

[11th March 1927]

## ETHNOLOGICAL GRANT.

Rai BRIJ RAJ KRISHNA : Sir, I rise to move :

That the provision of Rs. 6,500 for " Ethnological grant " be omitted.

We do not know, Sir, what this amount of money is meant for ; we do not know whether there is any institution for the advancement of ethnological education for which this amount is needed, or whether this money is given to the University to advance ethnological research. Not knowing what this money is meant for, we have sent this motion for the omission of the amount of Rs. 6,500 included in the demand for scientific departments. With these words I shall move this motion for omission. After hearing the Government's explanation as to what this money is meant for, we shall be able to decide whether the money should be voted or not.

Mr. E. C. ANSORGE : Sir, when I first saw this motion on the paper I confess that I was somewhat astonished that this motion had been moved for the refusal of this demand. My friend Mr. Swain is of course used to his budget being challenged and would I think feel uncomfortable if the police budget were passed without challenge. In this case we have provided a small grant in the budget for work which, I think, meet with the full concurrence of this House. The sum provided is for the purpose of a small grant to a distinguished member of the House.....

Babu NIRSU NARAYAN SINGH : May we know, Sir, what his name is ?

Mr. E. C. ANSORGE : His name is Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Ray. As I was saying, the sum provided is for the purpose of a small grant to a distinguished member of the House to carry on ethnological and anthropological research. In 1913 when the Bihar and Orissa Research Society was first started, Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Ray was selected as its first General Secretary and as the Editor of its Journal. In view of his exceptional knowledge of the subject and the interest which he had long taken in it, he was appointed Anthropological Secretary to the Society and was afforded special facilities for research work. Following the precedent of the Asiatic Society in Bengal, he was granted an annual allowance of Rs. 3,600 together with the cost of one clerk and one peon, and that is the staff which he now provides from this small grant. I

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understand that at the time he had a considerable practice at the Ranchi bar, and this practice he has had to give up, at all events to a large extent, in order to devote himself to ethnological work. When it was proposed to start a provincial museum at Patna, he was selected as its Curator, a post for which he has an indisputable claim. In spite of the small additional allowance which was attached thereto, however, and the special facilities which were accorded to him to practise at the High Court Bar, he decided, after serving for a year or so as Curator, to return to Ranchi to continue his research work there in Ethnology and Anthropology. He thought, and in my opinion thought quite rightly, that he could render greater service to science by such work than as Curator of the Patna Museum. Ranchi is, as the House well knows, the centre of the aboriginal population of this province, and still affords ample scope for ethnological study. Times are changing, however, and the old landmarks are rapidly disappearing; and the time does not appear to be far distant when the researches which are now being carried on by the Rai Bahadur into tribal history and customs will be impossible owing to the disappearance of the material on which they are based. Unless scientific investigations are carried out now and thorough records are prepared, the possibility of making such a record will before long have entirely disappeared. It, therefore, Government and this Council were to fail to discharge what is really their duty to posterity while the opportunity offers itself, they may have no further chance of doing so in the future. We have in the case of the Rai Bahadur the right man doing the right job. He has a very particular interest in ethnological and anthropological work and he has an extraordinary knowledge of the subject, a knowledge which I can safely say is greater than that possessed by anybody in India, I doubt whether the House will require much to be said regarding the importance of this study. I may perhaps be permitted to refer to a resolution of the Government of India on the subject of a scheme for an ethnographic survey of India, a scheme which may be regarded as the direct precursor of the Rai Bahadur's appointment in this province. This resolution, which was recorded in 1901, runs thus—(I will quote the relevant portions only):—

It is unnecessary to dwell at length upon the obvious advantages to many branches of the administration in this country of an accurate and well-arranged record of the customs and the domestic and social relations of the various castes and tribes. The entire frame work of native life in India is

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made up of groups of this kind, and the status and conduct of individuals are largely determined by the rules of the group to which they belong. For the purposes of legislation, of judicial procedure, of famine relief, of sanitation and dealings with epidemic disease, and of almost every form of executive action, an ethnographic survey of India and a record of the customs of the people is as necessary an incident of good administration as a cadastral survey of the land and a record of the rights of its tenants. The census provides the necessary statistics : it remains to bring out and interpret the facts which lie behind the statistics.

The same view of the importance of this work has been taken in the past by the local Government, and the House may remember the reply which was given to a question in 1921 as regards the use of this very grant. It was then stated that "anthropological and ethnological research such as that conducted by Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Ray is of the greatest value not only to the people of the province and to the Government but also to authorities on this subject in other countries. Accurate knowledge based on scientific enquiries of the customs of the tribes of the province is of great value to the judicial and executive officers of Government, for instance Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Ray's inquiries regarding the Oraons and Mundas throw much light on the system of land tenure prevailing in Chota Nagpur. He has also made many inquiries which have proved of value to the courts regarding the customs of partition and inheritance prevailing among the people."

I do not think it is necessary for me to labour this point as to the importance of this work. There is, however, a wider view-point. I do not think that any nation,—and we hear much to-day of nation-building departments,—can afford to disregard the study of its own history and its own customs. I doubt whether future generations would support the action of this House if, owing to the omission of this small amount of Rs. 6,500 in the budget, all opportunity of creating and maintaining a record of tribal customs were to be lost. There is also another point which I should like to bring before the House, and that is that we are dealing here with an Indian gentleman who is breaking what is practically fresh ground in India,—one who has earned the praises of the most distinguished scientists living, whose books have been welcomed as not of provincial or Indian but of international importance, and who has made a name for himself which stretches very far beyond the confines of his own country in scientific circles. Lest you should imagine that these

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remarks are at all exaggerated, I should like to mention a few of the very many remarks upon the Rai Bahadur's work which have been made by leading scientists, ethnologists and anthropologists, all over the world. Sir Arthur Keith, one of the greatest scientists living,—as the House no doubt knows,—Conservator of the Museum and Hunterian Professor of the Royal College of Surgeons, speaking of his book on the Birhors wrote, "you have done a splendid piece of work—one which will make Europe indebted to you."

Rai BRIJ RAJ KRISHNA : Sir, where are these remarks to be had ? Are they contained in any book ?

Mr. E. C. ANSORGE : I am reading from press cuttings of advertisements of books for sale.

Similarly Dr. Dixon, Professor of Anthropology in Harvard University, remarked that by his books the Rai Bahadur had placed all anthropologists in his debt. It is worth while perhaps mentioning that similar references have been made in newspapers in India, Great Britain and America, but obviously these do not carry the same weight as is carried by the personal tribute of leading scientists.

Well, Sir, the Rai Bahadur has already produced three books on the aboriginal tribes of Chota Nagpur, the Mundas, the Birhors and the Oraons, and these books are the standard authority in regard to those tribes. A fourth volume is, I believe, under publication, and the Rai Bahadur's object is to publish a volume on each individual tribe in the province and then to address himself to the most important work of preparing a comprehensive ethnological survey of all these tribes. For this purpose he has already collected material in regard to a number of tribes, but there is a very great deal still to be done. Besides this work, he publishes at his own expense an anthropological journal, the only one of its kind in India, with which hon'ble members of this House are no doubt familiar, entitled "Man in India." He has delivered a course of lectures in the Patna University on Anthropology, and I submit that the value of these lectures alone would be fully sufficient to justify the continuance of this small grant to enable him to carry on his work. These lectures have been published, and form one of the best introductions to the study of anthropology which exists in the English language. I fear no challenge in making that

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remark, as it has the authority of no less a person than Sir Arthur Keith. The Rai Bahadur, as the House may know, has been elected a corresponding member of the Royal Anthropological Society in London and an honorary member of the Folk-Lore Society,—an honour which has hitherto been accorded to only a very few ethnologists of international reputation,—I think the number is about six. At the annual meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science the excellent work done in the province of Bihar and Orissa was referred to in very high terms. The work done in Bihar and Orissa,—I need hardly say,—is the work done by Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Ray. I do not think this House will repudiate those honours and lose the services of an investigator who has been solely instrumental in conferring them upon this province in order to make a saving of Rs. 6,500 a year.

Babu NIRSU NARAYAN SINGH: Sir, may I ask a question? When did this grant to Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Ray commence? Was he a member of the Council when the grant was first given to him?

The Hon'ble Mr. E. L. L. HAMMOND: Speaking from memory I think it was about 1915 or 1916.

Babu NIRSU NARAYAN SINGH: We have been just now told that he was a Curator of the Museum. I think at that time the grant was not given to him.

Mr. E. C. ANSORGE: He received the grant for the whole time. For a short period of one year, when he was Curator of the Museum, he received an extra grant owing to the fact that he had to leave Ranchi and live at Patna and had therefore to give up the whole of his practice. As I remarked just now, he left the post of Curator after starting the work there and getting it into order and went back to Ranchi to continue his regular ethnological labours.

Rai BRIJ RAJ KRISHNA: Sir, may we ask for some information? What portion of this amount of Rs. 6,500 represents Rai Bahadur's allowance, and what portion is meant for the salary of the clerk and the peon?

Mr. E. C. ANSORGE: Rs. 500 is for a clerk and a peon. Rs. 6,000 is for the Rai Bahadur himself and that includes also his travelling allowance.

Rai BRIJ RAJ KRISHNA: It has been said that three books have been published by him. Do these books belong to

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the scientific department, or are they his publications, who gets the profit made out of these books? Is the scientific department in control over the research work carried on by him, and does the department receive reports from time to time as to the progress made by him? How long is this work of research likely to go on?

Mr. E. C. ANSORGE : Government exercises control over his activities through his travelling allowance. In that way they know where he is going and what he is doing. They are quite unable to exercise any control over his scientific work—they are quite unqualified to do so. As regards the books, they are published by him and are his own. They are not published by Government or by any scientific department. In this case Government is giving him a subsidy to enable him to carry on work for which he has a special aptitude, because by doing it he is prevented from carrying on the ordinary work on which he would otherwise be engaged.

Rai BRIJ RAJ KRISHNA : We would like to know whether reports are received from time to time as to the progress of the work done by him and how long his research is likely to continue.

Mr. E. C. ANSORGE : As regards how long the work is likely to last, I trust, and I hope the House will agree, that it will last as long as the Rai Bahadur will carry it on and we have the opportunity of utilising his services. As I said, his name is known very far beyond India. He has very particular qualifications for the post, and the longer he can be used in the interests of this province, the better it will be for the province.

Rev. E. H. WHITLEY : Sir, we have already received, I think a very satisfying, or what should be a very satisfying explanation of this item of expenditure, and I only rise now because I happen to know personally the gentleman to whom this allowance is given, and I think we surely ought to be able to trust a scientific man of his accomplishments and reputation, who has been acknowledged by authorities of other nations and has indeed literally a world-wide reputation. Surely we can trust him to carry on his work without asking for reports monthly or quarterly as the case may be. It is open to us to read his books, and I hope that the ignorance of these books which has been displayed by the mover of this motion will not

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long continue. I sincerely hope that our friends on the other side of the House will read some of those books and find out how interesting and full of information they are. I would appeal to the hon'ble mover of this motion to withdraw it on this ground that it ill becomes those who are specially anxious to be reputed patriotic to throw any obstacle in the way of what really is a patriotic labour, lifelong labour on the part of this gentleman of whom we are speaking now. His work really is a patriotic one. He is studying the various ethnic elements which go to make the future nation, which we hope will be a very great nation with a great part to play in the world, and it is the duty of every nation to study its own position, the different cultures and the different natures of the tribes and peoples which go to make them up. The people of England have long been studying and are still studying the various ethnic stocks from which their nation has sprung. The more they know about their origins the better able they are to realise their own national character and to carry on their part of the work in the world and so it will be in the case of India.

The hon'ble mover of this motion said that he did not know really for what purpose this ethnological grant was spent. Now the way in which it is spent has been very carefully explained and we have heard how leading scientists of the world have acknowledged that one of our countrymen here has secured such a reputation amongst scientists; and since we know that students of ethnology are very rare, it is, I think, very necessary that we should encourage one of our own members who has gone so far in this direction and trust him without asking for numerous reports to carry on this work as long as he shall be spared sufficient strength, and the intelligence which he has evinced in the past.

Babu NIRSU NARAYAN SINGH: Sir, it requires no argument on the part of any body that the study of races is absolutely necessary and any amount of money that is spent over it is well spent. If this motion has been moved from this side of the House it has only been moved because we feel that no elected member of this Council should have by way of remuneration anything for any work from the Ministry. The gentleman who receives such remuneration should have either continued in that activity or should not have dabbled in politics at all, the suspicion being that having received some sort of allowance from the Ministry he might,—I do not say, he does,

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that might be the suspicion,—try to continue that Ministry however worthless that Ministry may be. It is only on that ground that this motion has been moved and we wanted some information with regard to it. I do not doubt that such works are very valuable. I do not doubt that such work should be continued. In fact if it were left to me I would like to have more money spent over it. The whole of India wants such sort of work. When the Government of India wanted retrenchment and wanted once to abolish the Archæological Department, the Indians in a body protested against it and said the Indians want the Archæological Department to exist, the Indians want the study of races to continue. But as I have said the gentleman who takes it must wholeheartedly devote to the work that is allotted to him and should not dabble in politics at all. It is only on this ground that this motion was moved. I might ask the Hon'ble Minister or the "Clerk" whether it is not possible to have this work done by the Museum which has been started here, I mean by those who are in charge of the museum. I do not say that it is possible to have that work done, but I suggest it should be examined by my friend as the gentleman who dabbles in politics certainly should not have any allowance from the Ministry.

The Hon'ble Sir SAIYID MUHAMMAD FAKIR-UD-DIN, Khan Bahadur: Sir, I do not wish to add anything more to what has already been said by Mr. Ansorge. To the hon'ble member, who spoke last I beg to inform that it is not possible for any officer of the Museum department to make this research work which is being done by Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Roy and he has been doing this work so far as I remember from the time of Sir Edward Gait who took a great interest in the matter. Rai Bahadur was appointed to perform this work by the Government of Sir Edward Gait, and he is still continuing and from the remarks made from time to time in this country as well as outside it appears that his work has received appreciation all round. In their opinion in India there is no other Indian who has done this research work so thoroughly and efficiently. If the hon'ble member wants I can hand over some of the opinions which I have got. I beg to suggest to the House that some hon'ble members may interest themselves in reading his books and to discuss with him and then they will be able to appreciate his work. Under these circumstances it is desirable that this motion should at least for the present be withdrawn.



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Rai BRIJ RAJ KRISHNA : Sir, the purpose for which this cut was moved has, I think, been served by all that has been said by members on both sides of this House. I do not wish to withdraw one word from what I or any other hon'ble member from our side have said, but I do not think it will be any use pursuing this matter any further, and I seek the leave of the House to withdraw this motion.

The motion was by leave withdrawn :

The Hon'ble the PRESIDENT: The question is :

That the Council do assent to a demand of Rs. 46,420 to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March 1928, in respect of Scientific Departments.

The motion was adopted.

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### EDUCATION (RESERVED).

Mr. E. C. ANSORGE : Sir, I rise to move :

That the Council do assent to a demand of Rs. 1,39,791 to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March 1928, in respect of Education (Reserved).

. This appropriation has the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor.

The Hon'ble the PRESIDENT: The question is :

That the Council do assent to a demand of Rs. 1,39,791 to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March 1928, in respect of Education (Reserved).

The motion was adopted.

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### EDUCATION (TRANSFERRED).

The Hon'ble Sir SAYID MUHAMMAD FAKHR-UD-DIN, Khan Bahadur : Sir, I beg to move :

That the Council do assent to a demand of Rs. 76,60,538 to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March 1928 in respect of Education (Transferred).

This appropriation has the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor.