As the financial assistance received from the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research, will cease after the close of the year 1939-40, an enlarged departmental scheme for agricultural marketing has been formulated and is under the consideration of the present Government. This scheme is expected to come into operation in 1940-41. Meanwhile Government are considering a Bill for the establishment of regulated markets which is expected to be presented to the Legislature at an early date.

Sir, it is also very important that some subsidiary occupation should be found for our cultivators who have to remain idle for several months every year. So far as this aspect of the question is concerned, it is really the Industries Department which can help them to a very great extent, and the Industries Department is trying to give effect to certain cottage industries schemes for this very purpose. So far as the Agriculture Department is concerned, it has directed its attention to poultry farming, as I have already said and also to fruit growing and breeding of goats. A scheme regarding the last item is under the consideration of Government, and I hope that a satisfactory solution will be arrived at within a short time.

Sir, I need not touch upon the other items that I have pointed out in the beginning of my speech, but probably honourable members expect that I should say something about jute restriction and the fixation of a minimum price for that commodity. I think, however, that as there are some motions on this very question wihch will just be moved, it will be more proper if I reserve my remarks for that occasion than give my point of view just at present.

With these few words, Sir, I present the Agriculture Budget for 1939-40."

Medical.

In moving that a sum of Rs. 51,30,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "Medical", the HON'BLE MR. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN made the following speech in the Bengal Legislative Assembly on March 10, 1939:—

"The total provision for expenditure under this head is Rs. 58,80,000 of which Rs. 51,30,000 is voted and the balance, namely, Rs. 7,50,000 is charged on provincial revenues. A statement of expenditure for the preceding three years will, I believe, be helpful to the House. In 1936-37 the total expenditure was Rs. 49,44,000; in 1937-38 the expenditure rose to Rs. 52,87,000. According to revised estimates for the current year we expect to spend Rs. 55,97,000. The budget for 1939-40 makes a total provision of Rs. 58,80,000 as already stated. The details of the principal increases have been explained at page 104 of the Red Book which I have no doubt every member of the House has studied. I do not consider it necessary to go into the particulars at this stage, although I shall have occasion to make reference to the more important items as I proceed.

I owe it to the House, Sir, to offer some remarks as regards the policy underlying this budget. I trust it will be realised that substantial progress can only be made when policies and programmes

have been definitely settled which must take time specially as large financial commitments are necessarily involved. It may be claimed that the present Ministry have made real attempts to pursue a definite line of advance in the improvement and extension of medical relief in the province.

As by far the majority the honourable members of this Assembly represent rural areas I would very briefly refer to rural medical relief in the first instance. The State grant under the scheme of subsidies towards thana and village dispensaries stands in the current years' budget at Rs. 1,30,000. I may inform the House that the necessary additional amount has been found in order that all rural dispensaries recommended as qualified for the grant may receive the subsidy. This grant has proved very useful in aiding these rural institutions and in encouraging their establishments. The provision has been increased to Rs. 1,50,000 in this budget, and I can assure the House that any further amount that may be necessary with a view to meeting the claims of all dispensaries which comply with the simple conditions attached to the grant will also be found. Sir, the problem of providing a satisfactory system of medical relief for rural areas is a most important and at the same time a most difficult task. I shall have an opportunity, while dealing with the Public Health budget, of referring to a comprehensive scheme of rural public health organisation which has been under the anxious consideration of this Government for some time past. Those members of the House who happen to be Chairmen of District Boards are well aware of this, as only recently all Chairmen of the District Boards were invited to advise on the scheme and Government received very valuable suggestions from them. This scheme, Sir, is being framed with the object of establishing a rural dispensary as a centre of medical and public health activities for a moderate and well defined area with a medical officer trained in public health, in charge, thus co-ordinating the preventive and the curative activities of the two departments. Such a scheme would naturally require time to be put into shape. It is proposed to initiate this scheme partially in the ensuing year in selected areas on an experimental basis and when it is fully given effect to, after it has been put into complete shape, will provide a network of rural treatment centres combining preventive work all over the province, involving on Government a recurring outlay of several lakhs of rupees. I may also inform the House that several District Boards have already expressed their willingness to participate in the scheme and fully co-operate with Government.

As the House is aware the condition of the Sadar hospitals with few exceptions is generally unsatisfactory. These hospitals which serve rural as well as municipal areas, specially in cases of serious ailments are maintained by local bodies with inelastic resources. A survey of the needs, recurring and non-recurring of the Sadar hospitals in respect of buildings, staff, equipment and nursing arrangements, was made. A detail scheme for improvement of Sadar hospitals was drawn up providing for some relief to the local bodies and for the improvement of the standard of medical relief at present available. The scheme has not yet been examined and sanctioned in its entirety, but a provision was made in the current year for a grant of Rs. 3,00,000 with a view to assisting the local authorities in making improvements in their hospitals. As the hospital authorities could not get the scheme ready in time, only a part of this amount could be spent during

the current year and the balance has been repeated in this budget. Other proposals for partial relief to the local bodies and improvement of the standards of these hospitals are under examination.

Hospitals in this province stand badly in need of provision for nursing which is an essential part of hospital treatment. There is no nursing in the mufassil hospitals with very few exceptions, and in the State hospitals in Calcutta also with one exception the nursing is inadequate. It is specially unsatisfactory in the Campbell Hospital which is the largest pauper hospital in the province.

A scheme of improvement in the nursing in the Campbell Hospital and the establishment of a large training centre for Indian nurses has been framed. Government are committed to this scheme having provided a sum of Rs. 2,86,000 in the current years' budget for the necessary buildings and equipments with the nurses' quarters. As the preparation of plans and estimates took time, only a small portion of the amount is likely to be spent during this year and provision has been made for the balance in the next year's budget. It is expected that this nursing scheme will be introduced during the year 1939-40. Necessary provision has also been made in the budget for improved nursing in the Dacca Mitford Hospital which is the most important State hospital outside Calcutta. A grant has also been provided for improvement of nursing in the Victoria Hospital at Darjeeling, especially as this is a very suitable centre for training of nurses.

The expenditure on the State hospitals in Calcutta, the two most important of which are part and parcel of central teaching institutions, generally come in for criticism as involving neglect of the rural areas. I think honourable members are aware that these hospitals afford specialised treatment not only to the inhabitants of Calcutta but also to people hailing from all parts of the province. I may point out in this connection that the medical establishment and maintenance of mufassil dispensaries and grants to institutions outside Calcutta proper, account for a sum of Rs. 16,00,000 in the budget. The Eden Hospital extension block of the Medical College Hospitals was built several years back but has been lying vacant for reasons of financial stringency in spite of the overwhelming need for more accommodation for maternity cases. Twelve beds were opened on a paying basis in 1938-39: although there is no definite provision in the budget for the opening of the remaining beds on the same basis, I can assure the House that steps will be taken to open the remaining beds, thus relieving to a certain extent this standing need.

A capital grant has been provided for the Chittaranjan Seva Sadan, the well reputed maternity hospital in Calcutta founded in memory of the late Mr. C. R. Das. This hospital has been built up entirely by public efforts and it serves all creeds and classes not only in Calcutta but outside Calcutta as well.

Diseases of the eye in the rural areas have attained alarming proportions, especially since the advent of the epidemic dropsy. The Association for the Prevention of Blindness has been doing excellent work in educative propaganda and in maintaining travelling eye dispensaries in the mufassil. These travelling eye dispensaries are very greatly appreciated by the public in the rural areas as many of the honourable members are probably aware. In order to enable the association to run a few additional travelling eye dispensaries in the province for a term of years a grant of Rs. 15,000 has been provided.

Another outstanding feature of the budget to which I would like to refer is the scheme of improvement of teaching in the State Medical Schools in Bengal. Some of these schools have been threatened with disaffiliation by the Bengal Council of Medical Registration and the arrangement for teaching under which one teacher had to teach several incompatible subjects required reform. Accordingly, a provision has been made in this budget of Rs. 15,000 involving an ultimate recurring expenditure of about Rs. 40,000 in future. Provision has also been made for the improvement of the building and equipment of the Lytton Medical School, Mymensingh, at the ultimate cost of Rs. 50,000. The school would otherwise have been disaffiliated.

Sir, as there are two demands for me to complete to-day, I will not take any further time. I would humbly point out to the House that however one might like to do so, reforms in Medical and Public Health organisations cannot be effected without considerable time and thinking, and I trust that the House will assist the Government in carving a line of action leading to progress within the compass of our financial limits.

With these words, Sir, I commend my motion to the House".

Public Health.

In moving that a sum of Rs. 47,36,000 be granted under the head "Public Health" for expenditure in 1939-40, the HON'BLE MR. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN delivered the following speech in the Bengal Legislative Council on March 13, 1939:—

"The total provision for expenditure under this head is Rs. 48,52,000 of which Rs. 47,36,000 is voted and the balance, viz., Rs. 1,16,000 is charged to the provincial revenues.

The total actual expenditure under this head in 1937-38 stood at Rs. 30,32,000. In the revised budget of 1938-39 the total expenditure is estimated at Rs. 42,12,000. The comparative details of the new items of expenditure under Public Health are explained on pages 106 and 107 of the Red Book.

Sir, the problems of public health are many and varied. As I have already observed programmes and policies naturally require considerable time to be settled, and in explaining the outstanding features of this budget I shall try to show that Government are trying their best to tackle the various problems of public health on sound lines. I need hardly add that Government appreciate the natural anxiety of the House to see that public health reform is effected without any avoidable delay.

Sir, the problem of water shortage in rural areas is admittedly grave. Provision of adequate supply of good drinking-water is very essential for the control of water-borne diseases as well as for controlling incidence of malaria. This has also a great bearing in securing an improvement of the environmental conditions of the rural people. The block grant of Rs. 7½ lakhs, which was made for the current year pending the preparation of a comprehensive programme for rural water-supply, has been repeated in this budget. In the meanwhile, the question of preparing a comprehensive programme and the equally important question of finding out a suitable agency for its execution and

other allied matters have been taken up in right earnest. The proposals of Government were placed before a Conference of Chairmen of District Boards recently held and the discussions yielded very valuable results. The rural water-supply subdivision under the Chief Engineer, Public Health Department, has now been established with a view to assist the local bodies and organisations in the preparation and execution of the comprehensive programme.

Sir, malaria is the gravest menace to the health of our people, not only because of its high mortality but because of its devitalising effects on the sufferers. The first line of attack in the campaign of public health uplift consists in all countries of comprehensive measures to control various forms of preventible diseases. The existing policy of fighting malaria by doling out small grants through the District Boards to Union Boards, and anti-malarial societies has been found to be inadequate. Anti-malarial measures can only yield permanent results if large grants are made available for expenditure on comprehensive anti-malarial projects such as flushing schemes, irrigation schemes, anti-larval measures, and the like. The District Boards were invited to prepare and forward schemes of a permanent nature for examination of Government. Several such schemes are under various stages of examination by Government, while others were found to be defective. In order to assist in the preparation and execution of anti-malarial schemes, involving engineering works, a Malaria Engineer is shortly to be appointed by Government with necessary staff. Sir, it is a vast problem and Government have decided that in regard to these anti-malarial measures arrangements should be made to secure continued progress and lasting results. A lump grant of Rs. 3,38,000 in lieu of the grant of Rs. 1,18,000 was made during the current year but the money could not be wholly spent, as the various large anti-malarial schemes required close examination by the various departments of Government. The grant has been repeated for the next year and it is expected to be utilised in execution of anti-malarial works on a larger scale. The House is aware that a comprehensive malaria survey is in progress and valuable data will be available for preparation of anti-malarial schemes when the survey is completed.

Tuberculosis is a rapidly growing menace which is spreading not only in urban but in rural areas. A comprehensive anti-tuberculosis scheme has been prepared. In the meanwhile, Her Excellency the Lady Linlithgow's historic appeal for the King Emperor's Anti-Tuberculosis Fund was issued. The response has been most satisfactory and the Fund is now drawing to a close.

The comprehensive scheme is necessarily awaiting the decision to be made in utilising large funds that have been collected, so that the necessary measures may be co-ordinated. Tuberculosis survey of typical areas has, however, been started in order to obtain useful data for the campaign and provision has also been made for the training of medical and health officers in the modern methods of diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis. The House is aware that grant has also been provided in the Medical budget towards better nutrition and proper treatment of tuberculosis patients admitted in the Sadar hospitals. Government have decided to establish a climatic sanatorium in Bengal, but unfortunately no effect could be given to this decision, as a suitable site is still to be selected. The provision for commencing the establishment of the sanatorium has been repeated in the next year's budget.

Another grave problem is that of leprosy. The incidence of this dreadful disease is high and is on the increase in many districts of Bengal. A comprehensive anti-leprosy scheme has been prepared in this department. A lump grant provided in this year's budget for partially introducing this scheme on an experimental basis could not be utilised, as settlement of details with the District Boards and other local authorities naturally took a considerable time. This grant has been repeated and considering the progress that has already been made in regard to introduction of the more important parts of the anti-leprosy scheme in several districts it is confidently expected that the scheme will be successfully launched in the ensuing year, at least in several areas.

Sir, the problem of maternal and infant mortality is serious. It has not hitherto received the attention that it deserves. The solution of the problem lies very largely in the spread of maternity and child welfare clinics, inclusive of home-visiting, both in urban and rural areas. The pioneer work that the Indian Red Cross Society has done with State aid has been of great value, but the measures that have hitherto been taken are very inadequate. A grant of Rs. 50,000 has been provided in this budget towards substantially assisting the local authorities and recognised associations in establishing and maintaining maternity and child welfare clinics of an economic but efficient type approved by the Public Health Department. A Lady Superintendent of Maternity and child welfare work is going to be appointed shortly. Provision was made in this year's budget for the Lady Superintendent and the post was advertised but no suitable candidate was available on the emoluments offered. It has therefore been decided to appoint a Superintendent on contract for two years and in the meanwhile to train a medical graduate, native of, or domiciled in, Bengal, as the permanent incumbent. Similar action has been decided upon, subject, of course, to the vote of the legislature, in connection with the very important post of the Superintendent of vital statistics and vaccination.

Sir, the health organisation of the province is of the first importance in considering any programme of public health reform. The House is aware that since 1927 the skeleton rural health organization has been in existence, the cost of which is entirely met by Government. The present organisation has proved to be wholly inadequate for dealing with the outstanding public health problems of the province and is not at all equal to the difficult task of pursuing measures for protecting and improving the health of the people. In a thorough reorganisation of the rural health service lies the solution of the health problem of Bengal by bringing both prevention and cure into effective co-ordination under properly trained medical officers of health, wholly in charge of manageable and well-defined units. A comprehensive scheme including provision of adequate rural medical relief, school medical inspection, medical relief for school children and systematic health education of children and adults and provision for maternity and child welfare service has been framed in the Public Health Department and is under consideration of Government.

As I have already stated elsewhere, this scheme involves large financial commitments. The scheme was placed before the Conference of Chairmen of District Boards and generally approved with certain useful suggestions for improvement. As the scheme was under examination from various aspects during the current year, the lump provision made for introducing the scheme in selected areas could not be utilised.

The provision has been repeated. Several District Boards have expressed their anxiety to participate in the scheme and to co-operate fully with Government financially and otherwise. It is, therefore, hoped that the scheme will be started during the ensuing year which, when it takes complete shape and is in full swing, would solve to a large extent the problem of public health in the countryside.

Sir, I feel that I have taken too much time of the House. If progress in making an advance in the improvement of public health has been necessarily slow, the House, I am confident, will realise the gravity of the problems and the careful consideration that they deserve, especially in view of the limited financial resources within the compass of which Government must develop their public utility projects.

With these words, Sir, I commend my motion to the House."

Education.

In replying to the debate on the Education Budget (Rs. 1,53,56,000) in the Bengal Legislative Assembly on March 14, 1939, the HON'BLE MR. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ, who had not made any speech in moving for the grant, said:—

"Sir, for the last two days there has been an almost interminable flow of eloquence over this Education Budget, but I regret that very few points of real importance relating to the education of the province have emerged out of these debates.

Primary education certainly loomed very large in the course of the discussions and I will say just a few words as to what we have been able to do, what we have been doing and what we propose to do, in the matter of the introduction of free and compulsory primary education in Bengal. It may be that I will have to repeat something of what I said last year, but for the sake of continuity in the presentation of my case I feel it necessary to do so. Those who have talked so lightly of primary education have very little idea of the magnitude and the complexity of the problem, and I am extremely sorry that those who are not well posted as to facts should appear in this House as the champion of the cause of the education of the masses and should be talking, not from data but from imagination, not for the purpose of giving helpful criticisms but for the purpose of bringing the Government of the day into contempt. Politics should not be introduced into discussions relating to educational matters but I regret to say that the discussions during the last two days have tended more or less to degenerate into political diatribes against the Government and ended in the making of reckless charges without any evidence in support of them. Now, Sir, let us remember the facts that we have got to face. There are, as is well known, about 50 million people in the rural areas spread over an area of nearly 75,000 square miles and roughly speaking we have got a population of nearly 50 lakhs of boys and girls of school-going age. Now, Sir, what did the Government do to begin with in order to come to grips with the problem? They had an extensive survey made of the materials at their disposal. Last year when I was speaking on this very subject I pointed out to the House how we had taken great pains in having a complete educational survey and in having maps prepared showing on each map the location of each

thana, and in each thana, the location of each village, and in each village the location of all kinds of primary schools—lower primary and upper primary—maktabs and others with a note as to the grant they received from Government and other sources, the resources of that locality and various other matters which were necessary to be known in order to estimate the position of these schools, the nature of the problem before us and the solutions which we have got to arrive at, in order to grapple with the problem completely. I will just point out to the House that the maps are of the kind that I have got in my hand. The map that I have in my hand is a thana map of police-station Sharisabari in Mymensingh district. The villages are marked out and the schools located. The survey was undertaken in the year 1936 and continued for nearly 2 years and is being continued still in order to bring the information up-to-date. I am not going to take any credit for the preparation of these maps because this Government is only a continuation of the previous Government. Most certainly. The Government of the day stands. Only the power has been transferred from others to the representatives of the people. Now, Sir, after the survey was made, it was found that primary schools were most unevenly distributed. This was due to the fact that previously there had been no policy behind the expansion of primary education in the province. The survey having been made, it was found that something like a definite formula had to be found out for the location of these primary schools. There were two methods of doing it. One was what was known as the area method, namely, that there should at least be one primary school in an area within a radius of one mile. The other was that there should at least be one primary school for a population of 2,000 souls.

Now, on either of these bases which could be applied as the circumstances of the day required we found that there would be necessary for purposes at least of rough calculation nothing less than about 50,000 of these schools spread throughout the province. There would be necessary about a lakh of trained teachers and 20 or 25 thousand as a reserve. The net result was that the cost of maintaining these schools would be somewhere between 2 and 3 crores, and it was this money that had to be found in order to have a system of free primary education throughout the province.

Sir, I have waited long and anxiously and I thought that the Bengal Education Act of 1930 could be given effect to without taxation. But I confess now, as I have confessed previously, that all my attempts to find out an alternative solution have proved a failure. But I am not ashamed of confessing that I have not been able to find out an alternative method. No one has been able to find out an alternative method. I have in my hand a booklet on Indian education, and I find that in Madras they have an Elementary Education Act. They have an Education Act in Bombay, and they are going to have another to bring it up on modern lines, and they are going to have Education Acts in other provinces. We are not without a parallel in the matter of enforcement of an education cess so far as the other provinces are concerned. I have been reminded several times in the midst of interpellations and by means of remarks made in this House that there was a definite resolution last year that education should be imparted in primary schools and that these schools should be established without taxing the agriculturists. I submit that it is an absurdity to think of

imposing an education cess and excluding the agriculturists as a class from the payment of that cess. There are many agriculturists who are able to pay, many agriculturists who are able to pay far more than even the landlords. The question is whether the cess should fall on those who are not able to pay, who are economically unable to bear the burden. That is one of the fundamental canons of taxation, and I freely admit that that is a canon which we have always kept in view. What is the incidence of this education cess in Bengal? A cultivator who has to pay Rs. 2 as *jama* has got to pay 7 pice in the year or ½ pice every month. And it is preposterous to argue that a cultivator who has got some amount of land cannot pay half a pice a month for the purpose of getting free education for his children. As a matter of fact, he pays at present and without the cess many times more, and whenever I have been able to go out into the country I have met agriculturists and asked them about the education cess, but up to now I have not met a single agriculturist who has not admitted that he will be ready to pay the cess only if he can get primary education for his children. That being the position, I am not prepared to accept what has been said on the floor of this House that this tax will tell heavily on the poor—nothing of the kind. On the contrary, if they take something from the poor, they will give many times more in return. Let us remember what Mr. Wordsworth has been good enough to tell us that free primary education cannot be had through any acts of charity. Nothing in this world which is worth having can be had for the mere asking; we have got to pay for it, and the only condition is that we are not made to pay more than the thing is worth.

Sir, I submit that primary education which is intended to be given by a system of trained teachers under healthy conditions and under all the requirements of modern life is something of a commodity which a cultivator cannot expect if he has to depend on his own means. I submit, therefore, that no sensible agriculturist would hesitate for a moment to pay this cess.

Now, Sir, having been convinced of this fact I decided that I should use the armoury that we have in our possession and go ahead with the expansion of primary education in this province. The position at the present moment is this—in 14 districts we have got School Boards under the Act. In 5 of these districts the education cess has been imposed and the Act is working. In 9 districts the cess had been imposed but was suspended on account of certain representations made to me. As regards the 5 districts, 3 of them, viz., Mymensingh, Dacca and Tippera, are very far advanced in the matter of the establishment of primary schools, and to-day in consultation with the Director of Public Instruction I have decided to allot the five lakhs of rupees to the districts which have taken upon themselves to pay the cess, in order to see that free primary schools are set up in these districts in the course of the next 3 or 4 months. I congratulate the people of Mymensingh, Dacca and Tippera on their good luck in being the pioneers in the matter of the introduction of primary education in rural areas.

As regards the other 9 districts, I have decided to withdraw the suspension order. There also the cess is going to be imposed. As regards the other 11 districts, I have passed orders for the establishment of District School Boards and I shall take the earliest opportunity



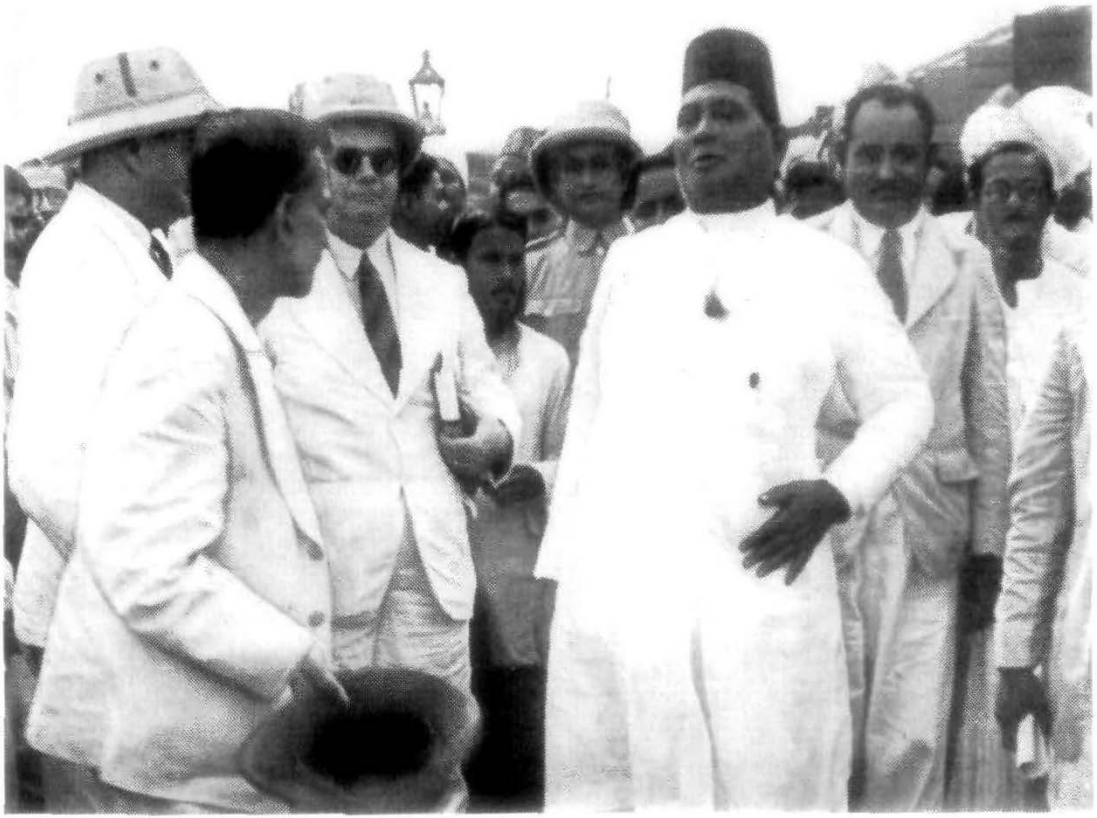
THIS PICTURE, REPRODUCED FROM THE FILM "BENGAL UNDER SELF-RULE," BY COURTESY OF MESSRS. AURORA CINEMA CO., SHOWS THE HON. KT. MR. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ BROADCASTING FROM THE SCREEN A REVIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL'S WORK DURING THE FIRST TWO YEARS OF PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY. THE FILM WAS SHOWN IN SEVERAL LEADING CINEMA HOUSES DURING THE FIRST WEEK OF APRIL, 1939.



Hon'ble Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq laying the foundation stone of the Dacca Agricultural Institute.



The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq laying the foundation stone of the new College at Munshiganj, Dacca.



THE HON'BLE CHIEF MINISTER AT CAN[illegible] WHERE HE GOT DOWN AT [illegible]





THE HON'BLE THE CHIEF MINISTER LEADS AN EXTREMELY BUSY LIFE. ON THE LEFT HE IS SEEN ENGAGED IN TALK WITH ONE OF THE NUMEROUS VISITORS WHO COME TO SEE HIM DAILY AND ON THE RIGHT HE IS SEEN ENGAGED IN DISCUSSION WITH THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP [illegible] FAMILY AND THE COUNCIL RESPECTIVELY.

to impose the education cess under the Act. I declare here and now that according to my calculation, within 12 to 18 months the whole of Bengal will see the Primary Education Act in operation and the whole of Bengal will either have primary schools or see a definite beginning in the matter of the establishment of primary schools.

I claim, Sir, that that will be an achievement of which the Government can well be proud. I feel a great relief now that I am able to tell this House and through the members of this House to the world outside that we have been able to solve the problem of the introduction of primary education in this province. I congratulate the members of the Coalition Party for the fight they have put up and for the support they have given to me and for the encouragement I have received from them in the matter of the establishment of primary schools in Bengal. And at the same time I condemn the attempts that have been made throughout in order to hamper my efforts and to put obstacles in the way of the expansion of primary education and introduction of free and compulsory primary education in this province.

Sir, I will just say a few words regarding the motion moved by my friend Mr. Monmohan Das. He wants that a declaration should be made that the five lakhs set apart for the education of Scheduled Castes should be made a recurring grant. I wish to point out to my friend that Government is ready, has always been ready and will always be ready, to help Scheduled Castes students like the students of other communities by the grant of scholarships and stipends in India and abroad and in any other way help them in the matter of education. But, Sir, to earmark Rs. 5 lakhs a year, recurring, for the education of the Scheduled Castes is a proposition which, I am sorry, I cannot accept. If I am here to earmark Rs. 5 lakhs for Scheduled Castes alone, I will have to set apart for the Muslims—they are 30 times as big a community—Rs. 1,50,00,000 simply for the cause of Muslim education and so on and so forth. That will rouse a fight among all the communities till the education budget will dwindle into nothing, and you will have nothing for the other purposes for which the Government have to exist.

Therefore, I would implore my friend not to take up that attitude. We have provided for Rs. 5 lakhs. We may provide for even more, if necessary, and I can assure you that all facilities for the spread of education amongst the Scheduled Castes will be provided in the shape of scholarships, stipends and such other things.

Now, Sir, my friend Mr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee waxed eloquent over the meagre amount provided for Education in Bengal. Has my friend forgotten that since the time of which Mr. Wordsworth has spoken there has been an all-round demand on the resources of Government and for the expansion of the activities of the nation-building departments? Will he please remember for a moment that we have had to provide in this very budget for water-supply alone in rural areas something like Rs. 15 lakhs? Will he remember that the demand on the resources of Government for medical relief has gone up by leaps and bounds till it is at the present moment five times more of what it was 10 years back? Will he remember that not only in the demand under "Public Health" and "Medical" but also under "Agriculture"

and for other nation-building activities Government are faced with demands from various quarters and that the pressure on the resources of Government at the present moment is much more than what it was 10 years back? So far as the Calcutta University is concerned, it has come in for a larger share of money than it did before. Now, Sir, if that is so, it is no use saying that all the money that is at the disposal of Government should be spent for Education. Proportionately, we have been spending a good deal; and I think my friend will be wiser to consult the budgets of other provinces.

Then, Sir, as regards hostels for students, I have found in the course of my tours that Muslim students had absolutely no hostel accommodation in Barisal. Since then I have taken up the question of providing hostels not only for Muslim students but also for Hindu students, and this matter will come up before the House in due course. My friend Dr. Mookerjee may rest assured that in this matter of providing hostels for students I will not make the slightest distinction between Hindu and Muslim students. (Cheers.)

Now as regards Mrs. Hasina Murshed's complaint, I can only say that the matter will be duly considered, but I want only to remind honourable members that the question of primary education in Calcutta is more the concern of the Calcutta Corporation than that of the Government of Bengal. However, we do not want to shirk our responsibility, and this matter will certainly be taken into consideration.

As regards the Dacca University Bill, we propose to introduce it this year, and I hope that Dr. Mookerjee and myself, working together, may do some wonders so far as the Calcutta University also is concerned.

Khan Bahadur Mohammed Ali has stressed the question of adult education. We have not forgotten the need of adult education which forms part of any rural uplift scheme. I can assure the honourable member that it is a part of our programme, and I congratulate him that he has started adult education in Bogra so well and so successfully. I hope it will be followed up in other districts as well.

Sir, there is one point to which I want to refer. As regards the Scheduled Castes, we have got a committee, and my friend Mr. Thakur has said that it is unrepresentative. On that committee, we have Mr. Hem Chandra Naskar, the leader of the Scheduled Castes group; we have got Mr. Kshetra Nath Singha, and we have got some others who are now sitting in the Opposition. I fail to understand, Sir, how such a committee can be called unrepresentative.

As regards primary education and adult education, we have got a committee of 25 members—mostly M.L.A.'s and M.L.C.'s—and they are considering all the questions relating to primary and adult education and submitting very useful suggestions to Government.

As regards the 5 lakhs of rupees, I have already made an announcement that it will be distributed in certain districts, and I am quite sure that those districts will have no difficulty now in having their full complement of primary schools.

As regards Maulvi Abdul Bari's remarks, I can say that it is more the concern of the Medical Department than of the Education Department. But this much I can tell him—that we have decided to have a board to deal with this question, and I hope that it will be an accomplished fact in the near future. As regards the other question, I can give him this assurance that after doing so much I shall not allow this question to be dropped simply for want of attention.

I do not want at the present moment to deal with other aspects raised. I have given a definite reply to all the speakers, but I want to express my regret that my friend Dr. Mookerjee should have referred to the Bill relating to the Secondary Education Board which has not yet been finally drafted. After it is finally drafted, there will certainly be time enough to consider it, but at the present moment it is somewhat premature to say what the provisions are or will be, and on the basis of whatever Dr. Mookerjee may have known previously or privately I think it is anything but fair to level an attack on Government.

As regards agricultural education, I can only say that it will form a part, and I think it already does form a part, of the curricula, but it depends on the District Schools Board to have the curricula suited according to the requirements of the various localities.

Sir, I wanted to take the House through certain figures, but I think it is unnecessary to do so.

I hope and trust that the statement that I have made about going ahead with primary education will dispel the idea that Government have got no policy or programme. Government have got a policy and a programme, and I think a more substantial and well-defined policy and programme than any other province in India. (Loud applause.)"

Rural Credit.

In replying to the debate on the motion that the sum of Rs. 15,33,000 be granted under the head "Co-operation" for expenditure during 1939-40, the HON'BLE MR. M. B. MULLICK made a speech in the Bengal Legislative Assembly on March 15, 1939, in course of which he thus explained Government's policy regarding the restoration of rural credit:—

"Sir, as you have been good enough to remind me of the time-limit within which I must finish, I think I should now come to that question of rural credit, and I have to place before the House the steps that I have decided to take; and it is this—The problem of providing short-term seasonal credit for agriculturists has been engaging the serious attention of Government. The private sources of credit are at present extremely shy and have practically dried up. People then started to look to the co-operative societies for such credit, but these societies could not meet the demand because for some years they have only been able to collect a small percentage of the outstanding loans, and therefore had not the expected money to put back into circulation. Further their inability to repay deposits on maturity did not encourage fresh deposits to supply fresh capital for circulation as short-term loans. So a deadlock was reached, and a certain degree of public anxiety has

been expressed about the stability of the Co-operative Banks and about the future of agricultural seasonal finance; depositors ask when they will be repaid their deposits, and debtor-members ask what hope have they of being released from the growing burden of debt and how they will manage in the future. This anxiety need not continue; Government fully intend to support the co-operative movement in this province and will not allow it to fall into any serious danger. Government will also see that cultivators obtain such short-term seasonal loans as they really require. These then are the two problems; to remove the deadlock in which Central Banks and Societies are involved as regards past loans and old liabilities, and to enable societies to start functioning anew purely for supply of seasonal short-term credit. In order to secure a steady flow of agricultural credit and to put the agriculturists on a sound footing for the future, Government feel that the burden of past debts must be lightened as far as possible and therefore that any scheme for supplying future short-term credit must be accompanied by a scheme for reducing society members' old debts to an amount within their repaying capacity. At the same time the two problems will be treated quite independently in practice and in all existing societies separate accounts will be kept for payments in discharge of old liabilities and for new short-term loans. I want to make it quite clear that the past entanglements will be no handicap for the future in the case of any member who shows an honest intention to pay what is settled as fair for him to pay towards old liabilities, and who knows that he can repay after the harvest the small seasonal short-term loan that he may require in the future.

First then with regard to the past: in order to release the deadlock Government propose, at an early date, subject to detailed examination of certain points, to give effect to a scheme which will facilitate the repayment to depositors of their principal dues in proportion to the extent that the assets of each Bank are considered good and justify such assistance from Government. The preliminary survey to ascertain this amount has already been carried out and the result is now under examination; this scheme will also include the scaling down of debts due from members to an amount which they can fairly be expected to pay by easy instalments spread over a number of years, and when these instalments have been fully paid off the past will have been fully cleared up. A scheme on these lines has actually been framed and is now under the consideration of Government. I may also add in this connection that with a view to giving further assistance in the liquidation of old debts and also to give facilities for credit on a long-term basis, Government intend to increase the number of land-mortgage banks. The five existing ones have been experimental, and their initial progress has necessarily been slow, because strict banking principles have had to be observed and have been observed; but the experience gained has been valuable, and Government now feel that they can expand this line of co-operative activity.

So much for the past debts and liabilities, and it is hoped that debtor-members, now that a definite limit will be placed to their liabilities and a clear chance afforded of pulling themselves out of debt, will respond by doing all in their power to expedite the disposal of their cases before Debt Settlement Boards by regularly and promptly paying instalments fixed for them and by giving proof of their intention to do so by paying what they can while their applications are pending before

the Boards. I will here repeat the assurance which has been given before that payments made, while an application is pending before a Debt Settlement Board, will be adjusted against the finally awarded amount.

Now for the future; I hope not only that the scheme outlined above will bring fresh hope to creditors and debtors alike, but also that the assurances that I have given of full Government support to the co-operative movement will dispel any tendency to lack of confidence in the banks. You may rest assured, Sir, that deposits may be made in full confidence, and that Government will take such executive action as may be within their power to assist the banks in maintaining efficient management. If, however, the action foreshadowed above and these assurances do not attract sufficient fresh deposits to supply the immediate need for future short-term credit, Government will help to such an extent as may be necessary and as may be justified by the economic assets and circumstances of the societies and their members. New societies will be formed for this purpose as and where necessary consistent with due regard for their organisation on a proper basis; new societies will be organised as rapidly as possible, but mistakes of the past must not be repeated. I must here make it clear, Sir, that in taking steps to stimulate the provision of funds for short-term agricultural credit, Government have in mind the requirements of cultivators for genuine seasonal agricultural needs, and do not contemplate nor consider themselves in any way responsible for the supply of credit for other extraneous objects, such as expenditure on social ceremonies, etc. The loans will be limited to the minimum amount actually necessary and to an amount which the borrower can repay in normal years without difficulty. Also it must be again emphasized that the ultimate basis of any system for the supply of credit is credit-worthiness, that is to say, conduct calculated to inspire a feeling of confidence that loans will be repaid in due time. The surest way to reopen the sources of credit is to dispel any apprehension that borrowers may evade their obligations, and the best and quickest means of dispelling any such impression is to give some practical proof of an intention to honour one's obligations and to meet one's liabilities honestly to the fullest extent within one's power. In order to make future deposits more safe, Government intend to legislate so that future loans by co-operative societies shall be recoverable as a public demand, the power to be used only in cases of wilful default, and in the meantime Government will afford the Provincial and Central Co-operative Banks all possible assistance through their officers towards ensuring a fair distribution of new short-term loans at a moderate rate of interest and to secure their punctual recovery."

Industries.

In moving that a sum of Rs. 16,18,000 be granted under the head "Industries" for expenditure during 1939-40, the HON'BLE NAWAB KHWAJA HABIBULLAH BAHADUR made the following speech in the Bengal Legislative Assembly on March 15, 1939:—

"In commending this industrial budget of the province for the approval of the honourable members I would emphasise that the responsibility that rests on us in the matter of the industrial development of

the province is indeed grave and considerable. It does not lie only in formulating a policy and in executing it, but also in placing before the wider public a realistic picture of the problems that face us and the possible solutions thereof that can be attempted by the Government, having regard to available resources. It is from this standpoint that I beg your indulgence to address a few words to you in the hope that you may appreciate our difficulties and assess our achievements accordingly.

If the provisions in the budget have not been as much as we would have them it is not because that I am not conscious of the responsibility of my department in the matter of assisting the industrial progress of the province along desirable and possible lines, but because of the various limitations and difficulties over which we have little or no control. I have listened with great attention, considerable interest and due respect to the criticisms that have been levelled against the budget provisions, but it appears that most of these comments partake more of the nature of criticism for the sake of criticism than a correct assessment, against the prospective unavoidable limitations and difficulties, of what it has been possible for us to achieve. Before I proceed to deal with the criticisms I may just assure the honourable members that Government have been quite unsparing in their efforts to utilise the available funds in the best possible manner with a view to promoting the industrial development of the province. And I hope to impress on the House with reference to the detailed schemes that have so far been put into operation or will shortly be implemented, that the policy and programme that we are following should enable us to achieve the objects in view.

I do not doubt for a moment that there is a genuine earnestness underlying all popular demands for a more rapid industrial progress of the province. Admittedly it is a happy augury for the country, for unless the public are inspired by an industrial impulse and their industrial consciousness are awakened, the unaided efforts of the Government cannot possibly make any headway. But I am sorry to have noticed that in their enthusiasm for criticism our critics lose sight of this important factor as also the realities of the situation. A Provincial Government's scope of initiative in the matter of industrial development is limited by many factors and industrial progress cannot be achieved merely by inspiration. It requires not only careful planning but also cautious adoption of measures in which certain delays are inevitable. In our anxiety for industrial advancement we must not ignore the limitations that beset us but should have patience for the fruition of our schemes. Although our industrial budget has since the 1st April, 1937, increased by more than six lakhs, there remain still a number of schemes which could not be taken up for want of adequate funds. If our industrial schemes are found to be incomplete in certain details and directions, it is mainly because of this limitation of funds.

Besides there is another factor which unavoidably causes delay in the formulation and execution of schemes. There are recognised methods and departmental procedures for examination and consideration through which every proposal is to pass, before it can be carried to the stage of operation. So certain delays are inevitable and however much we may like to expedite things, we cannot do so except at the risk of haphazard and possibly wasteful employment of resources

and materials. We do not certainly want the employment of our resources to uncertain ends, and that is why we have chosen to follow a policy of careful planning and gradual expansion of our activities even at the risk of a little delay. You do not certainly desire that in our zeal for progress and reform, we should put too many irons in the fire and dissipate our resources and energies on schemes of doubtful advantage and benefit.

I should invite your attention to another limiting factor in our programme of work which I emphasised in my speech in the other House only the other day. This relates to the lack of provincial control over tariff, fiscal policy, exchange and railway freight of the country. If I refer to this fact again to you, I do so only to impress upon you that on account of this lack of control over such important factors of national economy, the Provincial Government cannot have its own way in the matter of industrial development or cannot always develop industries according to its own requirements and plan.

With regard to the policy that we are following and mean to follow in future, I may assure the House that our objective is the harmonious development of all types of industries so that an all-round improvement of the economic conditions of the masses can be accomplished. I need hardly point out to you that the economic problems of the people are varied and many-sided, and unless we can attack them on all fronts we are not likely to make any impression on the accumulated deficiencies and handicaps that are lying like a dead weight on the country-side. While industries will have to be developed, agriculture and trade also will have to be improved on correlated lines, for they are complementary in many respects. But in the matter of industrial development also we should remember that a Provincial Government's scope of initiative is indeed limited.

We cannot certainly take a direct initiative to develop and promote all and sundry industries. By providing information, technical training and knowledge and by financial assistance in some form or other we may assist the industrial development of the province in many ways. But as the amelioration of the economic conditions of the masses is of the most vital concern to us, our foremost endeavour has been to initiate those measures which will materially assist the rejuvenation of the decadent small and cottage industries of Bengal and the promotion of new industries, so that the standard of living in the country-side may be gradually improved.

This is, in brief, Sir, the policy we are pursuing. I would now make a reference to the achievements of my department so far and the possibilities of further expansion in future. There is a general charge against my department that there are hardly any tangible proofs of industrial progress that the activities of the Government, directly or indirectly, have been able to assist. I am afraid the charge is largely based on insufficient and uninformed data. Although it should not be expected that the efforts of a Provincial Government department, specially within the constitutional limitations such as obtain in India, will lead the country far along the road to industrialisation, it must be said that in realising the objects which were in view of the Government since the inception of the department, it has been eminently successful and that since the inauguration of provincial autonomy the policy, as outlined above, has received an accelerated impetus. The example of

the potteries at Belghuria where a labour force of nearly 600 composed of almost of all communities is employed is a typical illustration of how Government initiative and assistance can produce very commendable results. During the short period of two years the Government have also put into operation a number of useful schemes which are expected to go a long way in improving the productive technique of the cottage industries and the arrangements for marketing of their products and expanding the technical and vocational training in various lines. During the year 1938-39, the establishment of the Silk Conditioning House at Howrah has been an important development in the sphere of the silk industry of the province, for it will serve to place the industry on a scientific basis. The Conditioning House will arrange for the testing of raw silk and its standardisation which is an essential prerequisite for the development of the market.

Three more important schemes that were put into operation during the year are the appointment of an Industrial Survey Committee, the establishment of the Industrial Intelligence Section and the establishment of the Industrial and Commercial Museum with moving exhibitions. The Survey Committee has been entrusted with the task of making a thorough investigation into the existing position of the various types of industries, the possible remedies that should be adopted for the solution of their problems and the possibilities of their further expansion in future. The Committee has also been asked to suggest what new industries could be introduced with a view to utilise the enormous economic resources lying untapped in this province and the huge available man-power lying practically idle. The Government are expecting that when the findings of this Committee will be made, the Government will be in possession of enough materials and data on the basis of which they would be able to formulate a comprehensive policy of industrial development for the province and launch it in right earnest.

The establishment of the Industrial Intelligence Section again was an important step in the matter of compiling and disseminating industrial data of the province. For want of an adequate and competent staff for the purpose the department was feeling very much handicapped, but the creation of the section enhanced the utility of the department. Quite recently, this Section completed the survey of brass and bell-metal industry in Bengal and produced a report which is not only very comprehensive but contains a huge mass of valuable data that will throw a flood of light on the problems facing this industry as well as other industries of rural Bengal. Similar reports on other important industries are in the process of preparation. As any industrial planning presupposes the availability of detailed and dependable data, the usefulness of the section is beyond question and when the Industrial Survey Committee will have made its recommendations and outlined the possibilities of further industrial expansion, it will have to carry out the important task of collecting industrial facts and materials more intensively and extensively.

In connexion with the promotion of rural industries, the work of the Industrial Intelligence Section will also be very helpful, for as I have already pointed out to you, the most urgent problem of the rural masses is how to provide them with gainful subsidiary occupations with the help of which they may be enabled to augment their scanty incomes from their land. Most of the agriculturists as is well known

to you remain unemployed or under-employed for a number of months in the year. If arrangements could be made for organizing small industries in the cottages, the idle months of the agriculturists would be profitably employed and the whole rural population would be materially benefited. We know what industries generally exist in the rural areas and when the investigations carried out by this section from time to time will reveal their problems and difficulties, the Government will devise suitable measures to tackle them and also it is expected that these surveys will indicate new lines of industries that the agriculturists may suitably adopt either as their principal or off-season occupations. I may assure the House that the Government will be unsparing in their efforts to assist the agriculturists in this respect in every possible way.

In the matter of providing better facilities of publicity and marketing for our industrial products, the establishment of the Industrial Museum and Moving Exhibitions have also been a measure of far-reaching importance and it is being expected that this Museum by proving a rallying ground for all types of industrial products will impart a definite impetus to the industrial development of the province in new and hitherto untried lines. The Moving Exhibition also as an adjunct to the Museum will be organised at suitable centres of the province occasionally and the party will move from place to place in order to enlighten the people on the industrial products of the province and also the techniques of production in many lines. The Moving Exhibition has been inaugurated for the first time at Uluberia in the midst of great popular enthusiasm. Judging from the number of visitors to the Exhibition, numbering more than 1,000 a day, it may be confidently said that there was a real need for it and its increasing popularity means its increasing utility. All this will serve to create an industrial mindedness and disseminate knowledge which are so very necessary for rousing the people out of the torpor of their indolence and poverty.

Further, to provide better facilities of technical training the industrial grant-in-aid fund has been appreciably augmented on account of which it was possible for the department to finance a large number of industrial schools in the rural areas. The reorganisation of peripatetic weaving schools by enlarging the curriculum of instruction and by providing for training in modern technique of dyeing and bleaching of yarns and fabrics has also been an important development. Dyeing, as you must be aware of, is a highly technical subject and a very important part of textile technology. With a view to providing the students with an up-to-date knowledge of modern dyeing, arrangements have been made for the expansion of the Dye House which is being equipped with the latest type of plant and machinery at Serampore. A power weaving cotton section also is about to be opened for the training of mill operatives and as a large number are annually absorbed in the existing Textile Mills of the province, it is expected that training imparted through this section will enable many young men to find employment in the existing concerns.

The Government Weaving Institute is considered to be the premier institution of its kind in India and its recent expansion will further

enhance its prestige and usefulness. The name of the Institute has now been changed into Bengal Textile Institute so that it may more appropriately convey the impression of its all-Bengal character.

There are again certain important schemes waiting to be implemented which could not be put into operation on account of certain unavoidable factors. I think I should refer to them, as several honourable members of the House have complained that in spite of the provision of funds in last year's budget, these schemes were not carried into effect. The schemes in question are (*a*) the reorganisation of the Silk Weaving Institute at Berhampore and (*b*) the establishment of a Power Weaving Section at the Bengal Textile Institute, Serampore. In regard to the reorganisation of the Silk Weaving Institute, I may inform the House that the Government did their best to expedite it, but as the details of the design and estimates of the highly technical machines were available rather late, they could not be ordered for early. They are, however, now on their way from abroad. Secondly, the question of accommodation offered difficulties with the closing down of the Berhampore Detention Camps. We are, however, now at an advanced stage of preparation and it is expected that the reorganisation scheme will shortly be carried into effect in its entirety.

In respect of the proposed Power Jute Weaving Section at Serampore, the delay has been principally due to the protracted negotiations with the Indian Jute Mills Association. It was considered necessary to consult this body whose members are the prospective employers, before the plant and machinery were actually ordered for and the course of study and other details finally settled. All this took much more time than would have been necessary with the result that the money could not be utilised during the current financial year.

This is, in brief, a review of the activities of my department during the short period I have been in office, and I hope that what we have so far achieved and what possibilities we have in view to realise need not be considered quite unimpressive. To organise men and materials for carrying out an industrial programme is a grave problem and unless utmost care is taken, any loophole or gap that may remain may jeopardise our prospects of success. Having borne in mind this consideration, we should regulate our policy and expect results. I would cordially invite the honourable members to visit the various institutions that have been organised under the auspices of the Department of Industries and judge for themselves what is being done in them and what services they are rendering to the young generations and wider public of the province. I would repeat this invitation, for I feel somehow that if honourable members see things for themselves they will discover that there is hardly any substance in the gravamen of their charge.

Sir, one word more and I have done. In moving the grant for the acceptance of the House, I have endeavoured to present you with an idea of what the Industries Department has so far achieved and in what new lines its activities will gradually expand. I hope I have been able to impress on you that we have not lacked either in initiative or in results within the limitations and difficulties of the situation."

RURAL RECONSTRUCTION.

On March 16, 1939, the HON'BLE MR. H. S. SUHRAWARDY, Minister for Rural Reconstruction, delivered a very important speech in the Bengal Legislative Assembly in which he unfolded the Ministry's plans for a comprehensive rural reconstruction drive in Bengal.

He said:—

I would not have spoken at this stage of the proceedings had it not been that this year there has been included in the Budget a new item of expenditure dealing with Rural Reconstruction. I think this House, and through this House the people outside, are entitled to know the purposes and the significance of this grant. I shall try to be brief but I hope I will be excused if I am more lengthy than usual owing to the novelty of the subject.

The honourable members will find that the grants for the Rural Reconstruction Department have been interspersed under various Budget heads. The main head of expenditure is under "General Administration" and consists of Rs. 57,000 under "Civil Secretariat", Rs. 1,54,000 under head "District Administration", Rs. 2,00,000 as "Discretionary grant to District Officers", Rs. 15,200 for "Training Institutes", Rs. 16,000 under "Department of Industries", Rs. 13,000 for "Adult Education", Rs. 41,000 under head "Agriculture", Rs. 5,000 each under the heads "Public Health" and "Irrigation", and Rs. 4,000 under head "Civil Works". Such a list may give the impression that Rural Reconstruction consists of these several items, but actually it is a great deal much bigger than these. I would like to disabuse any member of any idea that he may possess that Rural Reconstruction implies grants from Government for various nation-building activities in order to rehabilitate the countryside.

Incentive to Voluntary Labour.

On the other hand, these grants merely stimulate; they are merely an incentive to voluntary labour. If the future of the countryside depended upon grants from Government then it would take a very very long time indeed, if at all, for the countryside to assume that air of progress and prosperity which we hope a well-planned national scheme of Rural Reconstruction can achieve. Rural Reconstruction has been differently defined in the various provinces. Some regard it as debt conciliation, or as provision for short-term credit, or as establishment or habilitation of the Co-operative Department, or as improvements in agriculture, animal husbandry, poultry farming, or as marketing and securing a better price for the agriculturist for his crops. The popular view in Bengal is that it consists in cutting canals, draining *bils*, in improving roads, cutting jungles, filling up ditches, removing water-hyacinth. It is of these and of many more but yet not of these. These are merely the natural consequences of Rural Reconstruction and not Rural Reconstruction itself.

Great Psychological Uplift.

I visualize Rural Reconstruction as a great psychological uplift, an exaltation of the rural mind. The movement can well be described as an urge for better living, as a realisation in the mind of the villager that his destiny is in his own hands, that he has sufficient potentialities

within himself to better his condition. Its object is to arouse the villager from his lethargy and stupor and infuse in him a new hope, a new life, to make him self-reliant and self-respecting and self-sufficient. Rural Reconstruction will tend to widen his vision, to make him more receptive of ideas, to beget in him a craving for knowledge and a desire for constant improvement.

Not a Party Matter.

I consider that a Rural Reconstruction programme well-planned and well run will be the saving of our people and it is the greatest possible service that we can render to the poor and the suffering. It really is tantamount to apotheosising them and surely in this great work I have a right to claim the co-operation of all right thinking men, irrespective of political and party lines, irrespective of communal and class considerations. In this great drive against stagnation, surely I can expect help from all quarters, from the young and the old, from the rich and the poor, from the literate and the illiterate, from the landlord and the peasant, from the merchant, from the agriculturist, from the labourer, and particularly from those who feel intensely for the unhappy lot of the agriculturist and who in their own several ways,—some right and some wrong, some constructive and some destructive,—are trying to alleviate their distress and bring relief, where relief is so much needed. This will be the touchstone with the aid of which we shall be able to differentiate the workers from the talkers, through whose aid we shall be able to test the genuineness or otherwise of those wild protestations of extravagant sympathy in which some of us are apt to indulge.

The Agency.

Now what is the agency through which we propose achieving our object? I propose creating an organisation which I trust will attract the willing co-operation of all right thinking citizens. I propose in this organisation to intermingle the non-official with the official. I feel that Rural Reconstruction can only succeed if it has the wholehearted co-operation of the non-officials and the more responsibility I can impose on them the happier I will feel. When it is recalled that the main function of the movement is to pool the resources of the province not merely in money, for money will form a very small part of such resources, but in labour applied to a well conceived plan, cannot but happen that the success of Rural Reconstruction must depend upon the voluntary co-operation of the people of the province.

Officials will only guide.

If the officials are there they are merely to advise and to guide. The urge for betterment must come from within; it cannot be imposed from outside. Now I propose to make the village the primary unit of this organisation. Pallimangal Samities are to be formed in each village of any size worth the name. Each of these Samities will have its own office-bearers, its President and Secretary and a number of volunteers. It should be the endeavour of the Samity to enrol every single able-bodied male within the village as its members. I am for the time being

leaving the female population out of consideration in this preliminary organisation, but I do feel that their co-operation and their collaboration will be of the greatest benefit to the movement and I hope that at no distant date we shall be able to set up Ladies' Committees as well from which I am certain that the menfolk will derive inspiration and guidance and the necessary incentive for the rehabilitation of their hearths and homes. I certainly will not object if spontaneously and voluntarily ladies' committees spring up in the villages to take their proper place in this movement.

Details of Organisation.

A certain number of representatives from each village will together form Union Rural Reconstruction Society in conjunction with the members of the Union Board. The Union Board members will be the nucleus of this Society. I have advisedly included them partly because the Union Board being a statutory body has a permanency which a voluntary organisation does not essentially possess and partly because I wish it to be recognised definitely and established beyond dispute that these Rural Reconstruction Societies are in no way antagonistic or parallel to the Union Board, but merely help it to perform its own nation-building functions. In order that the Union Rural Reconstruction Society should be a success it must have the sympathy and co-operation of the Union Board.

Next, a number of representatives from these Union Rural Reconstruction Societies will form a Thana Rural Reconstruction Society which should be presided over by the Circle Officer. It will have as its members, apart from those representatives the non-officials, the outdoor officers of Government within whose jurisdiction a particular thana falls. I am sure that the movement will be greatly assisted by their valuable co-operation and their guidance, and I expect these officers in the course of their duties to preach the gospel of this movement and guide it along fruitful channels.

Next comes the Subdivisional Committee with the Subdivisional Officer at its head, the Circle Officers and technical officers of Government as its members along with the non-official representatives from each thana. The next step is the District Committee with the District Magistrate as its President with the technical officers of the district and non-officials of the various subdivisions. In these Committees I would be happy to include the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the District Boards, the Chairmen of the Local Boards, the municipalities and the members of the Legislatures. From here we pass on to the Divisional Committee presided over by the Divisional Commissioner and then to a Provincial Committee composed of certain technical officers of Government of the nation-building departments and a number of non-officials interested in the development of the rural areas. The Minister-in-charge will be its President and the Director of Rural Reconstruction its Secretary.

Now the honourable members will see that in this scheme I have endeavoured to bring together the non-official and the official because I feel that in a complete collaboration of these two classes lies the future success of this great experiment upon which we are about to embark. In order to assist these various Committees it is proposed to appoint 27

District Rural Reconstruction Officers, to assist the District Magistrate. There will be also 27 Propaganda Officers, and for this year 250 officers whose jurisdictions will extend to a thana. It is proposed next year to raise the number to 600 so as to cover the entire province.

Government will look to the local officers for the success of the programme. The Circle Officer shall be responsible within his circle, the Subdivisional Officer within his subdivision and the District Magistrate within his district. It should be clearly understood that District Rural Reconstruction Officers, whom we propose to place at the disposal of the District Magistrate, will be merely assistants to the District Magistrate on whom will rest the responsibility for the movement. To the Divisional Commissioner we shall look for proper co-ordination and guidance and constant supervision of the work of the department within his jurisdiction. We may call him the Divisional Rural Reconstruction Commissioner or we may leave him with his present title, but in any event, it is on him that the major responsibility will fall.

The Director's Function.

The Director of Rural Reconstruction will be the chief adviser to Government in this department. His duties are co-ordination of rural uplift work and rural reconstruction activities throughout the province, including the co-ordination of the work of the different departments of Government which are engaged in promoting the welfare of the rural population. He will constantly tour with the object of assisting and advising all officers engaged in this task. His tours will be of an extensive nature and I look to him to keep himself, and through himself the Government, informed of the rural reconstructional activities throughout the province.

Along with the organisation thus created I hope to be able to take advantage of the services of responsible but ardent men anxious to place themselves at the disposal of the organisation to act as honorary organizers. I am confident that we shall be able to secure the services of a number of such people, for I feel that the anxiety to serve and to work is widely felt and all that is required is the creation of opportunities and helpful directions. Then there are organisations as well which are engaged in social service work. I propose to assist those that are doing sound work in the rural areas.

The Role of Landlords, Pensioners and Retired Gentry.

In this connection I would like in particular to speak and to appeal to two classes of men who appear to me to be specially fitted to participate in this work, the one on account of their responsibilities to the countryside, and the other for the time and the ripe wisdom which they can place at the disposal of the people. I refer to the landlords and to Government pensioners and other retired gentry. We possess in them invaluable source of supply and I hope that they will rise to the height of the occasion.

Now let me try and reduce the psychological urge for mass uplift into concrete forms; almost every aspect of rural life will be touched

by it and, I hope, revivified. In the forefront, and as one of its most important aspects, I place adult education; which in its wider sense is almost tantamount to Rural Reconstruction itself, for adult education does not merely mean literacy or ability to read and write and avoid placing a thumb impression on a document. In the Rural Reconstruction Department adult education has its special significance. It not merely means literacy; it means creating in the villagers a desire to acquire knowledge to widen his vision, to know his rights and duties, to appreciate his place in the scheme of things, to expand his cultural activities, to raise his standard of living; in short, to inspire him to live a fuller life. Now, Sir, I propose to aim at establishing at least one adult school in every village, if possible, one in every *para*. Surely this ought not to be very difficult. If we place credence and reliance on that wave of sympathy for the unhappy lot of the agriculturist which is sweeping over the province and which is voiced from all parts of the house and finds an echo in the distant corners of our land, if all those who can read and write to undertake the task of teaching the illiterate, surely this will be no idle dream. If I cannot go so far as to hope that teachers and groups of learners will spring up in every village and every literate person will buckle to the task, surely I can hope that primary education teachers, students, Debt Settlement clerks, daffadars, Union Board clerks and the elders of the village will take up the matter in earnest, and I am certain that it will be possible to have an adult night school at least in the premises of every Primary School with a little library. The movement will be helped by this department by the publication of suitable primers and books, and by organising suitable lectures by officials and by peripatetic cinemas.

Now the question arises how is this venture to be financed. My objective is to try and make the village independent of Government, the District Board, or the Union Board's help as far as possible, and to put it on its own feet, but it must be recognised that organisations dependent on voluntary work are apt to languish and hence we should try and place them in a permanent footing.

Mushtibhiksha Plan.

We may make them statutory, we may reduce them into co-operative societies, we may register them under an Act, but a consideration of these will depend on the manner of their growth; at this stage I would like to suggest one measure which may make for permanency, i.e., by the organisation of the system of *Mushtibhiksha*—one *mushti* of rice per household per day. This is not too much of a strain. As a matter of fact, it is by such means that much of the charitable work in villages is still carried on, that the poor and the needy are able to help and assist their still more unfortunate brethren. I propose to establish *Mushtibhiksha* on a sound and a firm foundation and to make it, as far as possible, proof against malversation and peculation. A proper record should be kept with the Pallimangal Samity; there should be two cards for each house-hold—one will be kept wiith the house-holder and one with the collector of *Mushtibhiksha*; the *Mushtibhiksha* collected should be entered on both the cards; an account should be kept of the collections and sent to the Union Samity and a proper register maintained in order to ensure continuity. The Pallimangal Samity will be

registered in the office of the Subdivisional Officer and I am certain that the subscriptions so raised by means of *Mushtibhiksha* will suffice to pay the expenses of a small adult night school and indeed to meet most of the requirements of the Samiti. To supplement the income, the Union Boards may be authorised and requested, in fact, I feel that Union Boards will be only too glad, to undertake the burden of paying, say, Rs. 2 per school per month for this most laudable object.

This postulates a Pallimangal fund or even a general Rural Reconstruction fund. I see no objection to this; I see no reason indeed why the well-to-do villagers, landlords, Mahajans and traders and professional men should not contribute in accordance with their capacity towards the creation and maintenance of such funds.

Now let me pass on to other aspects of the Rural Reconstruction. I feel that it will benefit us greatly if a survey of the villagers themselves was taken before we embark upon a survey of the village itself. I think it will not be impossible to induce each villager to promise to assist in the Rural Reconstruction work in some form or other, by manual labour, by intellectual labour, by supervision or by subscription. There will thus be a drive on the part of the villagers themselves to include in the organisation as many persons as possible.

Mobilising Voluntary Co-operation.

Let us endeavour to mobilise voluntary co-operation in the widest sense, and by organised work best suited to the capacity of the individual members produce the maximum effect.

Side by side we should make a survey of the village itself, note its deficiencies and requirements, and then plan to make of it a model village for model villagers. It is clear that Rural Reconstruction work must encroach on the functions of the various nation-building departments of Government. The purpose, however, will be to co-ordinate those various functions and to stimulate the departments in the exercise of these functions. It is not to be expected that every Pallimangal Samity will at once adopt all the various works of improvement. It will take up those activities which it can more conveniently adopt; possibly it will take up those works which it considers most urgent and essential for its safety and happiness. With your leave, Sir, I will proceed to give some brief details of the work which a Samity can conveniently take up. It can put up its own samity building, which will be centre of its activities. It can improve the sanitation of the village and its hygiene, it can regulate rubbish heaps, clear jungles, fill ditches, disinfect and purify tanks, eradicate water-hyacinth. It can adopt improved farming methods and use improved agricultural implements; take up scientific rotation of crops, plant newer crops which may yield fair profits, learn how to conserve and prepare manure and compose and how to make soils; it may take up the problem of providing fodder for the cattle of the village by rotational planting of short hemp or Napier grass or by co-operative farming of land specially set apart by the villagers for the purpose of growing fodder crops; it may take up fruit culture or vegetable gardening or fish culture, or animal husbandry or poultry farming; it may improve roads and communications, cut khals, drain beels, open up chocked drainage channels and generally improve

communications. It can take up co-operative marketing of produce, establish seed stores and *dharmogolas*; it may put up industrial institutes or have its own co-operative industrial factory. A village or two may be induced to give up a portion of his land and to serve as a demonstration farm. The officers of Government will be only too glad to give technical advice and to run it for the profit of that villager and for the instruction of his co-villagers. It may take up the arduous duty of consolidation of holdings which require great good-will and delicate adjustment of rights: it may think of providing primary or model schools with playgrounds for the young folk; it may excavate tanks for water-supply, or dig wells, and by its own endeavour attempt to solve the water-supply problem of the village. It may be able even to set apart a plot of land for bamboo clumps for the inhabitants of the village which is so essential for its needs and requirements. If gifts of land are not forthcoming the Pallimangal Samities may acquire properties, such as tanks for rearing fish, lands to serve as seed farms and nurseries or as demonstration farms, or for fodder purposes or for bamboo clumps or for fuel farms. It may go in for hygienic houses and improved cattle sheds; it may set up its own panchayat to solve its various disputes and problems by arbitration; it may attempt to preserve peace and order in the locality, establish thrift societies, abolish costly and ruinous customs, inculcate habits of temperance. It could do these and more, but its greatest achievement would be if it could inculcate that sense of co-operation and of corporate life which alone is the key to future progress and advancement. I feel that all our efforts will come to naught if this sense of co-operation is not created, because in that sense lies permanency. If that sense is there we can almost achieve anything that we desire, a wonderful machinery will be created not only to supply knowledge but to receive knowledge. Do we need a census of the industries within the village? Our Samity will be able to supply it. Do we need restriction of jute cultivation and a proper supervision, whether under a voluntary or compulsory system? It is this organisation which can make it successful. Do we want to see that the villagers do not contract loans, and if they do, the loan is spent on productive purpose and is not dissipated. It is this corporate feeling alone which can ensure it: more than that it will make them co-operative-minded, so that they may be able to combine together voluntarily in a great permanent organisation based on co-operative principles.

Best Village Competitions.

In order to promote this work and stimulate a healthy rivalry, every subdivision would do well to have its Best Village Competitions allotting marks to rural activities of various kinds. Such competitions are already held in some districts and subdivisions and have proved a great success—funds are raised, medals are awarded by public-spirited gentlemen and there are running trophies.

Now all this great organisation and this great endeavour connotes some technical training. It cannot be undertaken adequately by persons without organised knowledge, however enthusiastic and self-sacrificing they may be. For this purpose it is proposed to open training classes where specialists will impart instruction. I hope, in

course of time, I shall be able to open up classes not only for officers of the Rural Reconstruction Department, not only for all out-door officers of Government who should possess adequate knowledge of the countryside and learn how to improve conditions there, but also for social service workers and for non-officials interested in this great humanitarian work. I would like the knowledge to be disseminated far and wide so that every one may be able to contribute his own endeavour to the great cause and it is possible that it may be taken up by educational institutions. For this purpose I propose to undertake compilation of certain manuals—elementary and advanced—which will be a sufficient guide to the village Samities and may help to inspire social service workers to devote themselves to the cause of the village. Sir, one could speak endlessly on this subject, but time is short. The suggestions which I have made are tentative and are obviously subject to alterations as we put them to test and gain practical experience and knowledge. There may be alterations but I believe that the main picture will remain unaltered. By raising the standard of living amongst the masses, by increasing their health, their happiness and their material prosperity, we shall, I am certain, solve to a large extent the problem of educated unemployment for which there appears to be no other solution. I would like to reiterate before I sit down that I not only look forward to but demand the co-operation of all in carrying out this programme. We are dealing with wonderful material. The villager is a long suffering patient human being, he has borne without a murmur the rude shocks of the world; the manner in which he has been neglected and oppressed has not shaken his intrinsic sense of loyalty, has not even warped his sense of justice, has not even made him revengeful and distrustful. He has still faith and hope and in the greatness of his simple and noble soul he appreciates little acts of kindness and of service. He has never shirked his obligations, and I feel certain that properly moulded and guided he will rise to great heights of sacrifice. Surely, Sir, if God lives on earth He lives in the hovels of our poor agriculturists and I deem it a proud privilege for any one to do him obeisance and render him service.

Irrigation.

In moving that a sum of Rs. 34,14,000 be granted for expenditure by the Irrigation Department during 1939-40, the HON'BLE MAHARAJA SRIS CHANDRA NANDY made the following speech in the Bengal Legislative Assembly on March 23, 1939:—

"Sir, in presenting the Irrigation Budget for 1939-40, I should at the outset refer to the detailed list of original works included in appendix A of the explanatory memorandum, and I think I need not take the time of the House by detailing them once again. On a perusal of these schemes, Sir, it will be noticed that a good number of them are intended to satisfy the crying needs of the localities concerned. But in making a selection of them we have also kept in view the requirements of a comprehensive Irrigation policy for the province as a whole.

Sir, in my last budget speech I made a brief reference to the seriousness of the major river problems confronting the Government and the imperative need of having a comprehensive and at the same time a

forward Irrigation policy. I now propose to acquaint the House with the steps that have been taken by me since then towards arriving at a satisfactory solution. The river problems in Bengal are extremely complex and to a certain extent unique; many of them are closely interlinked; and some of the measures suggested by our experts though intended for the ultimate good of the country, might adversely affect for the time being certain vested interests. It was, therefore, thought prudent that enlightened public opinion should be consulted before we decide to take up a comprehensive programme on certain definite lines. The Chief Engineer prepared a comprehensive monograph explaining the seriousness of the river problems of Bengal and indicating the lines on which a solution should be found. This monograph, along with a questionnaire, was circulated under my direction to the members of the Legislatures, Divisional Commissioners, Collectors, and other public bodies to ascertain their individual views. The replies received were discussed threadbare in an expert conference consisting of eminent scientists and people experienced in similar lines of work, held by me in July last year at Calcutta. I am glad to be able to inform this House that this expert conference mainly endorsed the lines of approach suggested in the Chief Engineer's monograph and fully encouraged the Government in taking up the comprehensive programme detailed therein. We have decided to follow this programme as far as possible, and I do claim this to be an important landmark in our progress towards solving the complicated problems of Irrigation and river control in Bengal.

Having got the programme, the next question to which I applied myself was the reorganisation of the department, so that the programme may be implemented efficiently and expeditiously. The broad lines of this reorganisation may now be indicated. We have decided, firstly, to retain on a temporary basis to start with the Development Circle with suitable modifications designed to expedite the preparation of major development schemes. The special feature of this reorganisation is that hereafter three divisions under one Superintending Engineer to co-ordinate their activities will devote their energies mainly to the investigation and preparation of these schemes, viz.:—

(*a*) Western Development Division will take up the preparation of the More and Dwarkeswar Reservoir projects, of which investigation has already been completed, and any other major development schemes that may be brought to light hereafter in Western Bengal.

(*b*) A new investigation division called Eastern Development Division is proposed to be formed and the duties entrusted to it will be to investigate and prepare a scheme for flushing the decadent tracts in Central Bengal by resuscitating the spill channels and diverting through them a substantial portion of the Ganges flood. The following objectives have naturally been kept in view: (*i*) to arrest the growing deterioration in health and productivitiy of the soil and to restore the old prosperity to this important area; (*ii*) to lower the level of the destructive flood in the Ganges so as to make it harmless and beneficial; (*iii*) to improve the drainage channels including the tidal channels and make them self-maintaining; (*iv*) to arrest the advance of salt-water limit up the Delta.

A contour survey of decadent Central Bengal has already been taken up and is likely to be completed next year; and steps are also being taken to collect the necessary hydraulic data.

An estimate for contour survey of the decadent tract in Northern Bengal has also recently been submitted to me, and I intend to employ the Eastern Development Division to take up the same and investigate and prepare, if feasible, a flushing scheme for Northern Bengal as well by resuscitating the moribund rivers and diverting waters from the Teesta. This will of course take its turn after the scheme for Central Bengal is completed.

(c) One Design Division is proposed to be added to take up the preparation of important designs in connection with these development projects.

As regards Northern Bengal, there are urgent works which cannot wait for the contour survey and I have accordingly made provision in the budget for one subdivision in addition to the Rajshahi subdivision already available to serve the seven districts in North Bengal.

As regards Eastern Bengal, it is indeed unfortunate that very little is known at present to the department, and the staff is rather hopelessly insufficient to look after all these important districts. Then, again, there is the immediate and crying need of dealing effectively with the problem presented by the old Brahmaputra in Mymensingh district. I have accordingly made provision in the budget for a new division with headquarters at Mymensingh, entrusted with the task of investigating into the possibilities of improvement of the old Brahmaputra and prepare necessary schemes, if feasible. I have also proposed that this special division for Eastern Bengal will have a new subdivision at Comilla and will study the irrigation needs of Mymensingh, Dacca, Tippera, Noakhali and Chittagong districts.

I may be permitted to mention another improvement which it is my intention to introduce to effect expedition and economy in the cost of the development schemes. One of the recommendations of the Expert Conference referred to before is that a Hydraulic Research Laboratory should be established in Bengal for the purpose of scientific study of the complicated river problems and their solutions. I have become convinced, after my recent visit to the Hydraulic Research Station at Lahore, that not only will the experiments with river models give valuable indications as to the correct solution of our complicated river problems, but they will also effect considerable economy in the ultimate cost by making it possible in many cases to test the proposals before they are actually executed. A report by my Chief Engineer on this subject is at preesnt under consideration, and the Government are in communication with the neighbouring provincial Governments of Bihar, Orissa and Assam and public statutory bodies like the Port Commissioners and the Calcutta Corporation who may feel interested in such a scheme.

Sir, I feel called upon now to make a passing reference to the important consideration of funds at this stage and the heavy costs involved in taking up any of the major schemes that might materialise. It is indeed obvious that such big schemes cannot be met from current revenues, but will have to be financed from loan programmes, which again will be risky to undertake unless we are assured at the ouiset of the productive nature of the undertakings. The Bengal Development Act was a constructive manner of solving this intricate financial problem involved in the huge unproductive undertakings of Irrigation and Navigation, and I think I should welcome from my friends opposite

any helpful criticism of the matter with a view to encourage us in taking up major Irrigation schemes for the vital regeneration of Bengal.

I have so far confined myself to the financing of major Irrigation schemes. But as regards smaller schemes of local interest, I may tell the House that we have also taken up a comprehensive policy. We have gathered fairly an exhaustive list of the Irrigation needs of each district suggested by the Collectors in consultation with Chairmen of District Boards, and these at present being examined by a Special Officer deputed for the purpose. In order that we can take up major Irrigation projects with undivided attention, we are examining the possibilities of a general policy of decentralisation entrusting District Boards to administer and finance minor schemes, with the Government, of course, in the background retaining ultimate power of supervision and contributing a share, perhaps a very large share of the cost from revenues.

The House will no doubt want to know what steps we have been taking in the shape of remedial measures against the recent devastating floods in the Ganges and in the connected channels. I may tell this House that under my direction soon after the floods, the Chief Engineer prepared a critical study of the causes and the remedial measures that should be adopted to meet the same. I am told that we can have no control over the elementary causes of floods, nor over the natural rise of spill area which is tending to raise the flood level. Of the controllable factors, the most important ones are noted by the experts to be, (*a*) control of extensive deforestation that is now going on in the catchment basin of the Ganges, and (*b*) encouraging afforestation. As the forest areas in the Ganges catchment lie mostly in United Provinces and Bihar, the co-operation of these Governments would be necessary, and I am glad to be able to inform this House that thanks to the initiative taken by this Government in persuading the Central Board of Irrigation and the United Provinces Government to take interest in this all-important question, an Inter-Provincial Flood Conference was held at Lucknow in January this year, in which representatives from Bengal, Bihar and United Provinces participated. The most important recommendation made by this conference, as hon'ble members are undoubtedly aware, is the proposed constitution of a Ganges River Commission to deal with all questions concerning the conservancy of the Ganges River Basin. It is hoped that this proposed Commission will soon be constituted—a small interim Committee is already in existence—making it possible to co-ordinate the different policies towards the Ganges and prevent the accentuation of the flood problem in any particular area.

Another important remedial measure is the resuscitation of the moribund spill channels in Central Bengal so that they can carry their due share of the flood water, thus relieving the flood congestion in the Ganges. I have already indicated that important steps have been taken in this direction, and there are budget provisions for the next year as well. We have undertaken the collection of statistics of rainfall as this has an important bearing on the question of floods. I have also just sanctioned an aerial survey of the Ganges from Rajmahal to Goalundo, as I am told, this is an absolute necessity for the purpose of controlling flood and preparing a flushing scheme.

Sir, I am afraid, I have probably exhausted the patience of my friends by this long narrative. I hope, however, that I have been able

to convince them that a serious endeavour is now being made towards the solution of the complicated river problems of Bengal. Our pace of progress is admittedly slow and the reason for the same is not far to seek. Firstly, we have to make up leeway for the years lost, extending well over a century, as our problems had been allowed to accumulate to their present proportions by the past policy of *laissez faire*. Secondly, careful and scientific planning is absolutely essential, and one should not mind the pace if we can be on surer grounds by a little bit more of careful handling. The tale of the dredgers is perhaps a significant pointer to the dangers of unthinking hurry in this serious matter. We have, I admit, been cautious, but I think, we have been able to cover much good ground towards taking up a comprehensive irrigation policy. I claim no spectacular results; what I do claim is that a good and at the same time, a sure beginning has been made for spectacular results to be achieved in the near future."

With these words, Sir, I beg to move my demands."

Debt Conciliation.

In moving that a sum of Rs. 21,12,000 be granted for expenditure under "Debt-Conciliation" during 1939-40, the HON'BLE MR. MUKUNDA BEHARY MULLICK delivered the following speech in the Bengal Legislative Assembly on March 24, 1939:—

"Sir, in presenting this demand to the House, I am sure, I shall not be misunderstood if I do not enter into a detailed discussion at this stage as to the activities of the large number of Boards that we have established in the Province for the purpose of conciliation of rural indebtedness. It must be understood at the outset that when we operate upon the Bengal Agricultural Debtors' Act for the purpose of conciliation or settlement of the debts of agricultural masses, it is not to wipe the same out. The idea is to settle the debts and to bring them within the paying capacity and power of the agricultural debtor on an amicable basis with his creditors.

Last year I placed before the House the amount of work that this department did towards that object. When I placed my demand before the House on the 24th March last year, I stated that we had established 2,791 Boards by then. The idea of Government is to have one Board for each big union or at least one Board for two small unions. It is also the idea to have a Board at each subdivisional headquarters with special powers of the Act. It has been decided further that, to expedite matters and to give relief to the debtors, one Board should be established with special powers for the area covered by a Co-operative Central Bank and one for that of the Land Mortgage Bank. Taking all these we now have 3,412 Boards working in different parts of the Province. Excepting the districts of Darjeeling and the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Boards have been established all over. It may be that we have not been able to go to the full extent, but it will appear that the want of these Boards at a particular place does not stand in the way of giving initial relief to the debtor, for, we have now

got special Boards established all over, and a debtor in order to get relief may apply to the Special Board.

In the next place I mentioned on the last occasion that we had decided to vest all the Boards with powers under sections 9 (*2*) and 13 (*2*) of the Act. There was a demand that we should vest the Boards also with powers under section 19 (*1*) (*b*) of the Act. The question has been considered, and it has been decided that the Boards, which would be recommended by District Officers for being vested with these powers, will be so vested. In point of fact, a large number of Boards have already been vested with these powers, and that instruction will now be sent to the District Officers to consider the cases of those Boards which have been functioning for over a year and to recommend those of them which have done well to be vested with power under section 19 (*1*) (*b*). It is sincerely hoped that the progress will be much quicker and that the problem will be tackled to the satisfaction of all concerned.

The House may be interested to have some idea of the progress that these Boards have made in actually conciliating rural indebtedness. Up to 31st December, 1938, the number of applications received was over 9 lakhs and 62 thousand. These applications involved a claim to the extent of over rupees 3 crores and 73 lakhs. The amount at which awards were made brought down the debt nearly to rupees 1 crore and 82 lakhs or at less than 50 per cent. of the claim. If the amount of the claim which has since reached the stage of determination is added, it will appear that the total claim thus tackled is over 5 crores of rupees. If again the amounts involved in the rest of the pending applications be taken into account, we shall then have a total of nearly 30 crores of rupees of agricultural debt sought to be conciliated on a voluntary basis through these Boards.

Questions put in the House seem to indicate some amount of despondency on the composition of these Boards. I am sorry I have to join issue with those of my friends who maintain this view. Even if it is assumed for the sake of argument that all this did not come up to our full expectation, I do maintain that a large number of these Boards have been doing very good work. In the course of my tour in the interior, I made it a point to get into close touch with the members of the Boards and to get to know their workings in the presence of the creditors and debtors as also in the presence of local officers, and I was extremely happy to find that these Boards were discharging their responsibilities to the fullest satisfaction. I have known of such cases in the districts of Dacca, Faridpur, Barisal, Khulna and also at some other places. I shall only mention one instance where a Board at Thakurakona in Netrakona subdivision of Mymensingh district has finished all the cases that were filed before it. It received 539 applications involving a total claim of Rs. 3,48,842-12-1 and of these, 45 cases were transferred to the Special Board involving a claim of Rs. 66,228-4-9, and 16 were transferred to other Boards involving a claim of Rs. 13,417-0-8. It was left with 478 cases involving a claim of Rs. 2,69,197-6-8. The amount determined under section 18 of the Act came to Rs. 1,24,351-6-3, or at less than 50 per cent. of the total claim. The amount at which awards were made came to Rs. 86,415-13-0, or at nearly 30 per cent. of the total claim. It realised court-fees

to the value of Rs. 2,739-9-0, and the total expenditure of the establishment for the Board came to Rs. 591-3-3. I have got another interesting report from a Board at Palba-Akna in the district of Hooghly. Although it has not finished all the cases, it has made equally wonderful progress.

I have not been able to follow the argument when it has been suggested that a technical knowledge of law is essential for this purpose. The main question is to settle the debts by bringing the same within the paying capacity of the debtors. I do not think the liability has ever been denied; and for the purpose of settlement by awards the person with a sense of responsibility living near about the parties are expected to do the very best.

I have known of instances where Boards are composed mainly of illiterate persons and the report is that they are doing extremely well.

It appears, therefore, as I have always maintained, that it is the character of persons enjoying confidence of the public and actuated with the honesty of purpose of making themselves useful to their neighbours, which is essential in making these Boards a success than anything else.

Some defects and difficulties have been noticed in the Act for a proper working of these Boards. To remove these, an amending Bill has not only been drafted, but has also been published. It is hoped that this Bill, when it takes the shape of law, will give enough power to the Boards to deal satisfactorily with that item of debt known as "usufructuary mortgage" in this province. Provision has also been made in the Bill by which a good deal of time will be saved between the making of an application and the final stage of making an award.

I do not think I should say anything more at this stage, and with these words, Sir, I formally put my demand for the acceptance of the House."

Law and Order.

In moving that a sum of Rs. 2,14,55,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "Police" during 1939-40, the HON'BLE KHWAJA SIR NAZIMUDDIN, K.C.I.E., delivered the following speech in the Bengal Legislative Assembly on March 20, 1399:—

"Sir, I am aware that in the course of this debate I may be attacked on the ground that the provisions for the police force have swallowed undoubtedly a large proportion of the available revenues and that there is no situation, no state of affairs, no cloud in the horizon which can justify the maintenance of that force at its present strength. But apart from that consideration it is my duty as a Minister responsible to this House for the maintenance of peace and the prevention of crime in this province to indicate, however briefly, the dangers by which that peace is threatened. The previous Governments, not in the same degree responsible to this House, have been criticized for their failure to inform the public in general and the more responsible sections of that public in particular of dangers which lay ahead. I intend to give

no such excuse for the withholding of co-operation by any section of the public. I have remarked before and I desire to emphasize again the fundamental difference which has been made by the introduction of Provincial Autonomy. It will be of no avail to this House to pretend that it now has to deal with an uncontrollable authority exercising functions in which it has no share and for which it bears no responsibility. On the contrary, I, as a member of Government in charge of Law and Order, am answerable to every member of this House and through them to the electorate; my responsibility to the people is shared by every member of this House. For more than a quarter of a century the things that matter to the ordinary citizens, the progressive development of instructed and constructive citizenship, the utilisation of the resources of the province, the increasing amenities of culture, medical aid, and the application of science to the production of individual wealth, have been choked and hampered by successive waves of distrust, intolerance and political strife. It is the irony of fate that two years after the power has passed into our hands there should be in Bengal a vigorous and vocal section claiming to be the apostles of freedom and progress, whose actual message to the people is naught but hatred, strife and destruction. There must, I fear, be some in this House to-day who are reflecting sadly where revolutionary leadership has landed Bengal in the political counsels of India. For my part I believe that if the culture of this people is to be preserved and embellished, if their health, wealth and happiness is to be increased, what they need above all is the grace of a period of protection from communal and political strife in which constructive thinking and constructive action will be possible. A period of calm in which we may plant rather than cut down, may build rather than destroy.

Yet what do we hear and read on every side? Reluctance even to work the constitution which has placed our future in our hands, the setting of class against class and race against race! Constitutional development is to be suspended, reform discarded, the powers and duties vested in this legislature are to be set aside and brought to nothing, and in their place we are offered the blessings of rebellion, revolution, and civil warfare!

This House cannot be unaware that since the inauguration of autonomy in this province we have set at liberty no less than three thousand persons who were in detention for terrorist activities. We did so in the belief that the dangers which led to their incarceration were passed, that as we were authoritatively told, their faith in violence was abjured, and that their activities would be turned into constitutional channels. We felt that we were making a necessary and proper contribution to the establishment of an atmosphere in which the reconstruction and the building of a new and better Bengal would follow; the dawn after the night of storm. I should be failing in my duty if I did not repeat in this House to-day what I have said and written elsewhere. The secret societies to which those men belonged and by which they were activated remain in existence and intact and are as well organised to-day as ever; they were probably better. Their declared aim is rebellion to be followed by social revolution. Though ostensibly in the ranks of Congress they are no followers of Congress, they are no followers of the creed of non-violence, they owe allegiance to none but themselves. I do not make these assertions on the basis of secret information, nor do I have to draw my own deductions. The

purpose is plain, the plan may be read, in the columns of every newspaper.

They openly describe themselves as the vanguard of the revolutionary masses, who stand for a special transformation that will admit of the complete freedom of the masses and of their fullest self-development. With such end in view, they say, they aim at present at a national democratic revolution which will overthrow Imperialism and make India a Sovereign State.

They insist that the subversion of the established order is the object of their struggle for freedom. In the pursuit of their aims nothing is sacrosanct. Congress itself is to be made to change its character and become the field of political activity of all the radicals and the revolutionaries. Our young men are told in provocative and militant terms that it is their duty to contribute to the rise of a new revolutionary leadership in order to transform the Congress into a revolutionary party of the Indian people and lead the struggle for freedom in the final stages.

Not only the aim, but the mechanics of the plan are laid bare. The agents of this doctrine including a large proportion of the detenus whom we set at liberty are to keep the people in a revolutionary ferment by fostering and identifying themselves with every possible source of friction and grievance whether it be agrarian, industrial, or among the student community. They are to be found in every district to-day posing as the friends of labour, fomenting discontent, and inciting the peasantry to refuse the payment of lawful dues. Every trade union and local self-governing body is to be captured, every school, college and student organisation penetrated and even every unit of the Congress party is to be activated by professional revolutionaries.

Simultaneously with this permeation of all our institutions, there is to be created a national militia of volunteers, who under the cloak of innocent and non-violent activities are to be trained and used at the proper moment under the old terrorist leaders to paralyse the Government and seize the power.

Sir, perhaps I shall be told that all this is to be tolerated, even welcomed, in the sacred name of national freedom, that the power so seized is to be vested in the toiling masses and the democratic millennium will be an accomplished fact. I wish to warn all responsible people, and in particular the Hindu community, that these men are neither the true apostles of freedom nor the true representatives of the Congress. Their design is to use the Congress for their own ends, and these ends are nothing short of the complete destruction of the existing social and economic system in the interests of what they are pleased to call communism.

If these men are allowed to succeed and to seize the power, there is no class in Bengal that will not be a loser, no interest that will not be adversely affected. The danger is real and the sooner the public recognise it and create public opinion against it, the better for all of us. I do not think that my friends, the constitutional Opposition in this House, will subscribe to these revolutionary doctrines, although I have not observed them publicly to repudiate them. There have been striking manifestations which must be fresh in the memories of all how Congress itself, to speak of one great party alone, regards these

designs on its integrity. I hope and believe that among the people of this province in every class and caste and creed, there is a substantial element which once alive to the danger will refuse to be mesmerized into accepting as the doctrine of progress the alien and discredited slogans of a dead decade. (A VOICE: "The zemindars are capitalists.") There are signs that thinking men are already conscious of the threat of destruction and organized obliteration which hangs like a storm cloud over all that they hold fair and of good report, and much that bears the age-old sanction of social and religious custom. But it is needful that this apprehension be transformed into active resistance to the programme of destruction.

To my mind this programme in all its stages constitutes not only a menace to the peace and progress of this province, but a direct challenge to the authority of this House. It is for this House, therefore, to ensure that due provision is made to resist that challenge. The preparation of the masses for militant action is no mere paper plan or bogey of my imagination, it is already in progress and has in more than one instance in both the industrial and agrarian spheres led to serious dislocation and loss as well as violence and even bloodshed.

A recent manifestation in the 24-Parganas is an example where as a result of this scheme of propaganda among the cultivators several cases of arson and paddy looting have occurred and a naib was set upon by a mob and beaten almost to death—an almost exact parallel to the murder of Major Bazalgette. Members of this House have still more recently expressed their anxiety to me regarding the effects of the propaganda that is being carried on in the Kishoreganj subdivision.

In many cases the ground is being prepared for a no-rent and no-tax campaign, and the insistence on class and sectional interests is giving rise to communal friction which is a source of grave anxiety. There is the definite danger here that the majority of the present Coalition Government being Muslim, any action which we may take against these threats to the peace and order of the country will be misconstrued and misrepresented as action directed against the great Hindu community. This is not so. The danger threatens Hindu and Muslim alike, and this Government intend to protect both against it. I only hope that members of both communities will be deaf to such insinuation and refuse to be led by communal considerations to encourage forces which aim at overwhelming society as a whole, both Hindu and Muslim, in a common conflagration.

It might have been expected that in these days of democratic advancement the press of this province would have perceived the dangers and warned their readers accordingly. But I have looked with few exceptions in vain for anything but support, either vailed or open, of those whose policy has been violence in the past, and must infallibly lead to violence in the future. I have no desire either to alarm or to weary the House by continuing a catalogue of impending ruin. I have tried to draw the attention of thinking men to what is going round them. Forewarned is forearmed, and so long as I am entrusted with the duty of preserving the authority of this Government in accordance with the will of this House and of enabling the public to go upon its lawful vocations without fear of interference, I can assure this House that Government will not hesitate to perform its duties. The first of these duties is to obtain from this House means adequate to the task."

Agricultural Education.

In laying the foundation stone of the proposed Agricultural Institute at Dacca on December 16, 1938, the HON'BLE MR. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ said:—

"LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

It is with feelings of the most intense pleasure and satisfaction that I comply with the request of the Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture to perform the ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the Agricultural Institute at Dacca. As you have already heard, the scheme for the establishment of such an institution occupied my thoughts when I was a member of the Legislative Council under the Minto-Morley Reforms. A little less than 20 years ago I actually moved a resolution in the then Bengal Legislative Council recommending to Government that a fully equipped agricultural college, to be finally incorporated with the proposed Dacca University, be established at Dacca at an early date. On that occasion I spoke in the language of hope and I think that I will be pardoned if on this happy occasion I make a quotation from my speech.

Addressing His Excellency the Governor who was then presiding, I said: 'My Lord, these quotations from the report of the Calcutta University Commission themselves make it manifest that so far as agricultural education is concerned we have not got within the limits of this Presidency any agricultural college or university, and supposing we are going to have a university at Dacca, it cannot claim the privilege of recognising or conferring degrees on the students of Bengal who may resort to Sabour for purposes of study. So far as higher agricultural education is concerned, the students of Bengal find one of the avenues of education absolutely shut to themselves. In the circumstances it is only natural that the people of Bengal should insist that so far as this province is concerned, suitable arrangements for agricultural education should be made at an early date. The question then arises if there is to be an agricultural college, where that can be most suitably located. We can think of Shibpur and its surroundings and we can think of Rangpur with its agricultural farms and we can also think of Dacca with an experimental farm at Monipur. So far as Shibpur is concerned, that is, for the students who belong to the west of the Ganges, there ought to be some sort of arrangement for giving higher agricultural education; but for the students coming from the eastern districts, an agricultural college at Dacca should, I think, be of immense advantage to them. I have already submitted that the experimental farm at Monipur possesses natural advantages for the purpose of agricultural education and that there are thousands of acres of land around where experiments can be carried on with the utmost efficiency and utmost regard to the requirements of higher agricultural teaching. In the circumstances and with all these natural advantages at hand, I submit to Your Excellency that it is high time that an agricultural college should at once be started at Dacca and in the near future when we hope to have the Dacca University, the agricultural college be incorporated with that University, which will give the Dacca University a high status among the universities. With these few observations I would strongly commend this resolution to the acceptance of Your Excellency's Government.'

The resolution was accepted by Government and the Hon'ble Mr. Cumming, the Member-in-charge, assured the House that Government was going to make a beginning towards giving practical effect to the recommendations contained in that resolution. Nearly 20 years have since elapsed; but although the country has witnessed momentous political changes, covering within these two decades the pace of centuries, it is to be regretted that the scheme which I then advocated and which was approved and accepted by Government had not yet been made to materialise. The brilliant function with which we are associated this afternoon recalls to my memory the events of far off years and all that I have seen and heard to-day has touched a very tender chord in my heart and filled my mind with deep thankfulness to the Almighty Providence that it has given me the opportunity to-day to lay the foundation stone of an edifice which I contemplated in theory more than 20 years ago, and that through the mercy of Providence my dreams have now come to be practically realised. The history of this institution is in some respects a very interesting one. Progress in the direction of the establishment of this institute has been slow but I am glad to be able to say that the idea did not actually escape the attention of the authorities during all this period.

In 1919-20 in pursuance of my resolution, land was acquired at a cost of Rs. 75,000 which was sanctioned by the Government of India and in December 1920, Government of India sanctioned a further grant of Rs. 10,02,500 for expenditure in connection with this scheme but somehow or other the money placed at the disposal of the Government of Bengal could not be utilised and eventually it lapsed into the provincial revenue. In 1925 the Director of Agriculture submitted complete plans and estimates for buildings, etc., with syllabus and rules in draft for the proposed institute. A controversy ensued as to whether Matriculation or I.Sc. should be the qualification for admission and the scheme was delayed. In 1927 the scheme was generally approved but the question of qualification for admission was left open pending the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Agriculture. The Royal Commission recommended the I.Sc. standard which was accepted in principle in 1930. The scheme was however not proceeded with on account of unsatisfactory financial position.

The need for higher agricultural training in Bengal, however, continued to be keenly felt. Since the present Government came into power the question of the development of agriculture in the province has been engaging their serious attention. They found themselves, however, handicapped by the want of properly qualified men for guiding and conducting its activities on efficient lines. In fact they proceeded with the scheme for an Agricultural Institute at Dacca, and the Director of Agriculture submitted an entirely new scheme last year involving a capital cost of Rs. 5,66,400, viz., Rs. 4,86,000 for buildings and Rs. 80,400 for equipments and ultimate recurring expenditure of Rs. 82,100 per annum. The scheme contemplates the imparting of agricultural training up to such a standard as would produce men suitable for filling up posts in the Agricultural Services of the province. The question as to whether the institute should be an integral part of the Faculty has not yet emerged out of the controversial stage; but it is proposed to have a conference of the representatives of the University and Government to discuss this question. It should, however, be made clear at the outset that the function of this Institute is to supply men

trained according to our own requirements rather than to provide facilities for higher agricultural education, which comes within the province of the University. But while the Institute is intended primarily to fulfil the above purpose, there is no intention to exclude the admission of such students with the requisite qualification in basic science as wish to proceed to a degree course at the University.

Bengal is predominantly an agricultural province. The importance of improving her agriculture can hardly be exaggerated. It has already been said that since the present Government came into power, it has been their earnest endeavour to effect an all-round improvement of agriculture in various directions. A tentative 4-year plan was drawn up last year by the Nawab Bahadur of Dacca, the then Minister of Agriculture, and this is being gradually and steadily worked out. The Agricultural Institute at Dacca is one of the most important items in that plan. It is our earnest desire that the buildings, the foundation of which is being laid to-day, will be completed within the next financial year so as to enable classes to be started in the latter part of that year. The other important features of the plan include better facilities for resarch and experiment, increase of the grant and staff for demonstration and propaganda so as to bring home to the agriculturists the results of the research and experiment carried on by the department and to persuade them to adopt the new methods evolved as a result of such research and experiment, improvement of live-stock and the creation of better facilities for the marketing of agricultural produce. The Agriculture Department has already been able to sanction some additional research staff. The Dairy Institute that is being opened to-day is an important stage in the development of facilities for research. Both the Demonstration staff and the grant for demonstration have been considerably increased and further increase is in contemplation. A large number of Union Board Farms have been recently established. Apart from the marketing work that is being done under the Government of India grant, three egg-grading stations have been started out of the provincial revenues. Besides, Government are considering schemes of far reaching importance such as the expansion and provincialization, of the Veterinary Disease Control Staff, the expansion of the animal husbandry staff now employed under the Government of India grant and its provincialization, establishment of regulated jute markets and the passing of an Agriculture Produce Markets Bill for that purpose and various other measures.

I cannot bring these remarks to a close without a public acknowledgment of the great help, assistance and encouragement the Ministry has received from His Excellency Lord Brabourne in all the stages of completion of the scheme and his unfailing sympathy for the objects we have in view. As the Governor of the Province and as a real friend and well-wisher of the agriculturists, he gave abundant evidence of his earnest solicitude for the good of the agricultural masses with whose prosperity is bound up the well-being of this great Province. To the Nawab Bahadur of Dacca, the country owes a deep debt of gratitude, for the incessant toil and labour with which he worked out the scheme at all the stages and made it possible for me to lay the foundation stone of the buildings this afternoon. I have been an optimist all my life and to-day, standing on the threshold of a new era in the history of the development of the resources of the Province I feel I can look through the long vista of years into a future full of promise and hope

for the people of Bengal. How far my hopes will be realised must now be allowed to remain on the Lap of Time; but with an earnest endeavour to do the best for our people and with sympathy and co-operation all round I have not the slightest doubt that the beginning we are making to-day will result at no distant date into an institution of which not only Bengal but India will be proud, and we will find within the walls of this institution a definite solution of many of the problems which confront the administration of Bengal to-day in its endeavours to bring about a happier and a prosperous peasantry in this part of India."

Co-operative Credit and Debt Relief.

In course of a speech at Chittagong on November 30, 1938, the HON'BLE MR. M. B. MULLICK said:—

"I am sure you appreciate that the Government of the day is a Government of the people, by the people and for the people. I am sure, you appreciate further that the power, if there is any, has got its corresponding responsibility attached to it and it follows therefore that any one exercising the power has got to give a responsible account of himself and of his activities. In the discharge of the onerous duties with which we have been entrusted to-day, you have undoubtedly a claim upon the present Government—which is your own Government—to ask for all sorts of help in bettering the conditions of the people and the country; but at the same time I may humbly submit that the Government as well can claim your advice and active assistance in the fulfilment of the wish that you express from time to time. It is no doubt very encouraging to have your assistance that you extend your support to the present Ministry.

In your addresses you have referred to various matters concerning your district. I am extremely sorry I have had no time to give a close consideration to them, as unfortunately my programme to visit this place was settled a bit too late and still more unfortunately I did not have copies of these addresses till last evening on my way to this district. You will excuse me therefore if I am not in a position to give you a detailed reply to the various matters that you have mentioned; but at the same time I can assure you that besides what I shall be saying now in reply. I will certainly give a very close attention to the several matters in consultation with my departments and see how far we can really go to render you all practical help. In the addresses you have further mentioned matters which are not directly under my charge. It is therefore neither proper nor fair that I should give you a detailed reply; but here again I desire to assure you that I shall place the same before my hon'ble colleagues who are in charge of those departments, so that they be good enough to give their consideration to them and then to take a decision on the suggestions that you have made therein. Indeed, I had not the least idea that I should be honoured with so many addresses from responsible and representative bodies at a place where besides knowing only a few as personal friends for sometime I had neither the honour nor the opportunity of knowing others very closely.

Before I come to deal with the two specific subjects of the Government which are under my charge, I should like to mention in brief the other points that you have indicated in your addresses. You have mentioned about your needs for more funds from the provincial revenues to meet your necessity for facilitating communication both by land and by sea with the rest of the world and for which you say you have submitted schemes to Government, specially the scheme of opening the Dacca-Aricha Railway for the same purpose as also for bridging the Brahmaputra at Jagannathganj. You can very easily imagine that these require very serious consideration, and as I have indicated already, I shall bring this to the notice of my honourable colleague in charge of Communications and Works.

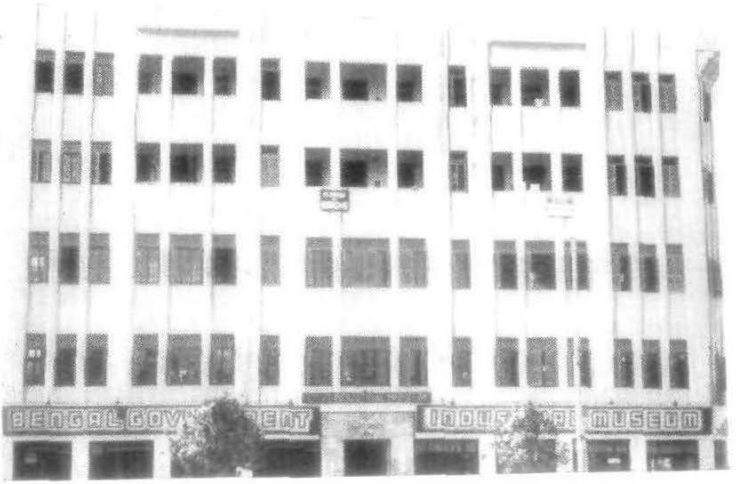
I am very glad to be told by the Municipality that you have introduced free and compulsory primary education for boys and girls within your jurisdiction and that you have made arrangements for giving education to over ten thousand of such children. I only wish that your example be followed by representative bodies of this nature in the province. You are aware of the provisions of the Bengal Rural Primary Education Act of 1930. I do not think I should be justified to say anything as to the measures that are under consideration of Government for introducing primary education on a compulsory basis in this province; but you will have no cause for apprehension when I tell you once again that the Department of Education is under the charge of the Hon'ble the Chief Minister himself. and his anxiety in this direction is known to all of you. The Government of Bengal to-day under his leadership will certainly try their very best to solve this difficult problem. It is however premature to say as to the exact shape that this decision may take hereafter.

I am very pleased to find that you have appreciated and actually realised through your activities the utility of the Co-operative Movement as a whole. In opening the Chittagong Divisional Co-operative Conference at Comilla in April last, I was delighted to find that representatives from this district not only took a lead but also gave very valuable suggestions for the development of the movement in various ways. You will excuse me if I am to repeat one little idea which I expressed in some of my public utterances in this connection before when I said that co-operation was no more a theory, but it has been proved to be a successful measure if only it is honestly followed with the spirit of good-will and fellow-feeling.

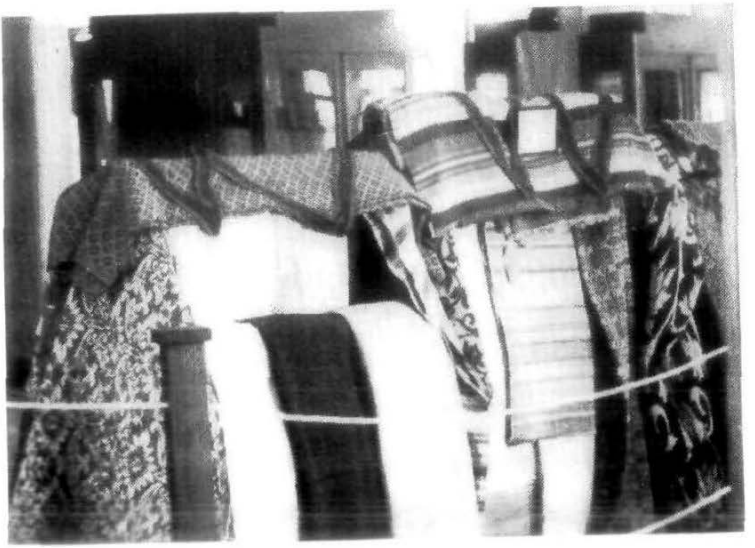
You have expressed your anxiety that the Co-operative Societies Act of 1912 calls for a thorough change to meet the changing and growing conditions of the present times. I am at one with you in this respect and I hope you will believe me when I say that following this anxiety a Bill for that purpose has really been introduced in the Legislative Assembly in August last which has been referred to a Select Committee. The Select Committee has started its deliberations already and I have every hope to present the report to the Legislative Assembly as soon as the Select Committee finishes its deliberations. Since the Bill has been published, you know what the provisions are. All that you have been good enough to think of and mention in your addresses has perhaps been indicated in the Bill itself. I do not claim that the Bill is all perfect, but I only say this much without breaking



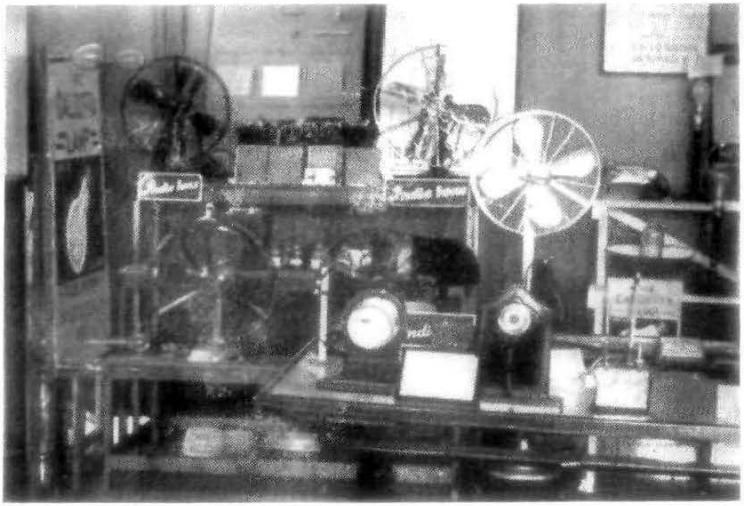
THE HON'BLE MR. N. R. SARKER SPEAKING ON BENGAL'S [illegible] REGENERATION [illegible] THE GOVERNMENT INDUSTRIAL [illegible]



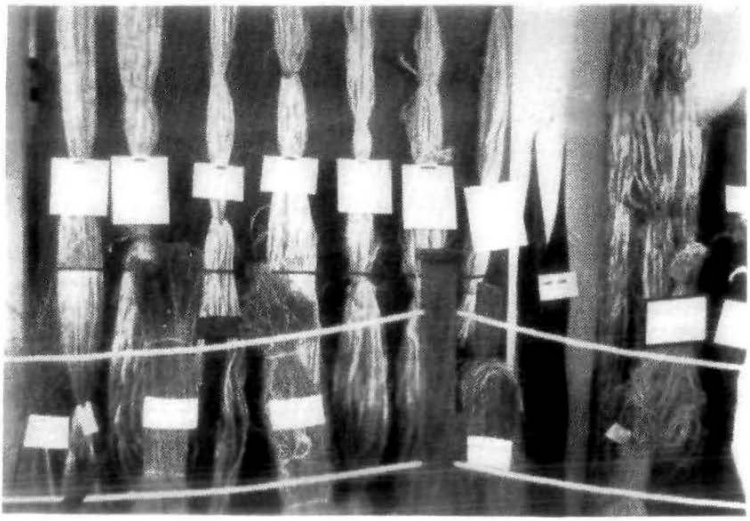
This fine building at 21, Chittaranjan Avenue, Calcutta, houses the Bengal Government's Industrial Museum



The Textile Section of the Industrial Museum.



The Electrical Section of the Industrial Museum.



The Fibre (Jute) Section of the Industrial Museum.



THE HON'BLE NAWAB K. HABIBULLAH BAHADUR (ON THE FOREGROUND) RECEIVING GUESTS AT THE FUNCTION HELD TO CELEBRATE THE OPENING OF THE INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM

the confidence that the members of the Select Committee are taking a very keen interest in the deliberation and with their assistance as also with the assistance of my officers in the department I hope to be able to present to the Legislature and to the country a report with a re-shaping of some of the provisions of the Bill to meet the wishes of the Legislature. It is for you therefore who take such a great interest in the movement as a whole as also in the institutions established under the Act to so advise and guide your representatives in the Legislature that they be good enough to give me that support when it comes up before them for consideration. It has been said that some of the provisions are of a drastic nature. It has also been said that Government want to take more powers and do not feel that the non-official agencies should be developed on a broader basis. To these my simple answer is this, that a responsible Government cannot function without proper powers being given to them, but that since it is a Government of the people, the Legislature can always cry halt and can even remove the Ministry if it is not satisfied with their activities or if the powers given to them are abused. You can also imagine that no officer of Government functioning under a responsible Ministry will be so negligent as to misuse or abuse any power unnecessarily. You will also agree with me when I say that Government are anxious to develop non-official agencies with regard to the Co-operative Movement, for there is a distinct provision in the Bill itself whereby Government are going to stand guarantee for the prinicpal and interest of debentures which they will allow the co-operative institutions to float and that further Government are going to come forward with direct financial assistance to these institutions in case of necessity. If Government are going to do all this, I am sure you will agree with me that there must be proper powers given to the popular Government to deal with any dereliction of duty by those in charge of such institutions if there be any at all in this respect. Even now if you be good enough to give me any practical suggestion for re-shaping some of the provisions of the Bill without disturbing the principles involved with the object of making it still better, I shall be too glad to consider the same.

I am equally glad to feel that you appreciate the usefulness of the measures provided for by the Bengal Agricultural Debtors Act, 1936. It is difficult to accept your suggestion that the co-operative societies may be excluded from the operation of this Act, for if you be good enough to give a closer consideration you will certainly appreciate that even if I am to exclude co-operative societies from the operation of the Debtors Act, that will not give the societies any practical advantage, because you will realise that if the debtor has got no means to discharge all his obligations to the fullest extent it does not for all practical purposes produce any tangible result. The Act, as you must have noticed, is designed to do this, namely, that the creditors in general are requested to take into their sympathetic consideration the distressed condition of their neighbour debtor and by keeping to him just enough to maintain himself and his family they be good enough to be satisfied with whatever he is in a position to pay. In this respect again definite instructions have been given to deal with the debts due to landlord as rent and to the co-operative societies on a different footing from other debts due to other ordinary creditors. The reasons are obvious. The Act itself has made mention of the rent, the principal of which cannot be reduced under section

23; and with regard to the co-operative societies the position is equally obvious, for the money with which these societies act does not belong to any individual person but it is the money either of other public bodies or of individuals who out of their implicit faith in the movement have put their savings in these institutions. You will also appreciate the anxiety of the Government to give tangible relief to the agricultural debtors when they have left the administration of this Act in the hands of the leading non-official public acting under the guidance of the local officers in order that they may take into their consideration the respective position of their neighbour creditors and debtors before they get to a settlement of the debts through awards. I can well appreciate your anxiety that some of the provisions require a change. I may tell you again that with regard to the suggestions that have been made in the Legislature and with regard to the suggestions that have been made to me by officers from various places, a Bill has been drafted; but before it was done the suggestions were considered in a conference of the Commissioners and some of the Collectors including those from Comilla and Noakhali at Darjeeling in June last.

This amending Bill is now before Government and as soon as it is agreed to, I hope to publish it in the official gazette so that you will know the actual step that has been taken already to meet this particular point that you have raised. I have every hope that when the amending Bill is published you will be satisfied that good many of your apprehensions have been removed. It will only then be necessary for you to advise and guide your representatives in the Legislature so that they be good enough to give me again a support in getting the measure through. In this connection I may also mention that there has been some amount of misapprehension in some quarters. I will not discuss the details at this stage but I will only request you that whenever you have any apprehension or misgiving you be good enough to approach the local officers and I am sure they will give you proper assistance in removing the same.

A request for establishing a Land Mortgage Bank in this district has been specifically made in the address presented on behalf of the District Board. I do not think I should be justified to give you a pointed reply with regard to this matter but I can say this that a scheme for an extension of Land Mortgage Banks on a co-operative basis is under consideration of Government and some decision is expected to be arrived at before the next Budget Session of the Assembly when you will know definitely the step that the Government propose to take. I shall however remember your request and see how far this can be acceded to.

I am indeed very proud to find in the address on behalf of the co-operative societies that such a large achievement has already been secured by them in various spheres of their activities in this district. Nothing gives me greater pleasure than to see that this movement has been taken up in its right perspective by those who are in touch with it and for serving whom it is my proud privilege to be in charge of this particular department of the Government of the province to-day. I do not think it is necessary for me to enter into details.

I have been told of the colony at Badarkhali. As you desire, I have a mind to pay a visit to this colony in connection with this tour of mine when I hope to get into closer touch with the details of that colony and also with the idea of seeing how the thing can be further developed. I am glad again to find that two of the conferences were presided over by the heads of this department and I am further glad to find that one such conference in 1936 was presided over by my esteemed friend Khan Bahadur A. M. Arshad Ali, the present Registrar of the Co-operative Societies.

I do not think I should be justified to repeat what I have said with regard to the Co-operative Societies Bill and the Bengal Agricultural Debtors Act along with its amendment that is under consideration, but with regard to the particular matter that you have specifically mentioned about the Debt Settlement Boards that some restriction of its pecuniary jurisdiction is necessary, I can only tell you that it is also under consideration of Government and before long it may be possible for us to get to some solution about this.

Bengal's Industrial Future.

Opening the Bengal Industrial Museum the HON'BLE MR. N. R. SARKAR, Finance Minister, said on March 18, 1939:—

"I am deeply thankful to the Nawab Bahadur of Dacca for giving me this opportunity for associating myself with to-day's Opening Ceremony of the Industrial and Commercial Museum. The establishment of this Museum has for me a deep personal significance inasmuch as it marks the consummation of a long and fondly cherished ideal of mine. The advancement of the arts, crafts and industries of a nation must form an integral part of the programme for the amelioration of the masses. And an Industrial and Commercial Museum should play a vital and useful role in stimulating this advancement under condition as they obtain to-day. It should tell the story of our achievements in the industrial field, a story of ground gained and hope for the future. It should function not only as a store-house of what has been already achieved but also as an inspiration for further progress. A Museum has therefore immense potentialities for doing good to the people of the Province. And I feel happy and honoured to be associated with the opening of an institution like this.

Need for Museum.

The need for an Industrial Museum was borne in upon me during my close association with the Congress Exhibition in Calcutta, in 1928-29, of which I was placed in charge. In organising that Exhibition I was increasingly conscious of the utility of a permanent

body which would collect and exhibit the specimens of all the best products of the arts, crafts and industries of the Province, and of agricultural products used as raw materials for the industries, and would thus provide a permanent centre to which producers and consumers alike could turn for information, inspiration and guidance.

Swadeshi Movement.

The Swadeshi movement of 1905-06 gave a strong impetus to the growth and expansion of industries in the Province. But while as a result of the Swadeshi fervour many industries and many ventures were started, owing to lack of experience in these lines and various other reasons, there were many failures and the extent of success was also limited. The wastage of resources we sustained was not in vain, for we learnt of our deficiencies and drawbacks. However that may be, since the Swadeshi days, there has all along been an effort, though rather halting at times, to rehabilitate the arts, crafts and industries of the Province, and to launch upon ventures in new and unexplored lines. The result has been that the Province possesses to-day a number of industries both big and small. Unfortunately, however, the general public have very little opportunity of knowing what these industries are, where they are located and what the quality and volume of their products are. Our industries, particularly of the smaller and medium-sized types, do not, as a rule, possess the necessary resources for any extensive advertising campaign, with the result that even while the quality of their goods may be quite satisfactory they are not very widely known to the consuming public. A Museum of this kind, therefore, was really necessary to bridge the gap that existed, to bring to the consumer the knowledge of the products made in the Province, as also to enable the producer to know whether in price and quality his products were competitive, how far the design and appeal of his products could be improved, whether there were other producers who were turning out goods of better quality, of more pleasing and artistic design, etc. I believe, therefore, that it is in the fitness of things that Bengal should now have a central institution like this Museum, to record the achievements of her arts, crafts and industries, at any period of time, an institution which would not only supply the knowledge of the markets, of the people who buy and sell, of the conditions at home and abroad, but would also be a centre for adult education, for exciting imagination and for supplying inspiration. It was through such an institution supplying definite knowledge and easily assimilable experience, on the one hand, and providing inspiration, on the other, that industries, particularly the small industries, and the handicrafts which were the products of the labour of small groups of individuals, could be placed on the road to progress on sound economic lines.

Three Main Industries.

In Bengal, we have the three main classes of industries well represented. There are the big ones, where capital, machinery and

men are employed on a large scale, and which have been fully organised, *e.g.*, jute and tea, the market for which is mostly outside India, and coal, iron and steel and cotton mills, of which the market is mostly confined to India. Then there are the medium-sized industries, in which capital, machinery, etc., are used on a restricted scale, which cover a large variety of industries and whose output is not as large as that of the previous group, and whose products are mostly consumed within the country. Then come the small ones, including cottage industries, where men count as much as, if not more, than capital and machinery, and which are innumerable and are distributed throughout the Province. There is no end to the variety of the products of these industries, they range from small engineering machines at one end to cane chairs and stools on the other. Some of the articles produced are of such excellent, artistic design that they are exported abroad and find a good market there. There is thus, on this side, a whole range of articles from the smallest necessities to the most artistic commodities for luxury use. The products of the big industries are essentially standardised, they have the advantage of a marketing organisation; they are also well known and are assured of a more or less stable demand. The products of the medium-sized industries are not so well standardised and are also not so well known, nevertheless there is an appreciable demand for them and the scale on which they operate makes it possible for them to advertise, to take advantage of the existing marketing organisation and to employ improved technique with comparative ease. But the small and cottage industries stand in an altogether different position: they are little known, have no stable demand and no assured market. For a broad-based national prosperity it is, however, essential that an all-round industrial development should take place, and such all-round development must embrace the thousands engaged in all these small industries of Bengal, the helpless and hapless men who often find it difficult to fit themselves into the altered state of things, who are unable to tide over the small vicissitudes which are inevitable in any circumstances. Bengal, for example, had certain classes of artisans whose reputation had at one time travelled overseas where a ready market was availbale for the articles produced by them. But these industries are dying and decadent to-day owing to various causes, such as changes in fashions and tastes, competition from cheaper machine-made goods, etc. The large-scale industries are in a much better position to hold themselves up against such factors but the small artisans and the cottage industries are very ill-equipped to withstand these adverse conditions. In the interests of the large number of small artisans who are in such great distress to-day and in the interests also of the agricultural population whose life could be made so much more comfortable by employment in profitable arts and crafts in their spare time it is essential that these small industries should be organised and given a new lease of life.

A stage has, therefore, been reached when a policy of absolute *laissez faire* in the matter of industrial development would not be productive of the most desirable results. From the days of the caveman to the days of the automobile, the philosophy of "letting things alone" has, it is said, resulted in the jungle law of the survival of the so-called fittest. The philosophy of social action must result in the protection of humanity, and the fitting of as many

human beings as possible into the scheme of surviving. Any Government which places mass amelioration in the forefront of its programme must plan for a diversification of industries which would embrace the small industries also and give the small artisans and rural craftsmen a chance of survival. With the further progress of our industries, the need for an Industrial Museum will be felt even more keenly. The Government realised this need, and, in view of the gap, existing between production and consumption to which I have already referred, they felt that early steps should be taken to establish such an institution.

Its Double Purpose.

This Industrial Museum is calculated to serve a double purpose. It will bring to the knowledge of the public products from every part of Bengal. There are many beautiful products fashioned by many rural artists of which little is known even to people residing in the locality. I was particularly impressed about the need for making these facts known when the other day I saw certain beautiful specimens of cane stools and on enquiry learnt that they came from Netrokona, my own home town. It struck me that, with proper publicity, such articles should find a good market not only in Calcutta but in all parts of Bengal. A display of such articles in a Museum like this would help to give a fillip to an excellent indigeneous industry. Similarly, it is my impression that much of the excellent handiwork produced by the women of Bengal and taught in the industrial schools and widows' homes often do not thrive owing to the fact that their articles are not sufficiently known to the people in general. I believe this Museum will not only help in popularising their products but also give their work a new incentive and a richer direction.

The other purpose the Industrial Museum should serve is to show how products of this Province could be improved in quality and design and made equally attractive as or better than, similar articles produced in other provinces or countries, how the price could be made competitive and how new articles which others produce but Bengal does not, could be introduced.

Of the functions which this Museum should fulfil, comparisons must occupy an important place. We must observe, analyse and correlate the materials, processes and products of other industrialists, whether in our own country or abroad. We shall here see, side by side, the products of our own endeavours and those of others and find tangible proofs that Bengal, or for the matter of that India, instead of trying to wall herself hermetically into her own ideas has opened her doors wide to the influence of the art and business and industrial methods of other countries. Considering that there are countries abroad whose advance in industry and the arts is much greater, it is only wise and reasonable that such comparative study should be provided by the Museum.

A Store-House of Knowledge.

We must then seek the reasons for the excellence or otherwise of our products in comparison with those made by others. This is where the Industrial Museum differs materially from a Swedeshi Exhibition, for instance. It is an institution not merely for the study of a product and the possibilities, etc., of other products, but for comparison as well. It should function as a store-house of knowledge and experience for the avoidance of error and waste, and as an incentive for further progress. To quote Ruskin: "Product does not consist in things laboriously made, but in things serviceably consumable, and the question is not how much labour it employs but how much life it produces, for consumption is the aim of production, life is the end of consumption." Industrial Museums abroad lay great stress on comparison. Foreign products, their raw material and process of manufacture, tools and machinery receive greater prominence in those museums. That is but natural, for in those highly developed countries, their own products are well known and efficiently organised. In this country, we have, in addition, to make our own materials, processes and products known to the public as I have already said. For, there are many kinds of products, both artistic and useful, manufactured on small-scale or cottage industry basis, which are not sufficiently known to a wider public. A good market could be developed for such products if only they were brought to the knowledge of the public. This Museum will, I hope, provide many surprises to the public by demonstrating to them various indigeous products hitherto unknown to them.

Special Study of Problems.

In an industrial and dynamic age, as this, an Industrial Museum must necessarily be full of life and abreast of all developments. They are not to be looked upon as depositories and dead materials. They have the vital factor of being alive and they grow, not merely by the collection of exhibits, but through special study of the problems and needs in various directions and the offering of helpful suggestions, by creating public interest and enthusiasm in the Museum and by establishing a close and constant touch with all the sections and interests the Museum is intended to serve. These factors are highly appreciated in western industrial museums, and a whole technology has grown around such museum work. In this Museum, advantage of the application of such technology will, I am sure, be taken and it will be continued. Information, research, and application, therefore, are some of the cardinal points towards which the Museum will advance.

Industrial Enquiries.

The Library attached to the Museum will also, I hope, be very useful in the matter of supplying information on all industrial enquiries. The management, I understand, also recognise that general information on particular industries, should be made available periodically.

They will be published from time to time, by the Museum, and lectures will also be organised. But all this should not be considered enough. It will probably not be possible for a large body of the rural public to visit the Museum or to study in it. Museum exhibits, especially prepared for the purpose, are, therefore, intended to be sent out in the country, where they will be further explained with the help of cinematograph pictures. This is particularly necessary in Bengal, where industrial consciousness is not yet very highly developed among the masses.

Viewed in this light and thus worked, the Museum will be, and is intended to be, not an isolated institution but a definite and vital link in the chain between production and marketing. The knowledge of the remarkable achievements of our small and cottage industries, of the beautiful products made from materials from our own country and by the hand and thought of Bengalee artists, mechanics and workmen, would, it is only natural, create a sense of pride and satisfaction, and if the Museum can properly utilise this feeling it will succeed in attracting more and more buyers and creating an increasing demand for indigenous products. On the other hand, the collections and the variety of designs displayed, will be a great help to the producer or craftsman. The Museum, in other words, will aid the growth of new ideals in industrial craftsmanship. And as a result of the opening of this permanent institution, the idea of quality will prevail, since it will show actual examples of originality and artistic taste as well as the necessity for good craftsmanship in ordinary objects, providing the fact that no worker should consider the beautiful and the useful to be incompatible. I hope that those who will come into this store-house of Bengal's riches will not fail to be impressed by the diverse resources of our land; by the achievements of our workmen and our crafts-people, by the effort made by every parcel of our country in its eagerness to grasp a life of ever-increasing prosperity and happiness; by the inspiration and depth of thought and feeling of our artisans and workers. The Museum, it is expected, will not only increase the demand for existing articles, but also set new standards and fashions, strike new ideas and create new demands.

A visit here affords the prospective buyer the shortest and most comprehensive panorama of our manufactures and will surely satisfy a businessman's demand for easily saleable goods of quality. Every visitor will be able to find out, in a few hours, the progress that has been made in several directions in various industries. He will know what articles are produced by the industries, arts and crafts of Bengal, where these can be obtained and at what price. The programme of this institution shall be conceived to be a vast and clear lesson for all. The chief aim of the Museum is that it will be impossible for any visitor to say that he has not learned something of intrinsic value.

Utility of Museum.

The utility of the Museum does not end there. I was pleasantly surprised to be told the other day, that a young man, who came to seek a job at the Museum, was so impressed with a small machine, built here,

and which was being placed in position, that he intended to work on one and earn an independent living. It was a bell-reeling machine and an outlay of Rs. 300 could, it was claimed, enable one to earn Rs. 40 to Rs. 50 per month. Whether this young man sets up in such an industry or not, the point to note is that, here is a centre for visual observation, inspiration and incentive to work independently.

Future of the Museum.

A beginning has only been made. And the picture we would like to visualise of the Museum when it is full-fledged cannot be the product of a day. It must grow. It must serve the people according to their needs and capacity. It must also respond to the stimulus received from the people. The future growth, success and usefulness of the Museum would depend on the response obtained from the public, on the one side, and, on the other, on those of you immediately responsible for its management, on how far you can sustain and keep up public interest and enthusiasm, respond to the changing needs of the people, and establish this institution in the affections of the people, by making them keenly sensible of its service and usefulness.

Enquiry Bureau.

The management, I am assured, will do everything within its power to make your visit to the Museum a success. The public are, therefore, invited to make use of service and arrangement this Museum offers, especially the Enquiry Bureau which is entirely at their disposal, free of charge. The Enquiry Bureau will provide reliable information and answer all correspondence, take you round, no charge of any kind being made for this, or for bringing buyers into touch with the manufacturers who have sent their exhibits here.

Invitation to Public.

From the expedition, and care and efficiency with which the Museum has been organised under the able guidance and direction of the Director of Industries, Mr. S. C. Mitter, who in fact has been the soul behind their organisation, I feel confident that it would succeed in attracting public notice and enthusiasm. I really believe that if it is properly worked and can attract a warm response from the public, the Museum may well be a landmark in the industrial evolution of the Province.

Let a richer industrial life grow in Bengal from this Museum. From this fruit of Bengal's industrial life let the seed be scattered all over the Province, changing barrenness to fertility, enriching the people of the land, turning despair into hope fulfilled, giving our people new courage and strength, changing their outlook in life completely from the helplessly dependent to the resourcefully independent. Let us learn to create and be happy in our creation and cease to envy the creation of others. In conclusion I pray to the Mighty Sower who scatters His Seeds with a generous hand and whose teeming creation is life, to infuse life in this institution and make it the source of new energy and strength to our Province and our country.

I sincerely believe that this beloved country of ours is entering upon a period of great development in every direction. That development can well include a greater material prosperity if we take care that it is prosperity for the fifty million human beings and not a prosperity socially controlled for the commongood with due regard, aim and sacred ideal, and I would exhort every one of you to have faith in the triumph of that ideal to give daily all that you have to give and to be loyal, and rejoice whenever you find yourselves part of a great ideal enterprise.

With these words, gentlemen, I have the greatest pleasure and the greatest pride in declaring to you that this Museum, which I believe will be an integral part of our industrial advancement, is now open and for ever."

Survey of many Problems.

The HON'BLE MR. H. S. SUHRAWARDY, in course of his address to the Chairmen of the District Boards at Government House on November 15, 1938, said:—

"This is the first conference of representatives of District Boards since the inauguration of Provincial Autonomy and since this present Ministry came into office. I thought, therefore, that it would be very desirable to place before the conference the most vital problems of Public Health and Medical Relief, on the solution of which depends to a very considerable extent the welfare of the people of Bengal as well as the outstanding needs for further growth of Local Self-Government. It was incidentally my desire, in asking you to consider and advise on various essential measures of Public Health and Medical Relief as well as of Reforms concerning further development of Local Self-Government, to lay before you the aims and objects of the present Ministry so that you may usefully assist me in carving out lines of action leading to ordered progress.

The first item on the programme is the reorganisation of Rural Public Health services. The present skeleton Public Health organisation which has been in existence since 1927 has done useful service within limits but has proved inadequate for dealing with the outstanding problem of protecting the health of the rural population. The brief outlines of a comprehensive scheme which is under the consideration of Government have been given in the memorandum which has been circulated to you. In asking your views on the question of a Rural Public Health Organisation combining curative and preventive measures, I would only point out that any such comprehensive scheme must involve very large expenditure. The District Board has a definite responsibility in the matter and the local bodies concerned, namely, the District Boards and the Union Boards, must be prepared to bear their legitimate share of the expenditure involved in any such scheme.

The two outstanding problems of rural Bengal are: an adequate Rural Water-Supply for drinking purposes and Malaria. The problem of rural water-supply, inspite of what has been achieved, still remains largely unsolved. It has been engaging the serious attention of the Ministry.

The revised policy contemplates the preparation of a comprehensive water-supply programme, district by district, arranged in order of urgency. One apparent reason why previous efforts in tackling the problem have not succeeded to the extent that they should have done, is that there has been no attempt to prepare a comprehensive programme on a survey of the needs of particular areas. It has been now decided to form Water-Supply Committees at the headquarters of each district, each subdivision, and each thana representing all interests, and it is hoped that a well considered programme will now be available to be worked gradually by stages so that the problem of rural water-supply may be effectively solved within a few years. The Committees will be charged with selecting areas and sites according to the urgency of the actual needs and on no other considerations. The chances of overlapping or wastage will, it is hoped, be thereby very largely reduced, whether parts of the programme are financed from the Government grant or the district fund or from the union fund. Government are prepared to contribute a suitable share from the provincial revenues. Even if this share is made increasingly large as far as finances permit, this is not a problem for Government alone to solve. I have no doubt that the co-operation and assistance that I except from the District and Union Boards in financing the water-supply projects with the help of the Government grants will be readily forthcoming. The District Boards and the Union Boards should pull their weight in working out the programme, and in this connection the liberal loan policy of Government should be availed of by District Boards to a larger extent than it has been up till now.

Menace of Malaria.

As regards the menace of malaria, it is the most serious public health problem of Bengal, and after playing widespread havoc in Western and Central Bengal it is now spreading rapidly into parts of the Province which were hitherto unaffected. Leaving aside a few irrigation anti-malarial schemes occasionally taken up the present policy has been to make grants to District Boards to be spent through Union Boards and Anti-Malarial Societies on certain conditions on minor local anti-malarial works. This policy has been found to be on the whole ineffective and wasteful. In pursuance of a resolution passed at the conference of the District Boards held in January, 1936, the District Boards were called upon to formulate larger anti-malarial schemes of a permanent nature, district by district, in consultation with the District Officers and other departments concerned. These schemes have been very slow in coming in. Certain schemes which have been forwarded by a few District Boards are under different stages of examination, while others had to be returned as being imperfectly drawn up. It is realised that District Boards are under a handicap in drawing up these schemes in that adequate expert advice is not available. That is the reason why Government have decided to appoint an Anti-Malaria Engineer in order that engineering anti-malarial schemes may be promptly prepared and properly executed by the District Boards under expert advice and guidance. Government are prepared to make suitable contributions towards such anti-malarial schemes from which permanent benefit will be derived in eradicating malaria. A provision of three lakhs has been made in the current year's budget for such contributions.

Distribution of Quinine.

It has been possible to make a substantial augmentation in the grant for free distribution of quinine during the current year and the revised principles proposed to be adopted for such distribution have already been set out in the memorandum which has been circulated to you. The object of this revision is to reach, as far as possible, the large number of cases which are not served by hospitals and dispensaries. It is needless to say, that your co-operation and active assistance is essential in making this policy a success. I feel constrained to say in this connection that in scrutinising the expenditure incurred on quinine by District Boards I was surprised to come across a few District Boards—one of them representing a notoriously malarious district—which had not in the previous year spent a single rupee on free distribution of quinine from their own funds. I need hardly lay stress on your duty and responsibility in this vitally important matter of placing quinine within the reach of the poor who cannot afford to buy it, and I trust that there will be no occasion for repeating this complaint. So long as other anti-malarial measures have not been effectively undertaken, quininization is the only demonstrably effective weapon in combating malaria and in the interest of the malarial-stricken people in their charge it is plainly the duty of the District Board to spend freely on the distribution of free quinine.

Tuberculosis.

The scourge of tuberculosis is spreading in an alarming way and definite action on planned and comprehensive lines has become essential in order to check its inroads. Her Excellency Lady Linlithgow's campaign for the King-Emperor's Anti-Tuberculosis Fund has made commendable progress and the bulk of the funds raised in this Province will be spent for its benefit in the organisation of campaign against tuberculosis. Government have under consideration a comprehensive anti-tuberculosis scheme and have already given effect to two essential items, namely, training of Medical and Health Officers in early diagnosis and modern treatment of the disease, and contribution towards the provision of better nourishment and treatment of tuberculosis cases in Sadar Hospitals. There are several Sadar Hospitals in which there is no X'ray installation and no provision for beds for tuberculosis cases. It is up to the District Boards to remedy this obvious deficiency in view of the rapid spread of the incidence of the disease The other parts of the scheme will eventually depend, to a large extent, on the organisation which will be set up as a result of Her Excellency Lady Linlithgow's campaign; but a partial solution of the problem will depend on the provision of a large number of chest clinics at headquarters and other centres in the rural areas (with milk-kitchens attached wherever possible). At the present moment I would only impress upon the District Boards the necessity of their paying immediate attention to this problem.

Leprosy.

Leprosy is another fell disease which causes prolonged suffering, severe maiming and often a painful death. The incidence of the disease

is high in several districts and it is increasing, the Census Statistics being definitely an under-estimate owing to the general desire for hiding the disease. The cure of this disease is a long process but it is very easily preventible, as has been demonstrated in other countries, by treatment and education in clinics and by isolation and segregation of lepers and their families in leper colonies, settlements and farms. Hitherto the work of organisation has been principally left in the hands of the British Empire Leprosy Relief Association and a large number of clinics is already working in the affected districts with the financial assistance and co-operation of the local bodies. The problem has, however, to be dealt with on organised lines. While Government are prepared to bear a share of the expenditure involved, the responsibility must necessarily rest with the local bodies as regards financing and organisation; and a general discussion of the ways and means would be helpful to Government. I would also commend to your consideration the suggestion for forming, in the more affected districts, District Leper Boards charged with the organisation of leprosy relief on the lines of those established in Madras.

Kala-azar.

Kala-azar is yet another menace which takes a fairly large toll of life and saps the vitality of a large number of rural people. There was an appreciable fall in its incidence after the discovery of treatment by specifics; but in recent years there has been unfortunately a marked recrudescence of the disease, and kala-azar cases have risen by leaps and bounds in certain districts. As you are aware, Government make an annual grant to local bodies for combating kala-azar and the District Boards have made commendable efforts in this direction. However, a campaign on a large and organised scale appears to be clearly indicated if kala-azar, which is a definitely curable disease, is to be stamped out within a short space of years.

Medical Relief.

In the matter of medical relief in the rural areas, there has been a welcome expansion in recent years. Since the introduction of the Government scheme of subsidies to rural dispensaries, such dispensaries have steadily increased in number. The annual Government grant has been gradually augmented. It has proved one of the most useful grants in this department and has met with appreciation from the public. An interesting feature has been that neighbouring Union Boards have, in many cases, pooled their resources and established a joint institution to serve the contributing boards from a central place. The Government of India's Rural Uplift Grant, a share of which was allotted for capital expenditure towards the establishment of Union Board dispensaries, has also resulted in the addition of more than 100 dispensaries in the rural areas. It cannot, however, be denied that even with the existing number of dispensaries of all kinds, provision for medical relief in rural areas is still hopelessly inadequate. There are 1,102 hospitals and dispensaries in the rural areas and the number of qualified medical practitioners settled in such areas is reported to be 2,177. This yields an average of only one medical practitioner for over 13,740 people according

to the Census of 1931. The situation obviously stands in need of early remedy. The improvement of the Sadar Hospitals on more or less modern lines so that they may serve the people of the districts efficiently in cases of serious illness is an urgent need of the Province. A provision of Rs. 3 lakhs has been made in the current year's budget for grants-in-aid towards Sadar Hospitals on condition that (1) the balance of the capital requirement is found from local sources and that (2) a guarantee for maintenances of the improved hospital is available. So far, only about 12 districts have come up with proposals for improvement on the prescribed conditions. I trust all the Sadar Hospitals will take advantage of this grant in effecting essential improvements in their hospitals. A first class hospital at the Sadar Headquarters is no less a necessity for the district as a whole than institutions for treating ordinary ailments in the rural areas.

Prevention of Blindness.

I think that most of you are aware that the Society for the Prevention of Blindness in Bengal is conducting 2 Travelling Eye Dispensaries which are visiting different areas in rural Bengal. The Society has been doing admirable work both curative and preventive, and the great popularity of these dispensaries has been evidenced by the request that has been made to me to prolong the stay of the travelling eye dispensary at almost every place where it has worked. The funds of the Association are, however, limited and even with assistance from Government it will not be possible for it to conduct more than one or two dispensaries, which would be too few to serve the whole of Bengal. Diseases of the eye are much more frequent than is generally believed and blindness and defective vision can be easily prevented by timely advice and treatment. I would, therefore, commend to your consideration the suggestion made in the memorandum that the District Boards in a division may pool their funds in order that at least one permanent travelling eye dispensary may serve each division. The Society will be glad to undertake the management of such dispensaries.

Infant Mortality.

You are no doubt aware of the appalling rate of maternal and infant mortality in Bengal. Government make grants-in-aid every year to local bodies and other organisations for conducting Dai-training classes. Grants are also made to the Dacca Maternity Centre and the Bengal Health Welfare Committee. In addition to the above, Government are making an annual grant to the Indian Red Cross Society towards a training school for health visitors and have agreed to provide the bulk of the ground rent for the new school building. The Indian Red Cross Society has been doing very valuable work in this direction. I am afraid it has to be admitted that the local authorities, in whom the responsibility for maternity and child welfare work primarily vests, have hitherto done little to remedy the present unsatisfactory situation regarding it. One would like to see a network of Maternity and Child Welfare Centres on modern lines all over the rural areas through which only pre-natal and anti-natal cares for mothers can be assured and the maternal and child mortality effectively controlled. Government are

prepared to assist within reasonable financial limits towards establishment and working of these centres but it is up to the local bodies, viz., the District Boards and Municipalities, to pay adequate attention to this vital problem which has such a vital bearing on the manpower of this province.

Amendment of the existing Act.

The next three items relate to the advancement and better administration of Local Self-Government. The Local Self-Government Act, 1885, now requires a thorough overhauling and its amendment has become long overdue. At the Annual Conference of Chairmen of District Boards held in 1923, this subject came up for discussion. In the Conference held in 1930 the advice of the Chairmen of District Boards was obtained on the amendment of this Act and in the amendment carried out in 1932 many of the recommendations made by you were incorporated. The last amendment was made mainly to remove certain anomalies and difficulties in the working of the Act. Suggestions for a thorough amendment have been asked for from local officers and District Boards but have not yet been received except in one or two cases. Your advice on the lines on which the overhauling of the Act should take place would be very helpful to Government. As regards the Village Self-Government Act, several defects have been found in its working and certain adjustments of powers and duties have become absolutely necessary in view of the growth of these bodies and especially in view of the decision to abolish the Local Boards, so as to make the contact between District and Union Boards more live and intimate. I would invite your suggestions regarding the lines on which amending legislation should proceed in achieving this object.

Regarding the division of a district into constituencies for election of members after the abolition of Local Boards this is a question which requires careful consideration. The principles on which in the opinion of Government the delimitation of constituencies should be made have been already made known to you. As this is a matter in which the District Boards are vitally interested, your suggestions will be very carefully considered by Government in coming to a decision.

Uniformity of weights and measures is a subject in which the rural areas are vitally interested and I would welcome your advice on the subject."

Landlords and Tenants.

The HON'BLE SIR B. P. SINGH ROY, Minister for Revenue, Bengal, discussed the relation between landlords and tenants in course of a speech at the opening of the Agricultural, Industrial and Health Exhibition at Port Canning (24-Parganas) in January, 1939. He said:—

'I must thank the management of the Port Canning Company for having afforded me this opportunity to be present here this afternoon and to take part in the opening or this agricultural, industrial and health exhibition. I have listened with great interest to this short history of the gradual development of the Port Canning area into a

fine agricultural and fertile place from a tract at one time inhabited by wild beasts and subject to inundation with salt water. This shows how human effort can transfer barren and unproductive soil into a vast fertile, profitable and attractive land. I am sure both Government and the Port Canning Company can congratulate themselves on their achievment. I have also listened with great attention to the interesting account of the various kinds of paddy, fruits and vegetable that are at present grown in this area.

I note with pleasure that the Port Canning Company as landlord are inclined to be generous to the *bargadars* and offer them more than 50 per cent. of the produce in return of their labour. I hope and trust that other landlords in this area will emulate their example as far as practicable.

It is indeed a matter of sincere regret that the relation between landlords and tenants in this area, as in some other parts of the Province, should be anything but cordial at present. Strained feelings between the two communities of which outside agitators are anxious to take advantage, is bound to have undesirable repercussions on the economic condition of both. The tenants have been hard hit by the world economic depression and are not in a position to pay their accumulated debts incurred during a period of agricultural prosperity. The landlords on the other hand have their own difficulties and statutory obligation of a regular payment of revenue to Government. For realisation of their rents the landlords have been obliged to bring a large number of holdings to sale and to purchase them khas in the absence of other buyers. Holdings are being let out in *barga*. This has rendered a considerable proportion of the tenants land-less. Those who are in possession of lands find that their difficulties are largely due to the high rate of rent fixed at a time when the price of agricultural produce was much higher. On the top of these there are allegations of realisation of *abwabs* by some of the landlords' agents, refusal to give rent receipts and disinclination on the part of landlords to re-settle the lands made *khas* with defaulting tenants. All these together have given rise to a very difficult and complex problem affecting this part of the district of 24-Parganas. The agitation by the tenants has been continuing for the last two years. I am glad to say however that because of the timely intervention of Government with a view to controlling highhandness and unlawful acts by both parties and checking of the abuses of their agents by the landlords, granting of concessions for softening down the feelings of the tenants prevented the situation from deteriorating further. I however deplore that in spite of the best efforts of the district authorities and of Government the agrarian situation is yet far from being normal in this area. The landlords must realise that if they do not change their methods and try to have more control over their own officers their difficulties with the tenants will rather increase than decrease. I would request them to take more personal interest in the management of their estates, to tour in their *zemindaries*, to meet the tenants personally and to try to allay the feelings of the tenants whose grievances are partly genuine and partly imaginary. Time has come when the landlords can no longer expect that rent will roll into their coffer without a genuine effort on their part to counteract the anti-landlord propaganda by offering the tenants concessions and taking a real interest in their welfare. Unscrupulous agents are enemies of the tenants but they are sources of positive danger to the landlords. To the tenants on the other hand, I would say

that they must get rid of the impression that under any Government or any system of administration or arrangement they would be allowed to enjoy land without payment of rent and other legal dues. Their financial obligation to the landlords must be honoured and while Government are determined to see that the tenants are in no way molested by the landlords or their agents they are also determined to help realisation of legal dues of the landlords without any impediment. It is a pity that the tenants should allow themselves to be misled by unscrupulous exploiters who are neither friends of the landlords nor of the tenants. The promise of a millenium to the tenant or advice to refuse the payment of legal dues is to my mind one of the worst forms of exploitation of unsophisticated people. I would request those who are real friends of the tenants to use their influence with them and to make them pay the landlords' dues or the *mahajans'* dues regularly. By this the tenant stands to gain in the long run.

These local difficulties coupled with a rapid development of a mentality since the introduction of the Constitutional Reforms, enforcement of the Bengal Agricultural Debtors' Act and the passing of the Bengal Tenancy Act (Amendment) Bill, that rent is payable when able, have contributed largely to a situation which is inimical to orderly economic progress of the people dependent on agriculture. It is greatly to be regretted that the aims and objects of these measures have been misunderstood in certain quarters and instead of producing contentment amongst the agriculturists and bringing about an adjustment of conflicting interests have produced a disintrigating effect on the economic structure of the rural area.

Future of Ex-Detenus.

Addressing the members of the two Pottery factories at Belghuria, which were started by ex-detenus with Government help, the HON'BLE MR. N. R. SARKAR, Finance Minister, said on November 16, 1938:—

"I am sure you realize that the work in which you are engaged has a larger national aspect. It helps you, no doubt, to earn your own maintenance, and that may be its primary purpose; but that should not be its only purpose to you. You are in a sense pioneers in a new field, and the traditions and conventions you set up, the honesty of purpose, integrity and diligence which you put into your work, the dignity of manual labour which you inculcate, would all go to determine the shape of things for future generations of Bengali youths in the field of industry. The way in which you apply your work would largely go to make or mar that future. I hope you are all conscious of this great responsibility—this larger national aspect of your work.

You must always remember that as you mould from the shapeless clay pottery of beautiful design, you are at the same time, also moulding the future of Bengal's young men in the field of industry. This is the spirit with which, in fact, I would like all young men engaged in constructive work of any sort to be actuated; they are all helping to rebuild what I may call a lost dominion.

Bred as you are in traditions of patriotism, I can fully appreciate your emphasis on the 'Buy Bengali' move. I think that such a campaign would find in Bengal a very hospitable soil. Right from the *Swadeshi* days, Bengalis have never been wanting in enthusiasm for patronising commodities produced in Bengal. If Bengal's industries have not had the desired success, it is, I think, not for any lack of patriotic support from her own people, but for quite different reasons, such as defects in the management and organization of those industries, or shyness of capital. However, as a Bengali, I naturally give my whole-hearted support to the 'Buy Bengali' move for which you appeal. At the same time I would like you to realize that the 'Buy Bengali' move is useful and advisable only up to a certain limit.

Subject to that limitation, I consider the move you suggest as a sound one and the Government are quite conscious about the necessity of securing a good market for Bengal's produce. I believe that the Industrial Museum, which will be organized by the Government shortly, will help you greatly in the furtherance of this object. It is very necessary, however, that as we advance in the path of our industrial progress, we should address ourselves more and more to the perfection of our own organization and technique and thus enhance the competitive strength of our factories in the light of world developments. Our industries must constantly keep themselves in touch with international forces and develop a wider outlook even for the object of maintaining their own integrity.

As young men prove their ability to undertake industrial and business responsibilities, it is necessary that the attitude of the owners of capital and resources also undergoes orientation. The multiplication of opportunities for livelihood which is essential if the educated unemployed are to be absorbed and fruitfully utilized, necessities that the old ideals of individual accumulation of wealth, ownership of land and possession of gilt-edged securities or large cash balances in the bank must give place to a spirit of enterprise and boldness in investment. The old world individualism must go; there must instead be an intelligent manipulation of resources for the general welfare.

If this is not done, if the outlook of the owners of wealth does not change the accumulative pressure, poverty and unemployment is soon likely to set forces in motion which would menace the very existence of ordered society. The rich must realize that prosperity and poverty are no longer a matter of separate concern for the individual. With grim poverty and the demoralizing unemployment of the educated classes stalking the land, none is safe—nothing is safe. Every ounce of effort and every necessary pie of our wealth must be mobilized as a defence, otherwise this situation will embitter the present and darken the future."

Appendix B.

Special articles contributed to the columns of the *Bengal Weekly* by the Hon'ble Chief Minister and other Hon'ble Ministers on the completion of two years of Provincial Autonomy in Bengal. These are reproduced from the issue of the *Bengal Weekly* dated 3rd April 1939.

BY THE HON'BLE CHIEF MINISTER.*

For two years now Bengal has enjoyed the fruits of Provincial Autonomy. As I look back on those two years, mingled feelings of satisfaction and disappointment arise within me. When we accepted office two years ago we were conscious of the responsibilities we were undertaking, but we were hardly aware of the extent and magnitude of the difficulties that would confront us in implementing the programme which we had set before ourselves. Both men and nature have impeded progress, but nevertheless, what we have been able to achieve within these two years constitutes a record of which we may be legitimately proud.

First and foremost in our thoughts were the teeming millions of our people who bravely struggle for their existence in the villages of Bengal. We found them groaning under a dead-weight of debts which, left to themselves, they would never have been able to repay. We found them suffering under a system of land laws which was in some respects harsh and unjust. Wherever we went these people from the villages came in their tens of thousands to greet us and to tell us their tales of hardship. We were touched by their profound faith in us and in our powers to drag them out of their slough of despondency. Inevitably, therefore, the first measures that we took related to their well-being.

We have set up nearly four thousand Debt Settlement Boards in almost all parts of the province. Debts amounting to more than five crores have been already scaled down and the debtors and the creditors have both been benefited. Within another six months, further debts to the tune of 26 crores of rupees will have been scaled down, with the result that nearly 31 crores, amounting to about one-third of the total debts of the agriculturists, will have been dealt with and scaled down, bringing relief to millions of our rural population. We have amended the Bengal Tenancy Act and conferred many new rights on the tenantry. We have appointed a Commission to examine the whole land system of our province. When its labours are completed we hope to be able to adjust the relationship between the landlords and the tenants in a manner beneficial to both classes and conclusive to the peace and prosperity of our country.

We have pushed on with our plans for improved agricultural education and only a few months ago I laid the foundation stone at Dacca of an Institution which is destined to become a centre of advanced training in agriculture to our young men.

We have undertaken an industrial survey of the province which will soon be completed and will enable us to launch a vigorous drive for the expansion of our national industries. Meanwhile we have established an Industrial Museum in Calcutta which it is our ambition to make the emporium of Bengal's national products.

Ours is the only province where we have a well-thought-out scheme of Primary Education which is already working fully in 5 districts. I have already announced that in the coming year we shall introduce the scheme in every district in Bengal, so that within 12 to 18 months every part of the province will have the blessings of Free Primary Education.

We have launched a new Youth Welfare Movement and to-day in every district a Physical Organiser is at work preaching the gospel of physical fitness among our young men. This is only a beginning. We

*The text of the Hon'ble Chief Minister's screen broadcast (*see* picture opposite) was the same as that of this article.

aim at the physical betterment of all our youth whether they are students of schools and colleges or whether they pursue other avocations in the countryside.

We have evolved a comprehensive plan of Rural Reconstruction. Our aim is to change the face of the countryside, to make our villages healthier and more beautiful, to help our villagers to help themselves, to create in them an urge for better living and, generally, to bring about a great psychological uplift among our rural population.

We have undertaken a contour survey of those areas of the province which suffer periodically from the incidence of flood. We have applied our mind to the resuscitating of the dead and dying rivers in Bengal and several Irrigation projects are now in the course of execution.

Our scheme for rural water-supply is perhaps unparalleled in any other province of India.

We have planned a mass attack on the water-hyacinth pest which has laid waste vast areas of agricultural land and blocked our rural waterways. The last week of April will witness a province-wide campaign against the "lilac devil" the like of which no other province has witnessed before.

We have released thousand of detenus and scores of convicted terrorist prisoners in the hope that those released will settle down to a life of constructive citizenship. We have taken the initiative in trying to set up many detenus so released in respectable business after proper training. At the Belgharia potteries, for instance, which has been started solely for the benefit of the released detenus many of them have been taught an industry which will enable them to earn an honourable living.

We have encouraged our industrial workers to organise on sound trade union principles and we have induced the employers to treat them fairly and squarely.

We have at the present moment under consideration a scheme of moving National Welfare Units which will be of immense benefit to our rural people. One of the features of this scheme will be that every District will have a moving medical unit constantly touring in the villages.

In this brief and hurried review it is difficult to give a more complete picture of the results which our labours during the last two years have produced, nor can I unfold in detail the various plans which we have chalked out for the betterment of our province and our people. But I see a vision of a happier, better and more contented Bengal where each class and each community will live in peaceful enjoyment of its legitimate rights and privileges, a Bengal where the palaces in the city and the huts in the hamlets will each play its allotted part, the one forgetting to look down upon or envy the other. It is that Greater Bengal which we are striving to build up. In this task we expect the co-operation of all who love their land and we rely upon the blessings of God Almighty. May the people of Bengal, high and low, Hindu and Muslim, take the fullest advantage of the opportunity for shaping their own destinies which the new Constitution has brought to their door. May they march shoulder to shoulder towards the destined goal of a nobler, happier and fuller life.

A. K. FAZLUL HUQ.

BY THE HON'BLE FINANCE MINISTER.

A much-maligned and a much-misunderstood Department of the State, Finance Department, is really the key-stone of the governmental arch. Although its activities are not apparent to the public, the responsibilities which devolve upon it are as delicate as they are exacting. Withal, for all its efforts to maintain financial stability of the Government and at the same time stimulate an ordered development in all departments of State its intentions are often misunderstood and misconstrued. To the public, the Department appears to be the hateful agency which imposes taxation and mulcts people out of their wealth. To other departments of the Government, it is the unimaginative hewer who unceremoniously brings down his axe on their schemes and proposals for further expansion. It also appears to them as the machinery which thwarts them at every step by what they consider to be hairsplitting and meticulous interpretations of rules and regulations. Yet the Finance Department is not an executive department. It is not a department which directly assists agriculture or industry, institutes measures for improving public health or imparts education, or maintains law and order, etc. The revenues it helps to raise, it distributes again to other departments of State for spending. The primary function of the Finance Department is a selfless and thankless one. It is to raise revenues within the limited scope available to it with a view to equitably distribute them to other departments of State so that they may be enabled to extend their activities to provide a better life and living conditions to the people themselves. Ever since the inauguration of provincial autonomy, the demands on the Finance Department for finding additional money to finance nation-building services and carry through a programme of mass amelioration have become enormous and insistent. In raising necessary revenues, however the Department would be failing in its duties if it were merely content in obtaining money anyhow. Its object is to raise money in an equitable manner so that the necessary burden is placed on those best able to bear it, and also in such a way that the costs of collection are kept down to the minimum. In spending money again, its principal function is to advise the Government and the Legislature as to how best the available revenues may be spent. And in tendering this advice, it is actuated by the desire to secure maximum benefit at minimum cost. Within the limit set by available resources, it has also to maintain a just equilibrium between the multifarious demands made by the various departments of State. Not directly in touch with the public, although holding the major responsibility of providing the sinews for public good, often visited with unmerited opprobrium, misunderstood by sister Departments of Government, the Finance Department works unflinchingly and ceaselessly in the interest of the society.

In Bengal, too the Finance Department has had to face complex problems. The most perplexing is the increasing demand of a democracy for expenditure in nation-building services coupled with an extreme reluctance, at the same time, to bear additional taxation. This is a most untenable situation. A democracy with mass amelioration as its objective must needs be expensive, and the citizens must be prepared to shoulder the necessary burden. It is often said that additional resources might be released by further economies in administrative expenditure. In Bengal, however, the previous administration had already effected drastic retrenchments and there is no large

scope for further retrenchment. Even the most impartial observers admit that the costs of administration in Bengal are comparatively much smaller. Even in regard to the demand for retrenchment, it is interesting to observe that it is only general in its nature, and that whether it is the individual departments of State or the public who may call attention the need for retrenchment they always take special care to emphasise that their own particular interests should not be touched. In truth the trouble with most of us in retrenching is that we want to take the "me" out of economy. The country should therefore fully realise that a popular Government vowed to implement a programme of mass uplift must demand and receive additional resources from the people.

A review of the financial stewardship of the Government of Bengal will reveal the happy circumstance that, while financial solvency has been fully maintained, the foundations for an ameliorative programme have also been securely laid. In every sphere of governmental activity, a sound and solid beginning has been made. The financial arguments for implementing a programme of mass uplift have been soundly made, and if we proceed on the same lines, we may be assured of steady progress. As fresh schemes will be elaborated and taken in hand, the finances will be made available by fresh taxation, as and when necessary. It is however an unfortunate circumstance that our legislators do not visualise the problems in a comprehensive manner. They are often interested only in particular problems or in certain aspects of them without adequately considering their implications and likely repercussions on other problems. For example, there is a general and persistent demand for the solution of unemployment problem. Yet in certain quarters, governmental expenditure on public works is strenuously opposed without apparently any appreciation of the relationship between such expenditure and a solution, however partial, of the unemployment problem. This is but one example to show that the capacity for conceiving and implementing any programme of amelioration will essentially depend upon the imagination and ability of our legislators and administrators. It will serve no purpose in trying to emulate the work of a Roosevelt or a Hitler if we do not possess comparable personalities amongst us. It is also necessary to emphasise that haphazard spending is nothing short of sheer wastage. Just because a Government may be possessed of funds, it would be folly to undertake expenditure in the absence of well thought-out schemes. In Bengal, we are determined to avoid such wastage of our none too plentiful resources. We must husband our resources to be utilised in the best possible manner. I may confidently say that the Finance Department is ever vigilant to see that the public obtain the largest benefit out of each rupee they contribute to the coffers of the Government.

N. R. SARKER.

BY THE HON'BLE HOME MINISTER.

As I look at Bengal in retrospect over the first two years of autonomy, the feeling that arises in me foremost is one of gratification at the peaceful atmosphere which has generally prevailed. While from elsewhere came report after report of communal strife which took its gruesome toll of life and property, we in this province were happily able to feel that all was quiet on our own front. The innate good sense of our people, both Hindu and Muslim, has been

mainly responsible for this, although we as a Government can legitimately claim some share of the credit for making it obvious to all that no aggression or attempt to stir up trouble would be tolerated for a single moment. We are specially grateful to the supporters of Government who have consistently helped in keeping our province free from communal strife. I have every confidence that in the years to come Bengal will maintain the reputation it has already earned. I need hardly remind my countrymen that if the various schemes which the nation-building departments of Government have prepared or already undertaken are to be successfully worked out, the first pre-requisite is an era of peace.

I congratulate the Police on the rapid adaptation of their outlook to the changed situation and their improved relationship with the public for whose benefit and service they primarily exist. They have much prejudice to fight down, and in some cases perhaps to live down. A great deal of that prejudice is gone and I am happy to note that the Police force have been able gradually to create in the public mind a new confidence in themselves. But I expect them to earn an even greater degree of confidence and I hope that before this third year of provincial autonomy is over my expectation will be fulfilled. Our new policy of recruiting none but Bengalees to the unarmed branches of the force should be an additional reason for the increased popularity of the Police.

We must also express our thanks to the Services of all ranks for the loyal co-operation which they have given and we shall look forward to the same co-operation in the coming years. There may be some to whom new policies evolved as an inevitable consequence of popular rule do not always present a pleasing prospect, but with the passage of time this outlook wherever it still lingers is bound to change.

I am constrained to end on a note of warning.

I have recently had to indicate the dangers by which the tranquillity of our province is threatened. My hope and desire is to see those dangers squarely met for unless that is done, there is little chance of building the new Bengal which is in all our hearts. Government have shown their goodwill by the release of the State prisoners and the detenus, as well as by the premature release of the majority of the terrorist convicts. It is for the people to see to it that our trust has not been misplaced, and if we can have secured their co-operation, that will be, perhaps, the greatest contribution that the Home Department can make to the general progress. But goodwill and humanity must have firmness behind them, for the prevention of crime and the reform of the criminal, must and will form a necessary part of the planned and orderly development of the province.

K. NAZIMUDDIN.

BY THE HON'BLE REVENUE MINISTER.

Rejuvenation of Bengal is the mission of the present Ministry. All the departments of Government are striving to contribute towards the realisation of that aim by tackling simultaneously the various problems of our national life. Their solution is to a large extent inter-dependent. Any attempt to deal with the problems in an isolated manner is sure to prove abortive. At first the process may appear to be too cumbrous and the object too ambitious but a systematic endeavour on this

line will soon prove the usefulness of the method and make the nation feel its capacity for self-emancipation. The duty of the Ministry is to instil in the mind of the people that confidence which can be gained only through sound and steady work, to train up the youth of the country to that ideal of patriotism, intellectual and physical fitness that form the basis of the character of every great nation and the source of indomitable courage and optimism which are their greatest assets. But this is a consummation which cannot be achieved through indiscipline or activities leading only to disintegration of various units of society but through determination to probe all the problems of national life with perseverence. Our duty is to foster these qualities in our young men and women so that they may not falter or be found wanting in character in their hour of trial.

B. P. SINGH ROY.

BY THE HON'BLE MINISTER FOR LOCAL SEIF-GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRIES.

The development of local self-government on right and democratic lines has been the aim of the Ministry since it assumed office. In the beginning, Bills were framed for amendment of the Bengal Local Self-Government Act, 1885, the Bengal Village Self-Government Act, 1919, and the Bengal Municipal Act, 1932, with the object of removing certain anomalies and defects in the practical working of these Acts. These Bills were however not proceeded with as it was found that these Acts required more thorough and complete amendment with a view to bringing them into line with popular ideals—especially the Bengal Local Self-Government Act of 1885 with the few piecemeal amendments from time to time was found to have gone completely out of date. The Ministry therefore decided that there should be a much needed overhaul of the various Local Self-Governments Acts in conformity with public opinion. Local bodies and local officers have therefore been asked to make suggestions, some of which have already arrived. These suggestions will be shifted and in consultation with public opinion these Acts will be thoroughly overhauled with the main object of making local self-government a real and live force in the administration of the province.

As regards the municipal administration of the city of Calcutta under the provisions of the Calcutta Municipal Act, 1923, the Ministry felt from the beginning that a change in the constitution was essentially necessary with a view to secure adequate and real representation of the minority communities without disturbing the framework and the scheme of the Act. In order to introduce the change before the next reconstitution of the Corporation of Calcutta, the term of the Councillors has been extended for a period of one year. The Calcutta Municipal (Amendment) and Validation Bill, 1939, which is expected to be passed before these lines are in print, validates the action taken by Government and makes certain necessary amendments in the Act. The Calcutta Municipal Amendment Bill, 1939, for making certain alterations in the constitution of the Corporation for the purpose set forth above is now before the Assembly. This Bill proposes *inter ali* to create a separate electorate for the Muslims in deference to an almost unanimous and persistent demand of that community and also to give similar privilege to the Anglo-Indian community. I need only mention here that the reasonableness

of separate electorates for the minority communities according to their option has been recognised elsewhere, e.g., in Bombay. The principle of additional weightage to a minority community has been similarly recognised in other provinces. At the same time separate representation for the scheduled castes has also been secured by reserving seats for them in the general constituencies, as only just and fair.

The Ministry felt at the same time that in the larger interest of the rate-payers as well as in the interests of the efficiency of city administration the provisions of the Calcutta Municipal Act, 1923, required to be closely examined with a view to introducing necessary improvements. With the above object as well as that of improving certain defects and working difficulties the question of a thorough-going amendment of the Act is now under the consideration of Government.

Amendments of various Acts and Statutory Rules which it is not possible to mention in this brief review are being considered by the Ministry. I think it may be safely claimed that the present Ministry has undertaken the reform of local self-government in the province in the spirit of true and wide nationalism which looks after the interest of the various communities and is not confined to coteries, sections and cliques; and I feel sure that when the programme that the Ministry has set before it, is complete the beneficent effect of legislation in various spheres of local self-government will be widely appreciated by the public of all communities and creeds, the advanced and the depressed, the poor and the rich.

Our activities in the Industries Department are already well known and I had an occasion to refer to our plans briefly on a recent occasion. The coming year, I can safely say, will witness a fulfilment of some of our plans and I would request the public to co-operate with us in our efforts to solve our common national problems.

K. HABIBULLAH.

BY THE HON'BLE MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATION AND WORKS.

I have been asked to send a short review of our activities in the important Departments of Irrigation and Communications at this second anniversary of the inauguration of provincial autonomy in Bengal. When we took over charge, I found that the prevailing atmosphere in this basic "nation-building" branch was that of a certain defeatism, born largely out of the century-old policy of *laissez faire* and neglect and the tremendous aggravation of the problem of public health and agriculture due to riverine deterioration and decay. The sensational disclosures of Dr. Bentley in the matter of malaria and agriculture, the scathing criticism of the late Sir William Willcocks and the report of the Hopkyns Committee of 1930 could hardly make much impression on the department. The Damodar Canal was practically the only irrigation canal undertaken within recent years. The drainage works were confined only within 24-Parganas and except the Magra Hat Drainage Project we had not much else to look upon. As regards navigation, we have in Bengal some 20,000 miles of navigable waterways, but the attention of the department was mainly concentrated to maintain the through routes.

Within the brief space of two years we have been able to introduce a forward and clear-cut policy. We have undertaken a thorough reorganisation of the Irrigation Department, have taken to most careful and scientific planning and to base our riverine policy on the solid rock of scientific researches and experiments, we have taken up the question of establishing a Hydraulic Research Laboratory in Bengal. A comprehensive programme of work has been decided upon with the help of our engineers, keeping in view the different regional needs of Western, Central, North and Eastern Bengal—and this programme was tested and found to be the best by an expert conference held by me at Calcutta. The contour survey of the decadent regions of Bengal, undertaken by us, is being pushed through with all expedition and will be completed by 1940. In the near future the herculean task of resuscitation of the spill channels of the Ganges, the Brahmaputra and the Teesta which was so long the despair of all, will be a practicable proposition. A great deal of very important spadework which may not be spectacular to the outside lay-public but which is essential for laying the foundation of the great work before us, true and strong, have been done. In the delta of the Damodar and the Hooghly, an important flush irrigation scheme has just been completed at an estimated cost of Rs. 2½ crores and we propose to take up the same in the immediate future after the detailed estimates are completed. We have also taken up in hand several schemes of local importance, such as resuscitation of the river Bhairab, Jhargram Irrigation scheme, Satkhira *Khal* reclamation, etc. As regards waterways, we are considering two alternatives—the introduction of a statutory Waterways Board entrusted with the specific task of conservation of the waterways and allotting to them certain important sources of revenue; or, in the alternative to reorganise the Navigation Department in an effective manner to face its responsibilities.

In the Public Works Department, the prejudice against the Government as regards wastefulness was almost proverbial. As important steps towards the efficiency and economy drive undertaken by us, the following among others may be mentioned. We have revised our schedule of rates and reduced the overhead charges, made new stringent rules regarding tenders, specifications, etc., so as to keep the corrupt practices under control. The net establishment charges which amounted to 20·4 per cent. in 1937, have come down to 16·6 per cent. in the revised budget this year and the estimates of next year are 13·8 per cent. only.

As regards the development of road communications, we found a huge accumulation of funds which was not our fault but a legacy of the past. We at once set our hands to devise a vigorous road policy, to speed up the work and expenditure and the success of our efforts will be evident from the fact that though the increase of our road expenditure was 5·4 per cent. in 1937-38, it has reached the high percentage of 57 in 1938-39. We are trying to still further accelerate the speed. We expedited the publication of the comprehensive report of our Special Road Officer on the road requirements of our Province, and the prospect of a well-planned road programme for the entire Province with time-limits is now well within sight.

S. C. NANDY.

BY THE HON'BLE MINISTER FOR LABOUR, COMMERCE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION.

Government have adopted the positive policy of encouraging healthy Trade Unionism and promoting industrial peace. We believe that if constitutional Trade Unions grew up which would have a proper perspective, namely, that of collaboration and co-operation with the employers on the one hand, and the promotion of their own interests and their welfare through sound organisations on the other, most of the disadvantages from which unorganised labour is suffering to-day and most of the problems arising out of the relationship between the employer and the employee would be solved. We, therefore, definitely deprecate the formation of labour organisations whose main purpose is not to promote the interests of the welfare of labourers, but to utilize them for political purposes. Such organisations are not anxious to bring contentment and happiness amongst labourers, but aim at keeping them in a constant state of ferment and discontent and promoting among them class warfare and class hatred. On the other hand, we desire to educate the labourers so that they may organise themselves along sound lines and adopt peaceful and constitutional methods in the settlement of trade disputes. The natural corollary also follows, namely, that employers must recognise such Trade Unions and make every effort to meet their wishes and demands and consider the representations sympathetically so far as the economic conditions of the industry can justify. Our task, therefore, has been to promote co-operation and sympathy on both sides. The task has been difficult as there has been a great deal of mutual suspicion and distrust. We aim at bringing the employer and the employee on to a common platform. I am indeed happy to say that our methods have to a large extent met with success. The employers, particularly the European employers, who control the major portion of the industry, have accepted the principle of recognising constitutional Trade Unions, and in many cases have recognised such Trade Unions and treated with them. Workmen also are beginning to realise the advantages of a constitutional movement and Trade Unions with reasonable ideals are growing up in almost every direction and driving the destructive and barren forces of revolution out of the field. In the settlement of industrial disputes we have laid down certain steps which ought to be taken before labourers resort to strikes. I propose giving voluntary methods of conciliation a further trial in the hope that both sides will gradually become sufficiently educated to appreciate each other's points of view and try and meet each other without unncessary dislocation of work. We have been able to settle not only many strikes but have also prevented disputes from taking a serious turn by mediating and promoting conciliation in proper time. Rules for the recognition of Trade Unions by Government and by the employers are also under discussion, and I hope that in a little while I shall be in a position to promulgate them. I have also been able to induce the employers to take seriously the question of bribery and corruption in factories. regulation of recruitments, the minimisation of dismissals, and the introduction of better service conditions. Many of them have accepted my suggestion and have appointed labour officers to look after the interests of their workmen. I wish to tender to them my thanks for the manner in which they have co-operated with me in advancing my ameliorative policy; I also

desire to thank those organisations, Labour Leaders and Labour Welfare Workers, who at great risk and self-sacrifice, are educating the labourers to organise themselves into constitutional Trade Unions.

Government have promulgated the Jute Ordinance and have accepted the responsibility of promoting commerce and industry in the province, even to the extent of legislative interference. In particular, it has undertaken the responsibility of regulating all matters concerning jute, which forms the most important staple crop of the province, from its production to marketing, sale transport, baling, future transactions and manufactures. Government have accepted further the principle of public control of electricity concerns and their ultimate nationalisation. Over and above this, it is considering ways and means to provide cheap electricity. We feel that this requires considerable caution and expert advice. We would make a survey of the electricity concerns in the various provinces before we embark on our own schemes.

In the field of Rural Reconstruction we are about to undertake a great experiment. I feel that if the matter is handled seriously and I receive the co-operation of all right-minded and earnest people, we can change the face of the countryside in a short space of time and infuse new life, new hope and vigour in our people. I am sure that there are plenty of people who are anxious to place their services at the disposal of any movement that is launched to promote the welfare of the masses. We propose organising this work, spreading it far and wide and co-ordinating of the nation-building activities of Government, so that even the remotest villages may reap the advantages of our activities. Only recently I have propounded a scheme and I can only hope that it will receive the co-operation of the people of Bengal in its fulfilment.

H. S. SUHRAWARDY.

BY THE HON'BLE JUDICIAL MINISTER.

The work done in our Department, which aim at general improvement as far as possible in the administration of justice, may not be as spectacular as in other departments but to those who can understand the implications, it cannot fail to be impressive. I need hardly repeat that it is essential for a good Government that the people must have unbounded confidence in the work of the law courts and feel sure of the protection of their rights in every way and of getting on application from courts such relief to which they are entitled irrespective of caste, creed or colour.

Our working must initially start on this principle and we are to strive to maintain this efficiency of courts and possibly improve it by our management of the department. I hope the legislations we have undertaken since the inauguration of the new Constitution and those we are about to undertake are sufficient indications of our genuine anxiety in this respect. The administrative measures we have initiated and contemplate to initiate also show that we have the same object in view all through.

I may refer to a few main particulars as below.

The most important piece of legislation we have put on the anvil of the legislature is the Bengal Money Lender's Bill which, apart from any other consideration, also goes to show our anxious solicitude to carry out one of the main programmes of the Coalition Party, viz.,

to devise means to free the cultivators from the burden of indebtedness. The Bengal Agricultural Debtors Act is there and its progressive operations are helping but it is meant only to be a temporary measure while our Bill is intended to be a permanent and a comprehensive one to afford relief to all in debt, rich and poor alike, against the present oppressive and usurious system of credit. The application of this measure when passed into law is expected to be welcome to the agriculturists.

The Calcutta Official Receiver's Act is another legislation of ours. Very few in the moffusil know about its implications, but suffice it to say that this measure is meant to bring order in the office of the Official Receiver of the Calcutta High Court in whose hands the said Court places estates of litigants in its Original Side generally and whose mismanagement of them has been the subject of comment both by the public and also in Judicial decisions. The Official Receiver's office will now be brought under direct Government control and thus we mean to save not only loss of revenue to Government but also to restore the usual confidence of the public in general in regard to the management of the estates by such officers.

We have also several other such legislative projects in hand, as for instance—

(1) Touts Bill to curb the evil effects of touting among the poorer and ignorant classes of the public.

(2) Administrator-General and Official Trustee's (Amendment) Bills to increase the scope of work of the Administrator-General in the muffusil and to initiate an appropriate system of audit of the accounts of the Administrator-General and Official Trustee.

(3) Civil Procedure (Amendment) Bill to enable courts to make greater use of stenographers in recording evidence. This will relieve them of a laborious duty in big cases and also ensure their speedy disposal. They will also thus be free to attend more to the actual proceedings going on while in the court room, having in effect more opportunity to prevent corrupt practices said to be restored to by persons, I need not name, at that time.

We are also contemplating legislation (1) for the better management of the Sheriff's Office at Calcutta, (2) for protection and management of properties of minors to whom guardians have been appointed through court and the management of whose estates is not satisfactory.

Among other things, we have reorganised the Civil Court staff on the basis of the report of the Special Officer Mr. (now Justice) Lodge. This will effect economy and increase efficiency.

A scheme has also been framed and is being tried experimentally this year to give assistance to Civil Court clerks in the rush of work on the *tamadi* institution of rent suits. This will ultimately help in quick disposal of rent suits to the relief of the landlords as also the tenants.

With the inauguration of the new Constitution recruitment to Bengal Civil Service (Judicial) has come directly in our hands from the High Court. Revised rules are being framed and opportunity has been taken under provisions of the Government of India Act to reserve a higher percentage in the service for the Muslims and the

Scheduled castes. The question of direct recruitment from the Bar is also under consideration. Appointments could not be made last year owing to fall in the number of institutions and dearth of work owing to the working of the Bengal Agricultural Debtors Act but the question is now under consideration.

We have introduced a scheme for giving criminal training to selected munsifs with a view to further increase the efficiency of the Bengal Civil Service (Judicial) officers appointed to work as Assistant Sessions Judges and eventually as Additional District Judges.

We have under consideration a scheme for liberalising jurors allowance rules, the inadequacy of the scale of such allowance being the subject of universal complaint. Recently we have made a provision for granting extra allowance to jurors when detained at headquarters owing to lack of transport facilities.

MUSHARRUF HUSAIN.

BY THE HON'BLE MINISTER FOR FOREST AND EXCISE.

Bengal Forests are one of the best in India. Our policy is to conserve the existing forests and to reafforest the denuded ones. The influence of the forests on climate, soil erosion, agricuture, and the river system of the country is too well-known to require reiteration. We intended to maintain a regular supply of timber, fuel and other forest produce and at the same time to provide adequate grazing grounds to the villagers. A representative committee has been appointed to explore the possibilities of reafforestation of denuded areas. We are taking over the management of some private forests for their better and more efficient management.

Preservation of wild life is engaging our attention. Game sanctuaries are being formed in the reserved forests. We have in contemplation the formation of a big wild life sanctuary where people will be able to see wild games and birds in their natural surroundings.

Our Cinchona cultivation and factory are run on commercial lines, and we look forward to the day when they will be able to supply the total requirements of this province and also a major portion of the demand of other provinces. Our quinine productions are in no way inferior to foreign brands and they have the additional merit of being cheaper in price. Our Cinchona cultivation is gradually on the increase and the factory is being equipped with the most up-to-date machineries and experts.

Prohibition is the ultimate goal of our excise policy. It is a great pleasure to me to mention that people of Bengal are most temperate so far as the drinking and drug habits are concerned. Bengal has, in fact, made a better progress in the path of gradual and effective prohibition than what other provinces have done.

History shows that the Sundarbans was one of the important places for salt manufacture in the 18th and 19th centuries, and our officers opine that salt can be manufactured on a commercial scale in the Sundarbans. We have decided to start an experimental factory and if this proves successful we will frame a scheme of work which will enable us to meet not only the demands of Bengal but those of some of the neighbouring provinces. Individual private enterprises are

clamouring for the grant of subsidies but much will depend in this respect on the results of this experimental factory and the progress made by the private enterprises. This industry ought to solve the question of unemployment to a great extent.

P. D. RAIKAT.

BY THE HON'BLE MINISTER FOR CO-OPERATIVE CREDIT AND DEBT-CONCILIATION.

The Co-operative Department had no independent and intrinsic existence of its own before April 1937. It was tacked on to the Agriculture Department. With the formation of the new Government in April 1937 its importance was recognised and it was made the subject of one department along with its allied subject the Rural Indebtedness. During the Budget discussions under the old Government Co-operative Department was never discussed and as such it never had the advantage of receiving any concrete suggestion from the representatives of the people in the Legislature. Having got the status I had to explain the activities of the department to the Legislature at the time of presenting my budget demand on the last three occasions. Though it met with caustic criticisms, it also received constructive suggestions from the Legislature, especially from the members of the Coalition Party. We all heard about the frozen condition of the large sum of money that was lent out to the Village Society members. Before any definite decision was taken by Government,—which in principle I announced on the floor of the House in connection with the Budget under this head on the 15th of March last,—the department undertook an exhaustive survey of the financial position along with the assets and liabilities of the vast number of the Society members. The results are being examined to formulate the details of the scheme which has not only been decided upon but has been placed before the Legislature and the country. It is intended to close the old chapter definitely and their past liabilities will have nothing to do with the future. We desire to expand it on sound lines remembering the experience that the movement has gained by the past events. The officers have been put through a regular training and it is hoped that they will get into closer touch with the rural masses and make them realise the benefits of co-operation through concerted action amongst themselves based upon the principles of honesty, loyality, devotion and discipline.

The indebtedness of the rural masses is sought to be tackled through the Debt Settlement Boards operating upon the Bengal Agricultural Debtors Act, 1935, whereby the debtor and the creditor are being brought together and successfully induced to accept awards after the claims are reduced and brought within the paying capacity of the debtor on an absolutely voluntary basis. The amount of rural debt tackled so far as is over 5 crores of rupees and it is hoped that a further sum of 26 crores of rupees of rural debt will be so tackled in about six months.

The question of supplying rural credit is one of the aspects of the Co-operative Credit Department. For, while the Rural Indebtedness Department seeks to conciliate agricultural debt, the real present need of the agriculturist has also got to be met by proper financial assistance. Otherwise the awards will practically mean nothing if

the agriculturist is not able to produce enough to maintain himself and also to clear up his debt even when it is reduced. The idea is to establish co-operative credit societies in a larger number in the interior of the province and to see that they are well distributed in order that the real needy and honest agriculturist gets proper pecuniary assistance for productive purposes. It is hoped that this will be properly utilised by our countrymen and that the Government and the people may find it convenient to work together to solve this most difficult and intricate problem of reducing the rural debt on the one hand and on the other of supplying rural credit.

I have explained the position of Government in these two departments not only on the floor of the Legislative Chamber but also outside in addressing large number of gatherings and in opening many conferences. The responsible Government of the day sincerely hope that their countrymen will appreciate the position in its true spirit and will render all assistance to them in order that the powers with which they are invested to-ady may be so used that they may really serve their own people for which they have taken an oath in the name of God.

I hope and trust that these words of mine will not fall on irresponsible ears.

M. B. MULLICK.

BY THE HON'BLE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH, MEDICAL AND AGRICULTURE.

It is not possible in this very short space to give any but a brief outline of the programme of improvement and reform of national health that the Ministry has tried to implement since it assumed office.

A comprehensive scheme has been framed for control of public health in rural areas, co-ordinating curative and preventive measures. Under this scheme a well-defined and manageable unit with a treatment centre will be placed under the charge of a Medical Officer of health with health assistants and other staff for affording medical relief as well as carrying out public health work in all spheres on approved lines. It is proposed to initiate this scheme during the ensuing year. I am happy to say that very encouraging offers of enthusiastic co-operation are being received from various quarters.

Government are determined to tackle effectively the problem of shortage of water in rural areas. A comprehensive programme is being prepared with the aid of local Committees and local bodies and it is proposed to carry out and complete the programme in as reasonably short a time as possible. In the meanwhile large grants have been made from provincial revenues to be utilised methodically so that needy areas may receive adequate attention.

We are determined to combat the problem of malaria. Schemes on a large and comprehensive scale and of a more or less permanent nature are being drawn up by the local bodies and provision has been made in the budget for adequate contributions towards the execution

of such schemes. In order to advise and assist the local bodies in drawing up and executing anti-malaria schemes, a Malaria Engineer is shortly being appointed by Government.

The problem of maternal debility and mortality and infant mortality which is a menace to the province has received anxious consideration. The solution lies in the spread of maternity and child welfare clinics imparting education and relief. With this view Government have made provision in the budget for contribution on a liberal scale towards the establishment of such clinics and centres of an economic but adequate type. I have reasons to believe that this offer will yield satisfactory results. A Superintendent of Maternity and Child Welfare is also being appointed in order to co-ordinate maternity and child welfare activities in the province.

In order to combat the scourges of tuberculosis and leprosy, comprehensive schemes have been framed by Government and preliminary but essential parts of the schemes have already been given effect to.

Our Public Health Reorganization Scheme when complete will provide a network of treatment centres throughout Bengal. Under the scheme of subsidies to rural dispensaries every village dispensary recommended as efficiently managed has received substantial contribution towards its maintenance according to the usual rates. The provision in this regard has been enlarged in the budget for the ensuing year.

The Ministry have drawn up a scheme of improvement after a survey of the needs and requirements of the various Sadar Hospitals. Provision for capital contributions towards effecting these improvements has already been made and the grant is being liberally distributed. The other parts of the scheme contemplate moderate relief to the local bodies vested with the management of these hospitals and improvement of the standard of the staff at the cost of Government.

In order to bring the teaching in the various State Medical Schools up to an adequate standard the scheme of improvement involving recurring outlay has been sanctioned and will be put into effect during the next year.

Large grants have been made towards various private institutions as medical relief must depend largely on voluntary efforts. Medical research has also been encouraged.

Following the establishment of a Council for Ayurvedic Medicine it has been decided to establish Councils for Unani and Homeopathic Medicine in order to regularise and control the practice in these systems.

With regard to the representation of various communities in the Medical Services and profession the Ministry have taken stock of the position and have provided for a number of scholarships for poor but meritorious students of the Muslim and Scheduled Caste communities so that communal inequality in the various services and professions may be redressed without deviating from the need of efficiency in this technical department.

It may fairly be claimed that the Ministry are not only anxious to solve the many and varied public health problems in Bengal but have as far as possible translated their anxiety into action. Progress must necessarily be slow in the beginning as effective schemes must be closely examined before they are launched. I am confident that in working this programme of reform of national health the people of Bengal, irrespective of classes and communities will lend their help and co-operation to the Ministry, considering the common aim, viz., the diminution of human pain, suffering and disablement. In this spirit of mutual trust and support, controversies will be adjusted, local jealousies will disappear and the problems of diseases will be attacked effectively and without waste of effort.

TAMIZUDDIN KHAN.

Appendix C.

Articles published, papers read and addresses delivered by Hon'ble Ministers or high officials of Government engaged in the study of special problems.

Bengal's river problem and her economic welfare.

(Speech delivered by the Hon'ble Maharaja Sris Chandra Nandy, of Cossimbazar, Minister of Communications and Works, at the Asutosh Hall, Calcutta University, Calcutta, on Monday, 6th February, 1939, under the auspices of the Bengal Economic Society.)

I thank you for your kind invitation asking me to speak on the important subject of Bengal rivers. It is indeed significant that you have thought fit to link the two subjects of River Problems and Economic Welfare, as it is only on their bearings on the vital economic and social problems that the River Problems in Bengal have their importance and significance. The Bengal delta is a gift of her mighty river systems—notably the Ganges, the Brahmaputra and the Meghna; they constitute important means of communication, for the transport of goods as well as men; as the natural drainage channels of the country our rivers form a vital factor in the problem of public health; and lastly, there are the life-giving and fertilising properties of the silt-laden river water, having their beneficial effect on agricultural prosperity. Important trends of population changes occurred during the last few centuries as a result of diversion in the courses of rivers and the consequent deterioration of certain parts of Bengal and development of certain other areas. Areas of high population densities a century ago in Western Bengal, for example, degenerated into areas of extremely low population density; whereas old undeveloped lands in the New Alluvium and along the banks of the Meghna, have shown within comparatively recent times the highest population density in the world. Then again there is the rise and decline in the growth of towns, so vitally linked with the activity or otherwise of the river system. As a matter of fact, to any serious student of our economic and social history the important bearing of riverine development on our wealth and welfare should form a fascinating study.

I do not propose to delve deep into the past; nor does it lie within my competence, layman as I am, to deal with all the intricate engineering details connected with our mighty river problems. I should however rest content with merely indicating before you the broad outlines of the river problems that face us to-day in Bengal and the lines in which we propose to tackle the same and the essential preliminaries that are necessary before we decide to launch a comprehensive policy, attacking the problem on all the fronts, engineering and financial, simultaneously. For those of you who feel more interested in the subject, I should ask them to go through the excellent monograph on "River Problems of Bengal" which was read by our Chief Engineer Mr. S. C. Majumdar before the Indian Science Congress at Calcutta last year. I have no doubt that many of you have already gone through the same.

Before we take up the subject, it may be useful for us to refresh our memory by a look at the map of Bengal. In Western Bengal (districts of Birbhum, Bankura, Burdwan, Midnapore and the western portion of Hooghly and Howrah districts), there are the torrential rivers like the Damodar, the Ajay, the More, the Dwarkeswar, the Cossye, etc., originating from the low hills of Chhotanagpur and the

Santhal-Pergonas Hills. In Central Bengal (eastern portion of Hooghly and Howrah districts, the district of Murshidabad. Nadia, Jessore, 24-Parganas, Khulna, and the southern districts of the Dacca Division) there are the spill channels of the Ganges, viz., the Bhagirathi. Mathabhanga, Jalangi, the Bhairab, and numerous other distributory channels showing signs of deterioration as a result of the Ganges taking an easterly course along the Padma. In Northern Bengal and the northern districts of Dacca Division there are the Teesta, Brahmaputra-Jumna and the Meghna systems. Rivers like the Punarbhava, the Atreyi and the Karatoa show signs of deterioration as a result of the diversion of the Teesta towards the Brahmaputra-Jumna. In the Mymensingh district the Brahmaputra has changed its old riverbed and joined the Jumna. The Meghna system is at present active in its full vigour and no broad change of river course has yet been brought to the surface. It would do well for us to remember these broad territorial divisions, as each area as got its own special problem and requires to be handled independently of each other.

Western Bengal—A retrospect.

The problems of Western Bengal come into prominent relief if we refer to past prosperity of the area, so eloquently narrated by foreign travellers. Bernier remarked in the middle of the 17th century—

"The knowledge I have acquired of Bengal in two visits inclines me to believe that it is richer than Egypt. It exports in abundance cotton and silks, rice, sugar and butter. It produces amply for its own consumption wheat, vegetables, grains, fowls, ducks and geese. It has immense herds of pigs and flocks of sheep and goats. Fish of every kind it has in profusion. From Rajmahal to the sea is an endless number of canals, cut in by-gone ages from the Ganges by immense labour for navigation and irrigation while the Indian considers the Ganges water as the best in the world."

Even as late as 1815 Hamilton wrote of Hooghly, Howrah and Burdwan as follows:—

"In productive agricultural value in proportion to its size in the whole of Hindusthan, Burdwan claims the first rank and Tanjore second".

I ask you to compare and contrast this bright picture with the famous report of Dr. Bentley on "Malaria and Agriculture in Bengal" published only a few years ago. Instead of this "granary of the East", we find Dr. Bentley unfolding a pathetic story of impoverishment of the soil, diminution of harvests and a heavy toll of malaria and there has been, in addition, a serious accumulation of silt and sand in the beds of many of the rivers to such an extent that they ceased to be active streams.

Principle of Over-flow Irrigation.

The present moribund condition of the area is indeed too distressing to hear repetition. Popular opinion as well as the opinion of the experts agree with the theory that the gradual deterioration of the river system is the principal, if not the only, cause of this unfortunate development. The problem therefore that presents itself before us is

how to put fresh life into the streams that have been once active in these regions and bring health and prosperity to the millions. In this connection it may not be out of place to refer to the illuminating Readership Lectures delivered at this University by the late Sir William Willcocks in 1930, and the tremendous public interest aroused by the same.

Relying on the statement of Bernier about the existence of an endless number of canals in Western Bengal, Sir William remarked that the early Bengal Kings thought out and put into practice a system of "Over-flow Irrigation" of the Ganges and the Damodar delta, "which insured health and wealth to Bengal for very many hundreds of years," and that it was the eventual neglect of these artificial canals which ultimately brought ruin to the area. "Every canal which went southwards, whether it has become a river like the Bhagirathi, or remained a canal like the Mathabhanga, was originally a canal. They were lined out and dug fairly parallel to each other. They were spaced apart and placed just about the distance apart that canals should be placed..... the long continued parallel alignments of the main canals can be readily seen by a practised eye. They are very different to the tangled, meaningless mass of waterways which are to be seen south-east of *Faridpur, where we have nature's undirected handiwork.* The Mathabhanga is the true ridge of the country, and from it were led off so many canals that the Mathabhanga itself dwindled in size as it continued its course, and hence its name of "Mathabhanga" or "broken-headed". (Pp. 10-11, Ancient System of Irrigation in Bengal).

Expert opinions differ as to whether the late Sir William Willcocks was strictly correct in laying this extraordinary emphasis on the existence of a system of well-aligned and well-spaced artificial canals along the deltas of the Ganges and the Damodar. There is also a rival theory in the matter, challenging the existence of artificial canals. Whatever be the merits of the rival sides in the controversy, layman like us feel that the issue is long dead and that it should be our endeavour to confine our attention to the present and devise effective ways of solving the problem as it presents itself before us to-day. Of more practical interest to us is the principle of "Over-flow Irrigation" enunciated by Sir William Willcocks—".....to mingle in the fields of standing rice, the fertilising and health-giving waters of the rivers in flood with the poor water of the monsoon rainfall" by means of a system of artificial canals. It has to be admitted that in emphasising this special irrigation need of Bengal—the land of mighty rivers and copious rainfall—Sir William rendered yeoman's service to the future of all our irrigation schemes. The principle was of course not new as Dr. Bentley had already mooted the idea of introducing "Flush Irrigation" into certain areas of Western Bengal in his famous report of 1925; we have gradually realised the soundness of the principle.

Western Bengal—Hooghly—Howrah Flood-Flushing Schemes.

As an instance that this principle of "Overflow" or "Flush" irrigation has been accepted by the Government recently, I may cite before you the adoption of the Hooghly-Howrah flood flushing scheme with a view to irrigate three districts at an estimated expenditure of over Rs. 2½ crores. The area covered by this irrigation project is about 3,50,000 acres in Burdwan, Hooghly and Howrah districts and we are

considering to introduce the same after certain preliminaries specially the financial aspects are settled. There are two other important projects in this region—the Dwarakeswar Reservoir project to irrigate about 2,00,000 acres in Bankura and Burdwan districts, and the More Reservoir project to irrigate about 4,32,000 acres in Birbhum and Murshidabad districts. The areas covered by all these three projects were selected mainly on the ground of comparatively short monsoon and erratic distribution of rainfall. The novel feature of these schemes is the provision of storage reservoir which by ensuring supply of water during the dry season will enable the cultivator to grow more than one crop. In Western Bengal, the rivers are mainly torrential; and a well-designed canal system will ensure good harvest in years of normal rainfall and offer an insurance against famine in years of drought.

Western Bengal—Policy of Embankments.

But the most serious problem in Western Bengal is that presented by the embankments along the Damodar, Ajay, and other rivers which were undertaken rather indiscriminately, cutting the river spill and as a result, causing deterioration in the fertility and sanitary condition of large tracts of country. The department at present maintains altogether some 1,500 miles of embankments, firstly, to act as protective measures in certain districts against river floods, and secondly, to exclude salt water and tidal waves from land situated in the estuaries or on the sea face. Most of these embankments are situated in Burdwan, Hooghly, Midnapore and 24-Parganas, as also in Nadia, Murshidabad, the north bank of the Ganges and in Tipperah. Taking in view the interest of the very lands which are "protected" and the ultimate interests of the region thus embanked, the embankment policy of the Government was considered by experts to be defective and naturally we have adopted the policy of giving up the embankments gradually. But here again the problem is extremely complicated by the existence of wide vested interests and it is desirable that we should proceed cautiously avoiding hardships as far as practicable. Perhaps, the most practical approach to this intriguing question would be to retain the embankments and at the same time minimise their baneful influence by taking steps to flush the embanked areas regularly by silt-laden water drawn through the controlled escapes. In the tidal areas of course, no compromise of this nature is possible, and in order to save the areas from the fate of remaining for ever as perennial water-logged marshes as shall have to demolish the embankments altogether in the long run.

Central Bengal—A Ganges Barrage to resuscitate its distributaries.

The problem of dead and dying rivers is most acute in Murshidabad, Nadia, Jessore, 24-Parganas and Khulna districts—the continuous deterioration of the spill channels of the Ganges, or "artificial canals" as Sir William Willcocks would put it, such as the Bhagirathi, Mathabhanga, Jalangi, Bhairab and other rivers. This deterioration has been caused by changes in the course of the Ganges and its eastward march along the Padma towards Meghna and the Brahmaputra. As an effective means of reviving these spill channels and ensuring flood or

"overflow" irrigation of Central Bengal, Sir William Willcocks made the most important suggestion of having an "Egyptian Barrage on the Ganges at a point about 14 miles below the Baral Head." This barrage would be so designed as to induce a portion of the Ganges flood to pass through the Jalangi and the Mathabhanga and their numerous branches with a syphon under the Garai for Faridpur, and at the same time ensure a steady supply of water all the year round in the Bhagirathi and the Hooghly. All experts agree that this is an ideal solution for all the problems of riverine improvement in the Ganges delta and cannot perhaps be improved upon as a counsel of perfection. Sir William himself gives us an estimate of £12,000,000 for the Barrage "with its training works complete." In the present condition of the finances of Bengal it may not be feasible for us to go in for so expensive a scheme. Sir John Anderson significantly pointed out a few years ago that the Barrage Scheme however satisfactory as an ideal solution "cannot be considered at the present time for financial reasons."

Barrage Effects of the Brahmaputra floods and the Hardinge Bridge.

For the time being therefore we shall have to consider less ambitious schemes which can be taken up more expeditiously and are expected to improve immediately the rivers of Central and Western Bengal. Bengal river engineers have already noticed that certain natural causes are in operation giving a chance of revival to the Nadia rivers by inducing a portion of the flood of the Ganges to flow through them. One of them is the barrage effect of the Brahmaputra flood which meets the Ganges just above Goalundo and holds back the Ganges flood to seek some other outlets higher up. The Gorai, for example, which was a minor channel in Rennel's map has been considerably developed within recent time. Another factor of this nature is reported by some to be the Hardinge Bridge, tending to cause an afflux in the Ganges and improve the spill channels higher up.

"The huge Char which hitherto masked the off-take of the Mathabhanga," writes Mr. S. C. Mazumdar in his "River Problems of Bengal," "has practically disappeared and its position in relation to the Ganges is definitely improving. The off-takes of the other two principal spill-channels in Central Bengal, *viz.*, the Jalangi and the Bhagirathi are also showing signs of improvement though not to the same extent as in the case of Mathabhanga." Assuming this tendency of the Ganges flood, which was reported to be very marked during the floods this year, it becomes a feasible proposition to introduce flood-flushing in Central Bengal by resuscitating the spill channels of the Ganges. If for example the Mathabhanga and the Jalangi are re-opened at their heads, their carrying capacity improved and adequate provision is made for distributory channels of proper capacity with facilities for spill over the country side, we may be able to utilise fully the recent tendency of the diversion of the Ganges flood for not only preserving the old spill channel but also restoring lost health and prosperity to Central Bengal.

We have already taken important steps in this direction. Firstly, we have taken up a contour survey of the decadent tracts in Central Bengal at an estimated cost of Rs. 1,33,571 with the object of collecting the

essential data required for flushing schemes to be prepared and introduced. Secondly, certain concrete projects have already been launched; the scheme for the resuscitation of the Bhairab river in Jessore for example at an estimated cost of Rs. 2,17,000 has only recently been taken up, of which I had the privilege of cutting the first sod the other day. On that occasion, I remarked that "the scheme for the resuscitation of the Bhairab should be viewed on the background of a much wider setting, forming as it does an important link in the chain of schemes for the resuscitation of dead and dying rivers of Bengal." I hope, we shall be able to give a concrete shape to this statement of policy after the contour survey of Central Bengal is completed.

Co-operation with local bodies and smaller Irrigation Schemes.

There are as a matter of fact a number of smaller schemes which may be taken up expeditiously for the immediate interests of the localities concerned. The co-operation of District Boards and Union Panchayets in this respect is necessary, and proved extremely valuable in the past. Resuscitation of the Bhairab itself has been possible to undertake because the District Board and the Municipality of Jessore agreed to co-operate and shoulder their proportionate shares of the estimated cost. In the common fight against the jungle, morass and the mosquito, there had also been valuable co-ordination of work between the Public Health and the Irrigation Departments and the Anti-Malarial Societies in the districts of Burdwan and Nadia. In carrying out the "Ghuznavi" and "Bejoy" cuts, designed to bring out the flood water of the Mathabhanga into the Nabaganga and Kabodak and thus improve the sanitary conditions of a large area in the districts of Jessore and Nadia, there had been a close co-operation of the Nadia and Jessore District Boards and the Irrigation Department. There is also another instance in Murshidabad, when the Gobra Nala was resuscitated by means of a cut connecting it with Kalkali river which takes off from the Ganges at Lalgolaghat. This cut cost Rs. 3½ lacs and was successful in removing malaria and increasing fertility by means of flush irrigation. There are also a number of similar instances of local enterprise, and encouraged by results, necessary instructions were issued by myself, after assuming charge as a Minister, to local bodies to submit their schemes of purely local interests to the Government through the Collector of the district. In this way valuable materials as regards local schemes of flush irrigation and drainage have been collected. There may be quite a good number of these schemes which need not adversely affect any of the existing waterways or run counter to the formulation of a comprehensive irrigation policy, and may be taken up to meet a pressing local demand. These schemes are at present being examined by a special officer and it is expected that a number of them will be taken up in the near future.

Northern-Bengal—a Teesta Barrage.

In Northern Bengal the diversion of the Teesta towards the Brahmaputra and the consequent deterioration of the spill channels of the area, particularly of the Karatoa, the Attreyi and the Punarbhava spelt

disaster for the area served by them. This question of the improvement of rivers in Northern Bengal is therefore vitally linked with the diversion of the Teesta which now practically runs to waste and moreover causes destructive flood in the Jumna. There is the suggestion that the waters of the Teesta might be dammed by means of a barrage near the hills, and drawn off into a canal striking south-west across the head waters of the Attreyi, Karatoa and the Punarbhava, thus flushing and resuscitating the same. The possibility of this Teesta Barrage have not yet been explored to the full, and it must necessarily wait till complete hydraulic data are available for this area. There is a similar suggestion for reviving however wait till the contour survey for Northern Bengal, which may be taken up shortly, is completed. I may mention at this stage that no serious study has yet been made by the Department about the special irrigation needs of this area owing to paucity of staff, and in the reorganisation scheme of the Irrigation Department which has been taken up by me recently, there is the provision of a special division for Northern Bengal.

Before I leave this subject of general riverine deterioration, I may refer in passing to two other tracts which also require considerable attention. In the Boral river by leading the Ganges water in flood season. All this must North-Western Bengal, there are large areas full of marshes and pools which may require irrigation and flood-flushing from the Mahananda. Another difficulty is provided in North-Eastern Bengal by the Brahmaputra changing its old river bed in the Mymensingh district and taking its course along the Jumna. The proposed reorganisation of the Irrigation Department contains a special division for this area as well.

To arrest the deterioration of the spill channels of the major river systems and restore them to their former activity may entail long years of preparatory contour survey and research in river training; but nevertheless one can very well share the optimism of the Irrigation Department Committee of 1930. "The country in question is difficult, but the difficulties in question do not appear to be insurmountable."

Hydro-Electric Developments—Possibilities.

A matter closely linked with all schemes of river control and irrigation is the possibility as well as the necessity of hydro-electric power development. In the United Provinces, the recent installation of the Ganges Grid scheme has opened up vast possibilities not only for irrigation but also for the general economic outlook of the Province. Development of cheap power is essential for the growth of village industries on up-to-date lines; and it makes possible the pumping of water from rivers, low-level canals as well as from tube wells. In Bengal there are areas which cannot be fed by river-silt-water through gravity canals, but where it would be necessary to pump silt water by cheap electric power. This method is also advantageous in areas where any interference with river channels is to be avoided. It is indeed unfortunate that we have not yet tapped the possibility of hydro-electric power development in a serious manner and a vast field in this respect remains unexplored. A scheme of considerable magnitude in this respect is the Teesta Barrage Scheme, which was first mooted as a

Hydro-Electric project, but later on discarded owing to certain difficulties which proved to be insuperable a decade or so ago. Then again there is the question of the Ganges Barrage project which might eventually materialise. The association of a hydro-electric project with this scheme if found feasible by experts, may revolutionise the entire economic frame-work of Bengal. All these however are in the realm of possibilities and mentioned only because they may give us the necessary inspiration to move forward with vigour and boldness with a comprehensive policy of riverine improvement and control.

The Irrigation Department has under consideration two projects which may have possibilities of hydro-electric development; these are the More and Dwarakeswar Reservoir projects, two storage dams across the river Mayurakshi at Mossanjore in the Santhal-Parganas, and the Dwarakeswar at Suknivas in Bankura district. These storage irrigation schemes are intended to offer the only solution for growing sugarcane and other *rabi* crops in the area by offering artificial irrigation when there is no rainfall or river water; they may also make possible the development of hydro-electric works.

Inter-provincial River Commission.

A peculiar problem has arisen in Bengal due to the utilisation of the upland water of the Ganges in the canal schemes of U. P. and Bihar and extensive deforestation in the catchment basin. It is not clear to what extent the flood problem or the problem of deterioration of the spill channels of the Ganges in Bengal has been aggravated as a result. There cannot, however, be any manner of doubt that the stakes of Bengal in this matter are very great and that any further project of irrigation, or deforestation must not be considered in the up-river areas without consulting the interests of Bengal. The Government of India Act indeed contains provisions under sections 130 to 134 empowering the Governor-General to retain the ultimate powers of adjudication in cases of dispute; but the principle of provincial autonomy precluded the framers of the Act from incorporating provisions to make the initiation of irrigation policy on an inter-provincial basis possible. When it is realised that a river like the Ganges, passing through a number of provinces and states, forms with its tributaries and branches an integral system, it appears reasonable to expect that there should be some sort of inter-provincial machinery where the Governments concerned are adequately represented to make co-ordination of policy possible. The recent floods made the situation rather acute and at the instance of the Chief Engineer, Bengal, the Central Board of Irrigation passed an important resolution in this regard. In the Conference of experts which was held by me at Calcutta in July last year, a definite recommendation was made for the formation of a River Commission on an interprovincial basis. It is also perhaps fresh in public memory that in January this year an inter-provincial flood conference was held at Lucknow where the three provinces of Bengal, Bihar and U. P. participated and it was decided to set up a Ganges River Commission to deal with all questions concerning conservancy of the Ganges river basin. The object of this Commission will obviously be to co-ordinate the activities of the provinces lying within the Ganges basin with a view to lower the level of the destructive floods in the Ganges by controlling

deforestation and encouraging afforestation as also to control the extraction of the Ganges water during the low water season.

The recent floods and the establishment of a Hydraulic Research Station in Bengal.

In my recent Radio talk on "Flood and its Remedies," I discussed the situation created by the recent floods and stated that the only effective manner of tackling it on a permanent basis is to restore the spill channels of the Ganges and adopt a comprehensive policy of river training and control. In other words, the flood menace in Bengal is but another aspect of the main problem of the resuscitation of dead and dying rivers. The conference of experts at Calcutta particularly stressed the need for having a hydraulic research laboratory with a view to study the special problems of river training and erosion in Bengal. Accompanied by the Chief Engineer, I visited the Lahore Hydraulic Research Station and River Training Laboratory in the Punjab to study its working at first hand and was greatly impressed by the systematic manner in which the scientific researches and experiments are carried out there. I congratulate the Government of the Punjab in the fruitful way in which the results are being utilised in evolving an intelligent irrigation policy for the Punjab, turning a barren and unproductive area into a veritable garden, healthy and prosperous. For a province like Bengal, full of rivers now dried up and dead, the value of such an hydraulic research institute cannot perhaps be overstated. It is also a vital necessity for the neighbouring provinces of Eastern India and I am glad to say that some neighbouring provinces are taking interests in the matter and encouraging me to have an institute for Eastern India. Let us hope that in the very near future we shall be able to make a good beginning in this direction, and thus make the future irrigation policy of the province well and firmly based on the solid rock of scientific researches and experiments.

Irrigation Finance.

Any discussion on the irrigation problems of Bengal will be rather incomplete unless the supreme question of finance is also touched upon and I propose to deal with the same in an outline form as briefly as possible. It is estimated that a total capital of Rs. 150 crores has been invested in constructing new irrigation channels, building storage dams and repairing old works throughout India up till now. About 30 million acres of land are being irrigated in India by means of these artificial canals which total some 40,000 miles in length. Of these 22 million acres are officially classed as "productive" and the rest 8 millions as "unproductive." Contrasted with these figures, the position in Bengal is rather disappointing, the total area irrigated in 1933-34 for example being only 48,035 acres and total capital outlay not much over Rs. 2 crores. The details of total outlay in irrigation undertaking and the percentage return on them are included in the statement below. I think, I need not elaborate them as they tell their own tale. I may [illegible] that the financial results of navigation canals present far worse a [illegible]re and have not been included in the statement being not necessary [illegible]resent purpose.

Financial results of major irrigation works to end of 1936-37.

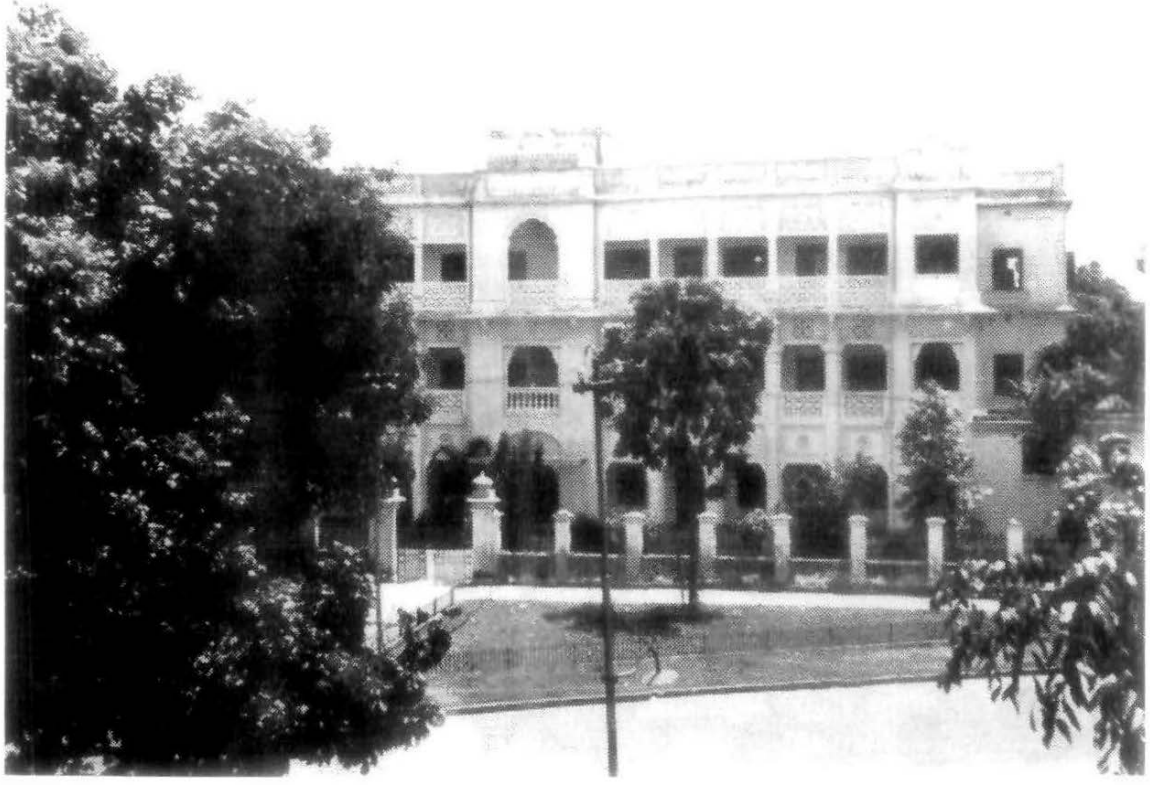
Works.	Total capital outlay to end of 1936-37.	*Total* accumulated arrears of simple interest to end of 1936-37.	Total capital invested to end *of* 1936-37 (Cols. 1 and 2).	Total gross *receipts* during 1936-37.	Working expenses during 1936-37.	Net revenue during 1936-37 (Col. 4 minus 5).	Percentage of net revenue on Capital (Col. 6 on 1).	Simple interest on capital invested accruing during 1936-37.	Net gain or loss during 1936-37 (Col. 8 minus 6).	Percentage of net revenue on capital invested (Col. 6 on 3).
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Damodar Canal	1,19,05,919	14,94,294	1,34,00,213	4,92,820	2,75,529	2,17,291	1·8	5,68,109	−3,50,818	Deficit in 1934-35 2·11 in 1935-36 1·6 in 1936-37
Bakreswar Irrigation Canal ..	7,13,875	2,41,295	9,55,170	18,810	13,753	5,057	0·7	35,089	30,302	0·57 in 1934-35 0·34 in 1935-36 0·5 in 1936-37
Midnapore Canal ..	84,92,053	1,86,03,344	2,70,95,397	1,25,832	1,27,315	1,482	Deficit	2,76,175	−2,77,658	Deficit in 1934-35 Do. in 1935-36 Do. in 1936-37
Total Irrigation	2,11,11,847	2,03,38,933	4,14,50,780	6,37,462	4,16,597	2,23,830	1·0	8,79,373	−6,58,508	



THE RALLY OF YOUNG MEN TRAINED AT THE GOVERNMENT COLLEGE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION, HELD ON NOVEMBER 12, 1938, IN THE PRESENCE OF THE LATE LORD BRABOURNE, ON THE OCCASION OF A "SEND-OFF" TO THE DISTRICT PHYSICAL ORGANISERS. THESE ORGANISERS ARE NOW DOING VERY GOOD WORK IN THE INTERIOR OF THE PROVINCE.



Village school teachers, under the guidance of the District Organisers are in many places levelling and rolling their own play grounds.



THE TEMPORARY PREMISES OF THE LADY BRABOURNE COLLEGE FOR GIRLS. THE FOUNDATION STONE OF THE PERMANENT BUILDING WAS LAID BY HIS EXCELLENCY SIR JOHN WOODHEAD ON AUGUST 26, 1939



His Excellency Sir John Woodhead Laying the Foundation Stone of Lady Dilkhusha College for Girls on August 26, 1930. On His Excellency's right is the Hon'ble Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq.

A salient feature that comes out of these interesting figures and which requires special mention is the fact that irrigation development in Bengal had been very meagre up till now. As a matter of fact the Hopkyns Committee of 1930 had to admit that "most of the province, viewed as a field for the extension of irrigation, is at present an unknown land to the department." There had undoubtedly been difficulties ahead—lack of experienced delta engineers, inadequacy of staff in the department, merciless application of the axe of retrenchment with the mistaken idea that irrigation in Bengal was a redundant function, and lack of sufficient data as regards river conditions and control. With so many handicaps in the field, there was moreover the pessimistic outlook of "unproductiveness" of the existing irrigation undertakings. Major irrigation projects are to be financed out of loans; but it would not at all be prudent to take up big loan programmes without assuring ourselves at the outset that the projects that are going to be so financed would be able to repay the money advanced.

The voluntary basis of the old Irrigation Act making it optional to use canal water did not work satisfactorily in Bengal, as when rains were plentiful people simply dispensed with the use of the canal water and as a result the canal revenue realised proved to be extremely insufficient. It had therefore been realised that if the financial working of major irrigation projects was to be satisfactory, we must change the voluntary basis of the canal rates without at the same time inflicting any real hardship on the users of canal water themselves. The Bengal Development Act was devised to solve this intricate problem of irrigation finance in the special circumstances of Bengal.

The ideal principle of imposing a canal levy, as suggested by the Indian Taxation Enquiry Committee of 1925, is to assess the same at a "moderate share of the value of water to the cultivator." The increased earning power as a result of the irrigation canal constitutes this "value of water" to the cultivator. What the Bengal Development Act did was to accept this ideal principle of canal taxation and empower the Government to impose a levy up to a maximum of 50 per cent. of the difference between the post-canal and pre-canal yields. The financial scheme thus evolved is not likely to inflict much hardship on the cultivators as it taxes what is termed an "unearned increment" accruing to him as a result of the canal. At the same time it is best calculated to put all major irrigation projects on a sound financial footing and make the securing of "productive loans" possible.

Canal Rate Controversy in the Damodar Area.

An unfortunate off-shoot of the operation of the Bengal Development Act is the Damodar Canal Rates controversy. The procedure adopted by the previous Government in this regard might be defective, and rightly or wrongly the enforcement of the Development Act in the Damodar Canal area provided a fertile ground for unpleasantness. I must confess that the difficulties experienced in bringing into operation the first experiment under the Bengal Development Act were unfortunate, as this undoubtedly acted as considerable set-back to other schemes under contemplation. I submit that the principles of the Development Act are altogether non-controversial and all of us should co-operate whole-heartedly to make its working successful.

As regards irrigation finance I have so far confined myself to the major projects which might require the floatation of big loans. There are a number of smaller schemes which are being met out of current revenues. But obviously the resources of the Government are not unlimited in this respect and there is the necessity of co-operation of the local bodies and members of the public. I have already cited a number of instances where local bodies have successfully contributed in launching necessary small irrigation projects. There is also a vast field for voluntary co-operation by members of the public—both in men and money. Instances are not rare where people of a locality combined together under the inspiring leadership of the Collector of the district and successfully excavated a moribund khal or reclaimed waterlogged areas. As a matter of fact there is a wide field for this sort of voluntary social service and can really work miracles if properly guided under the expert advice of the Government.

I think I must now conclude this rather lengthy statement of mine, and thank you for the very patient hearing all of you have so kindly extended to me. The river problems of Bengal are extremely complicated, and this complication has unfortunately deepened due to the past policy of laissez faire generally, and defective approach in particular cases. Our Engineers are at work in a subject which requires long years of specialised study and research and the necessary collection of hydraulic data. Then again there is the financial problem as presented by the huge mass of "unproductive" works and the difficulties of having a successful loan programme for major irrigation projects on the face of the pessimistic outlook engendered by them. I think I have been able to explain to you that on both these fronts we have been able to settle the preliminaries of a comprehensive policy and thus provide an optimistic outlook for the future of Bengal.

River problems in Bengal.

By Mr. S. C. Majumdar, Chief Engineer, Department of Communications and Works, Irrigation Branch, Bengal.

Formation of the Delta.

In a joint note (published with the 'Report on the Hooghly river and its Head Waters', 1919) Messrs. Hayden and Pascoe of the Geological Survey of India state that "the absence of tertiary marine deposits, and the presence of tertiary fresh water deposits, throughout the outer Himalaya from Dehra Dun to Sikkim shew that, since the elevation of the Himalaya, marine conditions have not existed in that area nor is there any evidence of the existence of such conditions at any point in the Gangetic plain between the Himalaya and the Peninsula". They admit that the evidence in support of this theory is rather meagre, being derived from a few borings at Ambala, Agra, Lucknow, Chandarnagore, Fort William and Port Cannings, the deepest of which was only a little over 1,300 feet deep. But they argue that, in the absence of any evidence in favour of a contrary view, it would not be safe to reject the generally accepted conclusion, "that the conditions prevailing over the Indo-Gangetic plain from comparatively early tertiary times have not been dissimilar to those that exist at the present day", and the there has been a slow but gradual subsidence permitting of the accumulation of an enormous mass of alluvial deposits". In the 'History of the Rivers in the Gangetic delta' Mr. C. Addams Williams, C.I.E., late Chief Engineer, Irrigation Department, has also given prominence to the view, 'that before the present upper strata of the delta were laid down, it appears that there was an older delta composed of materials totally different to those deposited by the Ganges. A stratum of yellow clay and sand appears to underlie that upper and newer strata of blue clay and sand. At Cowkhally on the lower Hooghly the yellow clay is about 60 feet from the surface as shown by borings taken in 1914. At Kushtia there are outcrops of the same stratum, and the general outcrop appears to be roughly round the extreme edges of the present delta'. Mr. Addams Williams concludes, 'It appears that this delta was laid down by the rivers issuing from the north or north-east, and that presumably the Ganges had not then become a factor in the case. The old delta was depressed and the Ganges appears to have been entered on the scene and began forming the new delta on the top of the old, from the neighbourhood of Rajmahal'.

No marine deposit 1300' depth.

The present delta built on an other delta.

2. In dealing with the river problems as we find them to-day we are really only concerned with the concluding portions of both the extracts quoted above which establish the point that the land we live in, up to a depth that we need think of, was built up gradually by the silt carried by the rivers mainly from the Himalayas and partly from the hills of Chhota-Nagpur and the Sonthal Parganas.

How the delta was formed.

3. To appreciate the river problems in Bengal it is necessary to envisage how the rivers, especially the Ganges, functioned in that early age and are still functioning in building the land and in extending it towards the sea. The process of raising and extension of the delta towards the sea has been going on for thousands of years, and it will probably continue for an indefinite length of time as the stock of building material, viz., detritus carried by the rainwater over thousands of square miles of catchment area, including a considerable portion of the Mighty Himalayas, is almost unlimited.

Stock of building material almost unlimited.

4. Millions of tons of this silt is thus being transported every year by the strong current of the Ganges flood and brought down to its mouth, where the current is checked by coming in contact with the sea and the silt in suspension drops into the bed. Land was thus formed at the head of the delta and as it began to extend, the Ganges, like the other delta builders, began to approach the sea in several diverging branches, enclosing and intersecting the delta already built, so as to raise it in the quickest possible time and to extend it towards the sea in ever-increasing width. Each branch carried its due share of the silt-laden flood and as the bank on either side was low to start with, it was inundated during floods with the result that silt carried in suspension was dropped on the bank which was thus gradually raised, the rising being more rapid nearer the river.

Thicker deposit close to the river.

5. Along with this process of raising the delta already built, so as to make it fit for human habitation, the other important function of extending the delta towards the sea was being carried on by the main volume of the floods carried down the several diverging branches dropping the silt near to their mouths.

A mere extension of the delta towards the sea-face would not be of much use, as what is required is that it should be sufficiently raised so as to be fit for human habitation and cultivation. If the task of raising the delta was left entirely to the carries of upland floods, the process would have been exceedingly slow as we can expect these floods only during the monsoon months, i.e., only in 4 out of 12 months every year. It is therefore in the economy of nature that the tides should come to our assistance in this respect. Tides flow up

these rivers with strong velocity, twice daily throughout the year, and as there is a vast reservoir of unconsolidated silt at their mouths, deposited there by the upland floods during the monsoon months, they pick up this silt almost to the saturation point on their way inland. So long as the banks of these rivers within tidal limits are below the high-tide level and the rivers are free to spill, the silt laden tides perform exactly the same function as the upland flood, viz., raising of the delta already built, with this difference that while the latter function only during the actual floods in the monsoon the beneficent activity of the tides continues throughout the year.

Tides help in raising the delta.

6. The second function of the tides is to fill up the interior of the delta lying between the upland flood carriers. As mentioned above, the depth of silt deposit by upland floods, or by the tides carried up these rivers, is greatest close to the river banks, where the velocity, which determines the proportion of silt that can be carried, is first checked, and as the spilling proceeds away from the river banks the silt content of the spilled water and consequently the depth of silt deposit is less and less. If nature had to depend entirely on this agency, the area lying midway between the contiguous upland flood carriers would have remained low—probably in the shape of creeks extending from the sea, till these rivers, after performing the function of raising the banks close to their channels would burst through the banks and follow the low valleys. This would have been a slow process and to facilitate the work of delta building, here also nature requisitions the services of the tides which, picking up the silt on their way up these creeks or tidal rivers, gradually raise their beds and banks until they are raised up to high-tide level and rendered fit for cultivation. There is no doubt that the source of this silt supply is the detritus carried to the sea by the upland floods for ages, but the tides by their constant movement keep it in an unconsolidated state and distribute it all along the delta-face between the two main estuaries, viz., those of the Hooghly and the Meghna.

Two agents employed by nature in building the delta—upland flood carriers and the tides.

7. It will be clear from the above that nature has been employing both the agents, viz., the upland flood carriers and the tides in her work of delta building. She has been assisted in her task by two favourable factors, viz., the high ranges of the Himalayan system of mountains, which have been furnishing the building material in abundance during the monsoon months, and the abnormally high tidal range, due to the funnel-shaped form of the Bay of Bengal, which has been helping in distributing these materials twice daily throughout the years. But though the abnormal tidal range at the delta-face has been so helpful in raising the delta—in fact raising it higher than what would have been possible if the range was lower—this very fact,

however, has stood in the way of rapid extension of the delta towards the sea; for owing to the high tidal range, more and more of the alluvium brought down into the sea by the upland flood carriers is being dispersed along the delta-face to be picked up by the tides travelling inland through innumerable tidal channels, and less and less of its has been deposited in a consolidated state to extend the delta.

High tidal range helpful to navigation.

8. The high tidal range has also been helpful to navigation and it is not surprising that the people of Bengal look upon the rivers, both tidal and non-tidal, with veneration, for they created the land, are draining and fertilizing it and are helping in carrying the produce. Fertilization by tidal silt may not be apparent, but as the source of this silt is really what is carried by the upland floods, the manurial properties of which are so highly valued, it is only a question of time, i.e., after the salt carried with the tidal silt has been washed away by rains, before its fertilizing properties are manifested as is so amply demonstrated in the case of the reclaimed land in the Sunderbans.

Function of rivers in Bengal.

Rivers are an essential factor in rural development.

9. Bengal being mainly an agricultural country, the rivers are the principal source of the economic wellbeing of the people. Where they are still active and are performing their original functions, as in East Bengal, the people are healthy and prosperous: where they are deteriorating and their beneficial activities have been interrupted, either due to natural causes or through human interference, as in Central and Western Bengal, the area is progressively deteriorating both as regards the health of the people and the productivity of the soil. River problems in Bengal are thus virtually the problems for Rural Development in Bengal and have to be solved if she has to be saved, especially her western and central parts which even as late as a century ago used to be very healthy and prosperous, from reversion to swamps and jungles from which she was reclaimed by the rivers. For a proper appreciation of the "River problems in Bengal" and their solution it would be convenient to classify the rivers, having regard to their special characteristics, into three groups as indicated below.

Rivers classified into three groups.

10. *Group I.*—Primary delta builders originating from the snow-capped Himalayas, maintaining a more or less perennial flow and navigable especially in their lower reaches.

The principal rivers in this group are (*a*) the Ganges series including the tributaries and the spill channels, (*b*) the Brahmaputra series including the Teesta and (*c*) the Meghna. By far the most important delta builder is of course the Ganges which, traversing a length of 1,540 miles and draining an average annual rainfall of 42 inches over a catchment area of 397,500 sq. miles and with the recorded maximum flood discharge of about 2,000,000 cusecs (at Sara) has been

mainly responsible in building, raising and fertilizing the delta. The Brahmaputra was originally a comparatively small river, but since her connection with the Tsan Po Tibet through her tributary the Dihong (in Upper Assam), and subsequent additions of the floods of the Teesta (since 1787), she has been a formidable rival of the Ganges and promises to play a more and more important part in the future. She now traverses a length of 1,800 miles and drains an average annual rainfall of 88 inches (in the Assam valley) over a catchment area of about 361,000 sq. miles.

11. *Group II.*—Primary delta builders originating from the low hills of Chhota-Nagpur and the Sonthal Parganas such as the Damodar, the Ajay, the More, the Cossye, etc. They are torrential rivers, the flow being mainly confined to the monsoon months from June to September. Though they bring in enormous volumes of floods at times (the maximum flood discharge of the Damodar, the largest of the group, with a catchment area of 7,200 sq. miles amounts to as much 650,000 cusecs), they dwindle down to a mere trickle sometimes even during the rainy season, and during the dry season there is practically no flow. Though their contribution towards the building of the delta could not be much compared with that of the Ganges, it is believed that the eastern portion of the Burdwan district and the western portion of the Hooghly and Howrah districts owe their origin to the delta building activity of the Damodar, and the eastern portion of Midnapore district to that of the Cossye and the Rupnarain. Their value, however, lies in the fact that they constitute the only source available for supplying the water needed for artificial irrigation and for flood flushing. I shall deal with flood flushing later but I propose to discuss the necessity of artificial irrigation and how this aspect of the problem can be solved at this stage, as irrigation is required in Western Bengal.

Irrigation required in Western Bengal.

12. Though the total rainfall in Western Bengal is sufficient in ormal years its distribution during the crop period is erratic, especially after the middle of September, when the rainfall is hardly sufficient to meet the requirements of the paddy crop. Even in normal years artificial irrigation is thus a necessity in Western Bengal to ensure a normal harvest. To provide an insurance against famine it is a vital necessity in years of abnormally low rainfall, which occur say once in 5 to 7 years. Again, since practically the whole of the rural population lives on agriculture and the allied industries and the raiyats are too poor to afford artificial manure, canal irrigation, by providing natural manure in the shape of highly fertilizing silt carried by the canal water, seems to be the only means available for increasing the yield from the land and improving the economic condition of the people.

Erratic distribution of rainfall in Western Bengal.

Irrigation the only means of improving the economic condition of the people.

I do not propose to lengthen this paper by dealing in detail with this important factor in rural development in Western Bengal, as this aspect of the problem and its solution is more or less similar to what is being experienced in the rest of India. I shall merely emphasize some of the points that have come to my in the course of my official duties and then pass on to other aspects of river problems which are peculiar to Bengal.

13. Bengal has an important advantage over the rest of India in the fact that during the transplantation season, when a very large quantity of water is required by the crops, the rainfall is usually adequate. In fact in normal years artificial irrigation is usually required to meet the deficiencies of the north-eastern monsoon from the middle of September to the end of October. Unfortunately this is the very time when the rivers in Western Bengal also bring in a rather scanty flow, though earlier in the season, *i.e.*, during the south-western monsoon, they usually bring in enormous volumes of floods which run to waste. It is, therefore, apparent that to meet the irrigation needs of Western Bengal storage is a necessity, *i.e.*, the water should be stored in natural storage works constructed in the upper valleys of these torrential rivers in Western Bengal during floods and utilised in times of scarcity. Storage works are no doubt costly, but as stored water has to be supplied mainly in October, when the requirement of crops is minimum, they are likely to be profitable undertakings in Bengal. The area that could be irrigated by a stream by its daily flow can be increased many times over if only a portion of its flood could be stored and utilised in times of scarcity to supplement the daily flow. In Madras, where storage works are also needed for the transplantation of paddy owing to the failure of the south-western monsoon, 1 m. Cft. of stored water can irrigate only about 5 acres. In Bengal, on the other hand, for the reasons mentioned before, it can irrigate over 30 acres. Again, for growing sugarcane and *rabi* crops storage works seem to be an absolute necessity, as from November till April no rain is usually expected in Western Bengal.

Necessity for storage to supplement the river flow.

14. But though storage schemes seem to be an absolute necessity for the development of irrigation and the economic uplift of the people in Western Bengal, owing to the flatness of the country it is difficult to obtain suitable sites for storage dams within the boundaries of the Province. For good sites we have really to search in the upper valleys of these rivers lying within the hilly regions of Chhota-Nagpur and the Sonthal Parganas in the Province of Bihar. Two good sites have been discovered so far in connection with the investigation of the Dwarkeswar and More projects, and it is estimated that by constructing suitable storage works, etc., about

Scarcity of sites in Bengal for storage schemes.

200,000 acres can be irrigated by the former and 432,000 acres by the latter.

15. *Group III.*—Subsidiary delta builders or tidal rivers. These are mainly the lower reaches of the rivers of groups I and II within tidal limits which, as has been explained above, continue their beneficent activities of raising, fertilizing and draining the lower portion of the delta twice daily throughout the year and help in transporting the produce of the whole country.

More and Dwarkeswar Reservior Projects.

River Problems with reference to health and productivity of the soil.

16. In all the accounts that have been preserved from ancient sources Bengal is reported to have been healthy and prosperous. Bernier wrote about the middle of the 17th century: "The knowledge that I have acquired of Bengal in two visits inclines me to believe that it is richer than Egypt". Even as late as 1815 Hamilton wrote of Hoogoly, Howrah and Burdwan, which area is now one of the worst as regards health and impoverishment of the soil, as follows: "In productive agricultural value in proportion to its size, in the whole of Hindusthan Burdwan claims the first rank and Tanjore second". In her eastern parts where she is being nourished by her rivers, Bengal still continues to be prosperous and healthy. Even in the rest of Bengal there is no dearth of water resources but the growing deterioration in the health and in the productivity of the soil has to be traced to their faulty distribution. Through some streams more water flows than is necessary, frequently causing disastrous floods, while at other places the scanty flow through natural waterways has caused serious deterioration, in many cases rendering them even incapable of draining the countryside. Indeed, many of these streams which were originally intended by nature—this is a phenomenon peculiar to deltaic areas—to spill over the land which they traverse and keep it in plenty by supplying the rich silt of the Ganges, the Damodar, etc., have now been converted into stagnant pools of water providing an excellent breeding ground for mosquitoes, and many a district of Bengal especially in the centre and in the West has been rendered extremely unhealthy with steadily decreasing population and with land gradually going out of cultivation.

Bengal highly prosperous even about a century ago.

Progressive deterioration due to faulty distribution of water resources.

17. This faulty distribution of the available water resources which has brought about the present deplorable condition is attributable partly to human interference with the natural process of building up the delta and partly to natural causes. The most prominent instance of human interference which has mainly affected the rivers of groups II and III referred to above is to be found in the flood embankments, mainly in Western

Faulty distribution due to human interference and natural causes.

Bengal, but partly also in Central Bengal which, by cutting off the flood spill and depriving the land of natural manure, have killed the net-work of natural spill and drainage channels within the area and have brought about the present deplorable condition.

Solution lies in more equitable distribution of the abundant water resources available in Bengal.

18. There is no dearth of natural hydraulic resources. In fact Bengal has been highly favoured by nature in this respect. The rainfall, though somewhat erratic in distribution in the western parts, is normally quite adequate to meet the requirement of at least the *Kariff* crop in other parts, and Bengal can count on abundant monsoon floods to nourish her soil with fertilizing silt and to kill the mosquito larvæ if only these floods could be properly distributed. A more equitable distribution of the water-resources is thus vitally needed for the rural development of Bengal. I shall now go into the question somewhat closely dealing with each group of rivers separately and examine a representative type of each group in detail.

RIVERS OF GROUP I.

Primary delta builders originating from the Himalayas.

Major changes in the river courses have caused deterioration in Central and Northern Bengal and in Mymensingh district.

19. The areas which have been adversely affected mainly by natural causes, *i.e.*, by major changes in the courses of the rivers of this group, are (1) in Central Bengal by the diversion of the Ganges through its present channel of the Padma sometime towards the beginning of the 16th century; (2) in North Bengal by the diversion of the Teesta sometime towards the end of the 18th century (1787); and (3) in portions of Mymensingh district by the diversion of the main Brahmaputra through the present Jamuna channel soon after. There is no doubt as regards changes (2) and (3) as they occurred comparatively recently and can definitely be proved by reference to Rennel's maps which were prepared earlier. Before the diversion, the Teesta used to discharge its water through the Panarbhaba (a tributary of the Mahananda), the Atreyi and the Karatoa which used to fall directly into the Ganges. The large number of spill and drainage channels which intersect Northern Bengal were, in consequence, allowed to continue their beneficent activities as explained above and the area was healthy and prosperous. After the diversion of the Teesta, completely cutting off the head-water supply laden with fertilizing silt from the Himalayas, these channels are gradually deteriorating, bring in their train water-logging due to inadequate drainage and progressive deterioration of the country as regards health and productivity of the soil.

Canal theory regarding the origin of the Bhagirathi untenable.

20. Even as regards the Ganges it seems to have been an admitted fact hitherto that the Bhagirathi constituted the main course of the Ganges till the end of the 15th century when the main channel was diverted along the present Padma channel. In recent years, however, this view has been challenged by the late Sir William Willcocks who, in a lecture delivered before the Calcutta University in 1930, has propounded the rather extraordinary theory that the Bhagirathi and other rivers in Central Bengal were originally really canals excavated by the old Hindu rulers of Bengal for the purposes of overflow irrigation.

As the challenge has come from a delta Engineer of the reputation of Sir William, it seems necessary to examine this point in some detail.

Evidence in support of the established theory that the Bhagirathi was the original course of the main Ganges.

21. A glance at the map of Bengal will show that the extension of the delta towards the sea is greatest towards its western end, *i.e.*, along the Hooghly estuary, and least at its eastern end, *i.e.*, along the Meghna estuary, the present outfall of the Ganges. This is in spite of the fact that the Meghna estuary is also receiving the flood of the Brahmaputra which, since her connection with the Tsan Po of Tibet, is probably much larger in volume than that of the Ganges. This ought to serve as conclusive evidence in support of the established theory that the main volume of the Ganges flood, which constitutes the main delta builder, has been passing down the Hooghly estuary for a much longer period than along the Meghna as at present, unless it can be proved that there were other delta builders discharging into the Hooghly and contiguous estuaries to the east, floods even larger in volume than that of the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna combined. Such a river does not exist and could not possibly have existed in the present geological epoch. Taking the present geological disposition of watersheds and considering the present meterological conditions, such a river or rivers could have drained only an average rainfall of about 50 inches from the catchment area of about 25,000 sq. miles, which is roughly the combined catchment areas of the rivers of Western Bengal originating from the hills of Chhota-Nagpur and the Sonthal Parganas. As compared with this the Ganges alone drains an average rainfall of 42 inches over a catchment area of 397,500 sq. miles, and the Brahmaputra, even before her connection with the Tsan Po of Tibet, had a very large catchment area in the submontane region of Assam with an average rainfall of about 88 inches. According to Sir William Willcocks the south western portion of Central Bengal was also built up by the Damodar. That this theory is not at all tenable will be apparent from the fact that the Damodar has a catchment area of only 7,200 sq. miles with an average rainfall of about 50 inches. Its maximum flood discharge is only 650,000 cusecs as compared

with 2,000,000 cusecs of the Ganges. Foods of this order again occur only at long intervals (1913 and 1935) and are short-lived, of not more than 2 or 3 days at a time. The average flood discharge of the Damodar and all the Western streams combined will be a mere fraction of that of the Ganges.

22. Among other evidences in support of the established theory the following may be mentioned:—

Religious and traditional evidence.

From the mythological period the Hindus have considered the Ganges as sacred and people by thousands have been going on pilgrimage to places on the banks of the Ganges such as Navadwip, Katwa, Tribeni (a few miles above Hooghly town and also called Mukta Beni where the Ganga, Jamuna and Saraswati, which were united at Allahabad, were separated), Kalighat and Ganga Saugor, all situated on the Bhagirathi or the Hooghly below the present offtake from the Ganges. No such sanctity attaches to the Padma below the Bhagirathi offtake nor is there any place of pilgrimage on her banks. (*N.B.* Major Hirst has dealt with this matter more fully in his report 'Nadia Rivers, 1915.')

Historical evidence.

Pliny (116 A.D.) and Ptolemy (140 A.D.) mention Tribeni referred to above. Arrian (161 A.D.) refers to Katadupa or Katwa. (Notes by Mr. Reaks published with the report on the Hooghly river and its head water.) No such places of antiquity are found on the banks of the Padma.

I am also informed by my brother Dr. R. C. Majumdar of the Dacca University that there is indisputable historical evidence, for instance, in the Khalimpur Copper Plate of King Dharmapala (780-820 A.D.) to show that the Ganges, even above Rajmahal, was also called the Bhagirathi in the olden days. The Padma has never been called by this name; but the western branch is still called the Bhagirathi, thus establishing the point that the latter was really the main course of the Ganges, and that the Padma (if it was really in existence then) was either unconnected with that river in the olden days, or it was a branch not large enough to claim the honour of bearing the same name with the main river.

23. It is also a matter of history that Gaur on the Bhagirathi was the capital of Bengal up to the begining of the 16th century, and I quote the following from Major Hirst's report on "Nadia Rivers" (1915) to shew that the Padma could not have existed in those days as a branch of the Ganges and, even if it did exist, it must

have been a comparatively minor channel, as otherwise both the upper and lower reaches separated by the Padma could not have been named the Bhagirathi as we find it up to the present day:—

"The upper Bhagirathi (Gaur arm) meets the Ganges and the Padma at the place where the Ganges loses its name. The lower Bhagirathi (Upper Hooghly) emanates from the present Ganges on the south bank practically opposite the mouth of the upper Bhagirathi. The alignment of the upper and lower Bhagirathi streams is essentially one which a river would follow and the only portion of the alignment that is missing is occupied by the main bed of the Ganges. From this fact it is clear that if the upper Bhagirathi was the main Ganges originally, and the history of Gaur proves that point, then the Padma as a main river is a more recent channel than the Bhagirathi upper and lower.

Major Hirst's explanation for Major changes in the river courses.

24. Major Hirst further remarks that: "There was a severe earthquake in 1505 A.D. and shortly after it, the Ganges left its old course past Gaur and retreated southwards. The cause of this great change is not known, but it may have been due to earth movements between the old alluvium of Malda and Chhotanagpur outliers." In fact Major Hirst attributes the major changes of the river courses in Bengal to tectonic activity which theory has not, however, been accepted by geological experts (Messrs. Hayden and Pascoe of the Geological Survey of India, *vide* Report on the Hooghly river and its Head waters, 1919).

25. But it does not seem to be necessary to rely on tectonic activity to find an explanation for the changes in the courses of rivers in deltaic Bengal which seem to be not only inherent in their very nature but necessary for the purpose of building and raising the delta.

Simpler explanation offered which seems to be more probable.

In the process of building up the delta, the river has a tendency to oscillate within wide limits; first, flowing on one side and after the riparian tracts have been raised to a certain extent, it bursts through its banks and opens up new channels through the comparatively lower areas of the contiguous tract and so on. After these latter areas have been raised sufficiently the process is reversed to raise still higher the tract which has been raised already. This is perfectly consistent with the natural conditions governing the flow of a river which, following the immutable laws of nature, always tends to take the line of least resistance. The lower land not only gives it a better hydraulic slope but by providing better facilities for spill, and consequently abstracting large portion of its silt burden, helps to maintain the river in a more efficient condition than if it has to pass through higher land.

26. Before the diversion of the Ganges, the Mahananda and North Bengal rivers probably had an independent outfall more or less along the present Padma

channel. The shifting of the Bhagirathi or the Ganges southwards of Gaur, mentioned by Major Hirst, made the condition favourable for a cut-off between the left bank of the Bhagirathi or the Bhairab which probably constituted the easternmost branch and the right bank of Mahananda. Owing to the existence of lower land to the east, which had not received so much attention hitherto as the western area as regards delta building activity, this Mahananda outfall after the above cut-off, rapidly developed and constituted the main course of the Ganges and the lower Bhagirathi began to deteriorate.

Central Bengal.

Central Bengal —built up and fertilised by the Ganges before her diversion.

27. There is no doubt that Central Bengal has been built up by the silt carried by the Ganges which, in the olden days, used to distribute her waters mainly through the Bhairab, which probably constituted the easternmost branch, and the Bhagirathi in the lower reaches, trifurcated into three main branches at Tribeni a few miles above Hooghly, *viz.*, the Jamuna, the Bhagirathi (or Hooghly) and the Saraswati. Since the diversion of the Ganges flood, however through the Padma channel, these rivers began to deteriorate. The Bhagirathi, which once constituted the main channel of the Ganges, now remains practically cut-off from this river, except during floods, and moreover the share of the Ganges flood it now receives is almost insignificant as compared with what used to pass before the diversion. In consequence, its western and eastern branches, *viz.*, the Saraswati and the Jamuna, are now dead and the Bhagirathi also would probably have shared the same fate but for the rivers in Western Bengal, which have their outfalls into this river, and the tidal flushing in the lower reaches which, thanks to the conservancy measures of the Calcutta Port Trust, is being allowed as freely as is possible. In the upper reaches, however, the river is fast deteriorating and even in the lower reaches its condition is not free from anxiety as further deterioration will threaten the very existence of Calcutta as a Port. The Bhairab also is now dead having been cut through first by the Jalangi and then by the Mathabhanga. These latter rivers opened up comparatively recently after the diversion of the Ganges but they are also fast deteriorating (partly due to artificial interference) and, though not completely dead yet, can no longer draw sufficient water from the Ganges to be able to spill over the land nor to keep their distributaries alive. The large number of distributary channels such as the Nabaganga, the Chitra, Kobadak, Betna, Kodla, etc., which used to distribute this spill equitably over the entire area, have also died or are dying, resulting not only in the progressive impoverishment of the soil but acute difficulty in drainage and water-logging. Practically the whole area traversed by these channels is highly malarious and unless the old

After the diversion, the spill channels deteriorated.

conditions of flushing by the Ganges flood can be restored, this area will gradually revert to swamps and jungles from which it was reclaimed by the rivers.

Technical feasibility regarding the restoration of the Ganges Spill considered.

28. The principal spill channels which are not yet completely dead and on which we have to depend for the purpose of drawing from the Ganges and carrying a portion of her flood for flushing this area are the Bhagirathi, the Jalangi and the Mathabhanga. In view of the apparent tendency of nature to enrich the Padma at the expense of these rivers, the question of primary importance to be considered in connection with their improvement is whether an appreciable portion of the Ganges flood can at all be induced to pass through them in preference to the Padma of which the hydraulic conditions are of course much more efficient. The late Sir William Willcocks advocated the construction of a barrage across the Ganges with a view to induce a portion of the Ganges flood to pass through these channels. But the cost of the barrage together with that of the river protective works that would be necessary to prevent outflanking and their maintenance woud be so heavy that those who have to finance the scheme may not be disposed so seriously discuss it in the present economic condition of Bengal. We have, therefore, to consider the question of improvement of these rivers without the barrage.

Ganges Barrage.

29. It may first be considered whether the Ganges has permanently or only temporarily forsaken this tract. In view of the characteristics of deltaic rivers as explained above, especially in para. 25, it seems reasonable to expect that after the Ganges has raised the tract through which she is now flowing, she will again turn her attention to Central Bengal and the present decadent rivers of these parts may improve. It may be mentioned here that an authoritative Committee recently examined the question of the head waters of the Hooghly and, after importance of the Ganges freshets carried by the Nadia examining all the evidence on the subject, stressed the rivers (Bhagirathi, the Jalangi and the Mathabhanga), and came to the conclusion that these rivers pass through successive phases of deterioration and improvement and that there is no definite proof that they have permanently deteriorated to any great extent (*Report on the Hooghly River and its Head waters*).

Barrage effect of the Brahmaputra flood.

30. In this connection it may be mentioned that diversion of the Brahmaputra through the present Jamuna channel, which meets the Ganges just above Goalundo, might have given some of these Nadia rivers (at least the Mathabhanga which is nearest to the junction), a chance of revival. The Brahmaputra flood usually reaches the junction earlier and acts more or less as a barrage trying to hold up the Ganges flood to seek some other outlet higher up. But, unfortunately for the Nadia rivers, such an outlet was found in the Gorai which, in Rennel's time, was only a minor channel

Development of the Gorai.

but which has since considerably developed. As there is an extensive area of low land yet to raise, the Gorai will probably continue to develop. In fact, even apart from raising and fertilizing extensive areas of low land along her left bank in the District of Faridpur, thanks to the Halifax Cut made by the District Board of Jessore in 1901-02 connecting the Madhumati (lower reach of the Gorai) and the Nabaganga, the Madhumati is now discharging the delta building functions, left unfinished by the Bhairab and the minor spill channel Nabaganga, Chitra, etc., in the eastern portions of Jessore and Khulna districts. It is, however, possible that after these lower areas have been raised the barrage effect caused by the Brahmaputra flood may even reach the neighbourhood of the Mathabhanga offtake and a large portion of the Ganges flood might be induced to flow down that channel.

Afflux created by the Hardinge bridge not material so far.

31. The popular view is that the Hardinge Bridge, which was completed in 1915, might also help in improving the Mathabhanga. But the offtake of the Mathabhanga being located about 25 miles higher up the Ganges, it does not appear that the bridge has caused a sufficient afflux yet to effect any material improvement of the Mathabhanga.

About half the width of the Ganges underneath the bridge has however silted up well above the low water level along the left bank. As widening of the channel along the right or southern bank is being prevented by extensive bank protective works and as deepening by scour is being restricted by extensive stone dumping round the piers, it seems possible that this bridge may in future act more and more as a barrage, with larger and larger afflux, holding up the Ganges flood to seek an outlet higher up. If, however, the afflux increases materially, it seems more likely that the river will find this outlet in the Lalpur bight, a few miles above Sara on the left bank, and there will be an avulsion through the extensive low areas near about Chalan Bil, outflanking the Hardinge Bridge on the north. But till this catastrophe occurs, the effect of the increase in the afflux, if any, will probably be to improve the Mathabhanga.

But it may increase to the advantage of the Mathabhanga and may even induce far-reaching changes in the regime of the Ganges.

32. We may have to wait for decades or perhaps centuries before nature turns her attention to Central Bengal and the point for consideration is whether it is not possible to effect any lasting improvement of these rivers by artificial means. Railway authorities should also be interested in this matter; for diversion of an appreciable portion of the Ganges flood through the Nadia rivers ought to relieve the pressure on the Hardinge Bridge thus reducing the cost of its maintenance and averting a possible danger of avulsion on the left bank as discussed above. The recent changes in the Ganges which might be attributable to the causes referred to

above seem to be hopeful. The huge *char* which hitherto masked the offtake of the Mathabhanga has practically disappeared and its position in relation to the Ganges is definitely improving. The offtakes of the other two principal spill channels in Central Bengal, *viz.*, the Jalangi and the Bhagirathi are also showing signs of improvement though not to the same extent as the Mathabhanga.

Mathabhanga offtake appears to be improving.

33. But mere improvement of the offtakes is not enough; it merely shows the tendency of nature. To be able to utilise fully these tendencies to our advantage, it is necessary to improve the carrying capacities of these channels and provide suitable outlets of distributory channels of adequate capacity, and other facilities for spill over the country side. For, unless the increased discharge that could be drawn in view of the favourable position of the offtake, could be carried by these channels and disposed of, no material improvement over the present condition can be expected. The function allotted by nature to these spill channels in deltaic Bengal is that they should spill over the land during floods and deposit the highly fertilizing silt carried by the flood water. Being relieved of the silt burden, the comparatively clear water should then flow down these channels and maintain them in an efficient condition. If it is not allowed to spill a good portion of its silt content, the flood water entering these channels, owing to the reduced velocity due to flatter gradient available in the lower portion of Bengal will not be able to transport the large quantity of silt and will deposit it in their beds thus agan deteriorating the channels. Improvement by dredging or by hand cut, where feasible will no doubt be necessary initially to give these works of improvement a good start. But it is impossible to maintain a river by dredging alone, for, apart from the question of cost, the dredged soil has necessarily to be deposited on the banks close to the river channels, which will go on rising as the dredging continues and soon reach a height beyond the lift of the dredger. An essential condition of success, therefore, is that, after their initial improvement, forces, which were in operation before, when these channels were in a live condition, should be restored so that they may again be self-maintaining or, in other words, they should be allowed to spill extensively over their banks without hindrance as far as possible. To what extent this may be feasible, it is not possible to say without a contour survey with lines of levels taken at fairly close intervals, and detailed investigation made as regards the vested interests that are likely to be adversely affected, and the remedial measures to be adopted to safeguard those interests. The problem is undoubtedly a very complicated one and what I wish to emphasise is that no piecemeal solution is really possible; and the problem has to be thought out and dealt with comprehensively.

Dredging alone cannot maintain a channel permanently.

About one point, however, there seems to be no doubt, *viz.*, the necessity for a substitute crop in the lower areas which will not be affected adversely by uncontrolled flushing when the Ganges is in flood in August and September. In the case also of these lower areas, mostly '*bils*' and '*baors*', the problem to be solved is one of premature reclamation. But since the vested interests have already been created and now constitute the course of livelihood of a large number of people, we have to face the problem as it stands and find a solution. The only practicable solution appears to be that *raiyats* should be encouraged to grow in these *bils* and other lower areas a crop which can be harvested before the Ganges rises sufficiently high early in August, or a crop like the long-stem paddy of East Bengal which grows with the rise in water level and will not be damaged by uncontrolled flushing. In any case, unless a practicable solution can be found for this problem, the prospect of flood flushing schemes for Central Bengal, which appears to be urgently necessary to arrest the growing deterioration in health and productivity of the soil, as also to revive the dying spill channels, seems to be rather gloomy. It does not appear to be feasible to have controlled flushing without a barrage across the Ganges, the cost of which will of course be prohibitive. But even if the flushing could be controlled, the lower land, the *bils* and other low areas are likely to be inundated, in the process of flushing to a depth which will probably make it impossible to continue the present method of cultivation. We had practical experience of this difficulty during the recent high floods when, owing to the abnormally high flood level of the Ganges and of its spill channels, the crops over a large area of Central Bengal were damaged. Necessity for growing in these low areas a suitable substitute crop, as an essential preliminary step before launching a flood flushing scheme, cannot therefore be exaggerated.

GROUP II.

Primary delta builders originating from the hills of Chhota-Nagpur and the Sonthal Parganas.

The rivers of this group serve Western Bengal (the whole of the Burdwan division) and in the western portion of this tract they pass through a non-deltaic region. The problems presented for solution in this region, *viz.*, those in connection with irrigation, are common to the rest of India and have already been dealt with. The eastern portion of the tract is deltaic, and due to human interference with the beneficent activities of the rivers traversing this portion, has given rise to problems which are unique and it is doubtful if a satisfactory solution can be found at all.

The area is flat and has been built up by the silt carried by these rivers of Western Bengal, particularly the Cossye in Midnapur district and the Damodar and the Ajay in Burdwan district. But before the land could be sufficiently raised by such natural deposits it began to be reclaimed by flood embankments long before the British occupation. In those days, these embankments do not appear to have been efficiently maintained by the Zemindars and breaches were frequent. Though this caused temporary inconvenience and damage, the land used to be flushed occasionally by silt-laden floods and the health and the productivity of the soil did not deteriorate to the same extent as at present. The evil effects of these embankments were not of course realised in those days and for efficient maintenance they were gradually taken over by Government and improved with the object of preventing breaches as far as possible. In consequence, though the breaches are now less frequent and the protection enjoyed by the people is now more thorough, this very fact has brought into prominence the evil effects of these embankments. The land has been deprived of even the occasional flushing with silt-laden flood-water, which it was enjoying when these embankments were inefficiently maintained by the Zemindars. This is not only causing progressive deterioration in public health and productivity of the soil but being deprived of their source of sustenance, *viz.*, the river spills, the natural channels within the embanked area, have all badly deteriorated and the difficulty of draining these areas is becoming more and more acute.

The embankments have thus prevented the gradual rise of the land by silt deposits during flood flushing. Indeed, it is actually becoming gradually lower, though at a very slow rate, due to the loss of the surface soil washed away by the rains. To make the case worse the floods, confined within emkankments and unable to spill and deposit on the land as was intended by nature, are depositing a portion of the silt-contents within the river beds which are gradually rising. The Irrigation Engineers in Bengal are thus faced with the most unenviable situation created by the low level of the land to be drained and the rise of the river beds into which the drainage has ultimately to be disposed of, and it has already become impossible to drain some areas by gravity. As a direct consequence of embanking these rivers and preventing free spill over the countryside there was a considerable rise in the flood level soon after these embankments were constructed and this level is tending to rise higher and higher owing to the gradual rise of the river beds, necessitating higher and higher embankments to prevent overflow by the floods. Indeed, during the Damodar floods of 1935 it was

observed that, though the embankment was over 20 feet higher than the country level, at some places it was about to be overflowed, and this could be prevented only by raising the embankment during the progress of the flood. It is needless to say that breaches at such places would have been attended with disastrous consequences to the countryside owing to the terrific velocity which a wall of water over 20 feet high rushing out of the breach would have generated, sweeping away everything in its way—houses, cattle and even human beings.

The potential danger to life and property that is likely to be caused by concentrated discharge through breaches at low places needs special mention and it is in such areas where high embankments have necessarily to be maintained, that breaches are more likely to occur. In fact, there is a limit as regards depth of water which can safely be withheld by unprotected earthen bunds. At some places in the Damodar Embankment this limit has almost been reached and, if the flood level rises higher, it will probably be necessary to go in for expensive surface protection of these embankments. But even then these earthen bunds can hardly be made breach-proof, for a little rat-hole may easily lead to a disaster; and where there are hundreds of miles of such embankments to look after, it is almost impossible to ensure that all such tiny holes have been detected and attended to in proper time. In fact, such holes are usually covered by vegetation and can only be detected when the flood level has reached their river side ends, and if these ends are located high up the slope they may not be detected till the flood has risen very high, when it may be too late to do anything. In view of these difficulties occasional breaches in the unprotected earthen embankments and the consequent loss of life and property caused by concentrated discharge can hardly be avoided and it is surprising that they do not occur oftener than is the case at present.

On the other hand what would happen if these rivers were left in their natural condition? The conditions now prevailing in Eastern Bengal furnish the answer. No doubt there would have been flooding of the area now inefficiently protected by the embankment, but the flood being allowed to spill over the countryside, the depth of flooding would have been much less and it would be lower and lower as the land rose higher and higher by the silt deposit. What I wish to emphasise is that there would have been no loss of life or property that is now caused by the high velocity of concentrated discharge through breaches. Moreover, there would be no distress among the people for, being accustomed to annual flooding, they would have erected their houses on mounds above the flood level, as is the practice in Eastern Bengal.

The position is undoubtedly very serious and unless a bold policy of improvement is followed, this tract will, in course of time, revert to swamps and jungles from which it was prematurely reclaimed in the olden days. The ideal solution would be to remove the cause of deterioration, *i.e.*, the embankments, and raise the land and increase its productivity by allowing the flood water to spill and deposit the silt which is very rich in manure. Where possible this solution should certainly be adopted. Millions of tons of this valuable silt is now being carried away by the floods and lost to the country and the land for which this silt was intended by nature, is starving. Above the tidal limits, where the water is sweet, such natural flood flushing need not necessarily destroy crops nor cause such acute distress amongst the people as is now being caused occasionally by the concentrated discharge through breaches in the embankments. For, when the embankments are

removed, the flood level will also fall considerably lower, as compared with its present level, and as the floods in these parts are short lived, lasting not more than 2 or 3 days at a time, such flooding may even be beneficial to the crops except in years of very high floods when, no doubt, the crops will be destroyed till these lands have been sufficiently raised by the silt deposit. The loss, however, will be more than compensated for by the increased yield in normal years due to the manurial value of the silt and improvement in health. As regards distress caused to the people by the collapse of houses it can certainly be avoided or at least minimised by erecting houses on earthen mounds and by avoiding mud walls, as is the practice in Eastern Bengal.

In most of the areas, however, owing to important vested interests such as the existence of railways, towns, etc., such uncontrolled flood flushing is hardly practicable and here we must be satisfied with limited flushing as may be found possible by drawing the flood water through regulated escapes to be built on these embankments. It is quite possible to introduce such limited flushing in the area lying between the Cossye, the Seyle and the Roopnarain rivers in Midnapore district and that lying between the Damodar, the Banka and the Hooghly rivers in Burdwan, Hooghly and Howrah districts. For this latter area considerable progress has already been made towards the proposal of a flood flushing scheme. A contour survey of the area was made a few years ago and the Government, on being advised that such a scheme is technically feasible, appointed a special officer to prepare an approximate estimate of cost. This estimate has since been prepared and it was found during scrutiny that a mere flood flusinng scheme, without provision to ensure irrigation in October, when rain and river supply both fail in these parts though highly beneficial as regards improvement in sanitation and productivity of the soil, cannot ensure good harvest except in years of well distributed rainfall, and as such is neither likely to be popular nor financially sound. Necessary orders were accordingly issued to make such provisions, *i.e.*, a storage reservoir in the upper valleys of the Damodar river and a Barrage across the Damodar near Burdwan. The rough cost of the combined flushing and irrigation scheme, including the above provisions for October irrigation, comes to Rs. 2,72,77,000 and it is intended not only to irrigate an area of 3,50,000 acres, where crops periodically fail for want of timely rainfall, thereby ensuring a good harvest in every year, but also to improve materially the sanitation and productivity of the soil by adequate flushing with the highly fertilizing silt-laden water of the Damodar floods. The next step is to prepare the detailed project estimate for which purpose one temporary Circle has recently been formed. The area proposed to be served by the project used to be one of the healthiest and most prosperous in Bengal, and though it has deteriorated to its present deplorable condition mainly by the acts of man, it is hoped that human agency will again make it possible to retrieve the situation and to restore the area to its original condition of health and plenty.

It may be mentioned here that as soon as the evil effects of the embankments were realised the Bengal Embankment Act was passed. In this Act there is an important provision making it a criminal offence to construct embankments, without previous permission, within certain areas which are being declared as prohibited from time to time. The area is, however, vast and enforcement of this provision, which involves frequent detailed inspection of the countryside and prosecution of the

offenders, is proving rather a heavy burden with the very inadequate staff.

Even apart from the question of flood flushing, so necessary in the interest of health and productivity of the soil, the question of maintenance of these rivers is presenting problems of a more and more serious nature as the years pass. Considering the Damodar as a representative of this group of torrential rivers it may be mentioned that this channel near about Burdwan is barely sufficient to carry more than say 2,50,000 cusecs which represent its normal flood discharge. This capacity is again being progressively reduced due to the gradual rise of the bed in consequence of the marginal embankments and, in the lower reaches, owing to large quantities of silt brought in by the tides twice daily throughout the year, which the occasional floods during the rains cannot clear, it can hardly carry more than say 50,000 cusecs. The potential danger of a flood of the order of 6,50,000 cusecs as occurred in 1913 and 1935 rushing down this channel can easily be imagined.

Originally the river was embanked on both sides but, appreciating this potential danger, the right embankment was abandoned towards the middle of the last century. This no doubt relieved the pressure on the left embankment for a time. But the right bank is also gradually being raised by the silt deposit with more and more pressure thrown on the left embankment and the time is not far distant when it will be impossible to maintain the left embankment, unless nature finds a remedy by cutting through the exposed right bank an escape into the Roopnarain, or it is provided by an artificial cut at a heavy cost. In fact nature appears to have already cut an escape in the Begua khal which is now carrying a considerable volume of the Damodar flood into the Roopnarain, but it takes off too far down the river and about 35 miles of the left embankment protecting a thickly populated area, including the town of Burdwan and the E. I. Railway line which runs very close to this portion of the embankment, is still being exposed to the full pressure of the Damodar flood; this is bound to increase more and more as the right bank and the river bed continue to rise by silt deposit.

If there were no flood embankments on either side as was intended by nature, the gain in elevation of the bank by silt deposit would at least have kept pace with the rise in the river bed as has been experienced in the case of the Nile. It appears that the Nile was embanked only recently and that before then "during the Christian era while the matter deposited by the overflow of the Nile has raised the surface of Egypt by 4½ inches per century, the bed of the river has also been raised at the same rate" (Samuelson in his "Note on the Irrawadi river" quoted in Mr. Reak's Report on Nadia Rivers). If both the embankments were retained, the country level on both the banks would have remained the same and though an avulsion would have been inevitable ultimately, owing to the gradual rise of the river bed and consequently of the flood level, it would have been left to nature to cut it either through the left bank towards the Hooghly or through the right bank towards the Roopnarain, probably the latter (as is evidenced by the natural formation of the Begua escape), owing to open country available on that side as compared with the left, where the country is full of obstructions such as E. I. Railway and G. T. Road embankments, etc. The policy of abandonment of the right embankment and retention of the left, on the other hand, has resulted in the rapid rise of the country level on the right side; that on the left side has even probably been

lowered by surface washing caused by the local rainfall. The inevitable consequence, therefore, it seems to me, will be that nature will try to force an avulsion through the left bank towards the Hooghly unless we can take adequate remedial measures in the meantime.

Such an avulsion will of course mean a serious disaster for, apart from the very large vested interests on the left bank which will be advrsely affected, the important city of Calcutta and the large business interests on either bank of the Hooghly will be in great danger. It is no doubt true that till the middle of the 18th Century one of the Damodar outfalls was at Noaserai, a few miles above Hooghly town, but owing to desertion by the Damodar floods since then and by subsequent encroachments, the Hooghly channel has considerably shrunk and near about Calcutta it can hardly carry more than 3,66,000 (Mr. Reak's estimate in 1918 of maximum flood discharge) or say 3,50,000 cusecs in its present condition. The seriousness of the situation that will arise by the avulsion referred to above can, therefore, easily be imagined if it is remembered that in 1913 and in 1935 the flood discharge of the Damodar was of the order of 6½ lacs cusecs. Furthermore when the Damodar is in high flood it is very likely that the other western tributaries of the Bhagirathi also will be in high flood simultaneously owing to the proximity of their catchment areas.

The above consideration should rule out any proposal for remedial measures by means of uncontrolled escapes on the left bank, while as regards controlled escapes, it may be mentioned that the rough estimate which was recently prepared for flushing the decadent area on the left bank referred to before amounts to Rs. 2,72,77,000. The proposal provides for the extraction from the Damodar and distribution over the area of only about 13,000 cusecs out of the total maximum flood discharge of about 6,50,000 cusecs, a mere drop, which will not cause any material lowering of the flood level nor its pressure against the left embankment. To afford such relief we should extract something of the order of say about 2,00,000 cusecs. Apart from the prohibitive cost this extra discharge cannot possibly be carried by the Hooghly in the vicinity of Calcutta and above. Increasing the capacity of the Damodar channel by dredging does not also appear to be a feasible alternative. As I have mentioned already, apart from the question of cost, no river can permanently be maintained by dredging. This is all the more true in the case of the Damodar with such a wide range of flood discharge,—maximum flood occurring at long intervals—, and with the lower reaches liable to be chocked up by silt carried by the tides functioning twice daily.

As regards remedial measures the only feasible alternatives, therefore, seem to be either to construct flood moderating reservoirs in the upper valleys, probably the most satisfactory, though costly, solution, or to provide an escape into the Roopnarain through the right bank which should take off from a point as far above Burdwan as is possible. It seems to me that once upon a time, the Roopnarain probably constituted the outfall of the Damodar. The tendency of nature to restore the old condition through the Begua escape is not sufficiently helpful. We should help nature by taking off this escape from a point higher up the river. Along with the escape it is also necessary to improve the carrying capacity of the Roopnarain in her upper reaches by removal of some of the circuit embankments on her banks (Chetua and Mohankhally circuits, etc.) which, for reasons explained before, seems to be necessary even in the interests of the areas prematurely reclaimed by these embankments.

GROUP III.

Tidal rivers.

In their lower reaches these channels of groups I and II discussed above are tidal, and, except where free tidal flushing of their spill areas has been interfered with by premature reclamation, their condition is not so bad. They are still continuing their beneficent activities mentioned above including the provision of cheap means of transport by water, a natural asset, which should be preserved at all costs. Mere tidal flow, unless reinforced by supply of upland water, cannot, however, maintain any channel for an indefinite period. Tides in these parts carry a large proportion of silt with which nature is trying to raise the lower portion of the delta now deserted by the Ganges floods. But it is only a question of time when the spill areas having been raised up to tide level, this silt, unable to spread over the land, will deposit in the channel bed in larger and larger quantities and will finally choke it. A gutter channel will probably remain for draining the local rainfall but the channel will no longer be fit for navigation. Besides, with the reduction of pressure of sweet water from above, the salt water limit is also being pushed up these channels, and a serious situation is likely to arise if the upper reaches of these channels continue to deteriorate and the supply of sweet water is futher reduced. In fact, it appears that the salinity of the Hooghly water near Calcutta, on which this big city is dependent for its water-supply, is showing a tendency to increase during the dry season. The case is probably similar or perhaps worse with regard to the tidal portion of the other spill channels in Central Bengal, as the only source of sweet water for these channels is the Ganges and from December till June they remain entirely cut off from this source, except the very small supply that is drawn by percolation through the sandy beds at their offtakes.

But where free tidal flushing has been interfered with by premature reclamation of spill areas by means of marginal embankments, the situation has already become serious, and at several places owing to the deterioration of the tidal channels the difficulties of drainage are becoming more and more acute. As mentioned already, apart from serving as carriers of country drainage with which we are all familiar, these rivers of Bengal, which are both upland flood carriers as also the tidal channels, perform the most important function of raising the delta we live in. Owing to the diversion of the Ganges the upland flood carriers are no longer functioning in Central Bengal, and so tidal channels are the only agencies now left by which the lower portion of Bengal could be raised and made fit for human habitation. Another point to be noted is that when the upland flood carrier dies in a particular area, as for instance in Central Bengal, though that area suffers, its beneficent activities are not lost to the country; only these are transferred elsewhere. If, however, a tidal channel is obstructed it usually gets choked in its own bed without any chance of diversion by avulsion as the energy required for the purpose is lacking, it not being possible for a tidal channel to rise above the tide level. Thus the consequence of premature reclamation by marginal embankments or other obstructions in tidal channels is that their beneficent activities of raising this portion of the delta will be lost to the country for ever and the land will continue to remain low with increasing difficulties of drainage until it becomes unfit for human habitation and reverts to

swamps and jungles. We have instances of this almost next door to Calcutta, *viz.* the low areas served by the Bidyadhari which, owing to earlier reclamation of the spill areas, is now completely dead and can no longer serve as a carrier of drainage, with serious consequences to the city of Calcutta and suburban areas. The Peali is also fast dying and will probably share the same fate as that of the Bidyadhari unless steps are immediately taken to throw open sufficient spill areas for this river.

In fact the provision of spill areas by the removal of marginal embankments seems to be an urgent necessity for prolonging the life of these tidal channels. But this is not enough. If these channels have to be given a permanent lease of life the supply of upland water seems to be an essential requirement. As this point is not usually understood it seems necessary to explain the physical characteristics of tidal rivers.

The energy which creates the tidal flow, *viz.* the attraction of the sun and the moon in the sea is very limited and is manifested partly as potential energy, *viz.* rise in tide level, and partly as kinetic energy, *viz.* velocity of flow. The former causes the tidal flow up the rivers and the latter determines its power of transporting silt. As the velocity of the tide when it enters the mouths of these tidal rivers is high and as there is a vast reservoir of unconsolidated silt in suspension along the delta face, the tide as it flows up these rivers is highly charged with silt. It is generally observed that the duration of ebb tide in a tidal river is much longer than that of the flow tide. As the same quantity of water must ebb out as flowed in, it, therefore, follows that the average velocity of 'ebb' is less than that of 'flow'. Now the capacity of water to transport silt depends on its velocity. Consequently the ebb tide is generally unable to carry back all the silt that has been carried up these tidal rivers by the 'flow tide'. Even a slight deposition of silt will add to the accumulation as the tides function twice daily throughout the year and the channel will begin to deteriorate. The deterioration would impede the propagation of the tidal wave which would cause further deterioration and the vicious circle would continue till the channel is completely dead.

It will appear from the above that to maintain the life of a tidal river what is necessary is an additional supply of water not saturated with silt, *i.e.* which has the reserve capacity to pick up more silt, to supplement the tidal flow during ebb so as to scour out fully the silt that has been admitted into the river by the flood tide. This could be effected either by the supply of upland water, local drainage, or by throwing the existing spill area open to the daily ebb and flow or by adding new spill areas, if possible. The spill area is of course an important flushing agent but it would function only for a limited period at a gradually diminishing rate, till the whole area is raised to high water level and its storage capacity is reduced to nil. The local drainage would also be specially helpful, while crops are standing in the fields, as the water at such time would be practically silt-free. But this agency can function only during the rains, and for 7 months (November to May) no material contribution can be expected from local drainage, however large the drainage area may be, to help in flushing the river during the ebb. The third agent, *viz.* upland water, is certainly the most important and if it were possible to arrange for its supply perennially, so as to flush the river even during the dry season, there is no reason why a tidal river should not live and continue her beneficent activities for a great length of time.

Improvement of the spill channels of Central Bengal and diversion through them of a portion of the Ganges flood thus appear to be necessary even in the interest of the tidal portion of Central Bengal as this water, after spilling over the land and depositing the silt content, will have to pass through these tidal channels for disposal into the sea. With the help of a copious supply of sweet water, it will be possible not only to maintain these tidal channels permanently but also to push down the salt water limit and extend cultivation more and more towards the sea-face even without embankments, as is the practice in Eastern Bengal.

In recent years the Bidyadhari river has been very much in the public eye owing to the increasing difficulty that is being experienced in disposing of the drainage from Calcutta through this outfall. I, therefore, propose to take up this river as a typical representative of this group and briefly review its life-history to illustrate the points discussed above.

As discussed in dealing with the Primary delta builders of Group I, the Jamuna, before the diversion of the Ganges flood through the Padma, constituted one of the main branches of the Ganges. Separated off at Tribeni the flood used to flow down this stream to the sea. In fact, between the Bhairab and its branches to the east and the Hooghly river to the west, the Jamuna was perhaps the most important delta builder in those days, and largely contributed to the raising of this portion of the Sunderbans. The Bidyadhari was an important spill channel of the Jamuna and to her was allotted the task of raising the delta just to the east of the areas near about Calcutta. Channels connecting the Bidyadhari with the Jamuna in the olden days (Nowi, Sunti and Nanagong) can still be traced reaching within a few miles of the present abandoned course of the Jamuna.

But the most indisputable evidence that the Bidyadhari used to receive a considerable supply of upland floods is afforded by the width[1] between the high banks of what is now called the Bidyadhari khal jsut above Bhangore canal. In fact I was surprised to find such high natural banks in the midst of what was known to be a purely tidal area when I inspected the khal in 1933. I had several cross sections taken to ascertain whether they were really above the high tide level as that would prove conclusively that the Bidyadhari used to receive upland floods. As the cross sections show, these banks are much above the high tide level even of the present day (which must be considerably higher than when the river was allowed to spill freely over the banks), and they could not have been built up by the tidal silt but must have been raised by the silt carried by the upland water. Having regard to the characteristics of delta builders of which the banks slope away from the river edge, the width between the crests of these high banks, therefore, gives a rough measure of the extent of upland flood supply in the olden days and, judged by this standard, it must have been considerable.

I would particularly emphasise the importance of this method of reconstruction of the life-history of deltaic rivers by means of cross

[1]The width varies from 350 ft. to 900 ft., the average being 660 ft. and the level at the bank from 10·21 to 16·66, the average being 12·57 ft. within a length of about of miles above Bhangore canal. As compared with this the highest tide level recorded 10 Bamanghata on the Bidyadhari, which is progressively rising, was 10·33 and the average High water 8·8 in 1932. At Haroa (a short distance above the length considered) the H.H.W. and the average H.W. level in 1932 were 11·0 ft. and 8·75 ft. respectively.
All levels referred to are taken on O.M.S.L. or P.W.D. datum.

sections. After completion of the contour survey of Central Bengal, portions of which have alrady been surveyed, we should have a lot of data to help us in this direction. For instance from cross sections of the country round about the Saraswati I found that this river, which now looks like a gutter, was originally a big river, thus corroborating the view that the Saraswati was a branch of the main Ganges as there is no other delta builder on this side of the country which could throw a branch of this size.

By similar evidence left by nature it was also found that the Kultigong, which now constitutes the outfall of the Nowi, Sunti and Nanagong (formerly feeders of the Bidyadhari), probably opened up much later than the Bidyadhari. In any case it was originally a channel of minor importance as compared with the Bidyadhari. Measured from the present outfall of the Nanagong into the Haroagong (the connecting channel between the Kulti and the Bidyadhari) high banks much above the high tide level extend to only a little over 6 miles along the Kulti route, while along the Bidyadhari they extend to at least 14 miles. I have discussed these points at length in my official report on the 'Bidyadhari Restoration scheme' and it will unduly lengthen the size of this paper if these evidence and arguments are reproduced here. I shall merely summarise the conclusion that I arrive at after a critical analysis of all the available evidence.

So long as the Jamuna remained active the Bidyadhari used to get a considerable supply of upland water (including a portion of the dry weather flow of the Ganges), not only the flood carried by the Nowi and Sunti, but also the major portion of the flood carried by the Nanagong. Deterioration of the Jamuna probably set in soon after the diversion of the main volume of the Ganges flood towards the end of the 15th Century or early in the 16th Century. It seems probable, however, that it still continued to receive, at least during the rains, a share of the Damodar flood, which had one of its outfalls into the Hooghly near Kalna until about 1660 and near Noaserai until about the middle of the 18th Century, both the places being above the offtake of the Jamuna at Tribeni. Diversion of the Damodar down its present channel with its outfall below Uluberia at the latter date finally sealed the fate of the Jamuna which, together with the spill channels, began to deteriorate rapidly.

Deprived of the upland water supply, the Bidyadhari was then thrown entirely on her own resources, *viz.* local drainage and spill area to prolong her life as long as she could. At this stage another characteristic, peculiar to tidal rivers carrying a large proportion of silt, hastened her decay. The Kultigong, the next parallel tidal channel to the east, had already opened up and by means of the connecting channel, now known as the Haroagong, provided a meeting ground for tides coming up both this river and the Bidyadhari. Owing to check in velocity there is always a heavy deposition of silt at the tidal meeting ground, but so long as these rivers received a plentiful supply of upland floods, this silt could be cleared by flushing during floods. After the stoppage of this supply, the silt deposited as a result of the meeting of the tides became a grave menace to the preservation of both the channels. Nature had thus to sacrifice one for the preservation of the other. It seems to me that by this time the Kultigong, which was originally discharging into the Matla through Kumerjolgong, had her present outfall into the Roymangal Estuary definitely established. Now the Roymangal is one of the deepest estuaries in the delta and the conditions for the propagation of the tidal wave being

more favourable, the stronger tide up the Kultigong could travel higher and higher up the connecting channel (Haroagong), thus shifting the tidal meeting ground more and more down the Bidyadhari. The Nanagong, the Sunti and the Nowi, which originally used to feed the Bidyadhari, were thus gradually absorbed by the Kultigong for her own sustenance. By robbing the Bidyadhari of the drainage and spill areas of these feeders, the Kultigong thus began to develop at the expense of the Bidyadhari and the latter river deteriorated rapidly.

But though the fate of the Bidyadhari as a permanent channel was thus sealed, the existence of a large spill area in the salt lakes should have made it possible for her to function as an outfall for the drainage from Calcutta and the neighbouring areas for a much longer period but for the acts of man. The salt lakes, even after reclamation along the borders now measure about 55 sq. miles and, it seems to me, define the boundary between the area built up from the north by the upland floods and that from the south by the tides carried up the Bidyadhari and the Peali. Even after the stoppage of upland floods it should have been possible for nature but for human interference, to raise this area by tidal deposit instead of leaving it as a nuisance so close to the city.

The first interference was the premature reclamation of the land on either bank of the Matla and of the Bidyadhari by means of marginal embankments, towards the middle of the last century. This was one of the earliest areas to be reclaimed, and consequently both the channels began to deteriorate with progressive rise in tide level or what may be called 'heaping up of tides'. At Port Canning (Bidyadhari outfall into the Matla) the highest high water level has risen from 6·28 in 1865 to 12·83 in 1930 (O.M.S.L. data). At Dhappa the ordinary high water level in 1830, as gathered from old records, was 1·5 in the dry season and 3·5 in the rains. The H.W. level was 9·41 in 1926. At Bamanghata on the Bidyadhari the H.H.W. level has risen from 9·1 in 1894 to 11·00 in 1926. It will be of no use referring to the level at Dhappa and Bamanghata in recent years as tidal flow is practically non-existent and the level is really ruled by the discharge of Calcutta drainage, but it may be noted that the present level is considerably higher. The Bidyadhari, which hitherto used to drain Calcutta, is now trying to drown the city with the sewage and we are trying to prevent the catastrophe by means of flood embankments proposed to be constructed along the eastern boundary.

Now this 'heaping up of tides', which occurs when a tidal wave is unable to dissipate itself over the spill area, is another characteristic of tidal rivers, and where tides carry a large proportion of silt, as in Bengal, it causes deterioration of the channel by the dropping of silt. The explanation is probably as follows: 'Heaping up' of tidal flow really means gain in potential energy. But as the sum total of the energy which generates this flow, *viz.* tidal impulse created in the deep sea by the attraction of the sun and the moon, etc. is constant during each tide, this gain in potential energy must be attended with a corresponding loss in its kinetic energy, or in other words the flood tide can only rise in level at the expense of its velocity. Now the silt-carrying capacity of the flow being proportional to the velocity, it follows that as soon as 'heaping up' occurs a portion of the silt brought up by the tides, in excess of what the reduced velocity can carry, drops on the bed, thereby further impeding the tidal wave and accelerating the deterioration of the channel in a vicious circle. This phenomenon of 'heaping up of tides' is going on more or less in almost all the tidal rivers, where the spill area has been unduly curtailed

and really constitutes the preliminary warning of deterioration. In the Bidyadhari, and at the head of the Matla Estuary, the 'heaping up of the tides' is probably the worst as their spill areas have been the earliest to be reclaimed. It becomes less and less as we move towards the eastern parts of the delta.

The second stage of human interference was the discharge of the Calcutta sewage into the Bidyadhari. While the liquid content has probably been helpful, especially during the dry season, the solid matter has certainly been harmful specially by forming a gelatinous coating over the channel bed and slope which the ebb flow finds it difficult to scour. The large number of fisheries in the salt lakes and other low areas also contributed to the deterioration of the Bidyadhari by preventing free tidal spill. Finally, the Kristopur canal (excavated in 1910), by cutting off a good portion of the salt lake spill area (Ghuni Jatragatchi—about 18 sq. miles) and interfering with the natural drainage from the north, accelerated the death of the Bidyadhari.

Attempts were made to revive the Bidyadhari both by acquiring a spill area (about 2½ sq. miles which was found to be much too small) and also by dredging at a heavy cost. But the opposing forces were found to be much too strong and he Bidyadhari continued to deteriorate. She is now absolutely dead without any chance of revival and it would be interesting to note the rapid rate of deterioration from the following figures:—

	1883.	1904.	1936.
Lowest Bed level near Bamanghata referred to O.M.S.L. or P.W.D. datum ..	−58·69	−29·71	+5·75

The present bed is even higher than the country level on either side.

	1894.	1915.	1917.	1926.	1932.	193.6
L.L. water level at Bamanghata ..	−4·9	0·0	+0·17	+2·5	+5·92	+11·05

	1926.	1936.
Cross sanctional area at Bamanghata below R.L. 9·75	2,440 sq. ft.	363 sq. ft.

All attempts at the restoration of the Bidyadhari have now been rightly abandoned and the Calcutta Corporation are dredging an independent outfall into the Kultigong. As the proposal has received the approval of Government and the work is in progress I refrain from making any comments. Nor would such comments be really appropriate in the present paper, which only deals with river problems in general and does not aim at finding a solution to any specific local problem like the drainage problem near about Calcutta. This problem is sufficiently important and complex to form the subject of a special paper. I wish only to add in this connection that the Peali, a branch of the Bidyadhari, is also fast deteriorating and will soon share the same fate as the Bidyadhari. Immediate steps are, therefore, necessary to prolong the life of this river. After the death of the Bidyadhari, the Peali is now the only source of drainage for a large portion of 24-Parganas district and constitutes the outfall of several drainage schemes constructed by Government at a heavy cost. The death of the Peali will not only mean the loss of this capital but, due to consequent water logging, the area affected will gradually revert to swamps and jungles from which it was prematurely reclaimed by the acts of man.

River problems with reference to Navigation.

I have dealt with the river problems in Bengal so far as they have arisen in respect of the beneficent activities of the rivers in draining and fertilising the land which they have created. I now refer to another aspect of river problems in respect of the valuable services which the rivers are rendering to the country in the matter of carrying the produce by cheap water routes. Together with the tidal portion of Central Bengal, Eastern Bengal possesses very important natural resources in her navigable channels, the value of which in promoting trade and providing facilities for cheap communication can hardly be exaggerated. We have first the principal highways, *viz.*, the Ganges, the Brahmaputra and the Meghna, providing water communication with the neighbouring provinces of Bihar and Assam. Then we have the network of feeder channels connecting these main waterways with the trade centres including Calcutta, one of the important ports in the world. Again, in Eastern Bengal, which is inundated by the floods of these rivers, it is possible during the monsoon to carry goods by water practically from every village to the nearest feeder channel, and from there to one of the principal highways for transport to the several trade centres. This is perhaps unique in the history of the world, for, though there are other countries possessing natural waterways, I do not know of any where the system of internal boat communication has been so thoroughly planned by nature as in these parts. Apart from its value to trade it is also providing employment to hundreds or thousands of people, the importance of which in a province like Bengal, where the pressure of population is already being felt, can hardly be exaggerated.

The importance of conserving and improving, where possible, this valued gift of nature is, therefore, obvious. As regards the principal highways no attention is really needed except during the dry months, when it may be necessary, near bad shoals, to train and divert the available flow through particular channels so as to increase the depth of water to suit the requirements of navigation. A large quantity of the discharge of the Ganges and her tributaries is, however, being utilised for irrigation in the upper provinces and so long as it is extracted during the monsoon months, it does not seriously matter as there is plenty to spare. But further extraction of low water discharge of these rivers should be a matter of serious concern to Bengal and Bihar as not only is this likely to endanger navigation in the Ganges during the low water season, but, after the improvement of her spill channels in Central Bengal, we shall require more and more of this discharge to pass through them to keep them efficient. It, therefore, seems necessary to keep an eye on the future development of irrigation schemes in the Ganges basin in the upper provinces and, as the interests of these provinces are likely to conflict with those of Bengal, the necessity for the establishment of a representative body to adjudicate those interests has to be considered.

But the main problem which we have to face at present in the matter of improving facilities for communication by water is with regard to the feeder channels connecting these principal highways, especially with Calcutta. In the olden days, when the Bhagirathi was in better condition, Calcutta was of course directly connected by water with the Ganges. Later, as navigation through the Bhagirathi became more and more difficult, the Jalangi and the Mathabhanga were being utilised for the purpose. In those days steamers were of

course unknown and, as can be gathered from the old records, navigation even by boats was difficult during the dry months. It appears that even up to about the middle of the last century there was considerable activity in connection with attempts made to maintain the Mathabhanga as a feeder route to Calcutta from the Ganges. (*N.B.*:— The Churni connecting the Mathabhanga with the Hooghly appears to have been an artificial cut made in the interest of navigation.)

Most of the supply drawn from the Ganges by the Mathabhanga offtake was in those days escaping into the Kumar and steps were taken to prevent this by artificial action. It also appears that in 1860 and 1861 five chord cuts were made across some of the bad loops of the Mathabhanga thereby shortening the river by 21 miles and making its fall equal to that of the Kumar.

These attempts, however, did not prove very successful and more and more attention was paid in improving the boat route through the Sunderbans. The construction of Calcutta Canals including the Chitpur lock was taken up early in the 19th Century and the canal route was gradually improved by the construction of New cut canal in 1859; Dhappa, Bamanghata and Kulti locks in 1895; and lastly the Kristopur canal in 1910, which was intended for boats. When steamers were introduced later, they used to enter the Bidyadhari through Tolly's nalla (excavated in 1770) and take the Sunderban route *via* Port Canning and Matla. Owing to the deterioration of the Bidyadhari and the Matla the steamer route is being gradually shifted more and more towards the sea face. Here again nature has helped us by providing cross connections between outfalls of primary delta builders (estuaries), usually flowing north to south. But for these cross connections navigation from Calcutta to the Ganges would have been difficult by steamers and probably impossible by boats, as they would have to pass out into the sea to get into the next north-to-south channel and so on. In fact our main problem at present in respect of navigable waterways is with regard to the maintenance of these cross connections. The maintenance of the north-to-south channels is also proving more and more difficult and will be impossible ultimately, as these channels, in the absence of upland water supply and with spill areas prematurely reclaimed, continue to deteriorate as in the case of the Bidyadhari and the Matla.

The existence of these cross channels is probably attributable to the funnel-shape of the Bay of Bengal, the deepest sea being in the middle ending in the 'Swatch of no ground', more or less in a line with the centre of the delta and the shallower and shallower sea running along the coast lines to the east and west. Owing to the more favourable conditions available for the propagation of the tidal wave along the deeper or central portion of the Bay, the tide makes first at the head of the 'Swatch of no ground' and travels along the delta face, one branch running to the west and another to the east. For this reason and also due to the irregular extension of the delta as pointed out above, the tides do not make absolutely at the same time at different points in the same latitude along the delta face, thus giving rise to cross currents between he deeper channels just below the outfalls of contiguous north-to-south delta builders. As pointed out by Major Hirst (*Report on Nadia Rivers*, 1915) the delta, in consequence, has not probably extended continuously but in the shape of islands between two contiguous outfalls, leaving a cross channel between the island and the main land. So long as the difference in the time of

arrival of the tide at either end was such as to prevent the formation of a tidal meeting ground within the cross channel, it remained. But where, owing to irregular extension of the island at its outer face, due probably to one delta builder being more active than the other, this difference was altered so as to provide a tidal meeting ground within the cross channel, it closed up, joining the island with the main land. In this way many of the cross channels have now disappeared throwing the steamer route more and more to the sea face. The gradual rise of the tide level with a tendency to drop a larger and larger proportion of the silt content has also helped in this process.

It has been stated above that, along with the improvement of the rivers in Central Bengal in their upper reaches and diversion through them of a portion of the Ganges flood, their tidal reaches will also automatically improve and with the copious supply of upland water thus available a solution may be found to maintain these tidal channels on a permanent basis which is so vitally necessary in the interest of inland navigation in Bengal.

In this connection it may be mentioned that to shorten the distance by water between Calcutta and the Ganges, the *Madaripur Bil Route* was opened early in the present century. As the name indicates, it was a passage about 20 miles long cut through a series of *bils* connecting the Madhumati at Manickdah with the Kumar river at Fatehpur and through that river and the Ariel Khan with the Ganges. The scheme was highly successful as the spill of the Ganges and the Madhumati, after depositing the silt on the *bils* and the country-side lying to the north and west of these channels, was sufficient to give them a thorough flushing and they were more or less self-maintaining. This route practically monopolized the whole volume of waterborne traffic between Calcutta and Bihar and Upper Assam and, apart from immense benefit to trade, it was also yielding a decent revenue to Government. But to meet the demand of the growing heavy traffic it was considered necessary to widen the bil route which, in consequence, began to draw more and more of the available spill supply at the expense of the Kumar which, for want of sufficient nourishment, is now being starved to death and in which navigation is no longer possible during the dry months. It is a highly complicated subject and cannot be dealt with properly in a short note. But I mention it to show that in this case also we have the requisite natural resources in the large volume of flood water now running to waste in the Ganges and the Madhumati and the problem is one of diverting a portion to feed the Kumar which is starving to death for want of an adequate supply.

While dealing with this subject of communication, I should like to sound a note of warning especially to those who live in areas which are still being favoured by nature in the shape of annual flood flushing. We hear talk of the extension of railways in those parts, for instance the rail road from Barisal to Madaripur and between Dacca and Aricha, etc. The improvement of facilities for communication is certainly necessary as these are vital factors in the cultural and economic uplift of a nation. But rail roads in these parts have to be carried on high embankments, materially interfering with the flushing arrangement devised by nature. We should not, therefore, repeat the mistakes made in the case of Western Bengal and, instead of embanked roads or railways, our policy in future should rather be to meet the demand for communication in these parts by improvin

the existing waterways and making new waterways where none exist *at present.*

River problems with reference to erosion.

Another problem that I should like to mention before I conclude is what is being created especially by the primary delta builders of group I, in Eastern and Northern Bengal, by the rapid erosion of the banks. The problem is to a certain extent inherent in the conditions of flow of deltaic rivers, but it has been aggravated by the natural tendency to concentrate all available flow into the two principal rivers—the Ganges and the Jamuna. Resuscitation of the rivers in Central and Northern Bengal, so as to enable them to carry their due share of flood water, will no doubt make the position somewhat easier, but the erosion will still continue to remain a problem as the soil through which these rivers flow is extremely soft. Special study in a laboratory may perhaps reveal some cheap method of river conservancy by which this problem can be satisfactorily solved. But the method of direct action, *viz.*, the protection of the eroding bank by brick mattress, etc., that is now followed, is so very costly that it can hardly be adopted except for the protection of important towns.

It will be seen from the above that the all-important factor which dominates the river problems in Bengal is the large proportion of silt carried by the floods. It is the silt which has created the land and made it habitable by raising it through centuries. It is the silt again which is fertilizing the land, and where the process is still operating the country is healthy and prosperous, while where it has ceased to function the country is progressively deteriorating in health and productivity of the soil. But though the silt has proved to be such a beneficial gift of nature this very factor has given rise to most of our river problems that we find to-day. It is the silt which, by deteriorating the old river channels, has forced their diversion through lower areas which, though beneficial to the latter, has been so harmful to the area served by the former as we have seen in the case of Central and Northern Bengal. It is the silt which, by raising the beds and consequently the flood level of embanked rivers, has created problems highly complex and unique in character, as we have seen in the case of the rivers of Western Bengal, especially *the Damodar. It is the silt which has killed many of the tidal rivers* in Central Bengal and threatens to kill the rest with disastrous consequences to the interests of navigation and drainage, unless we can reinforce the ebb flow in her struggle against the silt brought in by the flood tides. It is the silt again which is killing the cross channels so valuable in the interests of navigation, which, like a thoughtful mother, nature left between the north to south channels for the benefit of Bengal in the process of extending the delta. Silt, in short, is one of our greatest benefactors and, in some respects, also a malefactor and we ought to make the closest study of this all-important factor. Unfortunately we possess very little information on the subject beyond the general knowledge as indicated above. What is required is a fully equipped laboratory to study this and other questions amenable to laboratory treatment, thoroughly and scientifically, and to guide us in our effort to solve the rather complicated river problems in Bengal. Many of these problems are rather unique and without parallel. The results achieved elsewhere will not help us much; we have to find the solution ourselves by long and concentrated study of local conditions.

Some aspects of prison reform in Bengal.

By Mr. R. H. Hutchings, C.I.E., I.C.S., late Additional Secretary, Home Department of the Government of Bengal.

"In order to tap as wide a field of instructed opinion as possible, the Government of Bengal recently issued a questionnaire on prison problems. This questionnaire you will find before you to-day, and the questions, together with the statistical notes attached, will give you a general idea of the nature of the problem, some aspects of which I am going to try to deal with during my talk to-day. This questionnaire was circulated to the Boards of Official and Non-official Visitors attached to every jail, and also to all members of the Legislature. If after going through these questions, and listening to the discussion this afternoon, any Rotarians are good enough to send me opinions and suggestions, they will be a welcome addition to the great volume of replies which have already been received, and are now under examination.

We are all agreed, I presume, that reform must be directed towards making prisons more effective instruments in the reduction and prevention of crime. It is for that purpose that the tax-payer pays for jails, and that is the result which he is entitled to expect for his money.

While in olden days jails achieved their purpose to a certain extent by the unpleasantness of their regime, we aim to-day at something higher but infinitely more difficult. We are out to see if we can build up the prisoner's physique by good food, regular hours, and steady tasks, restore his morals and his character by the influence of discipline, inculcate ideas of hygiene and personal cleanliness, and at the same time increase his power to earn an honest living by teaching a trade or handicraft. The difficulty, when you are dealing with prisoners whose standard of life and education varies as much as it does in India, is to regulate the treatment of the individual so that the prison is neither too severe nor too comfortable, and when it comes to the exercise of reformative influences, you must remember that the department has to deal with a large number of prisoners for very short periods only. For instance, last year, out of 37,000 new admissions, 28,000 had sentences of less than six months, and half of those had sentences not exceeding one month. Moreover, 10,000 were sentenced to simple imprisonment, which means that they are not liable to compulsory labour.

The Problem of short-term Prisoners.

The problem of the short-term prisoner is a very difficult problem. Courts have to administer the law as they find it, and under existing conditions, I am afraid, the presence of such prisoners in jails must almost be considered a necessary evil. However that may be, it is clear that jails can do very little good to short-term or simple

imprisonment prisoners, and the danger is that such prisoners form a body of persons who have once incurred the stigma of jail, and have found the inside of a prison far less unpleasant than they may have feared. The result is that two of the moral bulwarks against crime have to a large extent disappeared, and little or nothing has been done to supply fresh defences.

I do not mention difficulties in a spirit either of complaint or as an excuse for inaction. While they are facts which must be taken into account, we prefer to regard such difficulties as stimulants to constructive effort, and I am now going to mention some of the lines of attack which the replies to our questionnaire suggest.

Question of Accommodation.

So far as accommodation is concerned, local overcrowding, specially among undertrial prisoners, still exists, although we have been able to do a great deal to relieve it. You will notice from the figures which I have supplied that there has been a steady tendency for our jail population to increase from between 11,000 and 12,000 prisoners 10 years ago, to 20,000 in recent years. We have at our disposal sufficient total accommodation to deal with this increased population, but considerations, which I shall mention later make it desirable to provide improved facilities for segregation of different classes, and this will involve additions and alterations within our existing jails. We shall have to consider the provision of increased hospital accommodation for the observation and segregation of infectious diseases, and it has been suggested that we must provide more accommodation for the observation and proper treatment of lunatics and mental defectives of whom, owing to lack of proper institutional accommodation, a considerable number still have to be dealt with by the Jail Department. There are indications that we ought to readjust our accommodation to provide more room for under-trial prisoners and, also among under-trials, to secure more effective segregation of different classes, such as juveniles from adults and first offenders from known habitual criminals.

Classification Rules.

A note in the body of the questionnaire indicates the main principles of classification. The consensus of opinion recorded is that our present classification rules are adequate on both counts, that is to say, the prevention of the contamination of casual offenders by the habitual criminal, and the provision of suitable variations in jail treatment to deal with persons of different standards of life. While the rules are satisfactory, overcrowding and the design of some of the jails makes it difficult to put them into practice effectively, and this is one account on which it may be necessary for us to undertake structural alterations.

The Jail Staff.

Together with improvements in the buildings attention is being directed to staff questions. We have received a good deal of evidence

of the opinion that our superior executive staff is not sufficient in numbers, is over-burdened with clerical work, and needs to be strengthened in order to ensure proper supervision by a superior officer of what is going on inside the jail at all hours. In addition to increase in numbers, we want to devise improvements in training, and we are examining whether it will be a good plan to establish some form of training centre both for superior staff and for warders, attached preferably to one of our Central jails. Among the warder staff, although the department has made efforts in recent years to encourage and promote healthy recreation, there is evidence that an increase in strength is necessary in order to provide for adequate rest and recreation periods, and another point which calls for attention is the provision of more and better quarters for warders, in particular, married quarters. Finally, we would like if possible to attract a more educated type of man, particularly Bengalees, into the jail service. This is not entirely a question of pay. In addition to improving the conditions of service we shall explore the possibility of providing avenues of promotion to higher ranks which may offer attractive prospects.

Jail Industries.

You will also find a short note on the main considerations in connection with jail industries in the body of the questionnaire. The replies which we have received have revealed no startling suggestions for reform. The fact is that in our jails we already have a great variety of useful industries, and the occupation of the long-term prisoners is on the whole well provided for. Our real difficulty is with the comparatively short-term prisoners who come to us unskilled in any trade, and remain too short a time to be trained. With them the solution seems to be to encourage Superintendents of district jails to use their discretion and ingenuity in introducing simple cottage industries, which could be practised as a supplement to income by prisoners when released in their localities, or which provide a commodity for which there may be a demand in the local market. Opinion is greatly divided on the question of the abolition of such forms of labour as the oil-mill. There is a volume of opinion which would like to abolish it, but which cannot suggest any equally useful substitute for the short-term cooly class prisoner, and I suppose that it is a fact that these oil-mills in the jails supply the purest oil that can be obtained in the province. The general consensus of opinion seems to be that the oil-mill should not be altogether abolished, but that great discretion should be used in selecting the prisoners to work them, that the task should be lightened, and that prisoners should not be kept at this form of labour for any length of time.

Education in Jails.

With regard to education in jails, I shall have more to say when we come to deal with juvenile and adolescent prisoners, but we have received a certain number of recommendations that we should attempt adult primary education within the jails, I am not sure that those who recommend this course have fully considered the implications. It is

clear that the prisoners must be selected as it is little use attempting anything with prisoners who have sentences of less than one year and we must consider an age-limit. We shall have to provide for teaching staff, for places of instruction, for hours of instruction, and probably for the necessary lighting equipment for work after dark. Many have suggested that vocational education would be more profitable than literary education, but vocational education must in practice be linked up with the general question of jail industries. In speaking to an audience of Rotarians, I have no hesitation in suggesting that there is a field for the voluntary worker in giving recreational and educational lectures to prisoners occasionally in our Central jails. Not only do such lectures have a very real moral value, but they do provide the prisoners with a change of thought, and a recreation in every sense of the word, the value of which cannot be exaggerated. I know that our Inspector-General would gladly welcome any offers by individuals or groups of individuals to provide for this very read need.

Games and Exercises.

Provision for games and physical exercises is another matter on which we have called for opinions. Considerations of space and discipline obviously limit the extent to which active games can be allowed inside a jail, but there seems to be at least a case for examining whether we cannot do something to provide a physical training Instructor for each jail to conduct physical training and physical drill among staff as well as prisoners. Team games, requiring a small space only, can be allowed to well-conducted prisoners in superior divisions as a privilege, and while on the subject of privileges, suggestions have been made that well-behaved prisoners should be allowed to have tobacco, and also that prisoners should be allowed to earn a money reward by their labour, such money either being held for their use after release, or being made available to the prisoner as a privilege to enable him to buy tobacco or other small comforts. Both these proposals are attractive from the point of view that it is easier to maintain discipline by giving small and valued privileges, which are liable to be lost by bad conduct, rather than by maintaining a state of affairs where there is temptation both to the prisoners and to the staff to corrupt practices, in order to obtain small comforts not permitted by the rules. We have, as yet, come to no conclusions, but I mention them as points which are receiving definite and careful consideration.

After-Care and Juvenile Delinquents.

The two important matters I should like to deal with before closing are After-Care Work and the treatment of Juvenile Delinquents. I believe that both are vitally related to our main problem, that is, how to decrease our convict population. When dealing with the one, we are thinking in terms of preventing young persons from getting into jail at all, and when dealing with the other we are thinking how we can ensure that once released the prisoner will never relapse. In both spheres we need not only the good-will and co-operation of the public, but the practical assistance of voluntary workers. We have

already in existence some After-Care Associations which are tackling the problem with courage and pertinacity, but replies to our questionnaire reveal beyond doubt that, taking the province as a whole, we need to-day to do far more to help and assist the discharged prisoner. The indications are that we should establish committees in all the districts and try and supplement their funds from Government revenues. These committees should, it is suggested, be at first of a mixed official and non-official character, although it may be hoped that as the work proceeds it may be possible for it to be taken over more and more by non-official agencies with official control forming no more than a benevolent background.

Finally, I come to the Juvenile Delinquent. If, indeed, there is any sphere in which educative and reformative treatment can be looked to for concrete results, it is, surely, in the correct treatment of children, and adolescents who display criminal tendencies. Although I am not speaking to-day as the mouth-piece of Government's considered opinions, I can say without hesitation that our Home Minister, the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin, regards this particular aspect of jail reform as the key-stone of his policy. As I have said before, the aim is to keep these young persons out of the ordinary jails. To deal with them we have the Bengal Children's Act, the Reformatory Schools Act, and the Borstal Act. These Acts all aim at enabling the courts, in some cases the specially constituted courts, to accord to young persons of different ages treatment which substitutes the "home" and "school" atmosphere for the prison atmosphere. The older ones, dealt with under the Borstal Act, are very well provided for on our Borstal Institution at Bankura, where they receive a liberal education of the primary standard with, I may say, occasional successful excursions up to Matriculation, supplemented by vocational training on which of course the greater emphasis is laid. Younger children are dealt with by two Acts, the Reformatory Schools Act and the Bengal Children's Act. At present the only Government institution which we have in Bengal to which they can be sent is the Reformatory and Industrial Schools at Alipore. Accommodation there is limited, and that has two results—the first is that the Bengal Children's Act can only be extended to the limited suburban area round Calcutta, and the second is that we have to send most of our children dealt with under the Reformatory Schools Act from the rest of Bengal to the Reformatory School at Hazaribagh. I am happy to be able to inform you that in this vital reform the Ministry have already decided to take a definite and decided step forward. The Reformatory and Industrial Schools at Alipore have been doing splendid work under very difficult conditions, and Government have now accepted the proposal of its Managing Committee to acquire land in the country near Calcutta and to build there an entirely new institution which will accommodate 500 children on the "cottage-home" system. They will be accommodated there in open, healthy, and beautiful surroundings, in cottages of a simple type, but provided with modern sanitation and lighting. There will be ample space for recreation and games as well as for the cultivation of plants and flowers. For the boys from the industrial areas, work-shops will provide training in useful craftsmanship, while for the agriculturist practical instruction in agriculture and improved methods of cultivation will be available. The scheme will cost over 6 lakhs but will, we hope, mean an increase in recurring expenditure of less than Rs. 20,000 annually. Not only will it enable us to deal

with these children in incomparably better conditions, but it will enable us to extend the operation of the Bengal Children's Act to a far wider area. The extension of that Act involves the creation of special courts, the enlistment of the services of special Honorary Magistrates, and the appointment of Probation Officers. As some indication of the work involved you will be interested to know that in Calcutta we have 12 Lady Magistrates working in Children's Courts with a Presidency Magistrate. In 1937 they dealt with 426 children, 57 of whom were sent to Industrial Schools an 18 to approved Homes, the remainder being placed on probation. In these courts everything is done to avoid the intimating atmosphere of a criminal court. The aim is to treat the child and decide his case with understanding and with sympathy. These figures indicate the volume of useful work which will open up in the districts both for officials and non-officials when an extension of this admirable Act becomes possible.

In spite of the operation of these special Acts, we must still for some time expect to have in our jails a certain number of adolescents. In the Presidency and Alipore Central Jails we have already instituted experimental elementary classes which are a marked success, and a further step is the concentration of young prisoners so far as possible from other parts of Bengal in the District Jail at Berhampore where similar special arrangements are available. With regard to future development, we have enlisted the services of an experienced officer in the Education Department to advise us on the future scope of such education and on the organization and qualifications of the special staff necessary for the purpose.

I am afraid that I have already occupied more of your time than I should on a not very lively subject and there are many interesting points such as home leave for convicts, library extensions, and variation of diet which I have had to leave untouched. While I have indicated the prime importance which is attached to the proper treatment of juvenile delinquency, I have endeavoured to show that our whole system is under review, and that the aim goes beyond making prisons more comfortable and less grim. I said at the beginning of this talk, and I repeat it now, that our aim is and must be to provide a more effective machinery for the prevention and reduction of crime. In this task the Jail Department is called upon in increasing measure for imagination and sympathy. The work of that staff is always arduous, often unpleasant, and usually thankless. I have not the time to pay the tribute, which I should like, to their work, but if I may for one moment speak on their behalf, I would assure you that they in turn will be heartened and encouraged by the thought that they have behind them the sympathy, the interest, and the goodwill not only of the public at large, but in particular of the Rotary Club of Calcutta."

Some figures about Bengal Jails.

Average daily total population of District and Central Jails in Bengal in different years—

1925	11,312
1930	15,266
1935	20,248
1937	19,411

	1	2	3					4				
			Number who had gained weight.					Number who had lost weight.				
	No. released during the year.	No. who had neither gained nor lost weight.	A Up to 1 lb.	B From 1 lb to 5 lbs.	C From 5 lbs. to 10 lbs.	D Over 10 lbs.	Total.	A Up to 1 lb.	B From 1 lb. to 5 lbs.	C From 5 lbs. to 10 lbs.	D Over 10 lbs.	Total.
Provincial Grand total ..	48,234	18,200	4,561	10,951	5,265	2,082	22,859	2,606	2,961	1,140	468	7,175

Year.	Daily average number of all classes.	Admission into hospital.		Daily average number of sick of all classes.		Death from all causes of all classes of prisoners.	
		Number of admissions.	Ratio per mille.	Daily average sick.	Ratio per mille.	Total number of deaths.	Ratio per mille.
1932	22,618	32,295	1,427·83	934·04	41·34	238	10·52
1933	21,405	24,095	1,125·65	761·98	35·59	233	10·80
1934	21,851	23,207	1,062·07	788·90	36·10	282	12·91
1935	22,724	23,303	1,025·57	808·31	35·56	240	10·56
1936	22,719	21,244	935·05	793·95	34·50	276	12·14
1937	21,331	19,198	899·99	760·99	35·67	234	10·97

There are in Bengal—

6 Central Jails.
19 District Jails.
62 Subsidiary Jails.

Problems of rural Hygiene and their solution.

By Lt.-Col. A. C. Chatterjee, Director of Public Health, Bengal.

The vast bulk of the population of India generally—and of Bengal particularly—live in the rural parts. Therefore any of the problems, which affect the health of the population, must naturally have a direct bearing upon the health of the people living in the rural areas. It is for that reason all the more important that a closer attention is paid by all concerned, namely, the State, the local authorities and the people themselves, to the problems of hygiene in rural areas. Although particular problems, specially those relating to diseases, may vary to a certain extent in the different parts of this country—for example, in some parts hookworm disease or kala-azar or plague may be an important problem while in others it may not—but in the vast majority of cases the following items are practically common:—

(1) Malaria,

(2) Water-supply,

(3) Nutrition,

(4) Tuberculosis,

(5) Housing conditions,

(6) Personal hygiene,

(7) Health education, and

(8) Public health organisation.

(1) *Malaria.*—Malaria is the most important disease of India in general and Bengal in particular. In India, about hundred million cases occur every year, out of which nearly thirty to forty million cases happen in Bengal alone. In Bengal, about half a million deaths occur out of nearly a million deaths that occur from this preventible disease in the whole of India. It is a most devitalising and emasculating disease. Its effect on the population can easily be seen by looking at the human suffering in the province of Bengal where the disease has been prevalent for about a century now. The people of this province have largely become physically unfit mainly because of this disease, with the result that they are losing ground in the struggle for existence in many avenues of life—for example, they are debarred from entering into the Army because of their physical unfitness.

Malaria is largely man-made in India. The engineers and their contractors have been largely responsible for its spread. Railways, roadways and canals have been constructed without very much regard being paid to the effect on the health of the public which such construction produces in the long run. In many instances, particularly in Northern India, the mere construction of these cannot be blamed for at all, but the method in which they have been constructed. But the same cannot be said about their construction in deltaic regions of Bengal where many of the roadways and railways emankments should not have been allowed to be constructed. But the people too are also

responsible. Tanks and ponds are being dug by the people and are not being properly kept up with the result that malaria is rampant in a large number of the population. It is particularly present in Assam, Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and the United Provinces.

Whatever may have been done in the past, time has come when we should stop the creation of any further nuisance by co-ordination and co-operation between the different departments of Government, between the public and the local authorities and between the people amongst themselves. We should also, as far as possible, try to remedy the defect and undo the mischief that has already been caused by the creation of mosquito breeding places. But it is a gigantic task and without the willing co-operation of all concerned, it will be very difficult for achievement.

In tackling this problem, we will have to make use of the temporary measures such as quininisation. But we should not however entirely depend upon it as it will be a false economy in the long run. We should try to devise ways and means for a much better control of the disease than by quininisation, that is by means of works which should be of a permanent nature.

(2) *Water-supply.*—This is a crying need in the rural parts of Bengal. In many parts, drinking water can only be had after trudging several miles from the villages and the womenfolk have to do this hard work. Improvement of water-supply will not only lessen the amount of sickness from waterborne diseases like cholera, typhoid, etc., but it is likely to help in the diminution to an appreciable extent in the general sickness as a whole. Moreover with improved sources of supply, for example, tube-wells and covered masonry wells fitted with pumps vis-a-vis open tanks and ponds, the number of breeding grounds of mosquitoes will lessen and also the chances of pollution of these sources of water-supply will diminish. There should be a method and an organised procedure in making provision for the water-supply in the rural areas. A programme for the whole district should be made in consultation with the accredited representatives of the villagers and suitable committees should be formed for its execution and supervision. Once the programme is laid down, it should be executed as finances become available.

(3) *Nutrition.*—This is a factor to which attention has only recently been given. It is being realised more and more that it is an important item and should deserve greater attention than what has been paid in the past. It is not only entails the production of total amount of food-supply, it not only entails how cheap that supply could be, but it also entails the question as to how best the limited resources of the peasantry can be utilised in getting the best out of the food-supply that is available within their means. In many instances, the people do not know how to have a balanced diet and utilise their staple food in the best possible way. It is no use prescribing a certain type of food as a staple diet to a particular province where that food is not grown in sufficient quantities. It is difficult for the peasantry to pay for an imported staple article of food. The staple article must be produced close to the areas where such article is consumed.

(4) *Tuberculosis.*—This fell disease is now much more prevalent in the rural areas than what it used to be before. Very likely it is spreading from the industrial foci where living conditions are very

unsatisfactory, where the working conditions are quite strenuous with the result that the workers become pulled down in health and contract tuberculosis. The industrial worker, as long as he can earn his living, sticks to his occupation. But when his health breaks down and he is no longer capable of making both ends meet, he goes back to his native village and thus forms a suitable focus for spreading the disease in that area. With practically no organisation at present in the villages to check its spread, the disease naturally is making strides in claiming victims from the rural population.

(5) *Housing conditions.*—Even a cursory glance at the homesteads in the rural areas will convince even a layman that the housing conditions there are far from satisfactory. In many instances, there are either no plinths or very low ones. The houses are principally made of mud walls and thatched roofing. In some places, tin is also used as walls for the hut. Windows not being common, ventilation is very poor. In the case of thatched roofs the eaves are brought down so low that light and free flow of air into the rooms is obstructed. To add to all these miseries, more often than not rooms are overcrowded. But on the top of all these, usually the cattle are also tethered in sheds adjoining the living rooms. In many places, particularly in Bengal, the homesteads are so overhung with thick shady trees and rank vegetations are allowed to grow up so close that light and air are badly obstructed. The peasant thus denies himself and his family the benefits of the disinfecting effects of sun light. There is hardly any provision for the disposal of waste water from the kitchen and the bathing place, which are allowed to stagnate close to the homestead and thus adds to the various other nuisances already present in the villages.

A latrine usually does not exist in a village home nor does the villager as a rule intelligently use his field for the purpose of easing himself. He very often defecates on the banks of his tanks and thus pollutes the water. There should be no harm if he could utilise the field in a proper way for this purpose. For example, if he uses the field at least a couple hundred yards away from the nearest habitation and opposite to the side from which the prevailing wind blows and if he digs a shallow hole, say nine inches deep, and covers up the nightsoil after defecation in that hole earth he could improve the sanitation of the village very greatly indeed without incurring any extra expenditure and at the same time enrich his fields with valuable manure. Of course, those who can afford, can provide bored hole and domestic septic tank latrines.

(6) *Personal hygiene.*—In practically all religions, there are many rules and injunctions guiding the daily life of the individual. There are definite injunctions against creating certain nuisances; there are clear instructions regarding the observation of fasts and feasts, kind of food, discarding away earthen vessels, etc. But as times are changing, faith in the observation of these injunctions is slackening. The peasantry has not yet got a rationalistic code of hygiene with the result that his personal habits and manners are far less helpful to him now than what it used to be before. For example, the simple injunction, that one should not take food from the hands of an outsider whom one does not know, was an excellent measure for preventing the spread of certain communicable diseases like typhoid, cholera, etc., and it was effective particularly in those areas where there was no official or semi-official organisation for the control of such diseases. But we all know

how this custom is slackening and the result is also obvious that diseases, particularly bowel diseases, are quite common and spread when once introduced in an area.

(7) *Health education.*—From the foregoing it is evident that before one could expect an intelligent co-operation of the individual, it is essential that the individual should be possessed of the knowledge which he should make use of and put them in practice in his life. Possession of such knowledge is sine qua non for success of any public health activity. For example, the peasant ought to know that he should not excavate burrowpits indiscriminately, otherwise he will be creating excellent mosquito-breeding places. He should know that the mosquito is transmitter of diseases like malaria, dengue, filariasis, etc., and therefore he should try to avoid creating breeding grounds for this pest. He should know that if he does get an attack of malaria, he should get *himself treated and use sufficient quantity of quinine. The peasant* ought to know that diseases like cholera spread through contaminated water. Therefore he should have such sources of supply as tube-wells or masonry wells covered on the top and fitted with a hand pump, which can be kept under better protection than ordinary open tanks or wells. The peasant should possess the knowledge as to how to make the most of his food within his limited resources. He ought to know that the *diet should be well balanced so that he may get the best out of his* food. He should know that growing children and expectant mothers require more nourishing food. He should know that he should not spend money on alcoholic drinks. He should know how to cook his rice or wheat as the case may be, because at present, particularly in case of rice, most of the essential elements are thrown away and practically pure starch is ingested which does not give the full amount of benefit which the peasant is rightly entitled to form his food. The peasant ought to know that it is wrong to overcrowd the living rooms, that it is wrong to keep windows completely shut, that it is wrong to bring down the eaves so low that it obstructs the ingress of light and free flow of air into the rooms. He should also know that a woman in poor health, particularly where there is a suspicion of tuberculosis, is sure to succumb if repeated pregnancies are forced upon her. It would thus be evident from what has been mentioned before, what vast amount of knowledge has to be imparted to the rural public so that the peasant should be made health conscious—so that he may be able to think of life in terms of health and not merely in terms of disease—so that not only he may guard against the disease but his physical and mental development should be healthful and vigorous.

Two Methods of Educating Public.

There are two principal methods by which the rural public can be given the necessary education. The first one is through children in the schools. Health education should form a definite and vigorous programme in the curriculum of the schools. It should be imparted by those who have had a special training on the subject. Children who have received such systematic and vigorous education on matters of health are likely to grow up with a much better health consciousness than their parents and thus would be much more useful citizens. They would demand a higher standard of living and better condtions of life from the

point of view of health than what their parents can think of at present. The second is to impart education to the adults—we cannot neglect them. If we take them into our confidence, we are likely to convert them into our confidence, we are likely to convert them into our views and rouse them from the abject apathy and indifference to a richer and fuller life from the point of view of health than what they know and can think of at present. This can be achieved by magic lantern demonstrations, lectures, charts, diagrams, cinema shows, family and group talks and conversation held in clubs and associations.

We much inculcate into the people the spirit of self-help. They must be weaned out of their idea that it is the duty of somebody else to do this. He must feel that it is his primary duty to look after himself properly first. He must be energised and mended to give up his idea of being spoon-fed or driven or compelled to take some halting action through fear. He should be made to realise that it is a matter of pride and joy to work for himself as well as for the community. He will however need guidance and that should be forthcoming at the proper time, that is where the initiative by the State or local authorities is necessary.

One of the best methods of imparting this education is mobilising the energy of the youth. There are a few organisations, for example, the Bratachari Institutions, but their number is far too few as compared to the total requirement. If the youths who are going to appear in the Matriculation, Intermediate or even Degree Examinations, be made to realise the importance and significance of such service to the community and urged to make contract with the population from amongst whom they have arisen, I have every hope they would respond willingly and generously for such a service which will make better citizens and fit them for a higher and fuller life in future. It would be a great advance. It may delay the passing of the examinations for a period of six months or a year as the case may be but it would make a better man of him as his knowledge about the population will be greatly enhanced and he will know and realise the actual conditions, handicaps and miseries from which his fellow countrymen suffer. He will appreciate the difficulties that lie ahead of the nation in the path of progress. But for this purpose, active initiative and co-operation are needed between the youth, villagers, local authorities and the State. But I am convinced that the youth of this country which is not yet trampled with the burden of seeking self-interest, whose mind and body are still young, who is naturally sympathetic and kind, will be able to overcome the many difficulties that it may come across in this work. I am sure, given the proper guidance and direction, he could yet evolve a silent revolution in the health and economics of this country.

(8) *Public health organisation.*—This must essentially consist of the State, local authorities and voluntary organisations. One can only refer to this very important matter briefly here. There is no doubt that in a backward country like ours the State will have to take the initiative. If possible, the State should create organisation itself. It may cost a little more but it would be far more effective. But it is not essential that the State should continue to have complete charge of the organisation for all time to come. State can hand over a good many of its activities gradually to local authorities and to voluntary organisations when they are really efficient and financially stable to take over. In any case, however, State will have

to give suitable direction and exercise effective supervision over the work carried out by the local authorities and voluntary organisations. Even so that the State cannot carry out the different activities without the active and willing co-operation of the local authorities, voluntary organisation and of the people generally. One must bear in mind more voluntary work is available, less costly would a programme be, for example, voluntary work could be of immense help in carrying out anti-malaria work, sinking of tube-wells, digging wells, excavating tanks and khals, clearing jungle, cleaning villages, rousing public opinion, etc. So also the more we get the rural people interested in their hygiene conditions the better it would be.

Agricultural Marketing in Bengal.

By Mr. A. R. Malik, Senior Marketing Officer, Bengal.

Introduction.

Marketing, in other words all the processes involved in the transfer of any produce from the producer to the consumer, has ever been recognised as a specialised operation. The function of the producer, it is said, is only to produce and he has neither the time, nor the capacity, to go into the various problems involved, at the various stages, after his produce has been harvested and handed over to the first-comer till it reaches the consumer in the finished form.

The arguments in favour of Marketing being recognised as a specialised occupation of perhaps not one but as many as five or six separate functionaries, each performing his own share, big or small, of the process and deriving a proportionate share of the ultimate value of the produce, are considered to be sound and inevitable.

On the contrary, it was being gradually felt that the producer was getting less and less share of the ultimate value of his produce when the processes involved in its marketing were getting more and more complicated and specialised till ultimately he got anything from 4 to 10 annas of every rupee which the consumer paid, depending upon the distance which separated the producer from the consumer and the number of middlemen handling a certain commodity. This fact was more particularly realised during the economic crisis of post-war period and the drought in Northern Bengal during the years 1930-1931, which brought about an unprecedented fall in the prices of agricultural produce.

It was true that there were certain processes involved, at certain stages, in the course of marketing which were beyond the capacity, or business acumen, of the producer; but this was also true that, taking advantage of his illiteracy and his inability to move too far afield leaving his home and immediate occupations, the middlemen kept him ignorant of the intrinsic value of his produce, at Assembling, Distributive and Consuming centres, of which he kept himself well-informed through personal contact and a commonness of interest with others in the trade.

The Royal Commission on Agriculture in India was appointed at a most opportune moment and its Report, more than anything else,

opened the eyes, alike of the Government and the public, to the abuses that existed in the marketing of agricultural produce. They showed that there were stages and processes which were not so highly specialised as was made out and by taking a hand at which, by careful and sympathetic guidance, the producer could get a little more than what he was getting.

This small bulletin is, therefore, being issued to state the problems involved, the work so far done and in view to meet those problems.

History of the problem.

The question of how to ensure to the producer a reasonable price for his produce is not a new one and has existed ever since the produce of land began to be sold. We hear of measures adopted by the Moghal Emperors with the above object. The name of a forerunner Alauddin Khilji—a Pathan King—deserves special mention. He caused edicts to be issued aiming at fixing the prices of everything including the produce of land and provided that if the prices tended to rise owing to the scarcity of any commodity at any place the Government officer concerned would arrange to supply it from places where it was in abundance. The import of grain was encouraged; but its export declared a crime. Mohammed Kasim Ferishta, the great historian, says that the King himself had a daily report laid before him of the quantity sold and remaining in the several granaries.

In the earlier days of the British rule in India, the East India Company also attempted "the regulation of prices." Later on, it was realised that no Government department existed to attack all problems affecting agriculture and it was due to the untiring zeal of Lord Curzon, during whose régime, as the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, the first sod was cut and the foundation laid of an Agricultural Department in India. The nucleus was provided by the establishment of a Central Research Laboratory at Pusa, in 1905, and the provision of Agricultural Departments and colleges in all the major provinces to study the problems affecting the produce of land followed. They all aimed at producing crops of better quality and higher yields; but the problems connected with the marketing of agricultural produce remained unattended.

The Royal Commission on Agriculture, under the distinguished Chairmanship of Lord Linlithgow who had already done very important and useful work of the nature he was called upon to do in India, in England, was appointed on 23rd April 1926 "to examine and report on the present condition of Agriculture and Rural Economy in British India and to make recommendations for the improvement of agriculture and the promotion of the welfare and prosperity of the rural population; in particular, to investigate, among other things, the existing method of transport and Marketing of Agricultural Produce and Stock."

The Commission assembled at Simla on the 11th October 1926 and, after extensive tours and examination of witnesses and a study of local conditions, signed their Report on 14th of April 1928.

The work in hand, therefore, follows the lead given by the Royal Commission through the recommendations contained in their Report.

The Problems.

The problems that have to be faced, and their solution, are not so simple as may appear at first sight. Although much headway has been made in other countries, it is for the first time in the history that work of this nature is being attempted in a scientific and systematic manner in India. Attention was first diverted to them by the Royal Commission in the following terms:—

"The Agricultural Departments in India have done much to improve the quality and to increase the quantity of the cultivator's outturn; but it cannot be said that they have been able to give him substantial help in securing the best possible financial return for his improved quality and his increased outturn. Except to a limited extent, where improved quality is concerned, they have regarded the problems connected with the marketing of his produce as outside their purview. His interests have, therefore, in the main, been left to the free play of economic forces and they have suffered in the process. For he is an infinitely small unit as compared with distributors and with the consumers of his produce who, in their respective fields, become more highly organised and more strongly consolidated. It is in their interest to secure from the producer the raw material they handle, or acquire, at the least possible price. Marketing is the sole business of the distributor whereas, from the point of view of the cultivator, it is apt to be regarded as subsidiary to production.

"That abuses exist is, however, beyond dispute. For instance, when the primary collector, who acts also as a money-lender, succeeds in getting a cultivator into his grip he is apt to use his advantage ruthlessly. Some of the marketing practices that obtain in the markets proper amount to nothing less than theft. Bad communications and chaotic conditions of marketing encourage a superfluity of middlemen. Apart from the organisation of producers for the sale of produce, the most effective means of removing unnecessary middlemen are the provision of good roads and the establishment of a sufficient number of well regulated markets, easy of access to the cultivator."

Coming to the point, following problems present themselves for solution:—

(1) *Marketing charges.*—It has been observed that the cultivators have to pay heavily in the form of market charges or deductions made out of their dues or weight of the produce they bring to sell, for which there is absolutely no authority or justification, while there are some charges for service rendered. Some of the charges are enumerated below:—

(*a*) Sample of the produce is taken and not paid for. Finlow June Enquiry Committee also drew attention to this.

(*b*) Dhalta, or excess weight, is taken as a practice.

(*c*) Different weights are in vogue for the same produce in different parts of the province. At one place in the district of Dinajpur 120 tolas of jute make one seer.

(*d*) Britti, or Iswar Britti. This is a deduction made for charity which the buyer wants to give and whether it is actually given or not is best known to him.

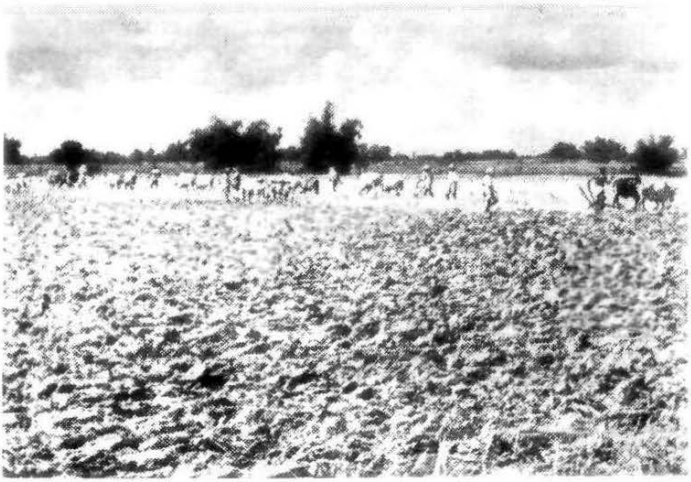


THE HON'BLE MR. H. S. SUHRAWARDY EXPLAINING TO A HU— GATHERING AT SHARSANA THE HUMAN RECONSTRUCTION SCHEME AND ACQUAINTING THEM WITH THE VARIOUS BENEFICENT MEASURES ADOPTED OR CONTEMPLATED BY GOVERNMENT FOR THE [illegible] OF THE PEOPLE

The Man behind the Plough.



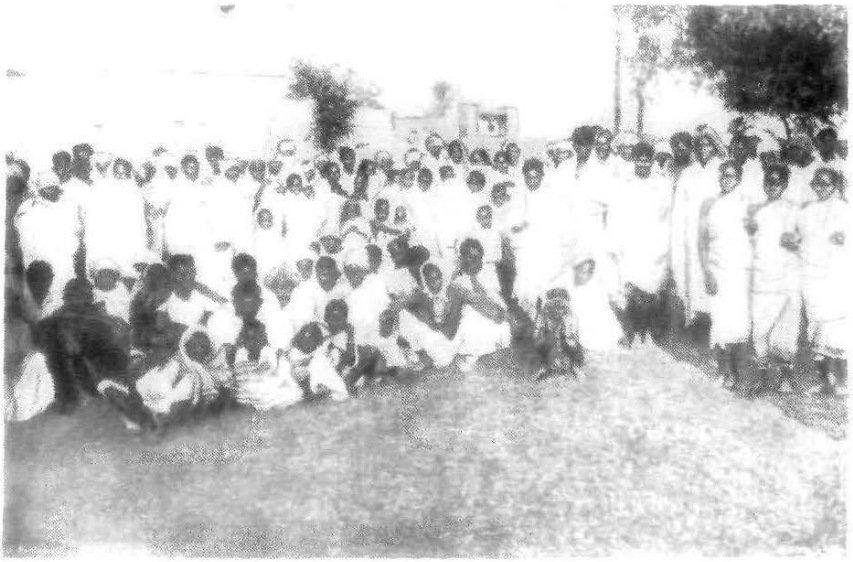
A TYPICAL BENGAL PEASANT, AT WORK WITH HIS PLOUGH.



A VILLAGE SCENE SHOWING A GROUP OF BENGAL PEASANTS, ENGAGED IN THEIR DAILY LABOURS. THESE REPRESENT THE CLASS WHOSE WELFARE THE PRESENT MINISTRY IN BENGAL HAVE PLACED AT THE FOREFRONT OF THEIR PROGRAMME.



A typical scene when Hon'ble Ministers are on tour. A section of the huge crowd which assembled to greet three Hon'ble Ministers during one of their tours.



A GROUP OF SANTHALS IN THE MALDA DISTRICT ARE ASSEMBLED TO PLACE THEIR GRIEVANCES BEFORE THE SPECIAL OFFICER APPOINTED BY GOVERNMENT



PERIPATETIC WEAVING SCHOOL IN THE BARIND AREA. THE SANTHAL STUDENTS AND THEIR WORK.

(*e*) Baisari, or a quantity appropriated for sitting on to weigh the produce purchased.

(*f*) Koyali and Kabari. Charges for weighing and the Buyer's menial servants.

(*g*) Mangon, or something begged, or requested.

(*h*) Dudh-khawa, or something to buy milk with for the buyer or his children.

(*i*) Hate-tola, or something lifted by hands.

(*j*) Brokerage, for arranging to buy or sell.

(*k*) Refraction, a deduction to cover moisture, dirt, dust or other impurities, etc.

(2) *Weights and measures.*—These present peculiar problem. For straight business, there should be only one set of weights for buying and selling and their values should be the same all over the country, otherwise prices cannot be compared. But, under the Government of India Act, 1935, the question of standardisation of weights is a central subject, and after an Indian Assembly Act has laid down the standards, they would be made applicable to the provinces.

(3) It is recognised that middlemen are necessary in trade but in places, or with particular commodities, perhaps they are too many of them with the result that the producer's share of the sale-proceed is reduced thereby. This is a problem that requires to be handled with sympathy on either side.

(4) Cultivators are generaly illiterate and unorganised. This results to their disadvantage. It would be desirable to organise them into corporate bodies to manage their affairs as far as practicable.

(5) There is no arrangement at present by which the cultivators can find out the prevailing prices for their produce in other markets. This calls for the establishment of a system of Market News Service, by means of bulletins, radio and telegraphic communications.

(6) Cultivators have at present no voice in a market or in the management. Markets, or hats, belong to their owners with no supervision, or authority to enforce the convenience and requirements of those using them. Everything depends upon the will and kindness of the owner.

(7) Finally, the system of financing requires some careful consideration. Producers require finance at the time of cultivation and harvesting, at the most, for six months in a year. Taking advantage of their situation, the financiers beat the cultivators both ways, by charging a high rate of interest, the first instalment being deducted when the loan is being given, and by buying his produce cheaper than its market price at the time of harvest.

Procedure of work.

In attempting to improve anything, it is first essential to know all details connected with it. Here again, the Royal Commission showed the way when they said:—

"For the framing of a sound and comprehensive policy for improvement in marketing, exact knowledge of the methods of distribution

applicable to any particular class of produce, including collection, storage, transport, and where it exists, manipulation, together with a detailed analysis of the price structure at every stage in the operation, is essential."

All this forms part of the investigation work which is to be followed by development work and under this latter head fall the standardisation of grades or qualities of a produce and the organisation of trade, or the provision of facilities to the producers with the object of seeing that they get a better share of the value of their produce than what they are getting.

Work done.

The Government of India made a grant to Bengal of one lakh of rupees, spread over five years, 1935 to 1939-40, for carrying out the preliminary investigation work. This work was started in 1935 and by the end of December 1938, investigations have been completed in 28 crops and commodities, excepting jute, which is being very thoroughly studied by the Indian Central Jute Committee. Investigations have been completed in respect of the following crops and commodities falling under four groups, namely:—

Cereal and oilseeds.—(1) Wheat, (2) rice, (3) linseed, (4) groundnuts, (5) barley, (6) grain, (7) mustard, rapes and toria, and (8) maize.

Animal husbandry products.—(9) Cattle, (10) hides, (11) skins, (12) ghee, (13) butter, (14) milk, (15) sheep and goats, and (16) wool and hair.

Fruits and special crops.—(17) Mangoes, (18) oranges, (19) pine-apples, (20) cocoanuts, (21) grapes, (22) bananas, (23) apples, (24) tobacco, (25) coffee.

Miscellaneous.—(26) Co-operative marketing, (27) markets and fairs, (28) cold storage and transport.

Standardisation and Grading.

The work of efficient marketing can only be done if the commodities were graded and marketing practices standardised. This work falls under two heads, *i.e.*:—(1) Marketing Legislation and (2) Standardisation of Contract terms.

(1) An Agricultural Produce (Grading and Marking) Act, 1935, was passed by the Central Assembly. Under this Act, rules prescribing the grades of the following commodities have been framed, namely, eggs, tobacco, hides, skins, ghee, grapes, oranges, apples, mangoes, plums, mustard, groundnut and til oils and citrus fruits, by-products, such as juices, quashes and jellies from limes, lemons and oranges.

Under the above rules, grading stations have been working, or have worked during the season, in respect of hides, ghee, eggs, oranges, tobacco and mangoes.

Graded Ghee and Eggs are available in Bengal.

(2) Another Bill called as standards of weight has been passed by the Central Assembly and awaits His Excellency the Viceroy's assent.

(3) Standardisation of contract terms. A Standard Wheat Contract has been laid down and is being worked by all the trading interests concerned. Under arrangement with the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research, all reports are sent to the Agricultural Marketing Adviser to the Government of India who consolidates them on an all-India basis and publishes them. Such reports have so far been published in respect of wheat, linseed, cold storage, eggs and tobacco. Publication of reports in Bengal will be done as all-India reports are being released.

Apart from investigation work, the development work undertaken by the marketing staff has been in the direction of grading of hides, oranges, ghee, eggs and mangoes. Grading work is only a first step towards further development work.

Work in progress.

Investigations.—Work is being done in respect of (1) fish, (2) lac, (3) sugar and gur, (4) cardamom, and (5) cashewnuts. Other commodities will be taken up as soon as work on these is completed.

Grading.—Following grading stations are in progress:—

Hides.—(1) Tangra, and (2) Garden Reach.

Eggs.—(1) Daulatganj (Tippera district), (2) Serajganj (Pabna district), (3) Lalgola (Murshidabad), and (4) Calcutta.

Ghee.—(1) Messrs. Ashok Chandra Rakhit, 26, Cotton Street, Calcutta, and (2) Messrs. Ghee Merchants' Association, 2, Doyahatta Street, Calcutta.

Following seasonal grading stations worked:—

Oranges (1) at Rangpo (Sikkim State) in 1937-38, and (2) at Teesta Bazar (Darjeeling) in 1938-39.

Tobacco at Haragacha (Rangpur).

Mangoes at Malda in 1938.

A note by the Agricultural Marketing Adviser on the "AGMARK" ghee and Marketing Leaflet No. I giving the scheme of Grading Eggs in Bengal are reprinted below.

Work proposed.

The Government of India grant for investigation work expires in March 1940 when it is proposed to take up the work on a provincial basis. Besides what investigation work may then have to be undertaken, it is proposed to take up (1) the establishment of a Market News Service by which the cultivators will be informed of the current price of their produce in other markets and will be advised as to the best methods of marketing it; (2) organisation of cultivators for the disposal of their produce; and (3) setting up of a clearing house for information affecting all phases of the problems connected with the marketing of agricultural crops and commodities.

By far the most important measure under contemplation is the passing of legislation aiming at the starting of regulated markets, the regulation of marketing charges, the application of the Indian Act standardising the weights, standardising the measures for agricultural produce, registration of all markets and licensing the various operatives in the regulated markets. Such measures have been working in the Central Provinces, Bombay, Madras, Bhopal and Hyderabad. An Act has recently been passed in the Punjab and Bills are before the Legislatures in the United Provinces, Bihar and Sind. A Bill on similar lines is in preparation in Bengal and is expected to be placed before the Assembly as soon as possible.

Appendix D.

Committees appointed by Government up to March 31, 1939, to investigate different problems concerning the welfare of the people.

The Chaukidary Enquiry Committee.

Terms of reference.

1. (*a*) whether the present powers and duties of dafadars and chaukidars are satisfactory and if not, what modifications are suggested;

(*b*) to what extent do they actually carry out the duties which they are required by law to perform;

(*c*) whether they should perform any other duties in the interests of village self-government or rural development;

2. (*a*) whether the dual system of control should be retained, modified or abolished;

(*b*) whether the rules of appointment, punishment and dismissal are satisfactory and if not, what alterations are desirable;

(*c*) whether the control exercise by the thana staff is sufficient to ensure that their duties of watch and ward are adequately carried out and if not, what suggestions can be made for improving the organisation;

(*d*) whether the appointment of rural constables in place of chaukidars is feasible and desirable;

(*e*) whether there should be any change in conditions of service and particularly whether leave with pay and leave reserves should be provided;

3. (*a*) whether the union boards should continue to bear the whole cost of their employment or whether the provincial Government should bear the whole or any portion of it and if so, what provision should be made for reimbursing the provincial Government;

(*b*) whether the equipment and reward funds should remain on a district basis or be decentralised or provincialised;

(*c*) whether any change in the equipment of the force or the method of meeting the cost of the same is necessary;

(*d*) whether the present system of crediting fines realised from dafadars and chaukidars be continued or modified;

(*e*) whether any revision is necessary in the rates of payment made for the service of processes;

(*f*) whether salaries are paid promptly and in full and if not, what remedy can be suggested;

4. (*a*) whether the chaukidars and dafadars should constitute a whole time or a part time force;

(*b*) whether any radical alteration is desirable in their numbers with a view to the appointment of a better class of men on a higher salary;

(*c*) whether the class from which they are drawn is satisfactory and if not, what steps should be taken to enhance their status.

Personnel.

PRESIDENT.

Mr. E. N. Blandy, C.I.E., I.C.S.

SECRETARY.

Mr. H. S. M. Ishaque, I.C.S.

MEMBERS.

1. Mr. B. R. Sen, I.C.S.
2. Mr. Zakir Hossain, S.P., Tippera.
3. Khan Bahadur Rezzaqul Haider Chowdhury, M.L.C.
4. Khan Bahadur M. Abdul Karim, M.L.C.
5. Mr. Abul Hashim, M.L.A.
6. Mr. Aulad Hossain Khan, M.L.A.
7. Khan Bahadur Anwarul Azim, M.L.A.
8. Maulvi Hafizuddin Chowdhury, M.L.A.
9. Mr. Shamsuddin Ahmad Khondakar, M.L.A.
10. Mr. Syed Abdul Majid, M.L.A.
11. Mr. Abdul Wahab Khan, M.L.A.
12. Mr. Puspajit Barma, M.L.A.
13. Mr. Krishna Prasad Mandal, M.L.A.
14. Maharaja Sashi Kanta Acharjyya Chowdhury of Muktagacha.
15. Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal, M.L.A.
16. Mr. Narendra Nath Das Gupta, M.L.A.
17. Mr. Adwaita Kumar Maji, M.L.A.
18. Mr. J. W. R. Steven, M.L.A.

The Jute Enquiry Committee.

Terms of reference.

1. The Regulation of the production of jute;
2. The Marketing of jute;
3. The Improvement of the price of jute;
4. The Fixation of the price of jute; and
5. The Jute forecast, including the collection of information regarding stocks in hand.

Personnel.

PRESIDENT.

The Commissioner of the Dacca Division.

SECRETARY.

Mr. D. L. Majumdar, I.C.S.

MEMBERS.

1. Mr. Mukhlesur Rahman, M.L.C.
2. Khan Bahadur M. Shamsuzzoha, M.L.C.
3. Maulvi Mohammad Israil, M.L.A.
4. Maulvi Abdul Hamid Shah, M.L.A.
5. Maulvi Moslem Ali Mollah, M.L.A.
6. Mr. M. A. H. Ispahani, M.L.A.
7. Mr. Birat Chandra Mandal, M.L.A.
8. Mr. Monomohan Das, M.L.A.
9. Mr. Kirit Bhusan Das, M.L.A.
10. Rai Moongtu Lall Tapuriah Bahadur, M.L.A.
11. Mr. I. G. Kennedy, M.L.A.
12. Mr. W. A. M. Walker, M.L.A.
13. Mr. S. N. Biswas, M.L.A.
14. Mr. Charu Chandra Roy, M.L.A.
15. Mr. Sibnath Banerjee, M.L.A.
16. Mr. S. A. Salim, M.L.A.
17. Maulvi Azhar Ali, M.L.A.
18. Maulvi Giasuddin Ahmed, M.L.A.
19. Maulvi Shahed Ali, M.L.A.
20. Maulvi Kazi Emdadul Haq, M.L.A.
21. Mr. A. M. Abdul Hamid, M.L.A.

The Paddy and Rice Committee.

Terms of reference.

To investigate the problem of improving the price of paddy and rice as affecting the province and to make recommendations in the matter.

Personnel.

CHAIRMAN.

Director of Agriculture, Bengal, Ramna, Dacca.

SECRETARY.

Mr. D. L. Majumdar, I.C.S.

MEMBERS.

1. Mr. Khorshed Alam Chowdhury, M.L.C.
2. Mr. Humayun Reza Chowdhury, M.L.C.
3. Mr. Ahmed Hossain, M.L.A.
4. Khan Sahib Maulvi Syed Mohammad Afzal, M.L.A.
5. Maulvi Md. Abdur Rasheed, M.L.A.
6. Mr. Abdul Hossain Ahmed, M.L.A.
7. Mr. Abdul Jabbar, M.L.A.
8. Mr. Jasimuddin Ahmed, M.L.A.
9. Dr. Syed Md. Siddique, M.L.A.
10. Khan Bahadur Abidur Reza Chowdhury, M.L.A.
11. Mr. Amrita Lal Mandal, M.L.A.
12. Mr. Lakshmi Narayan Biswas, M.L.A.
13. Mr. Birendra Kishore Ray Chowdhury, M.L.A.
14. Mr. Iswar Chandra Mal, M.L.A.
15. Mr. Kamalkrishna Ray, M.L.A.
16. Mr. Ashutosh Mullick, M.L.A.
17. Mr. G. Morgan, C.I.E., M.L.A.
18. Mr. J. W. R. Steven, M.L.A.
19. Maulvi Dewan Mustafa Ali, M.L.A.
20. Maulvi Asimuddin Ahmed, M.L.A.
21. Maulvi Abdul Wahed, M.L.A.
22. Maulvi Ahmed Ali Mirdha, M.L.A.

The West Bengal Re-afforestation Committee.

Terms of reference.

(*i*) Is it advisable to take measures in West Bengal for—

(*a*) the conservation of those forests which still exist there;

(*b*) the re-afforestation of any areas which have been denuded of forests;

(*c*) the afforestation of any areas which have been rendered unproductive in consequence of deforestation?

(*ii*) If so, what measures, having regard to the reasonable needs of the local people, should be adopted and by what agency should they be carried out?

(*iii*) What changes would, in consequence, be advisable in the existing law?

Personnel.

CHAIRMAN (*Ex-officio*).

The Commissioner of the Burdwan Division.

SECRETARY.

Mr. Y. S. Ahmad, I.F.S.

MEMBERS.

1. Maharaja Sashi Kanta Acharjya Chowdhury of Muktagacha.
2. Mr. J. N. Basu, M.L.A., Solicitor.
3. Maharaj Kumar Uday Chand Mahtab, M.L.A., Burdwan.
4. Maulvi Naziruddin Ahmad, M.L.C.
5. Mr. Harendra Nath Roy Choudhury, M.L.A.
6. Mr. Banku Behary Mondal, M.L.A.
7. Maulvi Abdul Bari, M.L.A.
8. Mr. Birat Chandra Mandal, M.L.A.
9. Mr. Syed Mustagaswal Haque, M.L.A.
10. Mr. G. W. Woodgates.
11. Mr. C. E. Simmons, I.F.S., Conservator of Forests, Southern Circle, Bengal.
12. The Collector of Midnapore (ex-officio).
13. Mr. Y. S. Ahmad, I.F.S., Divisional Forest Officer, Dacca-Mymensingh.

Questionnaire.

The following questionnaire prepared by the Forest Committee appointed by the Government of Bengal was circulated:—

It has been brought to the notice of Government that owing to the progressive denudation of forests in West Bengal by tenants and private owners the supply of timber and firewood has become endangered and that there is reason to believe that owing to soil erosion, large tracts of lands are becoming bare and almost unproductive. There is also reason to apprehend that the destruction of the forests is rendering West Bengal as a whole more and more liable to flood and drought.

The Government of Bengal have appointed a Committee to enquire if this estimate of the situation is correct, to investigate the facts, and to make recommendations to Government as to the remedies which should be applied to prevent this grave threat to the prosperity of the countryside.

The Committee accordingly prepared the following questionnaire:—

1. What is the area covered by forests in your Zamindari?

2. What are the principal species of trees in your forests? What is the percentage of (*a*) Sal, (*b*) Kendu, Asan (or Asna), Peasal, Mohwa, Simal, Kusum and (*c*) other species?

3. How much of the forest is—

(*a*) in your khas possession?

(*b*) in the possession of tenure-holders?

4. How much under head (*a*) and head (*b*) of question 3 respectively has been leased out for the purpose of the commercial extraction of timber and firewood? (If possible give areas leased in each in the last ten years.)

5. (1) Have you noticed any deterioration in your forests, and if so, what form has it taken and from what date did it start?

(2) What, in your opinion, were the causes of deterioration of your forests?

6. Is such deterioration greater—

(*a*) in the forests still held in khas possession by—

(*i*) yourself, or

(*ii*) your tenure-holders, or

(*b*) in the forests leased out to contractors?

7. (*a*) What area, if any, in your Zamindari, that was previously covered by forests, is now altogether devoid of vegetation?

(*b*) If so, what has in your opinion caused this?

(*c*) Has any part of such area been temporarily under cultivation, and, if so, for how long has it been under cultivation?

(*d*) Has any land near your forests (but not itself forest within recent times) gone out of cultivation?

8. (*a*) Has the supply of timber and fire-wood from your forests shown any decrease in quantity during the last ten years?

(*b*) Have you had any complaints from your tenants over the quantity or quality of (*i*) poles, (*ii*) small timber, (*iii*) firewood, (*iv*) Sal leaves, (*v*) thatch grass, and (*vi*) grazing, in your forests?

9. (*a*) Have you noticed any deterioration in any rivers or streams in or near the forests?

(*b*) In particular, has the flow of water been affected and, if so, how and to what extent?

(*c*) Have you noticed any silting of rivers or streams which you consider to be due to denudation?

Exercise of rights by villagers.—It is sometimes found that the villagers abuse their rights in the forests and as a result considerable damage is done. Reckless and wasteful cutting by villagers does perhaps more harm to the forests than working by contractors.

10. What are the rights exercised or claimed by villagers in different forest areas of your Zamindari?

11. How far are these rights covered by entries in the settlement records?

12. Are these rights exceeded or abused by the villagers? If so, how and to what extent? Has there been any tendency to utilise these rights to a greater extent than used to be the case?

13. In particular, is there any wasteful or reckless cutting? ("Wasteful cutting" means, for example, cutting a tree larger than is required. "Reckless cutting" means cutting in such a way as to damage other trees.)

14. What steps, if any, do you take to prevent wasteful or reckless cutting or abuse of rights by villagers? Does it pay you to take such steps?

15. Is there any wastage of young Sal saplings for fencing fields? What steps are taken, if any, to prevent this?

16. (*a*) Is there much damage done in the forests of your Zamindari by grazing?

(*b*) What is the nature and extent of grazing rights exercised by villagers in the different forests of your Zamindari?

(*c*) Do you consider that the grazing rights as exercised by the villagers are in themselves prejudicial to the interests of forests in your Zamindari, e.g., hardening the soil or destroying young Sal shoots? If so, please give details.

17. (*a*) Is there much destruction or deterioration of forests in your Zamindari owing to fire?

(*b*) To what extent, if at all, are such fires deliberately started, and for what reasons?

(*c*) What steps, if any, do you take to prevent such fires?

Exploitation of forests.

It has been alleged that one of the main causes of denudation of forests in West Bengal is over-exploitation by contractors who are interested only in the amount of profit they can make. Some Zamindars have also been said to disregard their ultimate interests in return for immediate gain. Even now the majority of forests in West Bengal are reported to be coppiced under very short rotations, the interval between successive cuttings in many cases being as short as three years. It is not realised that the vitality of the root-stock from which coppice shoots arise depends on the vigour of the shoots and if these are cut too frequently the root-stock must die. It is further stated that another and perhaps the most potent factor in the destruction of forests has been the extension of cultivation. With the growth of population and consequent pressure on land, extension of cultivation at the cost of forest has been proceeding at a rapid pace. Extension of cultivation is no doubt beneficial to the community but a point is reached when extension can proceed only at a considerable loss to the local people as well as to the people of the province as a whole.

18. To what extent do you lease out forest land to be cleared for purposes of cultivation? To what extent are the stumps of Sal trees dug out completely when this is done?

19. When you do this, what salami is usually paid, what is the rate of rent, and what proportion of land so leased remains permanently under cultivation?

20. Do you have a definite programme for preserving your forests as a permanent asset? If so, what is it? What permanent staff do you maintain for this purpose?

21. What is the "rotation", i.e., the interval generally between successive cuttings—

(*a*) in your khas forests,

(*b*) in your tenure-holders' forests, and

(*c*) by contractors?

22. In each of the last ten years or as many years for which figures are available, what was the total area worked under a rotation of 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, or more years respectively?

23. When you lease out forest for commercial extraction of timber or firewood—

(*a*) Is there a formal lease and, if so, what are its main conditions?

(If you have a standard form please supply a copy.)

(*b*) In particular do you impose any conditions to prevent waste and ensure early regeneration?

(*c*) Do you ever lease out the right to dig up or grub out Sal roots for making charcoal or for any other purpose? Do you allow this practice even though it is not definitely mentioned in the lease?

(*d*) What steps are taken to see that the conditions of the lease are adhered to?

(*e*) What is the staff maintained by you for—

(*i*) Supervising the work of contractors?

(*ii*) Protecting new coppice shoots against the villagers and cattle?

(*f*) Has this staff any forest training?

24. What is your income, gross and nett, from your forests for (*a*) timber, (*b*) firewood, and (*c*) other forest produce for each of the last ten years, or for as many years for which figures are available?

If you cannot give these figures, can you give a figure for average income per acre exploited and say whether it is tending to increase or decrease?

25. What quanties, roughly speaking, of (*a*) timber, and (*b*) firewood, from your forests have been sold—

(*i*) by yourself,

(*ii*) by your tenure-holders, and

(*iii*) by contractors in each of the past ten years, or of as many years for which figures are available?

26. What is the average price of (*a*) timber, and (*b*) firewood in each year for which you give quantities?

27. If possible, give quantities and prices for different areas worked under different rotations (e.g., 3, 5, 7, or 10 year rotations).

28. Can you give an idea of the amount of labour employed in these forests in a year and the value of their wages?

Remedies.

It is necessary to know the views of the land owners about the various measures which have been suggested from time to time or which are already provided in the Forest Act for the conservation of forests which still exist.

Under section 35 of the Indian Forest Act XVI of 1927, (1) The Local Government may, by notification in the local official Gazette, regulate or prohibit in any forest or wasteland—

(*a*) the breaking up or clearing of land for cultivation;

(*b*) the pasturing of cattle; or

(*c*) the firing or clearing of the vegetation;

when such regulation or prohibition appears necessary for any of the following purposes:—

(*i*) for protection against storms, winds, rolling stones, floods and avalanches;

(*ii*) for the preservation of the soil on the ridges and slopes and in the valleys of hilly tracts, the prevention of landslips or of the formation of ravines and torrents, or the protection of land against erosion, or the deposit thereon of sand, stones or gravel;

(*iii*) for the maintenance of water-supply in springs, rivers and tanks;

(*iv*) for the protection of roads, bridges, railways and other lines of communication;

(*v*) for the preservation of the public health.

(2) The Local Government may, for any such purpose, construct at its own expense, in or upon any forest or waste-land, such work as it thinks fit.

(3) No notification shall be made under sub-section (*1*) nor shall any work be begun under sub-section (*2*), until after the issue of a notice to the owner of such forest or land calling on him to show cause, within a reasonable period to be specified in such notice, why such notification should not be made or work constructed, as the case may be, and until his objections, if any, and any evidence he may produce in support of the same, have been heard by an officer duly appointed in that behalf and have been considered by the Local Government.

Under section 36, the Local Government may place such forest or land under the control of a Forest Officer.

Under section 37, the owner of the forest may, at any time not less than three or more than twelve years, require that such forest or land shall be acquired for public purposes, and the Local Government shall acquire such forest or land under the Land Acquisition Act. These provisions have not been considered at all in Bengal as Government were not in a position to acquire such forests or land at public expense.

Under Section 38, the owner of a forest may approach Government to have his forest managed by a Forest officer. This provision has not also worked so far in Bengal except in Dacca and Mymensingh districts and the owners do not generally realise the importance of conserving the forests both from the point of view of their own interests and that of the community as a whole.

The entire position was examined by the Stephenson Committee in 1909 who drafted a Bill, the objects of which were stated to be—

(*i*) to empower the Government to intervene, in the public interest, to preserve private forests from destruction; and

(*ii*) to facilitate, or, in some cases direct, the afforestation of private waste lands.

The chief purpose of the Bill was to allow Government to intervene without any liability to acquire the forest at public expense at any stage which has been the main stumbling block to such intervention, under Section 36 of the Indian Forest Act.

29. Are you in favour of fresh legislation such as proposed by the Stephenson Committee? If not, why not?

30. In your opinion will it be sufficient to amend Section 37 of the Indian Forest Act, so that Government may take over control of a private forest without having to acquire it compulsorily at any stage?

31. Do you prefer a system in which the forests of private owners may be managed by Government by voluntarily agreement or lease?

32. Have you any other proposals to make to meet the situation?

Madrassah Education Committee.

Terms of reference.

To investigate the problem of improving Madrassah Education in the province and to make recommendations in the matter in due course.

Personnel.

PRESIDENT.

Khan Bahadur Mr. Muhammad Maula Baksh, Assistant Director of Public Instruction for Muhammadan Education, Bengal.

SECRETARY.

Khan Bahadur Shams-ul-Ulama Maulvi Muhammad Musa, Principal, Calcutta Madrasah.

MEMBERS.

1. Maulana Md. Akram Khan, M.L.C.
2. Maulvi Abdur Razzak, M.L.A.
3. Khan Bahadur Maulana Ahmed Ali Enayetpuri, M.L.A.
4. Maulana Shamsul Huda, M.L.A.
5. Maulana Muhammad Abdul Aziz, M.L.A.
6. Maulvi Aminullah, M.L.A.
7. Mr. Shah Syed Golam Sarwar Hosaini, M.L.A.
8. Maulvi Mohammad Ibrahim, M.L.A.
9. Khan Bahadur Alfazuddin Ahmed, M.L.A.
10. Khan Bahadur Mahtabuddin Ahmed, M.L.A.
11. Mr. Mohammad Barat Ali, M.L.A.
12. Khan Bahadur Mr. Muhammad Maula Baksh, Assistant Director of Public Instruction for Muhammadan Education, Bengal.
13. Khan Bahadur Shams-ul-Ulama Maulvi Muhammad Musa, Principal, Calcutta Madrasah.
14. Maulvi Muhammad Mazammel Haq, M.L.A.
15. Dr. M. Sanaullah, M.L.A.
16. Maulvi Dewan Mustafa Ali, M.L.A.

Questionnaire.

The following questionnaire was circulated by the Committee appointed by the Government of Bengal to investigate the problem of madrasah education in the province:—

1. (*a*) Whether both the old and new schemes of madrasah education, now in vogue, should be retained or only one of the two systems is to be retained?

(*b*) If only one of the two schemes is to be maintained, which of the two should be abolished?

(*c*) In case it is considered necessary to retain both the types of madrasah education, the question that arises is whether there should be any co-ordination between them at any stage?

(*d*) If the answer to the question under (*c*) is in the affirmative, how this co-ordination should be effected and up to what classes? It is suggested that the difference between the old and new scheme junior madrasahs should be extinguished either wholly or as far as practicable. It is also suggested that the curriculum for junior madrasah should as far as possible approximate the middle English school course, so that a pupil after completion of the junion madrasah stage may join (*i*) a high school, (*ii*) a high madrasah, or (*iii*) a senior madrasah. Is this a practical proposition?

(*e*) If the high and senior madrasahs are to have a common or similar curriculum up to the middle stage how many classes should the upper department of a senior madrasah consist of? Should the number of classes be four as at present or six? It is suggested that a six-year course in the upper department of a senior madrasah will be sufficient to make up for the reduced course in Arabic in the lower department. Thus a student will ordinarily take fourteen years to complete the madrasah education under the old scheme from class I to the 2nd year Title class. This does not compare unfavourably with a student who ordinarily takes the same number of years to pass his Matriculation, Intermediate and B.A. Examinations.

2. (*a*) Should English be taught as a compulsory or an optional subject in the old scheme senior madrasahs?

(*b*) Whether the course in English should be the same as that for the Matriculation Examination and whether the students who appear at the Fazil Examination should, with the permission of the University, be required to appear in the English papers of the Matriculation Examination?

(*c*) Whether the University should not be moved to permit the madrasah passed students who pass the Matriculation Examination in English only to appear successively in the English papers of the Intermediate and B.A. Examinations and to grant them certificates of having passed these examinations in English?

3. Whether Bengali should be taught as an optional or compulsory subject in old scheme senior madrasahs?

4. Whether Urdu should be taught as a compulsory subject in old scheme senior madrasahs?

5. Whether vocational education should be introduced in madrasahs, and, if so, at what stage? What kind of vocational training do you suggest?

6. Do you suggest the introduction of compulsory physical training in madrasahs?

7. Whether madrasahs under private management should be allowed to open Title classes?

8. Whether a public examination should be held at the end of the junior madrasah course of the old scheme?

9. Do the courses of studies now in vogue in old scheme madrasahs require modification?

10. Are the old scheme madrasahs adapted to the modern requirements of society? If not, what reforms should, in your opinion, be introduced therein?

11. If the old scheme madrasah education is retained, is it not necessary that the madrasahs under the new scheme should be made to approximate, as far as possible, to the secular course in secondary schools?

12. Will the total abolition of the madrasah system of education lead, in your opinion, to an appreciable increase in the number of Muslim pupils in secondary schools?

13. Whether Tibb classes should be attached to the Calcutta Madrasah or whether a separate Tibbyia College should be established?

14. (*a*) Is the present Board of Central Madrasah Examinations of a representative character? If not, what should be its constitution?

(*b*) Are the duties and functions of the Board adequate? If not, what additional powers should be delegated to the Board?

15. How far will the lower classes of madrasahs be affected by the introduction of free primary education under the Primary Education Act and what action do you suggest to safeguard the interests of the madrasahs?

16. Do you advocate the publication and prescription of text-books by Government for the Junior Madrasah Examination?

Scheduled Caste Education Committee.

Terms of reference.

To investigate the problem of improving the education of the scheduled castes in the province and to make their recommendations in the matter in due course.

Personnel.

CHAIRMAN.

Dr. W. A. Jenkins, I.E.S.

SECRETARY.

Babu Raj Kumar Das, Special Officer for Scheduled Caste Education, Bengal.

MEMBERS.

1. Mr. Hem Chandra Naskar, M.L.A.
2. Babu Kshetra Nath Singh, M.L.A.
3. Mr. Rasik Lal Biswas, M.L.A.
4. Mr. Birat Chandra Mandal, M.L.A.
5. Mr. Anukul Chandra Das, M.L.A.
6. Mr. Puspajit Barma, M.L.A.
7. Mr. Pulin Behary Mullick, M.L.A.
8. Mr. Upendra Nath Edbar, M.L.A.
9. Babu Madhusudan Sarkar, M.L.A.
10. Babu Debendra Nath Das, M.L.A.
11. Babu Patiram Ray, M.L.A.
12. Mr. Kirit Bhusan Das, M.L.A.
13. Mr. Jagat Chandra Mandal, M.L.A.

Primary and Adult Education Committee.

Terms of reference.

To investigate the problem of improving primary and adult education in the province and to make recommendations in the matter in due course.

Personnel.

CHAIRMAN.

Dr. W. A. Jenkins, I.E.S.

JOINT SECRETARIES.

Mr. T. I. M. Nurannabi Chaudhuri, I.C.S.

Mr. Abdul Hakim.

MEMBERS.

1. Begum Hamida Momin, M.L.C.
2. Mrs. Hasina Murshed, M.B.E., M.L.A.
3. Mr. Nur Ahamed, M.L.C.
4. Maulvi Mohammad Mozammel Huq, M.L.A.
5. Khan Bahadur Alfazuddin Ahmed, M.L.A.
6. Mr. Mohammad Barat Ali, M.L.A.
7. Mr. Fazlur Rahman, M.L.A.
8. Mr. Syed Mustagaswal Haque, M.L.A.
9. Maulvi Mahammad Hasanuzzaman, M.L.A.
10. Maulvi Mohammad Abdul Hakim Vikrampuri, M.L.A.
11. Mr. Pulin Behary Mullick, M.L.A.
12. Mr. Dhananjoy Roy, M.L.A.
13. Rai Kshirod Chandra Roy Bahadur, M.L.A.
14. Mr. W. C. Wordsworth, M.L.A.
15. Mr. Abdul Hakim, Special Officer for Primary Education, Bengal.
16. Mr. H. S. M. Ishaque, I.C.S., S.D.O., Serajganj.
17. Mr. A. B. Chatterji, I.C.S., S.D.O., Serampore.
18. Mr. Sreemanta Das Gupta, S.D.O., Ranaghat.
19. Mr. B. C. Mukherji, Students Hall, College Square, Calcutta.
20. Khan Bahadur Maulvi Hashem Ali Khan, M.L.A.
21. Dr. W. A. Jenkins, I.E.S.
22. Mr. T. I. M. Nurannabi Chaudhuri, I.C.S.

Questionnaire.

1. Do you consider that efforts to promote adult education should be directed towards—

(*a*) the production of literacy only;

(*b*) the imparting of knowledge and training to village people without any attempt to produce literacy; and

(*c*) a combination of both (*a*) and (*b*)?

2. What are the minimum educational requirements of an illiterate adult in order that he may increase the general efficiency and productivity of his labour, raise his standard of living and intelligently discharge his civic duties?

3. It has been suggested that the syllabus for adult education should embrace—(1) Reading and Writing; (2) Arithmetic; (3) Rural Reconstruction; (4) General knowledge imparted through pamphlets, leaflets, approved newspapers, magic lanterns, educative films, charts, posters and gramophone records. What, in your opinion, is the minimum period which an average illiterate village adult should take to acquire literacy, learn simple arithmetic and also elementary knowledge about hygiene, rural civics and rural reconstruction?

4. Do you consider that the two main activities of adult education, viz.,—

(*i*) the production and maintenance of literacy; and

(*ii*) the imparting of information and general knowledge to both non-literate and literate adults,

can be usefully carried out in the same school or do you consider that these activities should be separate?

5. How far in your opinion can indigenous forms of amusement, e.g., *Jatra, Katha-katha, Jari, etc.*, be used for education of adults and what steps do you suggest for making proper use of the means you recommend?

6. Should the special control of adult education activities be vested in—

(*a*) existing authorities, such as, District Boards or District School Boards; or

(*b*) a new authority to be set up?

If in your opinion a new authority should be set up, what type of organisation do you recommend? The following controlling authority working under the Rural Development Association is suggested:—

(1) The District Magistrate shall be the President of the sub-committee.

(2) Besides the District Magistrate and the Subdivisional Officers, the following shall be the ex-officio members of the sub-committee:—

The Chairman of the District Board; Vice-Chairman or Vice-Chairmen of the District Board; Vice-President of the District School Board; District Inspector of Schools; District Organiser of Physical Education and the District Rural Development Officer;

(3) Some members of the District Board and the District School Board to be selected by the District Rural Development Association.

(4) Some other officials and non-officials interested in adult education. They will be selected or nominated by the District Rural Development Association.

What is your opinion?

7. If in your opinion a new authority should be set up, how do you consider it desirable to co-ordinate the work of this new authority with that of the existing Government Departments and the District Boards, Union Boards and the District School Boards?

8. To what extent is it possible to solve the question of adult education by staffing schools entirely by honorary helpers?

9. How do you suggest that the schools should be otherwise staffed? It has been suggested that after primary education cess is levied and free primary education is introduced throughout a district, it should be a part of the duty of the primary school teachers to arrange for teaching in night schools and a small additional remuneration may be paid to them from the village Musti Fund or the Union Board. What is your opinion?

10. If you are not of the opinion that honorary workers can be relied upon to solve the problem quickly, what remuneration do you suggest should be paid to the teachers engaged?

11. What plans you suggest of training if honorary helpers are employed?

12. What is your estimate of the cost of maintaining an adult school for 30 pupils—

(*a*) if the school is staffed by honorary workers; and

(*b*) if paid teachers have to be employed?

13. It has been reported that a large number of night schools are being run solely or mainly through *Mustibhiksha*. Do you think that if a system of account and audit of *Mustibhiksha* can be introduced by Government it will create confidence, stabilise this source of income and give a continuous income (in normal times), which will be sufficient for meeting the minimum cost of night schools, besides the expenses of some other activities of rural welfare?

14. Where do you suggest that night schools should be held?

15. Who should be the Inspecting or Supervising officers for adult education centres?

16. What conditions do you consider Government should lay down for fulfilment before grant-in-aid is given to adult schools?

17. Do you consider that it is possible at the present time to establish any useful scheme of adult education for women? If so, please give an outline of the scheme you recommend.

18. What do you consider to be the period within which it is reasonable to suppose that the problem of producing adult literacy can be reasonably solved?

19. Assuming that the present school books and literature available for use in adult schools are unsatisfactory, do you recommend that the production of satisfactory books should be guaranteed by—

(*a*) direct supply by Government; or

(*b*) by private enterprise?

Dacca Medical College Committee.

Terms of reference.

(*a*) the desirability of establishing a Medical College in place of the present Medical School;

(*b*) the number of students for whom facilities should be provided; and

(*c*) the approximate cost to Government (capital and recurring) of any such desirable scheme including the cost of necessary hospital improvements, etc., which may be necessary for providing additional training facilities.

Personnel.

PRESIDENT.

The Surgeon-General with the Government of Bengal.

SECRETARY.

The Secretary, Medical College Hospitals.

MEMBERS.

1. The Vice-Chancellor, Dacca University, Representative of the Dacca University.
2. Professor J. C. Ghose of Dacca University, Representative of the Dacca University.
3. Mr. Jogendra Nath Sen, M.A., B.L., One of the Executors of the Estate of the Donor.
4. Mr. K. Shahabuddin, C.B.E., M.L.A.
5. The Principal, Medical College, Calcutta.
6. The Principal, Carmichael Medical College, Belgachia.
7. The Superintendent, Campbell Medical School, Calcutta.
8. The Secretary, Medical College Hospitals, Calcutta.
9. Dr. Premankur De, B.Sc., M.B., M.R.C.P. (Edin), Professor of Physiology Medical College, Calcutta.
10. The Civil Surgeon, Dacca.
11. Khan Sahib Dr. Maijuddin Khan, Deputy Superintendent, Dacca Medical School.

The Damodar Canal Enquiry Committee.

Terms of reference.

To enquire into the fairness and equity of the rate of Rs. 5-8 per acre in the Damodar Canal Area under the Bengal Development Act.

Personnel.

SECRETARY.

Babu Mriganka Bhusan Ray.

MEMBERS.

1. The Hon'ble Mr. Abul Kasem Fazlul Huq, Chief Minister.
2. The Hon'ble Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarker, Minister, Finance.
3. The Hon'ble Sir Bijoy Prasad Singh Roy, Kt., Minister, Revenue.
4. The Hon'ble Maharaja Srischandra Nandy, of Cossimbazar, Minister, Communications and Works.
5. The Collector of Burdwan.
6. Mr. Naziruddin Ahmed Member, Bengal Legislative Council, Burdwan.
7. Mr. Jatindra Nath Basu, Member, Bengal Legislative Assembly, Calcutta.
8. Maharaj Kumar Uday Chand Mahtab, Member, Bengal Legislative Assembly, Burdwan.
9. Mr. Pramatha Nath Banerjee, Member, Bengal Legislative Assembly, Burdwan.
10. Mr. Adwaita Kumar Majhi, Member, Bengal Legislative Assembly, Burdwan.
11. Mr. Bankura Behari Mandal, Member, Bengal Legislative Assembly, Burdwan.
12. Maulvi Abdul Hashim, Member, Bengal Legislative Assembly, Burdwan.
13. Maulvi Md. Abdur Rasheed, Member, Bengal Legislative Assembly, Birbhum.
14. Khan Bahadur Alfazuddin Ahmed, Member, Bengal Legislative Assembly, Midnapore.
15. Maulvi Abul Quasem, Member, Bengal Legislative Assembly, Hooghly.
16. Khan Sahib Maulvi S. Abdur Rauf, Member, Bengal Legislative Assembly, Howrah.
17. Maulvi Abdul Wahab Khan, Member, Bengal Legislative Assembly, Bakarganj West.
18. Mr. David Hendry, Member, Bengal Legislative Assembly, Calcutta.

Appendix E.

Detailed statement of rural projects, district by district, for which the present Government have sanctioned grants on the recommendation of District Magistrates, up to March 31, 1939.

Bankura.

Leper Segregation Homes.

		Rs.
1.	Mandalgram	100
2.	Simplapal	100
3.	Lakshmisagar	100
4.	Kalpathar	200
5.	Gopalpur	400
6.	Tarapur	400
7.	Cultivation of ground-nuts in the district for demonstration purposes	4,000
	Total	5,300

Midnapore.

1.	District Swimming Competitions	1,000
2.	Sporting requisites for District Sports Association ...	300
3.	Sporting requisites for District Inter-School Sports Association	500
4.	Sporting requisites for Subdivisional Inter-School Sports Association	1,500
5.	Special grant to Contai Sports Association for fitting up a swimming tank for Subdivisional Inter-School swimming competitions	200
6.	Midnapore Boy Scout Association for holding camps and for excursions	500
7.	Grant to 16 Village Sporting Clubs for apparatus each	800
8.	Grant for a foot-ball ground for Irphala High English School	400
9.	Grant to the Ramkrishna Mission Free Circulating Library	500
10.	A ginning machine for the Cotton Experimental Farm at Milda	550
11.	Establishment of seed stores, one in each thana of Sadar (North) Subdivision and 2 in Garbetta Thana at Rs. 75 each	450
12.	Ballichak Coronation Hall	500

		Rs.
13.	Chandri Village Hall (Jamboni police-station ...	250
14.	Rogra Village Hall (Gopiballavpur police-station) ...	250
15.	Establishment of a Residential M. E. School near Jhargram (Vidyasagar Bani Bhawan) ...	1,500
16.	Silt clearance of the Suadighi Khal from Ramtarak Hat upwards 3 miles	800
17.	Silt clearance of one mile of Jafuli Khal ...	200
18.	Silt clearance of Denan Khal from the point of junction with the Kola Khal to 2 miles upward ...	500
19.	Construction of Barapania and Nimura bundhs in Jhargram subdivision	1,000
20.	Stone and brick dam across the Kalaichandi Khal in police-station Salbani with a water channel about 1 mile in length	500
21.	Play-ground for Tamluk Hamilton High English School	200
22.	Extension of the Weaving Section and purchase of improved apparatus for the Kalagachia High English School in Khedgree police-station ...	500
23.	Extension of the Weaving Section and purchase of improved apparatus for the Gangadhar Memorial Association at Mugberia, police-station Bhagwanpur, Contai subdivision	500
24.	Magic lantern for the Gangadhar Memorial Assiciation	250
25.	Shyamgunj Park—benches and some fittings and apparatus for sports and gymnastics ...	200
26.	Equipments for running a Child Welfare and Maternity Centre in the Changual union board dispensary	500
27.	Garbetta Adult Education Centre	50
28.	Nayabasat Rural Reconstruction Society ...	50
29.	A *bundh* at Jemua	150
30.	Garbetta Silver Jubilee Girls School (for furniture and equipment)	50
31.	Ghatal Prosannamoyee Girls' School	100
32.	Jhargram Girls' School for purchasing school requisites	50
33.	20 steel "donas" for low-lift irrigation	200
34.	"Supply of a monthly journal on agriculture krishi sampad to 36 village societies"	108
	Total	15,108

The Speaker.



The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur M. Azizul Haque, c.i.e., Speaker of the Bengal Legislative Assembly.

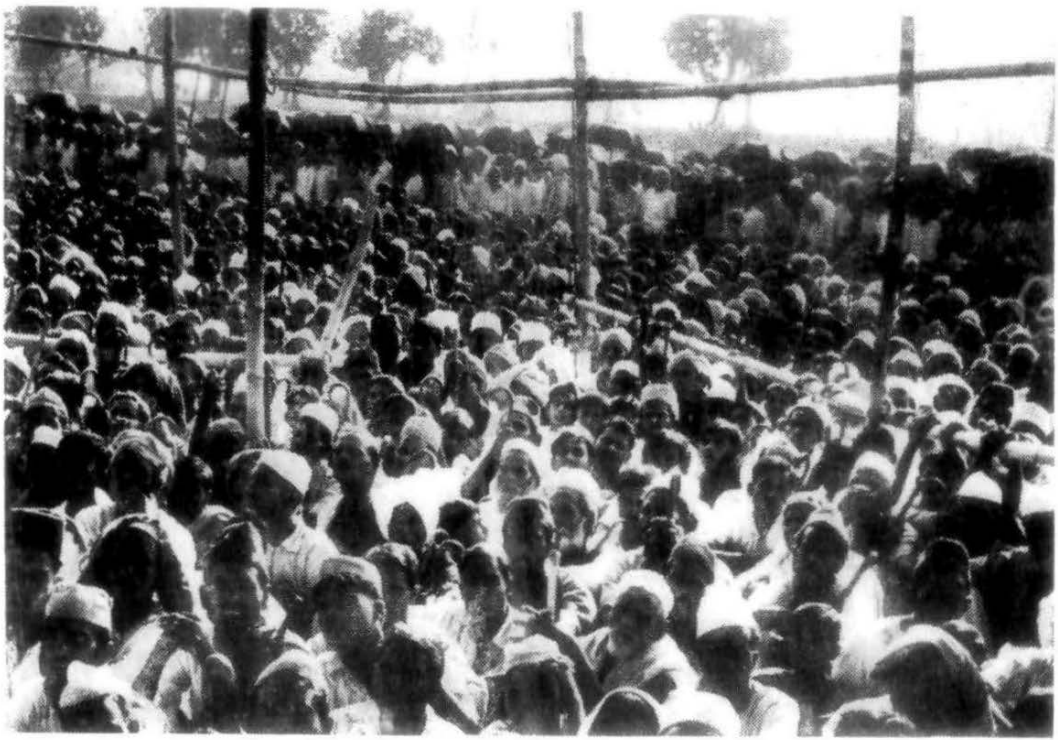
The Masses Behind the Ministry



PART OF A CROWD, NEARLY 10,000 STRONG, WHICH GREETED THE HON'BLE CHIEF MINISTER AT COX'S BAZAR



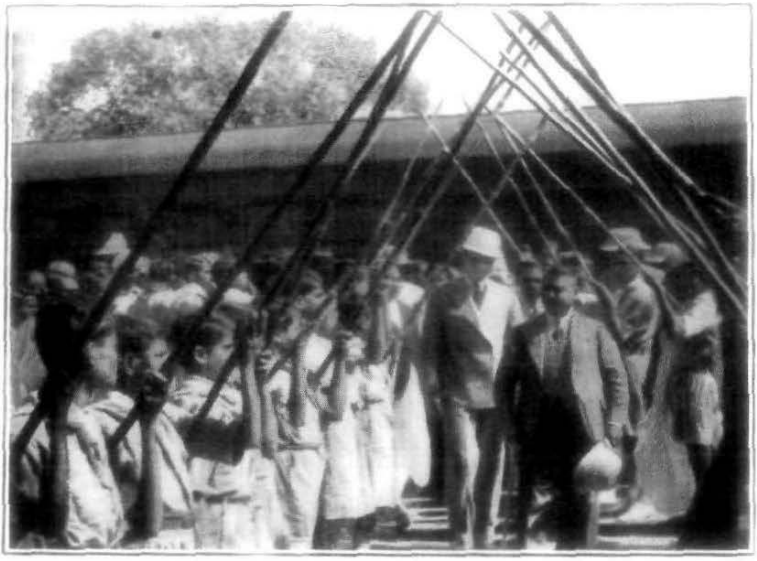
A section of the huge crowd at Faridpore which assembled to welcome the Hon'ble Chief Minister, the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin, the Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy and the Hon'ble Mr. Tamizuddin Khan on the occasion of their joint visit to that town.



PART OF A CROWD, OVER 100,000 STRONG, WHICH ASSEMBLED AT JUVENTUS, MYMENSINGH, TO LISTEN TO THE ADDRESSES OF THE HON'BLE CHIEF MINISTER AND OTHER HON'BLE MINISTERS ON THE OCCASION OF A JOINT TOUR.



PART OF A HUGE CROWD STANDING ON THE SEA-SHORE OF SANDWIP AND LISTENING TO HON'BLE MR. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ'S SPEECH DELIVERED FROM THE LAUNCH. MANY STANDING IN WATER

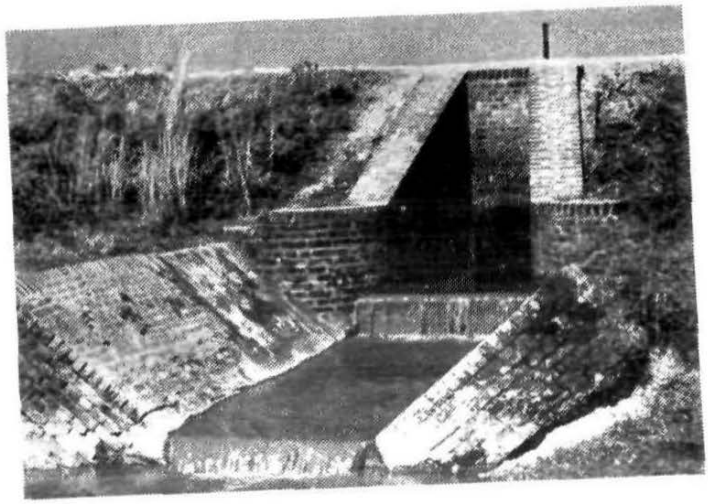


THIS PICTURE SHOWS THE HON'BLE MR. M. R. MUTTUK, PASSING UNDER A "TRIUMPHAL ARCH" IN MIDNAPORE ON THE OCCASION OF A VISIT.



THE ABOVE SCENE SHOWS THE OPENING OF A *khal* OR WATER-CHANNEL, EXCAVATED BY VOLUNTARY LABOUR. HUNDREDS OF SUCH *khals* HAVE BEEN EXCAVATED IN BENGAL DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS AS PART OF THE MINISTRY'S RURAL RECONSTRUCTION DRIVE, LOCAL OFFICIALS INSPIRING ENTHUSIASM FOR THE WORK ON A VOLUNTARY BASIS AMONG THE LOCAL POPULATION.

Irrigation Works.





TWO OF THE MANY IRRIGATION WORKS CONSTRUCTED AND MAINTAINED BY GOVERNMENT.

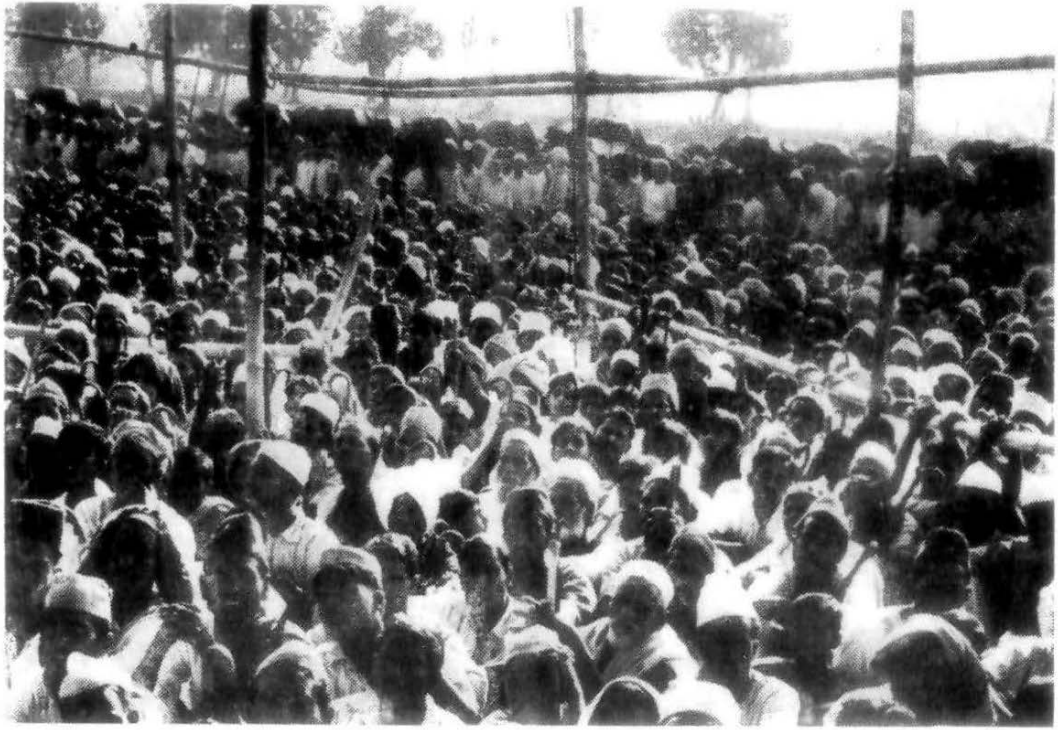
The Masses Behind the Ministry



PART OF A CROWD, NEARLY 30,000 STRONG, WHO WELCOMED THE HON. THE CHIEF MINISTER AT COX'S BAZAR



A SECTION OF THE HUGE CROWD AT FARIDPORE WHICH ASSEMBLED TO WELCOME THE HON'BLE CHIEF MINISTER, THE HON'BLE KHWAJA SIR NAZIMUDDIN, THE HON'BLE MR. H. S. SUHRAWARDY AND THE HON'BLE MR. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN ON THE OCCASION OF THEIR JOINT VISIT TO THAT TOWN.



PART OF A CROWD, OVER 100,000 STRONG, WHICH ASSEMBLED AT BANGALORE MAIDENS' PARK TO LISTEN TO THE ADDRESSES OF THE HON'BLE CHIEF MINISTER AND THREE OTHER HON'BLE MINISTERS ON THE OCCASION OF A JOINT TOUR.



PART OF A HUGE CROWD STANDING ON THE SEA-SHORE OF SANDWIP AND LISTENING TO HON'BLE MR. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ'S SPEECH DELIVERED FROM THE LAUNCH. MANY STANDING IN WATER

Howrah.

		Rs.
1.	Widening and repairing of the road from Jalalshi to Banharishpur, 3½ miles	1,000
2.	Re-excavation of a khal from Jhero to Shyampur ...	200
3.	Re-excavation of a khal from Deara to Shyampur in Uluberia subdivision	2,000
	Total	5,000

Birbhum.

1.	Equipment and building of the Sahapur Middle English School	250
2.	Construction of a building for the Dubrajpur Public Library	400
3.	Purchase of books for the Circulating Public Library for the Sadar subdivision	400
4.	Purchase of magic lantern slides for the use of Circle Officers for village reconstruction work ...	150
5.	Construction of culverts for the Margram-Parkuta Road in Rampurhat subdivision and for necessary earth work	300
6.	Construction of a bridge on Sainthia-Chauhatta Road near Tilpara in the Sadar subdivision ...	1,500
7.	Repairs to the Gopalpur Middle English School in Khoyrasole thana in the Sadar subdivision ...	170
8.	Equipment grant to 9 Co-operative Health Societies at Jaspur, Rupuspur, Panchra, Sekedda, Chauhatta, Bahiri, Benuri, Adityapur, and Adirapara at Rs. 100 each	900
9.	Building grant to the Sekedda Co-operative Health Society	500
10.	Scheme for improving Barwa Village Library ...	600
11.	Purchase of Bengali Primers, charts and other appliances for a literary drive in the district ...	250
	Total	5,420

Burdwan.

	Construction of a building for the Charitable Dispensary managed by the Union Boards of Nota and Bolgana in the Sadar subdivision ...	250

Hooghly.

	Arambagh Charitable Dispensary and Hospital ...	11,000

Nadia.

		Rs.
1.	Improvement of communication and sanitation of village Bharatpur (by cutting drains) to improve the health of the localities	50
2.	Improvement of communication and sanitation of Chanduria village	50
3.	Cost of appliances for Daksinpara Dispensary ...	100
4.	Cost of appliances for Panighat Health Centre ...	50
5.	Tube-well at Jehangirpur	150
6.	Tube-well at Jhitkipota	150
7.	Deep well pump at Char-Jirat	334
8.	Deep well pump at Santipur	332
9.	Horti-Agricultural Farm at Dignagar	250
10.	Cost of appliances for study of Science and Geography for Matiary High English School	150
11.	Cost of furniture for Badbillagram Moktab Pathsala	35
12.	Kushtia-Meton Road	200
13.	Gossaindurgapur-Monohardia Road	100
14.	Re-excavation of Baraichara Khal	100
15.	Re-excavation of Bagberia Khal	100
16.	Re-excavation of Kusalibasha Khal	100
17.	Kankiladah-Amla Road	100
18.	Daulatkhali Road	100
19.	Bhadurpur-Jagser Road	60
20.	Poradah-Chhatian Road	70
21.	Peepulbair-Khalisakundi Road	70
22.	Cost of furniture for Simulia Middle English School	100
23.	Cost of furniture and books for Swarupganj Primary Pathsala	50
24.	Cost of furniture and books for Debagram Middle English School	25
25.	Cost of furniture and books for Sarbari Primary Pathsala	25
26.	Construction of Sluice Gate at the mouth of Gacha Khal	250
27.	Improvement of drainage at Belpukur	50
28.	Cost of purchasing books for Bethuadaberi public Library	75
29.	Purchase of an oil pump for irrigation of crops ...	3280-3
	Total	6,606-3

Traditional doctrine of delegated powers.

Nothing is more striking in the legal and social history of the nineteenth century than the development of local government. Though its roots strike into early institutions, the rate of its extension during the last century could never have been guessed by our forefathers.[1] It is now, beyond all doubt, an extremely large and important part of our social scheme and is bound to affect public and private law in every department. Every day it puts forth new shoots, and even within the memory of the present generation it has grown almost out of recognition—owing not only to the extraordinary conditions of war and the *sequelae* of war, but to an inherent vitality in the thing itself. If we look at a standard work like Sir Courtenay Ilbert's *Legislative Methods and Forms*,[2] written only twenty-five years ago, we shall be struck by the comparatively small and unimportant place which the author assigns to subordinate legislation. If we refer to another standard work on *Local Government in England* (Redlich and Hirst), also written within the present generation (1903), we find the following general conclusions as to the subordination of Departments to parliamentary control:

'As the Ministry for the time being is only a Committee of a sovereign House of Commons, so the ministers and ministerial departments concerned with internal administration cannot follow their own impulses or conduct business as if they were bodies parallel to and independent of Parliament; they are, on the contrary, rather subsidiary aids to Parliament in the work of superintending government. They are merely intermediaries between Parliament and the Local Authorities, and cannot impose their own will on the latter.'[3]

trative side of devolution, a comparison of the chief developments in England, France, and Germany is to be found in Goodnow, *Comparative Administrative Law*.

[1] For the history of English Local Government see Redlich and Hirst, *Local Government in England*, i, Bk. I; Webb, *English Local Government*, especially iv, chaps. v and vi; Goodnow, *op. cit.* i, Bk. III, ch. v.

[2] Ch. iii. [3] ii. 357.

And again:

'In the earlier pages of this work it has been explained how the new central departments, created in the nineteenth century, have been fitted into parliamentary Government and brought under the sovereignty of Parliament. The task of the Legislature has been to extend and intensify the work of internal Government without reviving the ghost of the Star Chamber, to preserve the rule of law without stinting or starving administration. This task has been successfully accomplished. In spite of a vast expansion of governmental activity, England at the beginning of the twentieth century has no administrative law and no administrative courts in the continental sense. Every act of public authority, no matter by whom or against whom it is directed, is liable to be called in question before an ordinary tribunal, and there is no other means by which its legality can be questioned or established. And if the decision is unfavourable to the act in question, the proceeding complained of is immediately invalidated and nullified. There is no exception in England to the rule that every public proceeding, be it the issue of a warrant to arrest or a demand for rates, or a summons to pay money due to a public authority, or an order of Justices, is just as much a matter of ordinary law, and is liable to be questioned in the same way, as a private suit or action brought by one individual against another.'

A foot-note adds:

'Some trifling relics of a *droit administratif* are still to be found, as in the Petition of Right . . . and in a few restrictions upon actions against constables and public authorities. More modern tendencies towards a continental system of administration appear in certain powers granted to the Local Government Board, and described in a previous chapter, of adjudicating and finally deciding certain disputes arising out of modern laws of administration. After all that has been said in Part VI on the "quasi-judicial functions" of the Local Government Board it is enough here to repeat that they do not really encroach upon the unity and sovereignty of the law.'[1]

No longer accurate.

These confident assertions, which will also be

[1] ii. 364 f. *Scil.* the Local Government Board is now no more, its powers having been transferred, *mutatis mutandis*, to the Ministry of Health.

Jessore.

		Rs.
1.	For the establishment of a new charitable dispensary at Arpara, police-station Salikha in Magura subdivision	1,000
2.	For the establishment of a new charitable dispensary at Bhita-balla in Jamdia Union Board, police-station Bagharpara in Sadar subdivision ...	500
3.	For Khalishpur Coronation Union Board dispensary at Bongaon subdivision for the construction of the dispensary building	500
4.	For Nabharan Khan Bahadur F. Karim Union Board charitable dispensary in Bongaon subdivision for completion of dispensary building ...	200
5.	For Samta Union Board charitable dispensary in Bongaon subdivision for completion of the dispensary building	150
6.	To the Hazipur Union Board dispensary in Magura subdivision for the construction of a female waiting room and operation theatre	300
7.	For Sagardari dispensary in Sadar subdivision for the purchase of furniture and equipment of the dispensary	250
8.	Establishment of model villages	1,500
9.	Establishment of travelling library consisting of boxes containing elementary books, etc.	900
10.	Improvement to a village green in Boalia police-station Sailkupa in Jhenidah subdivision ...	250
11.	Improvement to a village green in Dudsar, police-station Sailkupa	250
12.	Purchase of a high pressure steriliser for the Bongaon Charitable Dispensary	300
13.	Construction of a brick-built house for a Middle English School at Gaighata in the Bongaon subdivision	500
	Total	6,600

24-Parganas.

1.	Sinking of a tube-well at Radhanagar, district 24-Parganas	150
2.	Resinking and repairing of a masonry well at Saligoria, district 24-Parganas	200
	Total	350

Tippera.

		Rs.
1.	Purchase of a microscope with accessories and Kahn test apparatus for the Nasirnagar Leper Clinic ...	750
2.	Provision of a tube-well in village Harnamakandi, police-station Matlab	120
3.	Provision of a tube-well in village Pialapur, police-station Nasirnagar	125
4.	Completion and requipment of the Bholachang Rashipur Primary School in Ibrahimpur Union Board, P. O. Bholachang	200
	Total	1,195

Chittagong.

1.	Re-excavation of the Badarkhali Khal, police-station Sitakund	1,000
2.	Sreemani Sitalcheri Irrigation Scheme	1,500
3.	Cost of science apparatus for the Hathazari Parbati Institute, P. O. Hathazari	200
	Total	2,700

Chittagong Hill Tracts.

1.	Purchase of 3 Bored-Hole Latrine Angers for sanitation purposes	420

Murshidabad.

		Rs.
1.	For the improvement of village sanitation and drainage at Mahalandi, police-station Kandi	150
2.	For improvement of sanitation and drainage of village Kirtipur, police-station Khargram	100
3.	For improvement of village sanitation and drainage at Indrani, police-station Khargram	100
4.	For improvement of village road, drainage and tanks in village Dangapara, police-station Bharatpur ...	50
5.	For improvement of village communication in village Amlai, police-station Bharatpur	50
6.	For improvement of village sanitation and communication in village Simulia, police-station Bharatpur	50
7.	For improvement of village sanitation and communication in village Rasora, police-station Kandi ...	50
8.	For improvement of village sanitation and adult education centre for Baidyapur village registered reconstruction society in Bharatpur police-station	100
9.	For Books and furniture for Adult Education Centre, Gazinagar, police-station Samserganj ...	25
10.	For Books and furniture for Adult Education Centre, Hazarpur, police-station Samserganj	25
11.	For Books and furniture for Adult Education Centre, Ailerupar, police-station Raghunathganj ...	25
12.	For Books and furniture for Adult Education Centre, Beniagram, police-station Sanderganj ...	25
13.	Completion of school building of the Miltu Upper Primary School	50
14.	Purchasing sporting requisites for the Rajapur Sporting Association	50
15.	Purchasing sporting requisites for the Manickchak Sporting Association	50
16.	For books and appliances for adult education centre Kair, police-station Sagardighi	25
17.	For books and furniture for adult education centre, Sujapur, police-station Raghunathgunj ...	50
18.	Purchase of books for the newly started library at Nabagram	100
	Total	1,050

Khulna.

		Rs.
1.	Twynam Village Hall in Barrackpur Union Board ...	150
2.	Twynam Park in Barrackpur Union Board ...	150
3.	Constructing a new path from District Board Road to Sujansha play-ground	50
4.	Improvement of Islamkati-Baw-Khola road by constructing 2 pucca culverts for Bowkhola Village Improvement Committee in Tala police-station ...	100
5.	Improvement of Madra School Road	50
6.	Improvement of Jiala Road	50
7.	Organisation of Inter-School Sports by Satkhira Sporting Association	50
8.	Completion of the Hall of the Bhaban, Kumira ...	200
9.	Construction of village Hall of Dhulihar Palli-Mangal Samity	200
10.	Improvement of Palli-Mangal Library ...	100
11.	Village Hall at Badokhali in Satgumbaj police-station	200
12.	Debipur Village Hall of Debipur Village Development Association	500
13.	Construction of a Village Hall in Raripara Union Board, police-station Kachua	500
14.	Laudobe Khutakhali village development association. Constructing a dispensary	500
15.	Ranbejoypur village development association in Satgumbaj Union Board, police-station Bagerhat. Constructing a recreation ground at Ranbejoypur	400
16.	Atlia village development association. Constructing a village Hall	500
17.	Sarat Batikhali Village Development association. Construction of a play-ground	200
18.	Secretary Chunkhola village library, police-station Mollahat. Purchasing books for the library ...	300
19.	Khalishpur village development association, police-station Daulatpur. Filling up Dobas to improve sanitation	200
20.	President Union Board Bahirdia Mansa, police-station Fakirhat. Sinking of a tube-well at Ramnagar village near mosque	125
21.	Boyra Rayermahal village development association. Reclaiming one old tank at Rayermahal Musalmanpara and Namasudrapara	300
22.	Secretary Daibagnahati village library, police-station Morrelganj. Purchasing books for the library ...	300
23.	Agarghata. Kapilmuni, village development association. Completion of the village library which has been started with local contribution	200
	Total	5,325

Noakhali.

		Rs.
1.	To the Committee of the Industrial and Agricultural Exhibition at Senbag	50
2.	To Civil Surgeon for the purchase of necessary instruments for Bigha Village Dispensary, police-station Ramganj	100
3.	Gopalpur Model Village for equipments and books (the amount is to be spent according to the suggestion of the Circle Officer)	50
4.	South Sarifpur rural uplift library for equipments and books	50
5.	Sadar Hospital, Noakhali for the treatment of Kala-azar patients of rural areas only	500
6.	One tube-well each in Char Ramani Mohan, Char Kachia, Char Bangshi and Char Elahi ...	300
7.	For ten best Adult Education Centres in the Islands at Rs. 20 each	200
8.	For tube-wells with or without local contribution to encourage rural uplift work. The sites are to be selected by the Feni Central Self-Help Rural Welfare League	250
9.	Play-field for Daganbhuiya Ataturk High English School	300
10.	Pathannagar, Ghopal, Mohamaya, Subhapur and Rajapur Union Boards (Rs. 50 each) for purchase of books and other paraphernelia of the village libraries and night-schools, and for purchase of implements for rural reconstruction works, and trying to remove illiteracy by carrying on "Anti-thumb Impression campaign," etc.	300
11.	Rs. 25 each per Union for Anandapur, Chhagalnaiya, Fazilpur, Faradnagar, Mutiganj and Char Darbesh, for repeat from the purchase of books ...	150
12.	Feni Hospital for treatment of Kala-azar patients of rural areas	150
13.	Games equipment and expenses of the Inter School Sports for the Noakhali District School Games Committee	300
14.	Purchase of books for the Char Alexander Middle English School, police-station Ramgati ...	50
15.	For the improvement of the Feni Senior Madrasah Building	200
16.	Medicine for the Coronation Stinerary Hospital, Noakhali	100
	Total	3,050

Jalpaiguri.

		Rs.
1.	Construction of a building for the Boda Girls School	400
2.	Construction of a bridge over the Patheraj river in Magura Union Board within Boda police-station ...	800
3.	Construction of a pucca floor to the Kumargram Charitable Dispensary	400
4.	Chandanbari Rural Reconstruction Society in Boda police-station	150
5.	Construction of a building and purchase of furniture for the Haripur-Maidandigni Middle English School	400
6.	Construction of a dispensary house and purchase of medicines for the Jalpesh Charitable Dispensary ...	1,300
7.	Repair of breach in the road from Sohagpur to Bhandardaha within the Jagatber Union Board of the Sadar subdivision	200
8.	Improvement of Changmari Middle English School building	450
9.	Improvement of a road from Tetulia to Salmohor ...	500
10.	Creation of a playground in the Barnes Union Board by purchasing lands	300
11.	Construction of 2 wooden bridges on the Amguri-Domohani Road	600
12.	Construction of a Boarding house attached to the Kumargram Middle English School	500
13.	Reconstruction of the Pandapara Board final school in the Kharia union board for the Sadar thana ...	300
14.	Construction of a building for a dispensary at Joydharbhanga Hat in Debiganj Circle ...	1,000
15.	Kumargram anti-Mararial Scheme	3,500
	Total	10,800

Malda.

		Rs.
1.	Improvement of Amriti-Chandipur Road ...	400
2.	Improvement of Lakshmipur-Kahala Road in Mathabari Union Board	400
3.	Nayalabhanga to Sultan Khaki village road ...	100
4.	Pokapari to Lalapara village road	50
5.	Improvement of the village road from Adina mosque to the Satashghara ruins	150
6.	Improvement of the village road from Chak Dahari to Atla Beel	150
7.	Improvement of the village road from Binodepur to Jamalpur (police-station Habibpur) ...	300
8.	Improvement of the village road from Tapsahar to Darla (police-station Habibpur)	300
9.	Sinking of a tube-well at Mohona village ...	175
10.	Sinking of a tube-well at Lakshmipur	175
11.	Sinking of a tube-well at Usri-Mirpara ...	200
12.	Singing of a masonry-well at Telepukur (police-station Habibpur)	250
13.	Sinking of a masonry-well at Chandrail (police-station Bemongola)	250
14.	Sinking of a masonry-well at Panditpur (police-station Gomastapur)	300
15.	Construction of a cement concrete well at Lakshmipur (police-station Gazol)	150
16.	Purchase of books for Bhaluka Union Board Library	50
17.	Purchase of furniture and teaching apparatus for four Santal Primary Schools	100
18.	Construction of a masonry well at Kanchanpur ...	300
19.	Construction of a cement concrete well at Balarampur	150
20.	Construction of a cement concrete well at Khalamba ...	150
21.	Construction of a cement concrete well at Kukurkamra	150
22.	Re-excavation of an old tank at Shyampur ...	300
23.	Re-excavation of an old tank at Naogaon	300
24.	Repairs to Jalalpur Balcharpur Road in Jalalpur Union Board	150
25.	Improvement of the Bangitola Rathbari Road in Sadipur Union Board	250
26.	Improvement of a village road from the Pakua Lala Road to the Lakshinarayanpur Irrigation Scheme ...	200
27.	Improvement of village road at Dadamani in Khempur Union Board	200

		Rs.
28.	Improvement of village road from Kanua-Bhingole to Gangot	300
29.	Improvement of village road Bhaluka to Khempur ...	300
30.	Improvement of village road from Harischandrapur to Barduari	300
31.	Improvement of drainage at Samshi	125
32.	For purchase of furniture and teaching apparatus for the Night School at Bulbulchandi	25
33.	For purchase of furniture and teaching apparatus for the Tajpur Santhal Primary School ...	25
34.	For a play-ground at the Lalagola Middle English School	150
35.	Purchase of equipment for Bhingole Girls' Primary School	25
36.	Annexe to the present buildings of the Public Museum at Malda	500
37.	Jadupur Village Hall and Library	500
38.	Grant to the King Edward VII Memorial Town Hall	150
39.	Grant to the Malda Moslem Institute for equipment	100
40.	Grants to the Rural Uplift Society at Naopara Kendanga	50
41.	Grants to the Rural Uplift Society at Deopara ...	50
42.	Improvement of communications from Chatra to Kochakunder	300
43.	Improvement of communications from Shibganj to Chak Daulatpur	100
44.	Reconstruction of village Lakhipur	250
45.	Malatipur Rural Uplift Society	50
46.	Sahapur Rural Uplift Society	150
47.	Purchase of furniture and teaching apparatus for the Santal Primary Schools situated in the Barind area	100
48.	Village play-ground at Enayetpur	200
49.	Village play-ground at Bulbulchandi	100
	Total	9,500

Rajshahi.

1.	Baju Bagha Union Board Dispensary	543

Bogra.

		Rs.
1.	Construction of a new road by voluntary labour from Tegharibisha to Uri Mohanpur (Tajpur) (about a mile) for "Jalpan" (Light refreshment for workers)	30
2.	Construction of a Palli Mangal road from Halatti to Fulatal (about a mile)—For "Jalpan" ...	30
3.	Construction of a village road at Majbari through voluntary labour—For "Jalpan" (Light refreshment for workers)	30
4.	Construction of a village road at Napaltali through voluntary labour—For "Jalpan"	30
5.	Construction of a road from Velurpara Railway Station to Nurpur—For "Jalpan"	50
6.	Construction of a village road from Matidali Pirgacha road to Jasapara about half a mile in length and from the same road to Kazi-Nurail about ¼ of a mile in length—For "Jalpan"	30
7.	Construction of a road from Gobardhanpur to Dakur Chak about ¾ of a mile in length—For "Jalpan" ...	30
8.	Construction of a culvert on a Palli Mangal road already constructed from Tegharibisha to Bhadsha	50
9.	Construction of a culvert on the Jaipurhat-Kujibahar road. The road has already been constructed by Union Board and Palli Mangal workers ...	60
10.	Travelling Library at Raikali—Purchase of books and a box for carrying books	50
11.	Hatibandha Palli Mangal Library	20
12.	Rameswarpur Palli Mangal Library—For books ...	20
13.	Chak Jhapu Palli Mangal Library and Club—For books	30
14.	Digdair Night School for books	15
15.	Marichtala weaving school	30
16.	Balua Palli Mangal Weaving Section	30
17.	Re-excavation of a tank at Kaji-Nurail which will serve to irrigate about 200 bighas of land—For "Jalpan"	50
	Total	585

Pabna.

		Rs.
1.	Dogachi (private) Charitable Dispensary for medicines	75
2.	Wooden Bridge across the new Jola cut at Kadamtali for draining out water from the Kadamtali Beel to the Badal Jola (Raninagar Union Board) ...	150
3.	Kasinathpur Union Board Dispensary at Mahedinagar, for purchase of medicines	100
4.	Night School for adults in Jasamanta Dulia (Khetupara Union Board) for equipments	25
5.	Night school for adults in the house of Hyder Mandal of Haturia, for equipment (Haturia-Nakalia Union Board)	25
6.	Natun Bharenga Union Board Dispensary for buying a filter	75
7.	Khanpura Girls' Primary School for equipment (Faridpur police-station)	50
8.	Badal Primary School, for extension of house (Badal Union Board)	75
9.	Hadal Junior Madrassa, for extension of building ...	75
10.	Haripur Anti-malarial Society	50
11.	Saratganj Union Board subsidised dispensary, for a tube-well	200
12.	Char Kanaidia, for a C. C. Ring-well	85
13.	Sirajganj Weaving Factory School, for equipment ...	75
14.	Hem Chandra Sarkar and Purna Chandra Sarkar, Fine-cloth weavers of Sohagpur, for a Weaving Shed	150
15.	Ullapara Weaving Factory School, for equipment ...	75
16.	Girish Chandra Sutradhar, of S. C. and D. C. Woodworks, Shahzadpur, for improvement of the semi-automatic handloom designed and prepared by him	100
	Total	1,385

Rangpur.

		Rs.
1.	Gaibandha Girls' Junion Madrassa	100
2.	Erandabari Girls' School	150
3.	Belka Girls' Middle English School	200
4.	Repairs of the Radio set in the Kurigram Town Hall	100
5.	13 Rural Construction Units at Rs. 75 each for general works and particularly for night schools ...	975
6.	For Kamalkhata Primary Girls' School ...	75
7.	For Kamalkhata and Bologacha rural reconstruction units for the improvement of playing field ...	300
8.	Construction of better houses and quarter for the Medical Officers of Belgija, Hazari and Chalhat Dispensaries	300
9.	Supply of 20 handlooms in 20 unions in the Sadar subdivision	600
10.	Supply of books, slates and lanterns, etc., to 160 adult education centres one in each union of the Sadar subdivision at Rs. 5	530
11.	For purchasing Jacqured looms for Badarganj Weaving School	150
12.	For purchasing appliances for the Cigar Society at Gajaghanta	100
13.	A bridge at Kutubpur connecting Padaganjhat with Madhupur and other villages (Kutubpur Union Board)	200
14.	Purchase of furniture for newly started Haridebpur High English School	100
15.	A wooden bridge on Union Board Road at Deodoba (Satgara Union Board)	200
16.	A wooden bridge at Sherudanga Beel on the Union Board Road (Bara-Hazratpur Union Board) ...	100
17.	A wooden bridge on the Kanchangiri Bahadurpur Union Board Road (Raipur Union Board) ...	300
18.	A wooden bridge at Sealerghat on Union Board Road connecting Chaperhat with Sitai (Chandrapur Union Board)	250
19.	A wooden bridge on Mahishkhocha Gobardhan Road (Mahishkhocha Union Board)	100
20.	Three bridges on the canal excavation schemes at Binnaguri, Boachouki and Swaruamati in Bhadai Union (Local contribution expended in canal excavation)	400
21.	Purchase of equipments for Baninagar School ..	50
22.	A wooden bridge at Petbhata on Union Board Road connecting Annadanagar Railway Station with Sadagahat in Annadanagar Union Board ...	120
	Total	5,400

Rangpur.

		Rs.
1.	Gaibandha Girls' Junion Madrassa	100
2.	Erandabari Girls' School	150
3.	Belka Girls' Middle English School	200
4.	Repairs of the Radio set in the Kurigram Town Hall	100
5.	13 Rural Construction Units at Rs. 75 each for general works and particularly for night schools ...	975
6.	For Kamalkhata Primary Girls' School ...	75
7.	For Kamalkhata and Bologacha rural reconstruction units for the improvement of playing field ...	300
8.	Construction of better houses and quarter for the Medical Officers of Belgija, Hazari and Chalhat Dispensaries	300
9.	Supply of 20 handlooms in 20 unions in the Sadar subdivision	600
10.	Supply of books, slates and lanterns, etc., to 160 adult education centres one in each union of the Sadar subdivision at Rs. 5	530
11.	For purchasing Jacqured looms for Badarganj Weaving School	150
12.	For purchasing appliances for the Cigar Society at Gajaghanta	100
13.	A bridge at Kutubpur connecting Padaganjhat with Madhupur and other villages (Kutubpur Union Board)	200
14.	Purchase of furniture for newly started Haridebpur High English School	100
15.	A wooden bridge on Union Board Road at Deodoba (Satgara Union Board)	200
16.	A wooden bridge at Sherudanga Beel on the Union Board Road (Bara-Hazratpur Union Board) ...	100
17.	A wooden bridge on the Kanchangiri Bahadurpur Union Board Road (Raipur Union Board) ...	300
18.	A wooden bridge at Sealerghat on Union Board Road connecting Chaperhat with Sitai (Chandrapur Union Board)	250
19.	A wooden bridge on Mahishkhocha Gobardhan Road (Mahishkhocha Union Board)	100
20.	Three bridges on the canal excavation schemes at Binnaguri, Boachouki and Swaruamati in Bhadai Union (Local contribution expended in canal excavation)	400
21.	Purchase of equipments for Baninagar School ..	50
22.	A wooden bridge at Petbhata on Union Board Road connecting Annadanagar Railway Station with Sadagahat in Annadanagar Union Board ...	120
	Total	5,400

Faridpur.

		Rs.
1.	Construction of a hall and library at Bhanga ...	750
2.	An electric fan for the Operation Theatre at the Faridpur Hospital	100
3.	A tube-well at Bakshipur in P. S. Bhusan ...	150
4-8.	Bullock-driven sugarcane pressing machines (including cost of pan and installation) at Hajiganj in Char Bhadrasan police-station, Kalamirdha in police-station Bhanga, Talma in police-station Nagarkanda, Krishnapur and Dheukhali in police-station Sadarpur	500
9.	A hall and library at Chikandi	500
10.	A rest house at Bhurghata in police-station Kalkini	100
11.	A club house at Shahebrampur khas mahal ...	250
12-20.	Bullock-driven sugarcane pressing machines at Alipur and Maijpara in police-station Kalkini, Panchkhola and Kendua-Bajitpur in Madaripur police-station Angaria in police-station Palong, Bhojeswar and Sureswar in police-station Naria and Idilpur and Nagerpara in police-station Gossairhat ...	900
21.	Hall and library at Korakdi in Baliakandi police-station	750
22-24.	Bullock-driven sugarcane pressing machines at Baliakandi in Baliakandi police-station, Khankhanapur in Rajbari police-station and Belgachi in Pangsa police-station	300
25.	Hall and library at Dighirpar in Kotwalipara police-station	750
26-27.	Bullock-driven sugarcane pressing machines at Majra and Fukra in Kasiani police-station	200
28.	A magic lantern with slides for use in the mofussil for propaganda on health, cattle welfare, improvement of agriculture, etc., to be placed at the disposal of a committee consisting of the District Magistrate, Superintendent of Police, Subdivisional Officers, Military Intelligence Officer, Chairman of District Board and the following non-official representatives of subdivisions:—	
	(1) Rai Sahib I. B. Sarkar (Sadar).	
	(2) Babu Jitendra Nath Mukherji (Madaripur).	
	(3) Babu Chandra Bilas Sen (Gopalganj).	
	(4) Moulvi Yousuf Hossain Choudhury (Goalundo)	450
	Total	5,700
	Grand Total	1,03,287-3

Appendix F.

Acts of the Provincial Legislature, 1937-38, and Government Bills introduced and passed by the Assembly in the February-April Session, 1938.

Acts of the Provincial Legislature, 1937-38.

1. The Bengal Minister's Salaries Act 1937, Ben. Act I of 1937, published in the "Calcutta Gazette, Extraordinary" of the 5th October 1937.

The Act aims at fixing the salaries of the Governor's Council of Ministers.

2. The Bengal Legislative Chambers (Members' Emoluments) Act, 1937, Bengal Act II of 1937, published in the "Calcutta Gazette, Extraordinary" of the 5th October 1937.

The Act aims at fixing the salaries and allowances of members of the Bengal Legislative Chambers.

3. The Bengal Legislature (Removal of Disqualifications) Act, 1937, Bengal Act III of 1937 published in the "Calcutta Gazette, Extraordinary" of the 5th October 1937.

The Act aims at removing disqualifications of persons from being members of the Bengal Legislature who hold certain office of profit under the Crown in India.

4. The Bengal Cruelty to Animals (Amendment) Act, 1938, Bengal Act I of 1938.

The Act aims at dealing more effectively with the operation called phooka.

5. The Bengal Rhinoceros Preservation (Amendment) Act, 1937, Bengal Act II of 1938.

The Act aims at putting restriction on selling and buying or possessing any part of a rhinoceros without the permission of the Provincial Government unless it is private property.

6. The Bengal Famine Insurance Fund Act, 1937, Bengal Act III of 1938.

The Act aims at the establishment and maintenance in Bengal of a fund called the Bengal Famine Insurance Fund for expenditure upon relief of, and insurance against, famine and distress caused by serious drought, flood, earthquake and other natural calamities.

7. The Bengal Expiring Laws Act, 1938, Bengal Act IV of 1938.

The Act aims at making provision for the continuance of certain Bengal Acts.

8. The Bengal Public Demands Recovery (Amendment) Act, 1938, Bengal Act V of 1938.

The Act provides for the realisation of dues of the land mortgage banks registered under the Co-operative Societies Act, 1912.

9. The Bengal Tenancy (Amendment) Act, 1938, Bengal Act VI of 1938.

The object of the Act is to lessen the burden on the cultivators by making such amendments to the law which appear to be most urgently required, namely:—

(*a*) *Abolition of landlord's transfer fees and the right to pre-emption.*

(*b*) *Repeal of Chapter XIIIA which allows landlords the use on certain conditions of the certificate procedure for realising their rents.*

(*c*) *Giving under-raiyats the right to surrender their holdings.*

(*d*) *Imposing fine for the exaction of Abwabs.*

(*e*) *Empowering Government to suspend any or all of the provisions of the Act relating to the enhancement of rent.*

(*f*) *Giving powers of surrender to tenure-holders.*

(*g*) *Allowing landlords to sue for a portion of their arrears of rent instead of for the whole amount.*

(*h*) *Giving increased facilities for the subdivision of tenures and holdings.*

(*i*) *Providing for the suspension or abatement of rent when a tenure or holding is lost by diluvion.*

(*j*) *Reducing the rate of interest on arrears of rent from 12½ per cent. to 6¼ per cent.*

(*k*) *Giving occupancy under-raiyats the same rights of transfer as occupancy-raiyats.*

(*l*) *Giving facilities to occupancy-raiyats to regain possession under certain conditions of mortgaged holdings.*

(*See* page 5 for fuller details.)

10. The Calcutta Official Receivers Act, 1938 (Ben. Act VII of of 1939).

The object of this Act is to provide for the administration and control of the Official Receiver of the High Court in Calcutta. Assent published on the 22nd September 1938.

11. The Bengal Repealing and Amending Act 1938 (Ben. Act I of 1939).

The Act amends certain enactments and repeals certain enactments. Assent published on the 16th March 1939.

The following Bill awaits the decision of the joint sitting of both the Chambers:—

(1) The Bengal Legislative Chambers (Presidents and Speakers Salaries) Bill, 1937.

(This Bill was passed by the Bengal Legislative Assembly. The Bengal Legislative Council passed it with certain amendments. The Assembly did not agree to the amendments made by the Council. The fact of disagreement has been referred to the Governor as required under the rules).

The Bill provides for the salary of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the Bengal Legislative Assembly and that of the President and Deputy President of the Bengal Legislative Council.

Government Bills introduced and passed by the Assembly in the February-April Session, 1938.

1. The Bengal Tenancy (Second Amendment) Bill, 1938.

Remarks.—*This has become Bengal Tenancy (Amendment) Act, 1939 (Ben. Act II of 1939). The assent was published on the 6th April 1939.*

The Act provides:—

(1) That no court shall decree any additional rent under section 52 of the Bengal Tenancy Act unless it is satisfied that there has in fact been an increase in the actual area of the tenancy since the rent previously paid was settled.

(2) In determining whether there has been an actual increase in the area, the court should inquire as to whether the present areas of other tenancies in the vicinity which was settled on or about the same time or on the same standard of measurement showed increase, in area, compared to the area originally settled similar to that in respect of the tenancy in suit. If such is the case, the court is to presume that there has been no actual increase in area.

(3) Where the present area of the tenancy is within the same defined boundaries as set forth in kabuliyat or patta the court is to presume that there has been no actual increase in area, provided, however, that this presumption shall not apply to a tenancy of which any portion of the boundary comprise a river or sea or land held khas by the landlord or the Crown.

The amended Act will apply to all suits instituted on or after date of the commencement of this Act.

(4) But if a decree has been passed before the commencement of the Act in a suit instituted on or after the 27th August, 1937, on an application by a tenant against whom such decree has been passed, the court will set aside the decree and restore and rehear the suit under the new provision.

2. The Bengal Rates of Interest Bill, 1938.

The object of the Bill is to reduce the rates of interest payable on certain dues.

Remarks.—*This has become Bengal Rates of Interest Act, 1939 (Ben. Act III of 1939). The assent was published on the 6th April 1939.*

3. The Bengal Maternity Benefit Bill, 1937.

The object of the Bill is to regulate the employment of women in factories for certain periods before and after child-birth and to provide for the payment of maternity benefit to them.

Remarks.—*This has become Bengal Maternity Benefit Act, 1939 (Ben. Act IV of 1939). The assent was published on the 20th April 1939.*

4. The Bengal Tanks Improvement Bill, 1937.

The Bill was passed by the Council in February-March Session with certain amendments and was referred back to the Assembly who have passed the Bill with further amendments and again sent it to the Council who passed it. It is awaiting the assent of His Excellency the Governor-General.

The object of the Bill is to provide for the improvement of the tanks in Bengal for purpose of irrigation.

The following Government Bills were introduced and referred to the Select Committee during the February-April Session 1938:—

1. The Bengal Municipal (Amendment) Bill, 1938.

The main object of this Bill is to ensure timely reconstitution of the Municipalities.

2. The Bengal Local Self-Government (Amendment) Bill, 1938.

The main object of the Bill is to ensure timely reconstitution of Local and District Boards.

3. The Bengal Village Self-Government (Amendment) Bill, 1938.

The Bill seeks to remove certain anomalies relating to the election of President and Vice-President of Union Boards.

4. The Bengal Dentists Bill, 1938.

The object of this Bill is to provide for the registration and control of Dental practitioners in Bengal.

Remarks.—*This has become Bengal Dentists Act, 1939 (Bengal Act XII of 1939). The assent was published on the 17th August 1939.*

The following Government Bill was introduced and circulated for eliciting public opinion during the February-April Session, 1938:—

The Bengal Touts Bill, 1937.

The object of this Bill is to suppress touts in courts and certain offices in Bengal.

The following Government Bill was introduced in the Council and passed with certain amendments. It is pending in the Assembly for its concurrence.

The Calcutta and Suburban Police (Amendment) Bill, 1939.

The object of this Bill is further to amend the Calcutta Police Act, 1866, and the Calcutta Suburban Police Act, 1866, by empowering the Commissioner of Police, Calcutta, to depute one or more Police officers or other persons to attend any public meeting for the purpose of causing a report to be taken of the proceedings of such meeting.

Remarks.—*This has become Calcutta and Suburban Police (Amendment) Act, 1939 (Ben. Act XIV of 193). The assent was published on the 7th September, 1939.*

The following official Bills have been introduced in the Assembly and circulated for opinion:—

1. The Bengal Official Records Bill, 1939.

The object of this Bill is to suppress unauthorised Currency to the contents of unpublished state documents.

2. The Bengal Amusement Tax (Amendment) Bill, 1939.

The object of this Bill is to bring betting on dog-racing within the operation of the Bengal Amusements Tax (Amendment) Bill, 1922.

3. The Administrator-General's (Bengal Amendment) Bill, 1939.

The Bill has been framed to provide certain improvements to the Administrator-General's Act, 1913.

4. The Official Trustees (Bengal Amendment) Bill, 1939.

The Bill seeks to amend section 19 of the Official Trustees Act, 1913.

The following Bill has been passed by the Bengal Legislative Assembly and sent to the Bengal Legislative Council:—

1. The Calcutta Municipal (Amendment) Bill, 1939.

The Bill aims at establishing a separate electorate.

The following Bill has been introduced and referred to a select Committee:—

1. The Bengal Agricultural Debtors (Amendment) Bill, 1939.

The Bill seeks to amend certain section of the parent Act.

The following Bills which originated in the Assembly have been passed by both Chamber of the Bengal Legislature and now await the assent of His Excellency the Governor:—

1. The Bengal Excise (Amendment) Bill, 1939.

The object of the Bill is to amend section 65 with a view to enable the Provincial Government to authorise Inspectors-in-charge of districts to compound offences.

Remarks.—*This has become Bengal Excise (Amendment) Act, 1939 (Bengal Act VI of 1939). The assent was published on the 29th June 1939.*

2. The Indian Stamp (Bengal Amendment) Bill, 1939.

The object of the Bill is to reconcile the divergent views taken by different authorities in the interpretation of Articles Nos. 57 and 62(c) of Schedule 1A of the Act and to avoid possible loss to the revenues of the Province.

Remarks.—*This has become Indian Stamp (Bengal Amendment) Act, 1939 (Bengal Act VII of 1939). The assent was published on the 29th June 1939.*

3. The Calcutta Police (Amendment) Bill, 1939.

The Bill seeks to amend section 33 of the Calcutta Police Act, 1866.

4. The Calcutta Municipal (Amendment and Validation) Bill, 1939.

Remarks.—*This has become Calcutta Municipal (Amendment and Validation) Act, 1939 (Bengal Act V of 1939). The assent was published on the 27th June 1939.*

The object of the Bill is to validate the extension of the term of office of the Councillors and Aldermen of the Calcutta Corporation by amending section 39 with retrospective effect, and by making the necessary consequential amendments in sections 25 and 45.

5. The Bengal Tenancy (Second Amendment) Bill, 1939.

The object of the Bill is to amend section 52 of the Bengal Tenancy Act, 1885.

6. The Bengal Finance Bill, 1939.

The object of the Bill is to levy an ungraduated tax of Rs. 30 on all persons paying income taxes.

Remarks.—*This has become Bengal Finance Act, 1939 (Bengal Act IX of 1939). The assent was published on the 13th July 1939.*

7. The Bengal Rural Poor and Unemployed Relief Bill, 1939.

The object of the Bill is to provide for the relief of the rural poor and unemployed.

Remarks.—*This has become Bengal Rural Poor and Unemployed Relief Act, 1939 (Bengal Act X of 1939). The assent was published on the 20th July 1939.*

Appendix G.

An account of the measures adopted by Government for the welfare of the aboriginals in excluded or partially excluded areas.

PROTECTION OF THE ABORIGINALS IN MALDA.

Introductory.

The aboriginals of Malda are concentrated in the eastern half of the district which is popularly known as the Barind tract, and covers an area of about 790 square miles. It formed part of the ancient kingdom of Pundravardhan. After the fall of Pandua in the sixteenth century it was depopulated and became a wilderness. In the seventies of the last century, the Santals and other aboriginals migrated to this area from the neighbouring district of the Santal Parganas, cleared the jungles, reclaimed the land and made it what it is now, a vast rice-producing tract. The total population of the Barind is about 2,60,000 of whom nearly half are aboriginals. The Santals alone number about 73,000 and Oraons about 3,000. The other aboriginal tribes, inhabiting this tract are Mundas, Malpaharias, Polias, Koches, Turis, Kamars, Koras, etc., but their numbers are not very large. The Barind area is so backward that the Village Self-Government Act could not be introduced there.

The landlords welcomed the aboriginals, specially the Santals, who are known as good earth-cutters, and let out lands to them on attractive terms. But as soon as the work of reclamation was over, and cultivation became profitable, victimisation began. Their simplicity, illiteracy and improvidence made the Santals easy prey of unscrupulous people. The Santals become heavily indebted to both landlord and money-lender and began to lose their best lands.

In order to stop further alienation of holdings, the provisions of Chapter VII A of the Bengal Tenancy Act were applied to the Santals of this district in 1923 and to the Oraons in 1927.

But owing to the reluctance of the aboriginal tribes to come to Court, and their entire ignorance of law, the Santals and Oraons continued to lose their lands.

The Special Officer.—In 1933 Government sanctioned the appointment of a Special Officer to protect the interests of the aboriginals of this district. Babu Kshitis Chandra Barman, M.A., Sub-Deputy Collector, who had previously worked among the Santals of this district as an Assistant Settlement Officer, and who had passed the Santali Language Examination, was specially chosen for the post. He joined his duties in June 1933 and was vested with powers under sections 49F, 49H, 49J, 49K, and 58 of the Bengal Tenancy Act. Since then, the condition of the Santals and other aboriginals has improved.

The Special Officer made an intensive study of the problems in the Barind and found that the Santals were victims of various forms of oppression which he has made every endeavour to stop. At the same time, the Santals had to be taught to meet their legitimate obligations to the landlords and mahajans. Much progress has since been made and cases of illegal exaction by landlords' *gomastas* or *mahajans* occur rarely now.

Santals' grievances.

The Santals had a long list of grievances, the principal of which were against the landlords, the money-lenders and the civil courts:—

(1) *Abwabs.*—Formerly *abwabs* were universally realised by every landlord and their scale was generally higher (4 as. to 12 as.

per rupee) in this area than elsewhere. Non-grantal of rent receipts and consequent sale of holdings was another common form of cheating the Santals. By application of the powers under section 58, Bengal Tenancy Act, with which the Special Officer was vested, these abuses were stopped. A large number of *gomastas* were summarily fined. The landlords were also induced to keep their *gomastas* under better control. They began to realise that as long as the practice of *abwabs* continued, little improvement in their collections could be expected. Almost all of them increased the small wages they were paying their *gomastas* and *peadas*, to living wages, and openly announced the illegality of the levy of *abwabs*. With the cessation of these malpractices the relationship between landlords and their tenants has improved.

(2) *The Mahajans.*—The unscrupulous money-lenders, took advantage of the ignorance and improvidence of the Santals and advanced them money at exorbitant rates of interest. Once in their clutches, the Santals became virtually their bondslaves. The usual rate of interest was 50 to 75 per cent.

The utmost use has been made of the provisions of Chapter VII A of the Bengal Tenancy Act for restoring to the Santals lands of which they had been illegally dispossessed. It has been estimated that by 1930 nearly 20 per cent. of the lands of the Santals had passed out of their hands either due to rentsales or action of the *mahajans*. By the special measures taken, however, the Santals have been saved from further loss of holdings. Debt Settlement Board are now at work in the district, but before they were established, the Special Officer constituted successfully in many debt disputes.

(3) *The Civil Courts.*—The Santals do not like going to the civil courts. The very atmosphere of the courts is repugnant to them. They are not litigiously-minded and do not understand the law's delay.

In order to enable them to have speedy injustice, the Special Officer mediates on their behalf and settles most of their disputes as arbitrator. He takes steps to set aside exparte decrees against Santals when there are legitimate grounds for doing so. A pleader and a moharar have been specially engaged who have thus been saved from the clutches of the touts. Notices can no longer be suppressed as extra copies of them are now sent to the Special Officer by the civil courts under the orders of the Hon'ble High Court.

General uplift of the Barind Area.

The Santals having been protected from the mischivious activities of the unscrupulous persons attention was turned to the general uplift of the aboriginals of the Barind. An account of the various forms which this work has taken are given below:—

(1) *Education.*—Illiteracy has been mainly responsible for the miseries of the Santals. The extension of free primary education among them is important. The Santal Education Board, of which the District Magistrate is the President, and the Chairman, District Board, the District Inspector of Schools and the Special Officer are members, is looking after the educational needs of the Santals. At

present 31 Santal free primary schools are run by the Board. Twenty more such schools have been established through the efforts of the Special Officer. It is hoped that these schools also will obtain recognition by the Board. Santal boys are given free studentships when they read in M. E. and H. E. schools. One Santal boy passed the Matriculation Examination in 1936 and was provided with a clerical appointment. Another Santal boy won an M. E. scholarship last year and is reading in an H. E. school now. There is a Santal Boys' Education Fund from which indigent Santals are given help in prosecuting their studies. Government is considering the question of appointing a Special Sub-Inspector of Schools for the Santal Primary Schools of the Barind Area. Books, slates and pencils are given free to the more regular Santal students. To encourage physical culture among Santal boys footballs are also given to some of the more advanced schools. The Santals are now beginning to realise the necessity of education.

(2) *Agriculture.*—Agriculture is the main stay of the Santals. The high lands of the Barind are not very fertile and yield only one crop, the transplanted winter paddy, the yield of which is 4 to 5 maunds a bigha. Steps are being taken to improve irrigation facilities. Several irrigation projects have been drawn up and are now being considered by the Government.

With a view to supply improved seeds and to popularise new crops, three demonstration farms have been established in the Barind out of the Government of India grant. An Agricultural Demonstrator is employed for the Barind to help the Santals in adopting improved methods of agriculture. Intensive efforts are being made to introduce cash crops like sugarcane, potatoes, cotton, tobacco, groundnut and vegetables, etc., in the Barind. So far the results are encouraging.

In order to improve the breed of cattle in the Barind, 35 stud bulls have been distributed at Government cost.

(3) *Economic improvement.*—The Special Officer has done a lot to save the Santals from economic ruin which is in no small measure, due to their own indiscretion. They are, by nature, very improvident and seldom live within their means. By intensive propaganda he has succeeded, to a remarkable extent, in cutting down the cost of marriages and other festivities to the minimum.

The Santals have no work to do for about six months in the year. In order that they may profitably utilise their idle hours,—which they usually spend in merrymaking,—spinning, handweaving and other cottage industries have been introduced among them. A Peripatetic Weaving School has been giving training to 10 Santals at a time and many of them have already become very successful weavers. The course lasts four months.

Cotton seeds are being distributed free among the Santal weavers. In order to popularise rearing of *Endi* silk worms, a Santal boy was given suitable training in the Bogra Sericulture farm.

(4) *Religious upheaval.*—Originally the Santals were all Animists. Since the census of 1921, a large number of them have been converted to Hinduism as a result of a movement known as the "Satyam Sivam" movement. The activities of the missionaries of the Lutheran Church

and the Catholic Missions have resulted in the conversion of about 200 aboriginals. The figures of the Santals according to the census of 1931 are:—

Hindu	...	38,309
Tribal (Animists)	...	32,879
Christian	...	957
		72,145

(5) *Parganait system.*—A new social system called *Parganait* system on the lines of that existing in the Santal Parganas has been introduced among the Santals of the Barind Area. Each Union has now got a *Parganait* consisting of a *Pargana* and four *Deshmajhis* who are elected by the village *Majhis* or headman.

They are entrusted with the duty of dealing with breaches of tribal discipline or morality and adjudicating on ordinary village disputes. This experiment has proved a remarkable success and the conventions established by the *Parganaits* and the standard of conduct laid down by them have come to stay. It is interesting to note that the Santals of the neighbouring districts of Dinajpur and Rajshahi very often approach the *parganaits* and the Special Officer of this district for arbitration in social and other disputes. Selected Parganas are rewarded yearly for good work.

(6) *Social and moral uplift.*—Since the introduction of the *Parganait* system various social evils common among the aboriginals have been reduced, and social discipline has improved.

The Special Officer's influence is used in the same direction. He has had occasion to act as an abitrator in hundreds of disputes arising out of the breach of marital contracts and other contraventions of social discipline.

Drink habit.—Illicit distillation of Pachwai and liquor has been curtailed and the Santals are gradually realising the utility of temperance.

Witchcraft.—Witchcraft plays an important part in the daily life of the Santals. They always labour under the belief that diseases, deaths and other domestic calamities are occasioned by the malevolent influences of witches (Dan) who are supposed to be the medium of evil spirits (Bonga). There are, among the Santals, some cunning people known as *Jan Gurus* (witch doctors) who pretend to be able to spot witches. Their services are requisitioned for detecting the cause of any troubles that any family may be suffering from. On receipt of a fee which varies from Re. 1-4 to Rs. 10 the *Jan Guru* makes an ostentatious display of a process of divination and incantation, and points to a certain woman, usually of the same village, as the witch. The poor woman is then subjected to all sorts of indignities, compelled to leave the village and is often beaten to death. No Santal would give evidence on her behalf, and such cases seldom come up before the courts of law. Since the appointment of the Special Officer, this superstitous practice has almost disappeared and the *Jan Guru* has begun to be looked upon with contempt.

Bitlaha.—"Bitlaha" is an aggressive form of social ostracism often attended with dangerous measures. When any Santal is found guilty of inchaste or any other similar moral offence, a host of Santals fall upon him, burn down his house and properties and beat him severely. This practice is now a thing of the past.

(7) *Sanitation.*—The Santals have a strong prejudice against vaccination and preventive inoculation.

They are gradually realising the benefit of hygienic living. The antipathy to medicines, which was so deep rooted among them is slowly dying out.

With the object of checking infant-mortality in the Barind, *Dai-training* centres have been organised. But Santhal women do not attend these centres. Nature has so made them that they seldom require the help of Dais.

Every year large quantities of quinine are distributed in the Barind during the malaria session. In 1937, 2,48,199 tablets (5 gr. each) of quinine were distributed.

(8) *Miscellaneous.*—(*i*) *Roads.*—Communication within the interior of the Barind has considerably improved during the last few years. The District Board now allots reasonable grants for keeping the Barind roads under proper repair, and in 1937-38 Rs. 12,400 was allotted. Above 40 miles of new village roads have been repaired this year with Government of India grants supplemented by District Boards grants and local labour.

(*ii*) *Water supply.*—Since 1933 a large number of old tanks have been re-excavated and many masonry wells sunk in the Barind with Government and District Board grants. The problem of rural water supply has thus been considerably solved. The Santals paid their local contributions in the shape of labour.

(*iii*) *Arbitration.*—Whenever they have any dispute, civil or criminal, the aboriginals go to the Special Officer for redress. In this way they get speedy justice without cost. Since the establishment of the *Parganait* system, the number of these complaints has decreased. Only those cases which cannot be effectively settled by the *Parganaits* come up before him. The procedure is simple. A petition is made on an unstamped paper and a note is sent through the complainant to the person complained against asking him to appear before the Officer on a certain date. Both parties turn up and are given a hearing. No pleaders or muktears are allowed to appear, and it does not take long to get at the truth and give a decision. The Special Officer commands remarkable influence in the district. His word is law and his notices are never disobeyed. His decision is accorded the same respect as a decree of a regular court.

(*iv*) *Outside influence.*—The Santals are very credulous people and can be easily inflamed into doing anything, however deterimental it may be to themselves. They can be easily led into trouble by professional agitators. But since the posting of the Special Officer their faith in the Government has increased and outside influence has ceased to be a source of concern. At the same time they have become

conscious of their rights, and have begun to feel that others have no right to exploit them now as in the past.

(*v*) *A Co-operative Supervising Union.*—An elaborate scheme for establishing a Co-operative Supervising Union for Santal societies in the Barind Area has been submitted to the Government. The main objects of the Union are:—

(*a*) to organise credit, irrigation, grain and other types of societies formed of Santal members living in the Barind Area, and

(*b*) to advise and help the members of the constituent societies for their moral, social and economic uplift. The scheme is now being considered by the Government. If properly worked, the scheme is likely to do immense good to the Santals.

(*vi*) *Santal member of the District Board.*—From 1935 a Santal member has been nominated to the District Board of Malda. His appointment has been welcomed by the Santals.

Conclusion.

It may now be said that the experiment tried by the Government of protecting the aboriginals has proved to be successful and that the appointment of the Special Officer has been justified. The various forms of oppression hitherto practised upon them have ceased and the condition of the people is much happier than it was few years ago.

UPLIFT OF ABORIGINALS IN MYMENSINGH.

The following is an account of the measures adopted by the Government of Bengal to ameliorate the condition of the aboriginal tribes of the Partially Excluded Area in the district of Mymensingh:—

The north of the district of Mymensingh is inhabited mostly by the aboriginal tribes of Garos and Hajangs. There was a time when their territorial possessions embraced the whole of the north of the district but pressure on land drove them towards the jungly undeveloped areas and they have now concentrated in the six thanas of Kalmakanda, Durgapur, Haluaghat, Nalitabari, Sreebordi and Dewanganj. The backwardness of these people; their economic helplessness and above all the illegal alienations of lands made by them came to the notice of Government and by an order in Council under the Government of India Act, 1935, six thanas Kalmakanda, Durgapur, Haluaghat, Nalitabari, Sreebordi and Dewanganj in the district of Mymensingh were declared as a Partially Excluded Area, and Maulvi A. Karim No. II, Sub-Deputy Collector, was appointed as a Special Officer to enquire into the condition of these aboriginals and to suggest measures for the amelioration of their condition. The Special Officer was also vested with powers under Chapter VIIA of the Bengal Tenancy Act in order to safeguard their interests against the wrongful alienation of lands and to protect them against the covetous greed of money-lenders. Simple and unsophisticated as they are, they fell

easy victims to any kind of unscrupulousness, and were unable to resist encroachments on their rights.

Immediately after taking over charge in January, 1937, the Special Officer made an extensive tour in the interior, living in tents in the aboriginal villages and has thoroughly studied the condition of the aboriginals. The measures, adopted so far for the amelioration of their conditions, will be found interesting.

2. The necessity of village organisation in the area was left first of all and in the interests of all concerned it was essential to organise these tribes on constitutional lines. The whole area was accordingly divided into eleven units each under an Aboriginal Protection and Welfare Board consisting of 9 to 15 members, locally called Laskars, with one of the leading representative aboriginals as their head man or president. Sometimes they select a president from amongst those who have shown readiness to take an interest in the welfare of these backward helpless tribes. These Boards, since their establishment have been doing immense good to their people in various ways. There was a new awakening among the aboriginals and a new enthusiasm and the idea of self-help was kindled in them. The working of these Boards has proved the competence of the aboriginals to manage their own affairs under proper guidance. One of the most important functions of the Boards is adjudication on tribal, internal disputes, civil and criminal. A large number of cases has been disposed of by them, which, if they had been brought before the regular courts at the district and sub-divisional headquarters, would have involved the parties in considerable expense. Another outstanding achievement of these Boards is that they have been able through their Central Association, to fight some very important test cases before the Special Officer and the appellate courts with satisfactory and far-reaching results. But for their organised attempts, it would have been impossible for poor individual aboriginals to wage a contest against rich and powerful landlords and mahajans.

In the last cold weather, there was a vigorous no-rent campaign against the land lords, specially on account of the *tanka* settlements. The Special Officer organised counter propaganda urging them not to revolt against their landlords, and the Protection and Welfare Boards were of immense help to him in counteracting the movement and in keeping the people within constitutional bounds. These Boards have thus become a source of help not only to the aboriginals but to the administration as well.

3. It has been found that there were great inequalities in the rates of rent prevailing in the localities. Illegal exactions by subordinate officers of the zemindars were also rife. A large number of cases of wrongful alienation in contravention of the provisions contained in Chapter VIIA of the Bengal Tenancy Act, 1885, were taken up by the Special Officer. Five hundred and thirty-eight cases have been filed up-to-date before the Special Officer under sections 49-H and 49-J of the Bengal Tenancy Act for the restoration of lands illegally alienated of which 483 have been disposed of, while 55 cases are still under enquiry. The total area hitherto restored is about 1,000 acres of lands worth about one lakh of rupees.

4. Government on the recommenadtion of the local officers considered it necessary to sanction a revisional settlement operation in the area with a view to obtain an accurate and correct record-of-rights

easy victims to any kind of unscrupulousness, and were unable to resist encroachments on their rights.

Immediately after taking over charge in January, 1937, the Special Officer made an extensive tour in the interior, living in tents in the aboriginal villages and has thoroughly studied the condition of the aboriginals. The measures, adopted so far for the amelioration of their conditions, will be found interesting.

2. The necessity of village organisation in the area was left first of all and in the interests of all concerned it was essential to organise these tribes on constitutional lines. The whole area was accordingly divided into eleven units each under an Aboriginal Protection and Welfare Board consisting of 9 to 15 members, locally called Laskars, with one of the leading representative aboriginals as their head man or president. Sometimes they select a president from amongst those who have shown readiness to take an interest in the welfare of these backward helpless tribes. These Boards, since their establishment have been doing immense good to their people in various ways. There was a new awakening among the aboriginals and a new enthusiasm and the idea of self-help was kindled in them. The working of these Boards has proved the competence of the aboriginals to manage their own affairs under proper guidance. One of the most important functions of the Boards is adjudication on tribal, internal disputes, civil and criminal. A large number of cases has been disposed of by them, which, if they had been brought before the regular courts at the district and sub-divisional headquarters, would have involved the parties in considerable expense. Another outstanding achievement of these Boards is that they have been able through their Central Association, to fight some very important test cases before the Special Officer and the appellate courts with satisfactory and far-reaching results. But for their organised attempts, it would have been impossible for poor individual aboriginals to wage a contest against rich and powerful landlords and mahajans.

In the last cold weather, there was a vigorous no-rent campaign against the land lords, specially on account of the *tanka* settlements. The Special Officer organised counter propaganda urging them not to revolt against their landlords, and the Protection and Welfare Boards were of immense help to him in counteracting the movement and in keeping the people within constitutional bounds. These Boards have thus become a source of help not only to the aboriginals but to the administration as well.

3. It has been found that there were great inequalities in the rates of rent prevailing in the localities. Illegal exactions by subordinate officers of the zemindars were also rife. A large number of cases of wrongful alienation in contravention of the provisions contained in Chapter VIIA of the Bengal Tenancy Act, 1885, were taken up by the Special Officer. Five hundred and thirty-eight cases have been filed up-to-date before the Special Officer under sections 49-H and 49-J of the Bengal Tenancy Act for the restoration of lands illegally alienated of which 483 have been disposed of, while 55 cases are still under enquiry. The total area hitherto restored is about 1,000 acres of lands worth about one lakh of rupees.

4. Government on the recommenadtion of the local officers considered it necessary to sanction a revisional settlement operation in the area with a view to obtain an accurate and correct record-of-rights

which will be esssential for proceedings under section 112 of the Bengal Tenancy Act. The revisional operation has already started its work.

5. The condition of agriculture in the area was anything but satisfactory. The working of the Debt Settlement Boards and the activities of the Special Officer in restoring illegally alienated lands, resulted in the mahajans greatly restricting their credit. To ease the situation, Government distributed agricultural loans amounting to Rs. 10,000 among these tribes and the entire amount has been repaid.

Among the aboriginals a peculiar system of settling lands was in vogue. It was called *bhasha partan* under which aboriginals used to give away their land verbally to the mahajans for a year or two obtaining in return advances at the rate of Rs. 6 per *ara* whereupon the mahajans used to take possession of the land and give it out in *adhi* to cultivators. This practice was also partly responsible for the deterioration of the economic condition of the aboriginals. The practice, which amounted to a cheap type of a complete usufructuary mortgage without the Collector's permission, has been stopped by the issuing of printed leaflets warning the cultivators against this sort of illegal settlement and encouraging the aboriginals to take to cultivation themselves.

Many of the cultivators could not afford to purchase cattle to replace those which they happened to lose. Some of them in order to plough their land had to do so by hiring cattle on paying 10 to 14 maunds of paddy per head of cattle. Government sanctioned a loan of Rs. 40,000 for the purchase of cattle, and the amount has been distributed amongst the aboriginals, the repayments being spread over three years. With the money they have actually purchased cattle, and this year they have gladly taken to cultivation themselves. Local observers say that they have never before seen the aboriginals so keen on cultivation and so keenly appreciative of the value of their land.

A Government agricultural demonstrator has been posted at Haluaghat to show aboriginals improved methods of cultivation and cattle rearing. In order to improve cattle breeding five Sindhi stud bulls have been distributed in the aboriginal area.

6. To provide an impetus to the aboriginals in cottage industries, agriculture, and public health an exhibition was organised by the Special Officer with the help of the Welfare Boards. It was opened by the District Magistrate and was attended by about 7,000 to 8,000 people. Simultaneously a Government Weaving Party began to work in that area, and has alerady trained a batch of 8 aboriginals who after finishing the course of training, have taken to weaving themselves. A second batch of 8 is now under training.

A party of blacksmiths under the auspices of the Aboriginal Welfare Exhibition Committee, of which the Special Officer is the Chairman, has been arranged to take up the work of training the aboriginals in this industry. The aboriginals have evinced great interest in this industry.

Arrangements are also being made to introduce at the earliest possible opportunity other cottage industries such as the making of umbrella handles, cutlery and silk-worm rearing.

7. This part of the district has for want of proper representation of its case in the past, failed to procure its due share of grants for the

improvement of water-supply. Sanction has, however, been obtained through the efforts of the Special Officer this year for a sum of Rs. 5,700 for the sinking of shallow tube-wells. There are large tracts of low-lying *bil* areas in the parganas of Susang and Sherpur. There is a proposal for draining some of them with a view to improve cultivation, sanitation, communication and public health.

8. Special efforts have also been made to secure employment for the aboriginals in Government offices as well as under the local bodies and the results, so far obtained, have been very encouraging.

The District Board of Mymensingh and its local boards have been employing aboriginals in preference to non-aboriginals in carrying out various schemes in the aboriginal area. The District Primary School Board has also appointed a number of duly qualified aboriginal Guru trained teachers in the primary schools of the aboriginal area in preference to non-aboriginal candidates. It has also earmarked some scholarships on a population basis for aboriginal children.

It is gratifying to note that an almost complete transformation has been effected in the mental outlook of the aboriginal tribes of the Partially Excluded Area. There are definite signs of a new awakening, of unity and of self-help amongst these people who have at last begun to realise a sense of security in the possession of their lands and to defend their lawful rights against aggression. It is confidently hoped that with the opening of new opportunities, in no distant future, they will make a place of their own in every sphere of activities in the district.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL.
LIBRARY.
RAJA RAMMOHANPUR.

B. G. Press—1939-40—3889B—6,000.