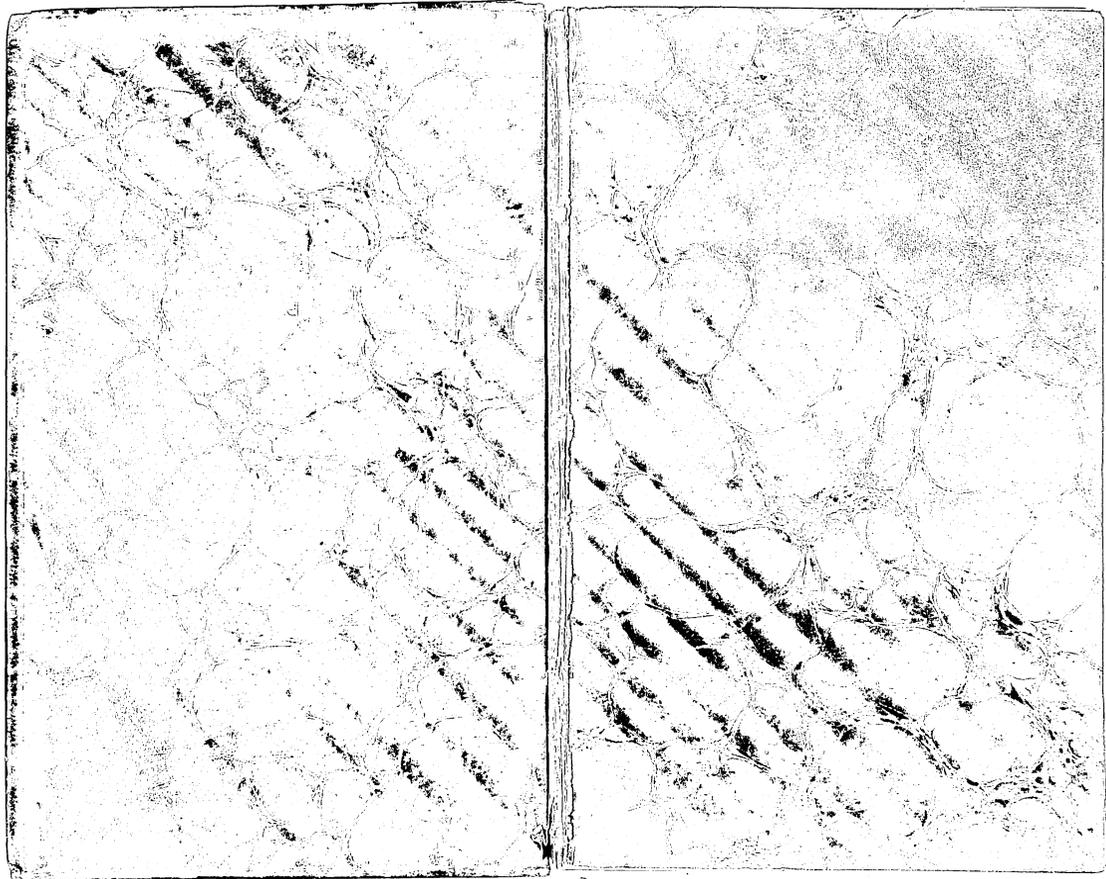
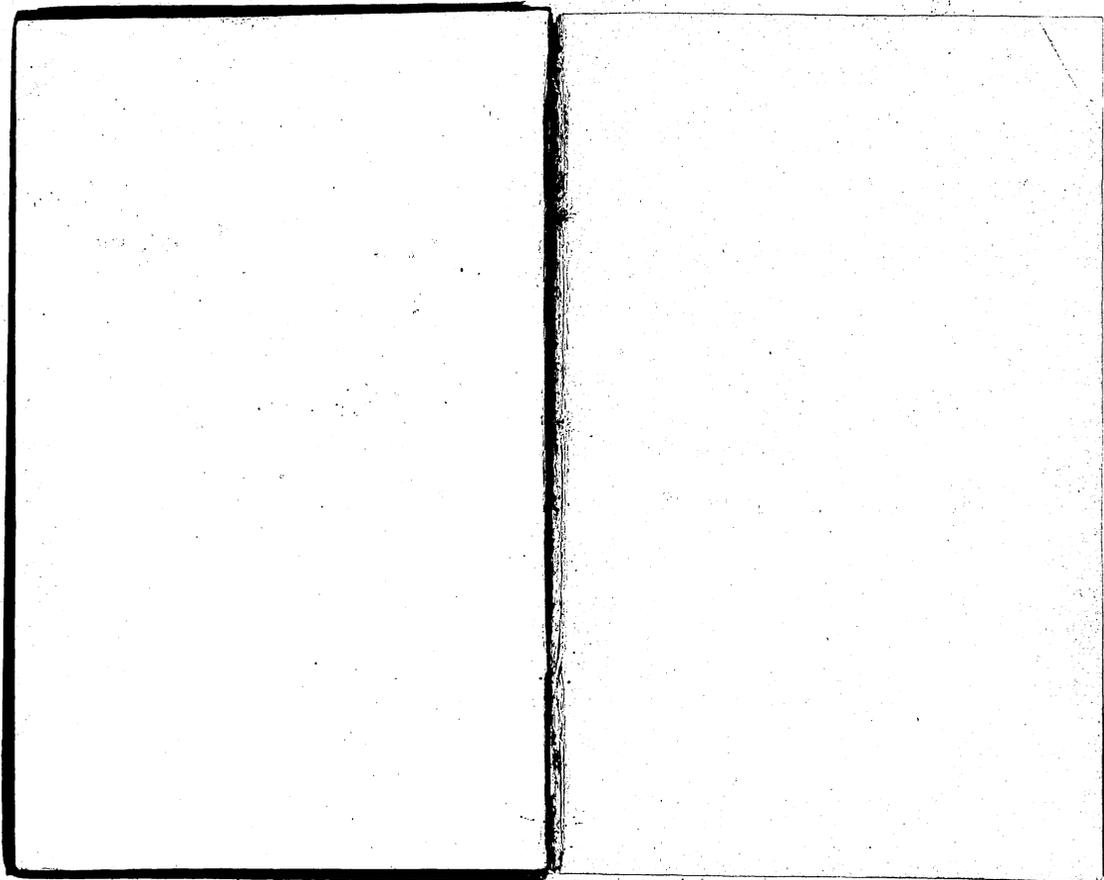
The image shows the front cover of a book. The cover is dark, possibly black or dark brown, with a fine, woven texture. It is framed by a double-line border. At each of the four corners, there is a decorative, ornate scrollwork element. The text is printed in a light, serif font, centered on the cover. The text reads: "HALF-YEARLY REPORT." on the first line, "BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE." on the second line, and "1ST NOVEMBER 1855." on the third line.

HALF-YEARLY REPORT.
BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.
1ST NOVEMBER 1855.





*Proceedings of a General Meeting of the Bengal Chamber
of Commerce, held on Wednesday, the 28th November
1855.*

DAVID COWIE, Esq., *President, in the Chair.*

THE Proceedings of the Meeting were opened by the Chairman reading the Report of the Committee for the past half-year.

With reference to the correspondence on the subject of the River Mutlah, the Chairman read a letter from the Government of Bengal recommending to the Supreme Government the desirableness of buoying off the Mutlah, with the view of testing the advantages of that river.

The following Resolution was unanimously carried :

Proposed by Baboo Ram Gopal Ghose, seconded by Mr. Maniachi—

That the interesting Half-yearly Report of the Committee just read be received and printed ; and that the thanks of this Meeting be recorded for the Committee's services.

The Chairman announced the retirement from the Chamber of Messrs. Martin, Pillans and Co. and Mr. C. B. Wood; and the conditional election of Mr. A. Black, which the Meeting now confirmed.

H. W. I. WOOD, *Secretary.*

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

HALF-YEARLY REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE.

IN placing before the Chamber of Commerce a brief Report of the proceedings of their Committee for the past half-year, it may be premised that the labours of that body are, of necessity, chiefly confined to correspondence, and that the appendix of this Report, in which all letters of interest are printed *in extenso*, will consequently form its leading feature, and be the real proof of the exertions of the Committee on behalf of the Mercantile Community. The chief topics thus referred to are the following :—

1. Revision of the Tariff, by expunging from it a long list of articles of trifling import and export, a measure which is still under the consideration of Government.
2. Arrangement for the despatch of Commercial messages to the Chamber by each mail from London and Hong Kong.
3. Successful application to Government of India in reference to the Electric Telegraph ;—1st, for precedence of these messages, cost free, provided each does not exceed 160 words, and is treated as public news ; and 2ndly, for refund to the public of the cost of all repeated messages not delivered, or rendered

Customs' Tariff.

Commercial Reports from London and China.

Electric Telegraph.

unintelligible in transmission, or which have experienced unreasonable delay.

The Committee, it will be seen, have also urged the introduction of the American system of telegraphing so strongly recommended by Dr. O'Shaughnessy, and have little reason to doubt that he will shortly be empowered to effect it.

Bridging the Hooghly.

4. The important subject of an improved communication between Howrah and Calcutta, in reply to an application from Captain Rogers, as President of a Committee appointed by Government on the feasibility of bridging the Hooghly.

Pilot Service, Harbour Master's Department & Moorings.

5. Unceasing endeavours to procure from Government that increase to the Pilot Service, the Harbour Master's Department, and the River Moorings, so imperatively called for by the extensive increase of shipping, and the urgent necessity of which is in no way lessened by any future prospects of an auxiliary port in the Mutlah, or of Wet Docks near Calcutta.

Bills of Lading and Policies of Insurance

6. A request to the East India and China Association to obtain the extension to this country of a bill for removing the disabilities which at present attach to holders of Bills of Lading and Policies of Insurance, in consequence of such documents not being in law transferable by endorsement.

Peninsular and Oriental Company.

7. A further urgent attempt to bring to the notice of the East India Company, and, through them, of the Admiralty, the constant infringements of their mail contract by the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, in the vexatious slowness of their steamers, and the expediency of transferring the right of fixing dates for the despatch of these vessels from

their respective Admiralty Agents to the Governor General.

8. The long pending claim of the merchants for adequate shed accommodation opposite the Custom House, the present state of which is, that one shed of considerable dimensions and apparent solidity, is now in course of erection, but that the Supreme Government has apparently not yet been induced to sanction the estimate of the Chief Engineer for an additional one of 300 feet by 50.

9. Communication with the Director General of Post Office, the Post Office on some points in which carelessness in sorting and delivering letters and papers had been complained of by merchants.

10. Obtaining from the Government of Bengal a clear and decided statement of the rules to be observed in future in reference to the right of any Government steamers or vessels in Government employ to claim salvage.

11. And an endeavour to obtain from Government the rescission of an order of the Collector of Customs and Board of Revenue, which completely altered, to the detriment of the merchant, the mode in which drawbacks and refunds of duty, had previously been paid; in which the Committee were ultimately so far successful that the Collector has been instructed to ascertain whether their suggestion for payment of such demands by orders of the General Treasury or Bank of Bengal cannot be complied with.

12. The Madras Chamber of Commerce in June last applied to this Chamber for their co-operation in inducing Government to introduce a uniform system

of weights and measures throughout India. The advantages of such an alteration would be self-evident, but, inasmuch as an earnest movement is now going on at home to bring the weights and measures of Great Britain to uniform and probably decimal standards, the Committee felt it would be premature to apply for any independent change in this country, until the question is finally settled at home, as it would evidently be a great desideratum in any such important changes that the weights and measures of India and England should, as far as possible, be assimilated.

13. A Bill for the repeal of the Usury Laws, for which the Committee applied on the 18th June 1853, has recently been passed, and comes into operation on the 1st January next.

14. An interesting notice from Government appears in the Appendix regarding the facilities afforded at Kurrachee for freighting vessels with Salt, to which the Committee have done their best to give publicity both here and in England.

There are various other matters on which correspondence will be found in the Appendix, which need not here be further alluded to; and the following subjects have recently occupied the attention of the Committee, although in point of form the correspondence connected with them will not enter into the past half-year's report, *viz*:-

The construction of Wet Docks at Howrah or Kidderpore.

The buoying off of the river Muttah, that its capabilities may be fairly tested, and the Hooghly be relieved of some of its present surplus shipping.

Usury Laws.

Salt at Kurrachee.

Wet Docks.

Muttah.

An improvement in the system at the Mint, where-
by a depositor of bullion shall be enabled to receive
at once a certificate to the extent of $\frac{2}{3}$ of his
deposit without waiting, as of late, until the whole
has been tested in the ordinary modes.

And lastly, the expediency of obtaining from Go-
vernment periodical estimates of the income and
expenditure of the country, and monthly returns of
the amount of cash held as balances in its treasuries.

The Committee have opened correspondence with
the Chambers of Commerce at Marseilles, Bordeaux,
Havre, Paris, Trieste, Genoa, Hamburgh, Boston, and
New York, requesting an interchange of commercial
information, and particularly of any alterations which
may, from time to time, be made in their Fiscal and
Marine Regulations.

The usual half-yearly statement of the Funds of Funds,
the Chamber is appended.

In conclusion, the Committee will record as matter
of congratulation their impression that, notwithstanding
the past six months of unparalleled pressure on
the money market, arising from adverse exchanges in
other countries and financial measures of Govern-
ment in this, the general trade of Bengal has been,
and continues, in a sound and healthy position.

DAVID COWIE,
President.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, }
Calcutta, 27th November, 1855. }

Publication
of Govern-
ment Budget
and monthly
balances.
Chambers of
Commerce.

APPENDIX 1.

CUSTOMS' TARIFF.

No. 1227.

FROM THE OFFICIATING JUNIOR SECRETARY TO THE
BOARD OF REVENUE,

TO THE SECRETARY TO THE BENGAL CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE.

Fort William, the 17th September, 1855.

Sir,—Adverting to your letter addressed to the Board, under date the
Customs. 11th January last, by the Committee appointed by the
J. Dunbar, Esq. Chamber of Commerce to co-operate in the revision of the
“Tariff for Duties,” I am directed to request that you
will be good enough to state, for the information of the Board and of Govern-
ment, *what particular articles* the Committee had in view when they
suggested “to erase from the table of valuations a number of articles, the
quantities of which are very inconsiderable, and from which the Revenue
derives little or no benefit.”

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed)

H. V. BAYLEY,
Officiating Junior Secretary.

B

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 1st October, 1855.

H. V. BAYLEY, Esquire,
Offg. Jr. Secy. to the Board of Revenue,

FORT WILLIAM.

Sir,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1227, of the 17th ultimo, requesting to be informed what particular articles the Committee appointed by the Chamber of Commerce to co-operate in revising the Tariff had in view when they suggested their removal from the table of valuations.

Your letter having been referred to that Committee, I am directed to hand you a copy of their reply which fully details the particulars.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

Calcutta, 28th September, 1855.

To H. W. I. WOOD, Esquire,
Secy. Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

Sir,—In reply to the letter from the Officiating Junior Secretary of the Board of Revenue, to your address, requesting, on behalf of the Board and of Government, to be informed what particular articles the Tariff Committee of the Chamber had in view, when on the 11th January last they suggested the erasure "from the table of valuations of a number of articles, the quantities of which are very inconsiderable, and from which the Revenue derives little or no benefit," we beg to annex a Statement of the Imports of sixty-eight articles during the five years, ending 30th April last, extracted from the Commercial Annals, published by employés of the Custom House, and which are understood to be compiled from official records, from which it appears—

Firstly.—That of forty-nine articles on which a fixed valuation for duty was placed on the last revision of the Tariff, either no importation whatever has taken place during these five years, or the quantity has been so inconsiderable

that its value has not been stated separately, but has been included under the head of "all other articles" (page 53 of the last Annual).

Secondly.—That of nineteen other articles, the average annual value of one only has exceeded 5,000, the remaining eighteen being thus classed:—

Exceeding 4,000,	2
Ditto 3,000,	1
Ditto 2,000,	2
Ditto 1,000,	7
Less than 1,000,	6
	—
	18
	—

the aggregate annual average value of the whole nineteen articles being only 37,341.

It was to these sixty-eight articles the Committee's recommendation had reference.

We have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servants,

(Signed) JOHN N. BULLEN, } *Members of*
 " SETH A. APCAR, } *the Tariff Com-*
 " N. M. MANIACHI, } *mittee.*
 " JAMES ROSE,

	1850-51	1851-52	1852-53	1853-54	1854-55	Average of 5 years.
Acaciarah or Pollitory,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Aloe,	4,129	1,272	1,350	1,292	623	1,731
Aloe Wood,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Ambergis,	nil.	210	907	352	2,692	812
Antiseal, Star,	1,121	252	3,599	4,012	5,703	2,937
Asafoetida (Hing and Hingra,) ..	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Animal Charcoal,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Bark, (Quercitron,)	1,080	3,094	2,074	14,312	36	4,299
B'dellium (Gum,)	992	2,270	2,911	10,822	322	3,445
Bedlahn, or Quince Seed,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Bogloss,	2,333	893	768	2,404	371	1,354
China Root,	4,110	nil.	nil.	2,722	nil.	1,366
Corrosive Sublimate,	8,259	9,245	4,137	9,567	2,166	6,878
Cubob,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Cumin Seed,	3,627	6,678	106	7,028	6,043	4,674
Dried Snails,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Elephant's Teeth or Tusks,	nil.	1,426	nil.	116	nil.	308
Ditto Grinders,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Ebony,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Eggs,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Fish Maw,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Flints, (Gum,)	375	1,241	919	4,763	690	1,617
Frankincense or Olibanum,	8,808	1,686	1,325	443	1,184	1,679
Gall Nuts,	7,328	340	nil.	300	1,302	1,860
Gamboge,	753	798	1,826	nil.	nil.	657
Grass and Tallow,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Gum Copal,	4,091	360	2,129	1,395	444	1,683
Ditto Myrrh,	nil.	90	15	73	90	54
Ditto Ammoniac,	36	nil.	67	nil.	nil.	20
Ditto Bamboo,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Hemp, Manila,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Horn, Buffalo,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Ditto, Deer,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Horse Hair,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Lamp Black,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Liquorice Root,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Lignum Vite,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Musk,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Ditto (in Pod,)	1,458	471	254	686	nil.	574
Mother O'Pearl Shells,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Oil, Sandal Wood,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Cassia,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Cocoanut,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
White and Fish,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Grass,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
						34,948

	1850-51	1851-52	1852-53	1853-54	1854-55	Average of 5 years.
Oil, Earth,						34,948
Woods,						
Kolaotic,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Utter of Reses,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Pimento or Allspice,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Pistachio Nuts,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
France, Bussorah,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Fenchonist,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Raisins, Gulph and Red Sea,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Ditto, Monaco, Gulph and Red Sea, ..	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Rose Water,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Rhubarb,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Saffron,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Ditto, in cakes or lumps,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Sarsaparilla,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Sunchal, or Black Medicinal Salt, ..	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Sulphuric Acid,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Sugar, Leaf,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Ditto, soft,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Storax Liquid,	1,948	3,392	1,982	2,697	2,009	2,393
Tortoise Shell,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
Turmeric,	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.	nil.
						37,341

APPENDIX 2.

COMMERCIAL REPORTS.

Letter from Jas. J. Mackenzie, Esq., late President of the Chamber of Commerce.

CHARLES LANE, Esquire,
36, Mincing Lane.

Sir,—It may be as well to commit to paper the terms on which you have undertaken to forward twice a month, *viâ* Marseilles, an abstract report on the Markets for East India produce, and of other items of intelligence, directed to the Deputy Superintendent of Electric Telegraphs at Bombay, for transmission to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce at Calcutta.

The heads of intelligence required are given in the form which has been given to you, and you are aware of the wish of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to have the reports forwarded, prepaid, under a red envelope. The report will of course give the latest advices up to the time of despatch of the Mails:—and if on the day following that despatch, or at any time within the possibility of overtaking the Mails at Marseilles by means of the Electric Telegraph, any event or change in Markets of great and general interest should occur, the Committee of the Chamber would particularly desire such information to be telegraphed to Marseilles, or if ensuring later intelligence to Trieste, to be therein forwarded to Bombay, in the same manner as your own reports.

I have to request that you will do me the favor to ascertain how the latter part of the arrangement can be carried out—whether the Telegraph officials would undertake to transmit messages from Marseilles or Trieste, postage from thence being included in the charge for them, or whether it would be necessary to employ a private agent. Private agency in these matters is best avoided if possible—and I therefore hope that we may be able to dispense with it.

Your remuneration for the duties you have undertaken is to be at the rate of £100 per annum, exclusive of postages and cost of stationery and messages

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per Electric Telegraph, and I have requested Messrs. Palmer, Mackillop, Dent and Co., to pay you quarterly in terms of this arrangement, so long as it shall exist between you and the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, on behalf of which I now act. You will have the goodness to hand to Messrs. Palmer, Mackillop, Dent and Co., a copy of each of your reports, and also of any messages you may send. Requesting a reply,

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,

(Signed)

JAS. J. MACKENZIE.

3, UPPER GROSVENOR STREET,
June 12, 1855.

JAS. J. MACKENZIE, Esquire.

Sir,—In reply to your favor of the 12th, I beg to say that I am willing to continue the duty undertaken on the 25th ultimo of transmitting by each Semi-Monthly Mail, an abstract report of the produce Markets, with financial and other intelligence, according to the prescribed form, on the terms proposed—that is to say, £100 per annum, exclusive of payments for postages, stationery and Telegraph messages:—each despatch to be made up to the latest hour preceding the departure of the Overland Mail, and addressed under a red envelope to the Deputy Superintendent of Electric Telegraphs, Bombay, for the Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta.

I also undertake, should any event of great interest transpire in time to be telegraphed to Marseilles or Trieste, to despatch information of the same, which I find can be accomplished without the interference of special agency, either through the Telegraph Office, or Mr. Renter, whose prospectus I enclose. A copy of each report or message, as soon as despatched, to be sent to Messrs. Palmer, Mackillop, Dent and Co.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed)

CHARLES LANE.

36, MINCING LANE,
June 16, 1855.

The Commercial Message from China is prepared and transmitted by E. Reimers, Esq., of Hong Kong.

APPENDIX 3.

TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION IN INDIA.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 30th May, 1855.

To C. BEADON, ESQUIRE,
Secy. to the Govt. of India,

HOME DEPARTMENT.

Sir,—In compliance with the application of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, dated the 15th June, 1854, the Most Noble the Governor General was pleased to direct the Government of Bombay to arrange for the despatch, by Electric Telegraph, of a short summary of commercial intelligence for the use of this Chamber; and His Lordship also ordered that such summary should form a part of the first message transmitted to the Supreme Government, upon the arrival of each Overland Mail. Up to the present moment the commercial intelligence received by Telegraph, from Bombay, has been prepared by the Chamber of Commerce there, but it has been so meagre and unsatisfactory that arrangements have been made with parties in London for the compilation and despatch of a précis of mercantile news suited to the wants of the merchants of Calcutta. The first of the series of direct advices from London is expected by the next Mail arriving at Bombay, and is looked for with much interest.

The last message transmitted from Bombay to this Chamber was not received till late on the night of the 24th instant, and was consequently unavailable till the following morning: its delayed arrival was the source of much disappointment and surprise, as several private messages had been received nearly 48 hours earlier, and its utility was therefore greatly depreciated.

In directing that the Chamber's message should be incorporated with that for the Government, His Lordship the Governor General admitted the impor-

ance of the earliest receipt of mercantile news by mercantile men, and so sensible is the Chamber of the expediency of obtaining that object that it now ventures to apply for the means of securing it.

The Committee, on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce composed of a great section of the mercantile community and representing large and varied interests in the trade of Calcutta, is of opinion that messages conveying important intelligence for a considerable majority of the commercial body should have the earliest possible transmission. The Committee is aware that by the Rules of the Telegraph office, short messages can claim priority of despatch, and by their operation the message for the Chamber, necessarily of some length, being seldom less than 100 words, would be kept back till all other briefer messages had been transmitted. In such cases it may be assumed that private and perhaps individual interests over-ride those of an association: since the message for one party, in consequence of its brevity, is permitted by the Regulations precedence over a possibly not much longer despatch intended for the advantage of 70 or 80 Members of a public institution.

The Committee respectfully submits that the rule which provides as above is capable of modification, and desires to urge upon the consideration of His Honor the President in Council the great boon that would be conferred on the Chamber of Commerce if he would be pleased to direct that in all instances messages for the Chamber should have precedence over all private messages, and that they should be transmitted immediately after the despatch of public news or other urgent matters connected with the public service.

In addition to the request now made, I am desired to submit a further application.

Under arrangements sanctioned by the Government of Bombay, the messages received from the Chamber of Commerce, are sent free of charge, but this has reference only to the English Market Report: China and other news being paid for.

The Committee trusts that it will not be considered unreasonable if it prays that the order for granting priority of transmission to all messages for this Chamber be accompanied by directions that such transmission be free.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

FROM C. BEADON, Esquire,
Secy. to the Govt. of India,

TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE BENGAL CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE.

Dated the 22nd June, 1855.

HOME DEPARTMENT.
Electric Telegraph.

GENTLEMEN,—I am directed by the Hon'ble the President in Council to acknowledge the receipt of your Secretary's letter, dated the 30th ultimo, and in reply to communicate as follows :

2nd. On the 16th June, 1854, in consequence of an application from the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, the Deputy Superintendent of the Electric Telegraph at Bombay, was instructed through the Government of that Presidency "to receive, after the arrival of each Overland Mail, a message from the Chamber of Commerce there, giving advices of the state of the European Markets, and other commercial matters of interest for transmission to Calcutta;" and, as an additional convenience to the Mercantile Community, and a safeguard against general information being anticipated by individuals, the Government of Bombay was requested to arrange, so that the commercial intelligence required by the Bengal Chamber, might be dispatched without delay "as a part of the first message for the Supreme Government."

3rd. At the same time a copy of these orders was sent for information both to the Superintendent of the Electric Telegraph, and to the Deputy Superintendent at Calcutta, and the Bengal Chamber was told what had been done.

4th. Subsequently, on a further application from the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, the Government of Bombay was on the 6th November, 1854, requested, until the Electric Telegraph should be regularly opened to the public ("when" it was added, "the Chamber of Commerce at Calcutta will be able to make arrangements satisfactory to itself"), "to avail itself of the services of the Chamber of Commerce at that Presidency, to convey to the Calcutta Chamber by Electric Telegraph, immediately after the receipt of the China Mail, the necessary items of intelligence." The Bengal Chamber of Commerce was at the same time informed that this had been done.

5th. The Committee now represents that with respect to the commercial intelligence brought by the Overland Mail, a message has heretofore been prepared by the Bombay Chamber, but that arrangements have now been made with parties in London, for the compilation and dispatch of a precis of mercantile news suited to the wants of the Merchants of Calcutta. The Committee further represents that on a late occasion the commercial message intended for the Chamber was not received until nearly 48 hours after several private messages, and begs that in future all messages for the Chamber should have precedence over all private messages immediately after the dispatch of public news. The Committee also requests that the Chamber may receive its message of intelligence from China, as well as of that from England, free of charge.

6th. The President in Council directs me to observe that the condition upon which the Chamber was permitted to have its message of English intelligence sent free of charge, was, that it should be sent as a part of the first message to the Supreme Government, and consequently that it should be published for general information immediately on its arrival in Calcutta. On no other understanding would the Government of India have consented either to give a preference to the Chamber's message over private messages, or to permit it to be sent free after the Electric Telegraph had been thrown open to the public. For although the Chamber numbers among its members most of the European and some of the Native Merchants of Calcutta, still it is only a private society, and so long as there are Merchants who do not choose to belong to it, it would not be fair to give its messages priority, or to convey them free of charge, unless those messages are made public immediately on their arrival.

7th. It appears, however, that by some misconception of the orders of Government, the messages of Overland news for the Chamber have ceased to be transmitted from Bombay as a part of the first message to the Supreme Government, and that although they are still transmitted free of charge, they have ceased to be communicated to the Government here, or to be published in Calcutta with the Government messages of public news. An explanation of this departure from the instructions of the Government of India, has been sought for in the proper quarter, and in the meanwhile the Government of Bombay has been desired to take measures for receiving and transmitting as a part of the first public message, the message prepared and transmitted from England by the Agents appointed by the Chamber, and the Deputy Superintendent of the Electric Telegraph in Calcutta has been directed to publish it with the rest of the news immediately on its arrival.

8th. The President in Council is willing to allow the message of mercantile news prepared at Bombay for the Bengal Chamber on the arrival of the China Mail to be transmitted by Electric Telegraph to Calcutta free of charge, and in preference to all other private messages, on the same conditions, namely, that the message shall be regarded as a public message and shall be published immediately on its arrival in Calcutta. The Government of Bombay and the Deputy Superintendent of the Electric Telegraph in Calcutta have been instructed accordingly.

I have the honor to be,
Gentlemen,
Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) CECIL BEADON,
Secy. to the Govt. of India.

COUNCIL CHAMBER,
The 22nd June, 1855.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 6th July, 1855.

TO C. BEADON, ESQUIRE,
Secy. to the Govt. of India,

HOME DEPARTMENT.

SIR,—I am instructed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 820, of the 22nd ultimo to its address, communicating the grounds upon which the Hon'ble the President in Council declines compliance with the Committee's application for precedence of the Chamber's message over all private messages, immediately after the despatch of public news: and announcing that "the Government of Bombay had been desired to take measures for receiving and transmitting as a part of the first public message the message prepared and transmitted from England by the Agents appointed by the Chamber," and that directions had been given to the Electric Telegraph Office in Calcutta, "to publish it with the rest of the news immediately on its arrival" for general information.

Your letter also intimates that, under similar conditions, the message of commercial intelligence from China prepared at Bombay for transmission to

the Chamber, will be sent free of charge, and in preference to all private messages.

The Committee desires me to return its thanks for the arrangements thus made, although they modify those proposed by the Chamber in my letter of the 30th May.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

No. 1010.

FROM C. BEADON, ESQUIRE,
Secy. to the Govt. of India,

TO H. W. I. WOOD, ESQUIRE,
Secy. to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

Dated the 10th August, 1855.

HOME DEPARTMENT.

Electric Telegraph.

SIR,—In continuation of my letter No. 820, I am now directed by the Hon'ble the President in Council, to forward an Extract (paras. 1 to 8) of a report from the Superintendent of Electric Telegraphs, dated the 6th ultimo, and also an Extract (para. 1) of the reply this day addressed to that Officer.

2. In explanation of the delay that has occurred in the receipt of messages addressed to the Chamber, I am further directed to furnish you with another extract (paras. 12 and 13) of the same report, and to state, for the information of the Chamber, that no message, public or private, can be detained for any other message which has not actually been sent to the office in a state fit for despatch. The head assistant in charge of the office at Bombay states as follows:—

"With regard to the message from London for the Bengal Chamber, it takes me generally one hour and a half to prepare it, as it has to be re-written. If I followed my instructions to the letter, I should simply have put the intended Telegraph dispatch into an envelope, and have forwarded it by Post,

as all the prices of commercial produce, quantities, &c., are put down in figures and not written in full." It would save time therefore if the Chamber would direct its Agents to prepare the messages in the manner prescribed by the Rules.

3. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, the President in Council has directed that public messages prepared at Bombay from information given by the Agents of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, shall be limited on each occasion to 100 words.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,
(Signed) CECIL BEADON,
Secy. to the Govt. of India.

COUNCIL CHAMBER, }
The 10th August, 1855. }

*Extract of a Report from the Superintendent of Electric Telegraphs,
dated the 6th July, 1855.*

PARA. 1. I have received this-day your letter No. 821, requesting me to explain—"why the commercial messages sent from Bombay to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, on the arrival of the Overland Mails, have not been communicated to the Government, or published with the other news."

2. I have to state in reply, that the messages in question were withheld from publication, and treated in all respects as private and paid messages, at the unanimous request of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce in Bengal.

3. I met the Committee in official conference on or about the 27th January, four days prior to the opening of the lines to the public. I attended officially their Meeting, held specially for the conference, to give them every information in my power regarding the state of the lines and offices, and the best mode of carrying on correspondence.

4. Many subjects were discussed, and last of all the transmission of the messages, the Chamber expected to receive from Bombay. I informed the Committee, that as these messages were to pass *free*, it was my duty to

publish them at every repeating station in India. This caused discussion and objection, wherein it was explained to them that by paying for their messages, like the rest of the public, they had an equal right to these being held confidential and not published in any way.

5. The Committee unanimously resolved to pay for their messages, and have these held solely as the property of the Chamber of Commerce.

6. I took a written minute of their resolution, and on my return to the Telegraph Office, issued orders accordingly.

7. The Committee of the Chamber had, under the published Rules, a clear and unequivocal right to send and receive confidential messages, paying for the same. The messages were to be prepared for them by their own Agents, not by public servants. On the other hand, by desiring their messages to be deemed confidential, they forfeited all claim for their free or preferential transmission.

8. If the messages received on this resolution of the Committee, have not been paid for, I have no doubt that on communication of this statement, payment will be made at once.

*Extract of a letter to the Superintendent of Electric Telegraphs,
dated the 10th August, 1855.*

1. "I am directed by the Hon'ble the President in Council to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 245, dated the 6th ultimo, and in reply to observe that under the arrangements detailed in Paras. 2 to 5, (arrangements quite in accordance with the Rules, but of which the Government had no knowledge) it would seem to be owing to an oversight in the Calcutta Office, that the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, have not been charged at the usual rates for messages of Overland News, which at their own request have been sent as private messages. You will now obtain from the Chamber a settlement of the amount due from them on account of these messages, which ought to have been paid for at the time."

*Extract of a Report from the Superintendent of Electric Telegraphs,
dated the 6th July, 1855.*

PARA. 12. It is my duty to state for the information of Government, that on many occasions the messages for the Chamber of Commerce, have not

been delivered at the Bombay Office for several hours, once or twice even for an entire day, after the arrival of the Mail.

13. The private, commercial and banking messages for mercantile firms, banks and individuals in Calcutta and Madras, received from London, Marseilles, Trieste, and Hong Kong by each Mail Steamer, are tendered in the Bombay Office, in an extraordinarily short time after the arrival of the Mail, and have frequently reached Calcutta long before the message for the Chamber of Commerce, was received in the Bombay Office.

(True Extracts.)

(Signed) CECIL BEADON,
Secy. to the Govt. of India.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 20th August 1855.

To C. BEADON, Esquire,
Secy. to the Govt. of India, Home Department,

FORT WILLIAM.

SIR,—I am desired by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1010, of the 10th instant, giving Extracts from letters from the Superintendent of the Electric Telegraph, in explanation of the delay in transmitting messages from Bombay; and informing the Chamber that the Hon'ble the President in Council has directed that public messages prepared at Bombay from information given by its Agents, shall be limited to 160 words on each occasion.

In reply, I am instructed to state that by the ensuing Mail, the Agent in London for the Chamber, will be directed to comply with the Telegraph regulations, as to the shape in which his messages should be transmitted, and to compress his Report into the number of words sanctioned by Government.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 19th July, 1855.

To C. BEADON, ESQUIRE,
Secretary to the Government of India,
HOME DEPARTMENT.

SIR,—By direction of the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, I have the honor to call the attention of the Honorable the President in Council to the present state of Telegraphic communication in India so far as it affects the interests of those engaged in Commercial pursuits.

When the Electric Telegraph was some months ago thrown open to the public, it was generally understood that at the commencement of its career this mode of communication would necessarily involve many inaccuracies and imperfections, because the signallers employed had gradually to learn their business, and could not be expected to attain celerity in signalling save by continued practice.

With this impression and in the hope of a gradual improvement being one day manifested, the Mercantile Community have gone on patiently availing themselves of the Telegraph, and taking their chance of the accuracy of its working; but the Committee of the Chamber regrets to have to record that, instead of any improvement, there has been a palpable deterioration to the extent that, in the transmission of private messages during the last few weeks, inaccuracy would almost appear the rule, and complete accuracy the exception.

With reference to this state of things, and to some points in the Superintendent's Circular of the 9th ultimo, regarding non-refund of cost of messages, the President of the Chamber addressed a private letter to Dr. O'Shaughnessy, from the reply to which I am authorized to state that in his opinion no real improvement can be expected under the management of the signallers whom he is at present compelled to be dependent upon.

And further, that Dr. O'Shaughnessy's only hope of making the Telegraph in India what it ought to be, is in the introduction of the American system, (vide para. 234 of Letter on the Electric Telegraph) by which, if efficiently carried out, it is possible to perform on one line more than six times the amount of work which the present arrangements admit of.

One great advantage of that system is that the American instruments record their work, and so obviate nearly all causes of blunders and effects of carelessness in the different offices.

The Committee does not profess competence to judge of the individual merits of the two systems of signalling, but desires to record its conviction that nothing can be more unsatisfactory than the working of the present one; and I am consequently instructed, to entreat the careful consideration of the Honorable the President in Council to the suggestions for this change of system, which it is understood the Superintendent of Telegraphs has submitted direct.

I am further desired, with reference to the Superintendent's published Circular of the 9th ultimo, to express the opinion of the Committee that the principle therein laid down, of no refunds being made for cost of messages, presses with great hardship upon the sender of a message which is in no shape delivered.

The Committee could cite recent instances of messages between the three Presidencies which have thus entirely been suppressed, and the intended recipients of which became aware of their having been so addressed only on the arrival of the ordinary post.

As accuracy is not guaranteed, it is perhaps not unreasonable that no refunds should be made in those cases where a Telegraphic message is delivered inaccurately or even unintelligibly, particularly as it would be difficult to define what extent of error should authorize the demand for a refund; but in the instances above referred to, where a message has been booked and paid for in one city and not the slightest intimation of it reaches the other, the Committee submits that simple justice would dictate a refund of the entire cost paid; and trusts the Honorable the President will authorize a modification of the Circular in question, to the extent of declaring that refunds will be made for all messages the absolute non-delivery of which may be sufficiently proved.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 16th July, 1855. }

FROM G. F. EDMONSTONE, Esquire,
*Secretary to the Government of India,
with the Governor General.*

TO H. W. I. WOOD, Esquire,
Secy. to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

SIR,—I am directed by the Most Noble the Governor General to acknowledge the receipt of your letter to the address of Mr. Secretary Beadon, dated the 19th July last, regarding the present state of Telegraphic communication in India, and requesting a modification of the Superintendent's Circular Order of the 9th June last, to the extent of declaring that refunds shall be made for all messages, the absolute non-delivery of which may be sufficiently proved.

2. In reply I am desired to state that, His Lordship has been in communication with the Superintendent on the subject of your letter, and that instructions have been issued for the introduction of a different system of signalling, and for allowing refunds to be made in India in cases of non-delivery of a message, of unjustifiable delay, or of error so gross as to frustrate the object of a message.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) G. F. EDMONSTONE,
*Secy. to the Govt. of India,
with the Governor General.*

OOTACAMUND,
The 8th September, 1855. }

APPENDIX 4.

BRIDGING THE HOOGLHY.

TO THE SECRETARY TO THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

SIR,—As President of a Committee appointed by Government to report on the general question of a Bridge across the Hooghly, I shall feel much obliged if you will favor the Committee with the views of the Chamber of Commerce on the following points:—

“To what extent is the call for a Bridge over the Hooghly at Calcutta well grounded? For what objects is it especially wanted, and, assuming the cost at half a crore of rupees, might or might not this sum or part of it be expended on works more urgently required by the Calcutta Community?”

“How far would it be serviceable were a Railway Branch and Station established at Sulkes?”

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) T. E. ROGERS,
President of the Committee.

CALCUTTA,
The 25th May, 1855.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 1st June, 1855.

CAPTAIN T. E. ROGERS,

*President of the Committee on the question of
Bridging the Hooghly.*

SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 25th ultimo, requesting to be furnished with the views of the Chamber of Commerce on certain points connected with the question abovementioned.

I am instructed by the Committee of the Chamber, in reply, to solicit your reference to the annexed copy of a letter which I addressed to the Government of Bengal, on the 6th of February last,* in which the Chamber recorded its opinion against the propriety of erecting any Bridge across the Hooghly below Aberitollah Ghaut, as interfering with the navigation, and suggested as preferential a Railway Bridge at some distance above the town, with a branch line into Calcutta.

The locality which the Chamber then had in view for such a Bridge was Pultah Ghaut, and as its Members still adhere to their opinion of the feasibility of that scheme, the reply which I am now directed to make to your inquiries must necessarily be taken in connexion with it.

To your first question of the extent to which the call for a Bridge over the Hooghly at Calcutta is well grounded, I have to state that in the opinion of the Committee the call for *some* improved means of communication between this city and its populous suburbs of Howrah, Sulkeah, &c., is self-evident and urgent.

The daily passenger and goods' traffic across the river, which was extensive prior to the opening of the Railway, is, of course, greatly on the increase, and is chiefly carried on by means of native boats, with an annual heavy loss of life and property.

Assuming the erection of a Bridge at Pultah Ghaut, or rather while it is in abeyance, the Committee suggests that the best mode of improving this communication will be by powerful Steam Ferry Bridges, to cross the river at or near the Howrah station. These would offer safe and speedy transit to passengers and goods, without interfering with the navigation of the river, and their cost, it is believed, would be a very moderate item contrasted with that of any permanent Bridge. Another mode which has been suggested, is that of a Bridge of Boats as in use on the Rhine, the Neva, and other large rivers, where the frequent passing of Steam Boats is found to interfere very temporarily with the maintenance of a permanent roadway.

The Committee believes the chief recommendation of such a Bridge over the proposed Steam Ferries, would be economy and rapidity of construction, and that, pending the question of the erection of any thing more permanent, which it is presumed would take years for completion, the formation of one or both of these modes of transit would be a great public benefit.

* Vide the Chamber's Report for the last half year.

Your second query, relating to the objects for which a Bridge is required, may be considered already replied to in the foregoing remarks; and in regard to whether the presumed cost of a Bridge might or might not be expended on works more urgently required by the Calcutta Community, I am instructed to state that this Committee can scarcely hazard an opinion, without knowing to what other public works sums of money have already been destined, in excess of that proposed to be appropriated to Bridging the Hooghly. Undoubtedly this latter work would, for the present, yield in point of public importance to such objects as a complete system of drainage for this great city, or the thorough improvement of that portion of the river which forms its harbour for shipping by the erection of quays on its banks to supersede the necessity of a resort to remote docks; but this Committee would hope that these important objects are receiving the attention of Government irrespective of the question which your Committee has been nominated to consider.

Your last query regarding a Railway Branch and station at Sulkeah, is presumed to have reference to the erection of a Bridge between the latter place and Aberiollah Ghaut, and with the opinions already placed before you, it is almost unnecessary to reply to it beyond giving the expression of this Committee's belief, that *if* a Bridge is erected in that locality the call for such Branch Railway and station will eventually be found imperative.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

APPENDIX 5.

LICENSED PILOTS.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 21st June, 1855.

CAPTAIN T. E. ROGERS,

Superintendent of Marine,

FORT WILLIAM.

SIR,—With reference to your letter, No. 5373, of the 13th October last, to the Honorable the Lieutenant Governor, and No. 5874, of 8th November, to my address, I am desired by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to inquire what has been the result of the attempt to introduce the system of Licensed Pilots; and what other measures are being taken to provide Pilots for the largely increasing shipping resorting to this Port.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

No. 3786.

To H. W. I. WOOD, ESQUIRE,
Secy. to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

SIR,—By direction of the Superintendent of Marine, I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st instant, inquiring what has been the result of the attempt to introduce the system of Licensed Pilots, and what other measures are being taken to provide Pilots for "the largely increasing shipping resorting to this Port."

2nd. I am desired to state in reply, for the information of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, that up to this time only one Licensed Pilot has

been obtained. This result has been reported to Government, and the matter is under consideration.

3rd. The Superintendent will be glad to receive from the Chamber of Commerce any suggestions they may have to offer on a matter of such importance to the shipping interests of the Port.

4th. It is well known that some training is necessary to enable any one to Pilot even a small class vessel up and more particularly down this river, but it is not so difficult but that the Superintendent thinks that, if encouraged by the Mercantile Community with promises of support, young Officers not in the pay of Government would come forward and qualify.

5th. When compared with the earnings of Officers employed on board Merchant Ships, the amount that could be earned by a smart Pilot, receiving two-thirds of the sum now paid to Government, would be a most handsome remuneration, and nothing but the fear of want of support, it appears to the Superintendent, can account for a number of Candidates not having come forward to qualify.

6th. There is another point connected with this subject that seems to the Superintendent to have peculiar claims on the attention of the Chamber. It is well known that the difficulty of obtaining Pilots for the increasing number of ships resorting to the Port would be very much diminished by a supply of efficient Steam Tugs, adequate to the actual demand for them. At present ships are detained here with Pilots on board for a fortnight at a time for want of Steam, as at the draught ships now load to it would be dangerous to attempt to pass many of the shallows in the river without such aid. This is an evil the remedy for which it would seem to be the business of the Mercantile or Shipping interests rather than the State to supply, but Government is doing all it can in the matter, by permitting two of its sea-going Steamers to be employed in towing ships, at some inconvenience to the public service.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) JAS. SUTHERLAND,
Officiating Secretary.

FORT WILLIAM,
MARINE SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE,
The 25th June, 1855.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 27th June, 1855.

TO CAPTAIN T. E. ROGERS,
Superintendent of Marine,

FORT WILLIAM.

SIR,—I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 3786, of the 25th instant, and to state in reply that the Committee does not see how the Mercantile Community can encourage young aspirants for the Pilot Service with promises of support in any other way than has already been implied in their approval of the attempted system of licensing. That plan has been prepared on the requisition of the Merchants for more Pilots, and it would seem naturally to follow that whenever any of these licensed hands were pronounced fully qualified, they would be readily patronized by the community.

The terms offered may appear handsome, but it is for the consideration of Government, whether, as they have thus far failed in bringing forward Volunteers, they might not with reason be made still more tempting.

The Committee hailed with satisfaction this first attempt to increase the number of Pilots as a first step towards, what must necessarily be a work of time, the throwing open the Pilot Service. If under any additional inducements which the Government may be pleased to offer, it should still prove unsuccessful, the Mercantile Community will only have to solicit an increase of the service as it exists.

The Committee is fully alive to the urgent call from the trade of the Port, for an increased number of Steam Tugs, but this is a want which private enterprise will alone properly supply. That efforts to remove it are being made in more than one quarter, the Committee fully believes; and in the meantime feels grateful in the present exigency that Government allows the occasional employment of its Steamers for such purposes.

The Committee does not think that in cases where vessels are detained after clearance for want of Steamers, Pilots in charge remain idle with them for any length of time, but that they would be appointed to other ships if their own did not actually commence dropping down.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

RIVER MOORINGS.

No. 189.

FROM THE UNDER-SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF
BENGAL,
TO THE SECRETARY TO THE BENGAL CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE, CALCUTTA.

Dated Fort William, 12th June, 1855.

SIR,—With reference to previous correspondence on the subject, I am directed by the Lieutenant Governor to forward, for the information of the Chamber of Commerce, the accompanying extract, paragraphs 1 to 3, from a letter* from the Superintendent of Marine, together with an Extract, paragraph 1, from a letter† from the Harbour Master on the subject of the steps which have been taken towards supplying the additional Moorings required for the shipping of this Port.

2. The indent referred to by Captain Rogers was forwarded to the Supreme Government for transmission to England on the 27th March last.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) HODGSON PRATT,

Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

Extract from a letter from the Superintendent of Marine to the Honorable F. J. Halliday, Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, No. 3407, dated the 5th June, 1855.

1. I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Secretary Grey's letter, No. 161, of 21st May last, requesting me to report briefly what has been done towards carrying out any part of the alterations in the River Moorings which were authorized in his letter No. 86, of 2nd March last.

* No. 3407, dated the 3th instant.

† Dated the 4th instant.

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2. With reference to the above, I respectfully beg to inform your Honor, that on receipt of Mr. Grey's letter of the 2nd March, I forthwith requested the Master Attendant to make such alterations in the Moorings as the materials at hand would admit of, and also directed the Naval Store-keeper to indent on England, for the necessary anchors, chains, &c., to complete the authorized alterations.

3. From the accompanying copy of a letter from the Harbour Master, your Honor will perceive that nineteen additional Moorings have been laid down. The Naval Store-keeper, moreover, has made his indent for what was required, viz., 40 anchors with a proportion of chain, &c., and the same was forwarded to Government with my letter No. 1837, of 23rd March last, for transmission to the Hon'ble the Court of Directors.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) HODGSON PRATT,
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

Extract from a letter from Mr. W. T. Llewellyn, Harbour Master, to Captain D. Robertson, Master Attendant, dated the 4th June, 1855.

1. With reference to Officiating Secretary Superintendent of Marine's letter, No. 3186, dated 29th ultimo, requesting to be informed what increase has been made to the Moorings within the last six months

I have the honor to inform you as follows:—

8 Sets of Moorings off Esplanade.

6 Do. Do. of Bankshall.

1 Swinging Mooring Do.

4 Off Howrah, (fixed Moorings.)

Total, ...19

(True Extract.)
(Signed) HODGSON PRATT,
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, June 19th, 1855.

W. GREY, ESQUIRE,
Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

SIR—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 189, of the 12th instant, forwarding copies of Extracts from letters from the Superintendent of

Marine and Harbour Master, on the subject of the steps which have been taken towards supplying additional Mooring's required for the shipping of this Port.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce learns from these papers that 19 additional Mooring's have been laid down off the Bankshall, Esplanade, and on the Howrah side of the river; and that an indent has been forwarded to England for materials required to complete the authorized alterations. The Committee remarks that, of these 19 sets, 11 are so placed that they would appear to be available solely by vessels of light tonnage; the remaining 8, off the Esplanade, can therefore be considered as of service only to ships of greater burthen.

The Committee submits that this additional accommodation is totally inadequate to the wants of the shipping, and learns with much regret and surprise that the resources of the Superintendent of Marine are limited to so insufficient a supply of Mooring materials, and that that Officer has been obliged to indent on England for stores which the Committee believes are to be had on the spot; but if the indent had been made when, or shortly after, the Committee first called the attention of Government to this matter, nearly ten months ago, the required materials might in that long interval have been procured, and provision made in season for the demands of the Port.

The approaching period of danger and distress among the crowded shipping in the river, must of necessity pass away without sufficient means of protection against the violence of the freshes. This is much to be regretted, and, in the opinion of the Committee, might have been avoided.

The Committee earnestly urges upon the attention of the Hon'ble the Lieutenant Governor the absolute necessity for an early compliance with the application now repeated for an adequate supply of Mooring's, and for such changes in the present system in the Harbour Master's Department as may enlarge the space required for a daily increasing number of vessels. At the present moment there are upwards of a dozen applications for Mooring's registered at the Bankshall, and no berth available.

In the Chamber's letter of the 26th August last, the Committee expressed a belief that the increase in the shipping resorting to Calcutta would be progressive, and their expectations have been more than realized by the considerable addition that has been made since then; for on that date the number of vessels, of all kinds, was 146, whereas at this moment it amounts to 199, an increase of upwards of 36 per cent.

The Committee cannot employ argument more cogent, or submit reasons more powerful, than the above fact, in begging respectfully but most earnestly

that the call made by the Chamber of Commerce may be promptly and sufficiently met.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

No. 765.

FROM THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF
BENGAL,
TO THE SECRETARY TO THE BENGAL CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE.

Dated Fort William, the 21st June, 1855.

SIR,—With reference to your letter of the 19th instant, I am directed to forward a copy of the instructions conveyed to the Superintendent of Marine under date the 2nd of March last, which will explain to the Chamber of Commerce the precise extent to which additions to and alterations of the Mooring's have been sanctioned.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) W. GRIDY,
Secretary to the Govt. of Bengal.

No. 86.

FROM THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF
BENGAL,
TO THE SUPERINTENDENT OF MARINE,

Dated Fort William, the 2nd March, 1855.

SIR,—Your letters and their enclosures noted in the margin having been submitted for the consideration for the Supreme Government, the Most Noble the Governor General in Council has decided that, it is desirable to carry out the arrangements proposed by Captain Dacey and Captain Robertson, which the Lieutenant Governor understands to be as follows:—

1st. The Moorings below the Fort to be re-laid, by which means accommodation for four* additional vessels will be obtained.

2nd. New Moorings for eight vessels to be laid down along the Esplanade.

3rd. The Moorings between Baboo Ghat and Burra Bazar to be re-laid, by which means accommodation will be obtained for twenty-four additional vessels, including six, the Moorings for which it is proposed to place between Bankshall and Koils Ghat, in substitution of the present swinging Moorings.

This accommodation will be provided in all for thirty-six additional vessels.

2. The Lieutenant Governor directs me to request that you will report what part of the abovementioned alterations may most conveniently be at once put in hand, with reference to the amount of shipping now in the river, and that you will at the same time give directions for the immediate commencement of the work. The Lieutenant Governor also wishes you to report further what you estimate the cost of the whole proposed alterations as likely to be, giving a separate estimate for each of the three parts into which the alterations have been already divided.

3. The Lieutenant Governor observes that Captain Robertson, in paragraph 3 of his letter to your address, dated the 22nd of August, states that the cost of laying down these Moorings will be re-paid in three years by the Revenue derivable from them. It is not, however, quite clear to what Moorings Captain Robertson referred, and I am directed accordingly to request that a further report upon this point also may be furnished.

4. The plans and original papers received with your letter of the 23rd November last, are herewith returned.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) W. GREY,

Secretary to the Govt. of Bengal.

(True Copy)

(Signed) W. GREY,

Secretary to the Govt. of Bengal.

* See para. 2 of Harbour Master's letter, dated August 20, and the part of Plan No. 1, marked B.

† See para. 3 of Harbour Master's letter, dated August 20, and the part of Plan No. 1, marked C.

‡ Para. 2 of Captain Robertson's letter No. 1485, dated 22nd August. This para. mentions 26 additional vessels, but this is presumed to be the total number, including the four additional vessels provided for at Cooley Bazar.

FROM THE UNDER-SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF
BENGAL,
TO THE SECRETARY TO THE BENGAL CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE.

Dated Fort William, the 23rd June, 1855.

Sir,—In continuation of this office letter to your address, dated the 6th January last, No.

Marine.

Letter from Bengal to India, No. 520, dated 31st October, 1854, with enclosures.

Letter from India to Bengal, No. 1187, dated 10th November, 1854.

Letter from Bengal to India, No. 588, dated 1st December, 1854, with enclosures.

Letter from India to Bengal, No. 345, dated the 13th February, 1855.

10. I have the honor to forward, for the information of the Chamber, a copy of the Correspondence noted in the margin.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) G. G. MORRIS,

Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

No. 520.

FROM THE UNDER-SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF
BENGAL,
TO THE UNDER-SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF
INDIA,
HOME DEPARTMENT.

Dated Fort William, the 31st October, 1854.

Sir,—I am directed to forward the following original Correspondence* on the subject of the urgent necessity which is experienced, of providing a larger number of permanent Moorings to meet the

Marine.

* From Secretary Bengal Chamber of Commerce, dated the 26th August, 1854, to Superintendent of Marine, No. 428, dated 2nd ultimo.

From Superintendent of Marine, No. 581, dated 24th instant, with two enclosures.

wants of the increased number of ships resorting to this port, and to solicit the favourable consideration of the Supreme Government to the proposal made by the Superintendent of Marine to lay down six sets of Moorings between the Bankshall and Custom House Ghaut.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) HODGSON PRATT,
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) G. G. MORRIS,
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

No. 1187.

FROM GEORGE COUPER, Esquire,
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of India,
TO W. GORDON YOUNG, Esquire,
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

Dated the 10th November, 1854.

Sir,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 520, dated the 31st ultimo, with original enclosures, respecting the necessity of providing a larger number of permanent Moorings to meet the wants of the increased number of ships resorting to this Port, and to request that you will have the goodness to furnish this Department, with the least practicable delay, with the Report from the Master Attendant on the subject referred to in paragraph 5 of the Superintendent of Marine's letter No. 5581, dated the 24th ultimo.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) GEORGE COUPER,
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of India.

COUNCIL CHAMBER,
The 10th November, 1854.

No. 546.

Copy forwarded to the Superintendent of Marine with reference to his letter No. 5581, of the 24th ultimo, and with the request that he will furnish the Report called for with as little delay as possible.

By order, &c.,

(Signed) HODGSON PRATT,
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

FORT WILLIAM,
The 15th November, 1854.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) G. G. MORRIS,
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

No. 6153.

TO THE HON'BLE F. J. HALLIDAY,
Lieutenant Governor of Bengal.

HON'BLE SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Under-Secretary H. Pratt's office communication, No. 546, of the 15th instant, forwarding copy of a letter from the Under-Secretary to the Government of India, No. 1187, of 10th idem, requesting to be furnished, with the least practicable delay, with the Report from the Master Attendant on the subject referred to in the 5th paragraph of my letter No. 5581, dated 24th October.

2nd. Herewith I have the honor to forward in original the Report* referred to, with a sketch of the River and the Moorings as now laid down, and with reference to this I would beg to point out that the sketch of the outer tier of ships at Cooley Bazar represents the Moorings as they would be, if taken up and re-laid with the utmost possible economy of space. The vessels

* From Master Attendant, No. 1485, dated 22nd August, 1854, with four enclosures.

shown off the Esplanade exhibit them as they lay lately in the freshes moored with their own anchors; there are no Moorings laid in that locality.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

(Signed) T. E. ROGERS,
Supdt. of Marine.

FORT WILLIAM,
Marine Superintendent's Office, }
The 23rd November, 1854.

P. S. The return of the original enclosures herewith submitted is solicited when no longer required.

No. 1485.

FROM CAPTAIN D. ROBERTSON,
Master Attendant,

TO CAPTAIN H. HOWE,
Secy. to the Superintendent of Marine.

SIR,—I have the honor to forward for the favorable attention of the Superintendent of Marine, the accompanying letters and charts from Captain Llewelyn, and beg to recommend that the proposed alterations may be carried out; firstly, because there is a great scarcity of Moorings in the river during the freshes; and secondly, because it will considerably increase the Revenue of the Port.

2nd. The plan proposed by Captain Dicey at Cooley Bazar, if extended from Chaudpal Ghaut to Burra Bazar, will accommodate about twenty-eight more vessels, independently of those off the Esplanade.

3rd. Captain Llewelyn has shown what the cost of laying down these Moorings would come to, and the Revenue that they would yield by being occupied only four months in the year, by which it appears that the original cost will be paid in three years.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

(Signed) DIVIE ROBERTSON,
Master Attendant.

MASTER ATTENDANT'S OFFICE, }
The 22nd August, 1854.

TO CAPTAIN D. ROBERTSON, H. C. S.,
Master Attendant.

SIR,—I fully intended when I forwarded my Report relative to the annual examination of all the Calcutta Moorings in April last, at the same time to have sent a plan of them commencing from Folly's Nullah to the Barra Bazar Ghaut, as laid down at present, together with another, as suggested by Captain Dicey, showing the length of the Mooring Chains and the respective distances which they occupy; but perceiving I was unable to complete the same satisfactorily I resolved to despatch the former.

I have, however, now the honor of submitting one of the plans (embracing from Hastings' Bridge to Chaudpal Ghaut) representing the Moorings as they are at present, marked A, and that proposed, marked B, whereby you will perceive that only four extra vessels can be accommodated.

I have laid down a set of Moorings alongside the Esplanade, marked C, sufficient to accommodate eight ships of 1,000 tons, and from 200 to 250 feet in length, and likewise six others from Bankshall to Collah Ghaut, by doing away with the three swings Moorings there at present.

The great necessity for Moorings in the S. W. Monsoon from the month of June to October, during which the freshes run with great velocity, has compelled me to bring to your notice the extreme need of soliciting the Government to allow the proposed Moorings to be laid down. The continual accidents to ships lying in the stream, by the extraordinary strong tides tearing away their cut-waters, breaking their windlasses, hose-pipes, &c., frequently sustaining damage to such a serious extent, as well as causing the same to others, that they are oftentimes in danger of foundering, and in several instances necessitated to go into Dock, discharge their cargoes and stop leaks, occasioned by their being moored in such a turbulent stream, added to which, the expense, annoyance and loss to ship-owners, by the anchors being buried, and on the day of their departure with a steamer engaged are unable to proceed.

I am aware, by a letter recorded in this office, that in October 1842, an appeal was made to the Hon'ble Mr. Bird, Deputy Governor of Bengal, to allow Moorings to be placed along the Esplanade, and was objected to, (on the score that it would lead to various nuisances, and besides the consideration due to the community in keeping this part of the Strand free;) but as some years have now passed away, and the age of improvement daily increasing, and such magnificent vessels resorting to this port, of immense tonnage and great

length, expecting, in a city like Calcutta, to meet with every facility for their safety, I hope, on a second consideration the Government may be induced to sanction them.

The probable expenses of the proposed Moorings I will forward with the plan No. 2 in a few days, trusting, in conclusion, that you will concur with me as to the great necessity for extra Moorings for the safety of so many ships at present in the port.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) W. T. LLEWELYN,
Harbour Master.

HARBOUR MASTER'S OFFICE,
BANKSHALL,
The 18th August, 1854. }

TO CAPTAIN D. ROBERTSON, H. C. S.,
Master Attendant.

Sir,—I have the honor to submit plan No. 2, of the Moorings as laid down at present between Baboo Ghaut and Durra Bazar.

The only improvement that I consider would be advantageous is in placing six ships between Bankshall and Coliah Ghaut, as represented in the accompanying plan, and the swinging Moorings for small vessels dispensed with.

I also forward an estimate for the proposed new Moorings, together with a statement showing the probable amount of returns for four months in the year if fully occupied by ships of 600 tons' burthen and more at the Esplanade, and by vessels of smaller tonnage at the Bankshall Moorings.

Trusting that the plans submitted together with the suggested improvements may meet your approval,

I have, &c.,

(Signed) W. T. LLEWELYN,
Harbour Master.

BANKSHALL,
Calcutta, 20th August, 1854. }

Statement showing the return that eight ships of 600 tons occupying the Esplanade Moorings from 1st July to 30th October, being 4 Months, at 8 Rupees per day.

	Rs.	A.	P.
Eight Ships, 120 days, at 8 Rupees per day, ...	7,680	0	0
Hauling out and in each Ship 52 X 8, ...	416	0	0
Total amount, ...	8,096	0	0

Bankhall for 6 Ships of 400 Tons to 600 from 1st July to 30th October.

	Rs.	A.	P.
Six Ships, 120 days, at 6 Rupees per day, ...	4,320	0	0
Hauling in and out each Ship, ...	312	0	0
Total amount, ...	4,632	0	0

Estimate for Bankhall Moorings for Six Ships.

	Quantity.	Siss.	Cwt.	Qrs.	lbs.	Value.			
							Rs.	A.	P.
Anchors,	12	0	67	0	0		13	13	4
Extra large size Buoys, ...	8	0	0	0	0		980	0	0
1st Class ditto,	1	0	0	0	0		650	0	0
12 lengths of 8 fms. each for ground chain,	96	23	288	0	0		25	4	7
12 ditto of 12 ditto for Brille,	144	2	285	2	24		7	0	0
Buoy Chain,	15	13	30	0	10		7	8	0
No. 1 Shackles,	12	0	0	0	0		30	2	5
" 2 Ditto,	48	0	0	0	0		4	1	7
" 4 Ditto,	48	0	0	0	0		4	9	2
Large Rings for Buoys, ...	21	0	0	0	0		10	7	11
Inshore Chain,	80	2	164	1	4		7	0	0
Shackles No. 1,	12	0	0	0	0		5	0	11
Large Rings,	4	0	0	0	0		10	8	0
Sail Posts,	8	0	0	0	0		25	0	0
Buoy Swivels,	6	0	0	0	0		11	8	8
Total Amount,							23,880	13	6

(Signed) W. T. LLEWELYN,
Harbour Master.

Estimate for Esplanade Moorings for Eight Ships.

Quantity.	Size.	Cwt.	Crs.	lbs.	Value.	
					Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
Anchors	18	0	67	0	12 12 4	16,885 0 0
Hacking Anchors,	2	0	39	0	0 0 0	839 0 0
Extra large size Buoy, ..	0	0	0	0	888 15 0	7,840 0 0
1st Chain,	2	0	0	0	499 0 0	889 0 0
Ground Chain, 16 fms. each set,	144	2 1/2	492	0	0 6 8 0	2,808 0 0
Doitto ditto 24 ditto,	216	2	419	0	4 7 0 0	2,263 0 0
Buoy Chain,	24	1 1/2	45	2	10 7 0 0	325 2 0
Hocking Chain, 20 fms. each set,	40	1 1/2	44	0	2 7 8 0	330 2 1
No. 1 Shackles, 2 for each Buoy,	20	0	0	0	20 12 5	415 8 4
Doitto, 8 for ditto,	75	0	0	0	4 1 7	311 8 4
Doitto, 4 ditto,	20	0	0	0	4 0 2	91 7 4
Inshore Chain, 20 fms. each, No. 3 Shackles for Inshore Chain,	320	2	621	0	22 7 0 0	4,848 6 0
Large Rings for the Buoys,	48	0	0	0	5 0 0	240 0 0
Doitto ditto for the shore, ..	28	0	0	0	10 7 11	283 13 8
Sunk Posts 22 x 18,	10	0	0	0	9 0 0	144 0 0
Buoy Swivels,	10	0	0	0	25 0 0	250 0 0
					11 3 3	112 0 6
Total Amount,						38,837 0 3

(Signed) W. T. LLEWELYN,
Harbour Master.

No. 588.

Copy of the above letter and of its enclosures forwarded to the Home Department of the Government of India, with reference to the letter from that Department No. 1187, of the 10th ult.

By Order, &c.,

(Signed) HODGSON PRATT,
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

FORT WILLIAM,
The 1st December, 1854.

(True Copies.)

(Signed) G. G. MORRIS,
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

No. 345.

FROM C. BEADON, Esquire,
Secretary to the Government of India,
To W. GREY, Esquire,
Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

Dated the 13th February, 1855.

SIR,—With reference to the three letters from your Office of the Nos. and dates noted in the margin, on the subject of providing a large number of permanent Moorings to meet the wants of the increased number of ships resorting to this Port, I am directed to communicate the follow-

Home Department.

Marine.
No. 220, dated 31st October, 1854, and Enclosures.

No. 588, dated 1st December, 1854, and Enclosures.

No. 9, dated 6th January, 1855.

No. 9, dated 6th January, 1855. I am directed to communicate the following observations and orders.

2nd. The Most Noble the Governor General in Council has read the papers and examined the plans connected with the question of new Moorings for the Port of Calcutta. His Lordship in Council conceives that the increase of the trade of this Port and of the tonnage of the ships now resorting to it; the consequent aggravation of the inconvenience arising out of an insufficient number of Moorings; and the certainty that such inconvenience will increase further every year, cannot be questioned. The remedy which Captain Rogers contemplates would be afforded by Wet Docks is remote, and as yet uncertain. The remedy which would be applied by laying down the Moorings anew and adding others, as proposed by Captain Dicey and Captain Robertson, would be immediate, and not in any way unprofitable; and his Lordship in Council thinks it due to the trade of this great Port that a remedy for the admitted evil should be applied at once if it be practicable. The Governor General in Council therefore requests that the Honorable the Lieutenant Governor will have the goodness to take measures for carrying into effect, without further reference to the Government of India, the proposal of the Master Attendant.

The plans are herewith returned.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) CECIL BEADON,

COUNCIL CHAMBER,
The 13th February, 1855.

Secy. to the Govt. of India.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) G. G. MORRIS,
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, June 28, 1855.

W. GREY, Esquire,
Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

SIR,—I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letters No. 765, of the 21st, and No. 211, of the 23rd instant, the former giving cover to a copy of instructions to the Superintendent of Marine, showing the extent to which additions to the permanent Moorings of the Port have been sanctioned; and the latter forwarding copies of Correspondence between the Supreme Government and the Government of Bengal, and of documents therein referred to, on the same subject.

In continuation of the remarks contained in my letter of the 19th instant, I am desired to submit the following for the consideration of the Honorable the Lieutenant Governor.

At the present moment there are in the river Hooghly nearly 200 Merchant vessels, of from 70 to 1,900 tons measurement, aggregating 1,11,250 tons, and which may be classified as follows:—

Of vessels up to 200 tons, there are	...	...	...	16
Upwards of 200	...	...	...	19
300	...	...	...	24
400	...	...	...	18
500	...	...	...	28
600	...	...	...	37
700	...	...	...	18
800	...	...	...	9
900	...	...	...	7
1,000	...	...	...	17
A total of				193

exclusive of vessels belonging to Government and the Peninsular and Oriental Company.

For the accommodation of this large amount of shipping, there are, the Committee learns, 56 old and 21 new Moorings, thus providing for 77 vessels only, leaving about two-thirds of the entire number exposed to the chances of the river at a dangerous season of the year.

It is obvious that the present provision and that which has been sanctioned to complete the maximum number of Moorings, are quite inadequate to the

extent of shipping—which may always be estimated to require Moorings for at least some months of the year.

Difficulties have been frequently suggested as to finding the space sufficient for that extensive enlargement of Mooring accommodation which is so anxiously called for: the narrowness of the channel—which must of necessity be kept perfectly unobstructed—will not permit additions to the piers at Cooley Bazar and to those from Chandpal Ghât upwards; and the same reason applies to the impossibility of more than the present number of ships being Moored off the Esplanade.

While, however, these are difficulties which the Committee admits cannot be removed, it suggests for the consideration of the Honorable the Lieutenant Governor whether Moorings cannot be laid down in the stream, and that portion of the river which is avoided during the freshes be thus rendered available.

In a single line extending from off Hastings' Bridge to abreast of the Howrah Docks upwards of 40 swinging Moorings could be placed; that number easily doubled, and the ordinary traffic on the river in no way interfered with.

Assuming the existence of eighty Moorings in the stream, even that addition to the number already occupied and the further increase which has been authorized would yet be less than the amount which would be eagerly availed of during the freshes, for several vessels would still have to depend on their own resources.

The Committee is not unmindful of the considerable outlay by which so desirable an improvement would be attended; but the Master Attendant's statement of the cost of Mooring materials, and of the returns which will eventually be yielded, leaves no room for doubting the highly remunerative investment of public funds so employed.

With the daily increasing trade of Calcutta, the progressive influx of shipping may be anticipated; and the Committee respectfully urges upon the attention of the Honorable the Lieutenant Governor the expediency of making provision for the present and prospective wants of the Port.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,

Secretary.

No. 3941.

TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

GENTLEMEN,—By direction of the Superintendent of Marine, I have the honor to address you with reference to a statement, contained in your letter to Government of the 19th instant, on the subject of Mooring for this Port, an extract from which has been transmitted to him.

2. The statement is that you believe that the Mooring stores for which the Superintendent has indented on England, are to be had here. The Superintendent begs the Chamber of Commerce will oblige him by specifying the nature of the stores for Mooring which they believe can be had on the spot, and where they are to be found.

I have the honor to be,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) JAMES SUTHERLAND,

Officiating Secretary.

FORT WILLIAM,
Marine Superintendent's Office,
The 30th June, 1855.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, July 11th, 1855.

J. SUTHERLAND, Esquire,
Offy. Secy. to the Superintendent of Marine,

FORT WILLIAM.

SIR,—I am instructed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 3941, of the 30th ultimo, and to state in reply that the belief expressed in the Chamber's communication to Government on the subject of Mooring, that the necessary materials were to be had on the spot was founded on the fact that anchors, chains, &c., are articles of ordinary import, and that there is always a stock of them in the Bazar, as well as occasionally in the hands of European importers.

Since the receipt of your letter now under acknowledgment, the Committee has made more particular inquiries, and finds that the existing stock of such

articles in the Bazar is much less than usual, and that it consists of sizes which may very possibly not be adapted to the construction of Mooring.

I am instructed to add that if any of these stores which now exist in the Bazar can be availed of for the purpose in view, the Committee trusts you will so appropriate them, as the present scarcity of Mooring would render any tolerable substitute a boon to those interested in shipping.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,

Secretary.

No 396.

FROM THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL,
TO THE SECRETARY BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Dated Fort William, the 3rd October, 1855.

Marine.

SIR,—I have the honor to forward to you with reference to the previous correspondence on the subject of laying down additional Mooring in the River Hooghly, copies of the letters noted on the margin.

2. The Lieutenant Governor desires me to say that he will be glad to be made acquainted with the present opinion of the Chamber on the scheme of constructing Wet Docks in Calcutta, keeping in view the alternative project of establishing a new Port on the River Nulah.

3. The Chamber probably have in their possession a copy of the printed Report by the Committee appointed in May 1844, to inquire into the practicability of providing Calcutta with Wet Docks capable of containing a part or the whole of the shipping frequenting the Port.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) W. GREY,

Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

No. 2280.

TO THE HONBLE F. J. HALLIDAY,
Lieutenant Governor of Bengal.

HONBLE SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Secretary Grey's letter No. 220, of 29th June, forwarding copy of a letter of 20th idem, from the Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce, urging the necessity of additional Moorings, and suggesting that two tiers each of 40 Swinging Moorings might be laid down, extending from abreast of Hastings' Bridge to the Howrah Docks, and I am requested to report on the feasibility of the measure suggested, stating also how it could be given effect to, at what probable outlay, and with what probable prospect of return.

2. With reference to the above, I beg to state that on the 3rd ultimo, I addressed the Master Attendant a letter, copy of which is herewith forwarded, in which I invited his report on several points connected with laying down Swinging Moorings, as proposed by the Chamber of Commerce. Captain Robertson's reply is also forwarded, but it does not touch upon the subject of the Swinging Moorings. He confines himself to giving it as his opinion that Moorings might be laid down on the opposite side of the river in tiers of three or four. The Moorings to the south and west being of greater weight than these in the opposite direction. The cost of laying down 80 sets of Swinging Moorings is estimated at Rupees 4,00,000, as will be seen from the enclosure to the Master Attendant, No. 1644 of 9th August, copy of which is forwarded herewith.

3. Before proceeding further with the subject of the Swinging Moorings referred to in the letter from the Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce, I would beg to refer to the estimate for re-laying the fixed Moorings at Cooley Bazar and Calcutta, called for in Mr. Secretary Grey's letter No. 86, of the 2nd March last.

4. The cost of re-laying the Moorings, provided all the anchors can be recovered, is estimated at Rupees 12,464, but the Harbour Master states, and I am inclined to agree with him, that only one-half of those now laid down can be lifted, many of them having been down for years have sunk so far into the mud that the chains would break before the anchors could be started. From an estimate of the cost of re-laying the present Moorings, on the supposition that only half the anchors now down can be recovered, and adding thereto in the space gained Moorings for 22 ships, the probable outlay will be Rupees 1,77,344, as shown in Statement A. annexed to this letter. It will

also be seen by the Master Attendant's office communication, No. 1654 of the 10th instant, that at present there is accommodation for fourteen ships between the tiers as the Moorings are now laid at Cooley Bazar and off Calcutta. It will thus appear that the advantage to be derived from an outlay of Rupees 1,77,344, in re-laying and adding to the fixed Moorings will be accommodation for eight ships only, in addition to the number that can now be safely accommodated in and between the fixed Moorings, as they are laid at present.

5. Whether such an outlay is to be incurred as that above named for the accommodation of eight ships, it will be for your Honor to determine. The return to be derived from eight additional Moorings, provided all are occupied during the year, would be Rupees 12,640, but the interest of Rupees 1,77,344 at 5 per Cent., would reduce the actual revenue to less than 4,000 Rupees.

6. The estimated cost of laying Moorings for six small ships is Rupees 23,830. That for laying Moorings off the Esplanade for eight large ships Rupees 38,937. The receipts, if occupied throughout the year, Rupees 9,020 and Rupees 18,720 respectively.

7. From the enclosure to the Master Attendant's letter No. 1644 of 9th August, a copy of which is herewith forwarded, it will be seen that the cost of laying down a set of first-class Swinging Moorings will be Rupees 5,000, which is about the same as the outlay required for a set of fixed Moorings of a like class.

8. Although it may be inferred from Captain Robertson's letter of 9th instant, that he is in favour of fixed Moorings on the opposite side of the river, as he takes no notice of the proposition of the Chamber of Commerce for laying down Swinging Moorings, I have myself very great doubt if fixed Moorings for large ships would answer on the western side of the river. The water on that side from Howrah downwards is shallow at some distance from the shore, and such Moorings must be laid in the full strength of the tide. Another disadvantage which the ships in fixed Moorings on the Howrah side would have is that all their fastenings would be movable, that is to say, they must all be secured to buoys afloat. The vessels secured in the fixed Moorings on the Calcutta side have the advantage of the key ship of each tier, that is the one nearest the bank having one-half of her fastenings on shore. This gives stability to the whole tier, the different ships' cables being reticulated, which prevents the tier from swinging about, as it would if secured altogether to buoys afloat in the river.

9. According to the estimate it would cost Rupees 4,00,000 to lay down 80 sets of Swinging Moorings. The return, however, is estimated by the

Harbour Master to pay the cost in six years; this I do not think by any means certain. Comparatively very few ships will occupy either swinging or fixed Moorings except during the freshes, unless compelled to do so, or are allowed to occupy them free of charge.

10. Under all the circumstances of the case, I would beg to recommend, that the plan of re-laying the fixed Moorings, by which, at a probable cost of Rupees 1,77,844, only eight additional ships will be accommodated, be postponed for the present, and that all our available resources be employed in adding to the Moorings on the opposite side of the river, either in tiers or Swinging Moorings.

11. The material for increasing the Moorings that has been ordered from England, and such as may be procurable here, can be employed in increasing the number of either description of Moorings on the western side of the river.

12. Ten sets of Swinging Moorings may be laid down half above and half below the "Zenobia" Swinging Moorings off the Esplanade, and the remaining 20 of the 40 anchors exported from England used in laying two tiers of fixed Moorings on the Howrah side; the utility of laying Moorings, either swinging or fixed, on that side, would thus be tested, and in the meantime the necessary anchors and chains, and plate and other iron for buoys, be ordered from England. I have been informed that great difficulty is experienced in inducing boats to convey cargo to ships in the stream on the springs during the freshes.

13. Before it could be decided that a double tier of Swinging Moorings could be laid down on the Howrah side, a survey of the river in that part must be made, and I have requested the Master Attendant to furnish this, together with a full report on the proposal of the Chamber of Commerce, for laying two tiers of Swinging Moorings. I am myself of opinion that no more than one line of Swinging Moorings of any extent could be laid down on the western side of the river, leaving a sufficiently wide channel for ships to move up and down between them, and the tiers of fixed Moorings on the Calcutta side, but this the survey will determine.

14. I would beg to take this opportunity of bringing to your Honor's notice the subject of providing Wet Docks for the accommodation of ships resorting to Calcutta, which has often been discussed, and was strongly recommended by a Committee assembled by order of Government in 1844, which Committee after lengthened investigation submitted its report on the 1st May 1846.

15. The construction of Wet Docks near Calcutta, was by the Committee of which Colonel Forbes, Colonel Irvine and Captain Goodwyn, all Engineer Officers, formed apart) unanimously pronounced to be easily practicable. The

giving to the shipping then frequenting the Port (in the course of the year in number 651; of an average of 400 tons) Rupees 8,86,360 arising from shortening the time of unloading and loading. This did not include the saving from loss arising from damage by lying exposed in the river. The cost of constructing a Dock that would afford ample space for the accommodation of 140 vessels was estimated by the Committee at Rupees 45,70,686. This sum included the cost of a Rail-road from the Docks at Kidderpore to the Custom House in Calcutta.

16. A plan for Wet Docks has lately, I am informed, been laid before the Governor General by Messrs. Greaves and Henderson. In the latter plan it is proposed to excavate the Docks on the Howrah side above the Railway terminus; such a plan, however, could not be carried out until the site of a Bridge across the Hooghly is determined on.

17. There is, however, no such objection to excavating a Dock with an entrance immediately below the terminus, and land there is much less occupied by buildings, and consequently at present is less valuable than it is above the rail. A dock in such a position or at Kidderpore, as recommended by the Committee above referred to, would obviate one objection that now exists to throwing a Bridge across the Hooghly, near the Railway terminus, *viz.*, that it would curtail the accommodation of shipping off Calcutta.

18. From the increased and increasing trade of the Port, I believe it will be admitted on all hands, that room for a sufficient number of Moorings where ships can ride in safety in the freshes cannot be found off Calcutta; and that safe accommodation other than can be provided in the river off the Town has become absolutely indispensable to the prosperity of the Port on which the development of the resources of the valley of the Ganges so much depends.

19. Since the June gale of 1842, no great damage has occurred amongst the shipping off Calcutta from stress of weather, but were a cyclone or heavy gale of wind to pass over the anchorage during spring tides in the freshes, crowded as the Port now is, it is beyond all doubt that the destruction both of life and property would be immense, and that the only safeguard against such a catastrophe is to be found in the construction of Wet Docks.

I have, &c.,

T. E. ROGERS,
Superintendent of Marine.

(Signed)
PORT WILLIAM,
MARINE SUPPLY'S OFFICE,
The 30th August, 1855.

A.

Estimate of re-laying the Moorings below Fort Point at Cooley Bazar, and adding thereto Moorings for Four Ships.

Moorings for four additional Ships,	26,000	0	0
Probable loss of 20 out of 40 anchors now laid at Cooley Bazar,	19,600	0	0
Cost of weighing and re-laying 40 anchors,	4,451	0	0

Estimate of re-laying the Moorings between Baboo's Ghaut and Barra Bazar, and adding thereto in the space gained, Moorings for 18 Ships.

Moorings for 18 additional Ships,	90,000	0	0
Probable loss of 36 out of 72 anchors now laid down between Baboo's Ghaut and Barra Bazar,	35,280	0	0
Cost of weighing and re-laying 72 anchors,	8,013	0	0
Estimate of laying Moorings for six small Ships, in tiers of three each, off the Banksiall,	*23,830	0	0
Estimate of laying Moorings for eight Ships, off the Esplanade,	*58,937	0	0

(Signed) J. SUTHERLAND,
Officiating Secretary.

FORT WILLIAM,
MARINE SUPPLY'S OFFICE,
The 30th August, 1855.

* This has been done at a cost considerably below the estimate, by partly using old anchors, some of which were purchased in Calcutta, others taken from the wreck and anchor concern. This resource has now, however, been completely exhausted.

(Conv.)

No. 3996.

TO CAPTAIN D. ROBERTSON,
Master Attendant.

Sir,—By direction of the Superintendent of Marine, I have the honor to forward you a copy of a letter* from Mr. *No. 220, dated 29th June, 1855. Secretary Grey, with enclosure received therewith in original, relative to an increase of Moorings in this river, and to request you will favor him with your report on the subject.

2. The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce seem to think that the safety of the shipping in the tiers is entirely owing to the Moorings to which they are made fast. The Superintendent is of opinion that they are safe at the Moorings, because the tide near the shore does not run with such velocity as it does in the middle of the river, and being moored head and stern ships cannot shear about so much. With regard to the proposal to lay down a double line of Swinging Moorings in the centre of the stream and the full force of the current, the Superintendent is inclined to believe that Commanders would not be very eager to avail themselves of Moorings so situated. Ships riding at them might indeed be less liable to girt and injure themselves below water, but they would still be liable to tear their cut-waters out and split their hawse-pipes, and on the whole perhaps the only advantage of any consequence to be derived from Moorings laid in the full force of the current, would be those of saving the ships' anchors, which are liable to be buried when ships ride at them in the stream during the freshes, and enabling them to get away more readily than if they had to weigh their own anchors.

3. In advocating a double line of Swinging Moorings to the west of the present channel, the Chamber of Commerce seem to have overlooked that where there is room for a double line of vessels to swing with a length of bridle sufficient to secure them against girting, there would be room for four ships abreast in fixed Moorings, and that if there is sufficient water for ships to lie in double tiers, and land at Swinging Moorings to the westward, leaving the channel sufficiently wide between them and the present fixed Moorings, four ships might be added to each tier, and still have a channel for ships to move up and down between the western shore and the tiers.

4. With your reply you are requested to furnish an estimate of the cost of laying down 80 sets of Swinging Moorings, the time that would probably occupy in the work, and the return that might be expected. The Swinging Moorings

were taken away from the opposite side of the river, because they were seldom or ever used and produced little return for expense incurred in laying them down.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) JAS. SUTHERLAND, *Offy. Secy.*

FORT WILLIAM,
MARINE SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE,
The 3rd July, 1855.

(True Copy)

Signed JAS. SUTHERLAND, *Offy. Secy.*

(Copy)

No. 1644.

FROM CAPTAIN D. ROBERTSON,

Master Attendant,

TO JAMES SUTHERLAND, Esquire,

Offy. Secy. to the Supdt. of Marine.

Sir,—With reference to your letter No. 3996, dated 3rd ultimo, and its enclosures, I have the honor to forward to the Superintendent of Marine, the accompanying Statement from the Harbour Master, giving the information called for in the concluding part of the 3rd paragraph of your letter.

2nd. I am of opinion that Moorings might be laid down on the opposite side of the river in tiers of three or four. The Mooring anchors to the southward and westward should be of greater weight than the others.

3rd. The copy of a letter from the Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce, to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, is herewith returned.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) DIVIE ROBERTSON,
Master Attendant.

MASTER ATTENDANT'S OFFICE,
The 9th August, 1855.

FORT WILLIAM,
MARINE SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE,
The 30th August, 1855.

(True Copy)

(Signed) J. SUTHERLAND,

Officiating Secretary.

ii

Statement showing the amount 80 sets of Moorings would yield Annually.

	Rupess.	As.	Pic.
Eighty sets of Swinging Moorings averaging 3 Rupess per day, 240 Rupess, or 7,200 Rupess monthly, occupied for 9 months in the year; 3 months free,.....	64,800	0	0
Hauling in and out of the Moorings 52 Rupess each ship. Averaging a Ship hauls from each buoy, six times in 12 months—			
480 × 52,	24,960	0	0
Probable Receipts Annually, Rupess,	89,760	0	0
Years 6,	5,37,560	0	0
Expenditure for 80 sets of Moorings and Interest at 5 per Cent. for 6 years,	5,20,000	0	0
Balance in favor of Moorings,.....	17,560	0	0

(Signed) W. T. LLEWELYN,
Harbour Master.

FORT WILLIAM,
MARINE SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE,
The 30th August, 1855.

(True Copy)

(Signed) J. SUTHERLAND,
Officiating Secretary.

Estimate for Swinging Moorings for one Ship.

ARTICLES.	Cwt.	Qrs.	Hls.	Quantity.	Rs.		A. P.		Total.	
					Rs.	A. P.	Rs.	A. P.		
2 Anchors of 68 Cwt., ...	68	...	...	2	13	13	5	1,892	0	8
2-Inch Chain,	48	16	11	11	803	12	0
2½-Inch Chain,	24	25	4	11	607	6	0
Buoy Swivels,	1	11	3	3	11	3	3
Bridle Swivels,	1	32	8	3	32	8	3
Moorng Rings,	1	10	7	11	10	7	11
No. 1 Shackles,	2	20	12	5	41	8	10
No. 2 Shackles,	2	15	10	10	31	5	8
No. 3 Shackles,	8	9	7	1	75	8	8
No. 4 Shackles,	1	4	14	8	4	14	8
Extra large size Buoys,	1	980	0	0	980	0	0
Stocking, Speltering, &c., 2 Anchors,	200	0	0	400	0	0
								4,880	11	11
Wear and Tear, and use of Heave up and Anchor Boats each set,	110	4	1
Total Cost of one set,	5,000	0	0

Statement showing the expenditure of 80 Sets of Swinging Moorings.

	Rupees.	As.	P.
Cost of 80 Sets of Swinging Moorings, at 5,000 Rupees each set,	4,00,000	0	0
Interest at 5 per Cent. for 6 years,	1,20,000	0	0
Total,	5,20,000	0	0

The probable time that these Moorings will take to be laid will be eight months, providing the anchors and chains are procurable.

(Signed) W. T. LLEWELYN,
Harbour Master.

HARBOUR MASTER'S OFFICE,
The 6th July, 1855.

FORT WILLIAM,
MARINE SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE,
The 30th August, 1855.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) JAMES SUTHERLAND,
Officiating Secretary.

(Copy.)

To CAPTAIN D. ROBERTSON, H. C. S.,
Master Attendant.

Sir,—In reply to the letter from the Officiating Secretary to the Superintendent of Marine, No. 4826, dated 9th ultimo, and with reference to the

latter part, I have the honour to inform you, that the total number of ships that can be accommodated between the Moorings at Calcutta and Cooley Bazar are fourteen, i.e. six at Cooley Bazar and eight in Town.

I have, &c.,
 (Signed) W. T. LLEWELYN,
Harbour Master.

HARBOUR MASTER'S OFFICE, }
 The 10th August, 1855. }

Memo.

No. 1654.

Forwarded to the Superintendent of Marine, with reference to Mr. Official Secretary Sutherland's letter No. 4826, of yesterday's date.

(Signed) DIVIE ROBERTSON,
 MASTER ATTENDANT'S OFFICE, } *Master Attendant.*
 The 10th August, 1855. }

FORT WILLIAM,
 MARINE SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE,
 The 30th August, 1855.

(True Copy)

(Signed) JAMES SUTHERLAND,
Offg. Secretary.

No. 391.

FROM THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL,
 TO THE SUPERINTENDENT OF MARINE.

Dated Fort William, the 29th September, 1855.

Marine.

Sir,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 5280, dated the 30th ultimo, with its enclosures, on the subject of laying down additional Moorings for the ships resorting to this Port.

2. The Lieutenant Governor understands that there are now available 77 Moorings, 21 of which have been laid down subsequent to the orders conveyed to you in my letter, No. 86, dated the 2nd of March last.

3. His Honor further understands that there is accommodation for 14 vessels between the Moorings at Calcutta and Cooley Bazar, that an additional row of 10 vessels may be accommodated off the Esplanade, and that a fifth vessel might be placed in each of the first five tiers of the Calcutta Moorings.

4. This would give accommodation in all for 106 vessels, which is, of course, still quite inadequate for the wants of the Port.

5. To give additional Moorings there seem to have been three plans suggested:

6. *First*.—The plan spoken of in the Master Attendant's letter No. 1485, dated the 22nd August 1854, as Captain Dicey's plan, by which it was stated 28 additional vessels would be accommodated.

7. *Secondly*.—The plan proposed by the Chamber of Commerce in their letter, dated the 28th of June last, namely, to lay down Swinging Moorings in the stream for 80 additional vessels.

8. *Thirdly*.—The plan suggested by the Master Attendant in his letter, dated the 9th ultimo, namely, to lay down Moorings in tiers of three or four on the opposite side of the river.

9. With respect to the first plan the case appears now to be that a re-arrangement of the Moorings would give additional accommodation for 22 vessels only, and that from this number must be deducted the 14 vessels that may now in case of need be accommodated between the Moorings, thus leaving a balance of 8 only, really gained by the re-arrangement. The measure is estimated to cost rupees 1,77,344, and you express yourself doubtful whether the advantage to be obtained is worth so large an outlay.

10. The Lieutenant Governor however has heard it stated that the present plan of placing ships between the Moorings is full of danger, and it would seem that the proposed re-arrangement of the Moorings would provide for the present 14 and also 8 others without putting any ships into the danger of having ships placed between the Moorings. If this is the case, and the present mode of placing the vessels involves a real risk, it may be worth while, he thinks, to make the re-arrangement proposed, and he would wish the Master Attendant to be called on for a full explanation on this point.

11. With respect to the second plan, I am desired to say that Captain Robertson has verbally stated his opinion to the Lieutenant Governor, that ships would never use the Swinging Moorings in the centre of the stream in the

freshes, and indeed could not do so without danger, and you have yourself stated in your letter under acknowledgement that "comparatively very few ships will occupy either Swinging or fixed Moorings except during the freshes, unless compelled to do so, or are allowed to occupy them free of charge." You also state that you believe "great difficulty is experienced in inducing boats to convey cargo to ships in the stream on the springs during the freshes."

12. Under these circumstances, the Lieutenant-Governor would wish you to communicate with the Chamber further on the subject, pointing out the difficulties which are believed to oppose themselves to the establishment of Moorings in the stream.

13. With respect to the third plan, namely, to lay down Moorings on the opposite side of the river, the Lieutenant Governor observes that this measure would appear to be recommended by the Master Attendant merely on the ground that it is very necessary to lay down additional Moorings somewhere, for he has not discussed any one of the objections which might present themselves to the Mooring of vessels in that locality. You yourself express great doubts whether fixed Moorings for large ships would answer on the western side of the river, for the reasons stated in paragraph 8 of your letter, and it appears to the Lieutenant-Governor probable that Moorings in that position might not meet the views of the Mercantile Community. He would wish therefore the opinion of the Chamber of Commerce to be ascertained on this point also.

14. Having regard to the doubts which you consider to attach to every one of the three plans abovementioned, you suggest that with the forty anchors indented for from England in March last, ten sets of Swinging Moorings should be laid down, half above and half below the "Zenobia's" Swinging Moorings, and ten sets of fixed Moorings on the Howrah side, by which means you think the utility of laying Moorings, either swinging or fixed, on that side would be tested.

15. On both these propositions the Lieutenant Governor would wish to defer giving an opinion, at all events until a fuller report is before him in regard to the first plan, that is the proposed re-arrangement of the present Moorings, and also until the further views of the Chamber of Commerce are made known both in respect to the advisability of laying down Swinging Moorings in the stream, and also in respect to the advantage of laying Moorings on the opposite side of the river.

16. You are requested to put the Chamber fully in possession of the objections which occur to yourself and the Master Attendant in regard to both these plans.

17. With reference to paragraphs 14 to 19 of your letter, I am desired to say that the attention of the Chamber of Commerce will be directed to the scheme of constructing Wet Docks, and their opinion requested in regard to its practicability, and in regard to the expediency of any such undertaking as compared with the advantages supposed to be offered by the Moolah. It is apprehended that a Rail-road would not cost so much as Wet Docks, and in the Moolah there is accommodation, apparently of the most favorable kind, for any amount of shipping.

18. I am instructed to draw your attention to the 2nd paragraph of my letter, No. 219, dated the 28th of June last. There is no reference in your letter under acknowledgement to the Harbour Master's Department, but the Lieutenant Governor would wish you to require a report on the efficiency of that Department from the Master Attendant, and to submit the same with your own remarks, after having communicated with the Chamber on the changes in the present system to which they made reference in their letter of the 19th of June.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) W. GREY,

Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

(True Copies.)

G. G. MORRIS,

Under-Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,

Calcutta, 12th October, 1855.

W. GREY, ESQUIRE,

Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

Sir,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 396, of the 3rd instant, forwarding copies of correspondence between the Hon'ble the Lieutenant Governor and the Superintendent of Marine, on the subject of laying down additional Moorings in the River Hooghly, and to tender the respectful thanks of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce for those papers.

The objections entertained by the Superintendent of Marine to the Chamber's proposal for Swinging Moorings in the stream, will be considered

by the Committee; and its opinions upon that point and other measures connected with the subject will be communicated to that Officer.

Upon the question of the expediency of constructing Wet Docks, I am directed to say that the Committee will lose no time in placing its views before the Lieutenant Governor; but the Committee begs respectfully to record its opinion that that question, although introduced by the Superintendent of Marine in connexion with the call for additional Moorings, should in no way supersede it. The urgency of that call was made clearly apparent in the Chamber's letter to your address, under date the 26th August 1854, and it has become increasingly so by the vast influx of shipping during the present year. Such improved accommodation and security as can be given by Moorings is called for at once and imperatively, while the construction of Wet Docks of size adequate to the trade of the port, whether undertaken by the Government or (more legitimately) by private enterprise would, it is presumed, be the work of years.

(Signed) H. W. L. WOOD,

Secretary.

No. 411.

FROM THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL
TO THE SECRETARY TO THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Marine.

Dated Fort William, the 15th October, 1855.

Sir,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 12th instant, and with reference to its concluding paragraph to state that the Lieutenant Governor did not understand the Superintendent of Marine to bring forward the question of Wet Docks with any view to the consideration of that question superseding the question of a present addition to the Moorings, but rather with a view to direct the attention of the Mercantile Community to the fact that the resort of shipping to this Port was apparently increasing beyond the limit for which any number of Moorings, which it seemed practicable to lay down in positions at once safe and convenient, could provide for.

2. The Lieutenant Governor, I am desired to add, entirely concurs in the opinion stated in the concluding words of your letter that the construction of Wet Docks would be more legitimately undertaken by private enterprise than by the Government.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) W. GREY,

Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

No. 6180.

To H. W. L. WOOD, Esquire,

Secretary to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

Sir,—I have the honor, by direction of the Superintendent of Marine, to forward herewith copy of letters as per margin* relative to the increase of Moorings for the accommodation of ships off Calcutta.

2nd. The Superintendent will feel obliged if the Chamber will favor him with their opinion in regard to ships willingly paying for Swinging Moorings in the North-East Monsoon, and as to how far those lying at them in the freshes would have facilities for unloading and loading. The opinion of the Superintendent on the advantages and disadvantages of Swinging Moorings for large ships in the stream are contained in my letter to the Master Attendant, No. 3996 of the 3rd July last, as also his ideas in regard to fixed Moorings on the Howrah side of the river referred to in the 13th para of Mr. Secretary Grey's letter.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed)

JAMES SUTHERLAND,

Officiating Secretary.

MAINE SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE.

The 10th October, 1855.

* Note.—The letters referred to are given with Government of Bengal letter No. 396 at page xliii.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, *vide*
Calcutta, 30th October, 1855.

J. SUTHERLAND, Esquire,

Offy. Secy. to the Supdt. of Marine,
FORT WILLIAM.

Sir,—By direction of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 6180, of the 10th instant, relative to the increase of permanent Mooring accommodation; and to submit the following remarks in reply.

The proposition of the Chamber for 80 sets of Swinging Moorings, was made under the impression derived from previous correspondence, that no further adequate room could be found for fixed Moorings on the eastern bank of the River. If such space can possibly be found between Hastings' Bridge and Ahercetollah Ghaut, the Committee thinks that it should be availed of in preference to any Swinging Moorings as affording far greater convenience to trade and security to shipping.

But it would appear, from the returns furnished in the several enclosures of your letter, that with the utmost economy of space, consistent with the preservation of a sufficient channel, and carrying out the suggested plan of the Master Attendant (in his No. 1485, of 22nd August, 1854, to Government of Bengal) by which 22 additional berths could be gained, no more than 114 vessels, or about half of the number that are on an average in port, can be provided with accommodation.

Presuming that further space on the Calcutta side of the River is unavailable, the Committee has already but two remedial measures before it, viz., its own original suggestion of Swinging Moorings, and the Master Attendant's proposition for fixed ones on the western bank. The latter plan, the Committee thinks, is open to the objection that vessels would lie at a considerable distance from the shore, owing to the shallowness of the water; and, being exposed to the full strength of the stream, and occasionally to violent bores, the absence of shore fastenings would diminish the stability and safety of the Moorings; and for the same reason 't appears doubtful whether under any circumstances more than a very limited number of vessels could be moored on the Howrah side.

Filling the requisite space on either or both banks of the River, the proposal for Swinging Moorings in the stream demands an apparent necessity, and the addition of the entire number recommended by the Committee, to

those already, and shortly to be available, will not exceed the demand which may be looked for in the next season.

The Committee observes that while the Master Attendant's 'his' verbally expressed to the Lieutenant Governor an opinion that ships would never avail of Swinging Moorings during the freshes, you have yourself stated that they would not occupy them *except during the freshes*, unless allowed to do so free of cost; but it feels no doubt that your opinion is correct, and is equally certain that during the freshes and strong tides—in fact, for at least eight months of the year—the Swinging Moorings would be eagerly availed of in the absence of safer accommodation in shore. It is hardly necessary to mention the serious accidents which so frequently happen to vessels at their own anchors, the liability to which would, in the Committee's opinion, be materially lessened by the provision suggested.

The Committee does not think that ships would occupy Swinging Moorings during the N. E. Monsoon, (except free of charge) unless it were made compulsory, and that in the existing high scale of port charges cannot, by any means, be recommended.

With regard to facilities for loading and unloading, the Committee is not aware of any objections being made by owners of cargo boats to their going alongside of vessels in the stream during the freshes; and there is no doubt that many ships in that season have hitherto been unloaded and loaded while at their own anchors. The Committee learns with regret from your letter, to the Hon'ble the Lieutenant Governor that the materials indentured from England are sufficient for only 20 sets of Moorings. But under such circumstances, and with the view of testing the comparative advantages, and drawbacks of the two systems, it approves of your suggestion that one-half of the material should be employed in laying down five sets of Swinging Moorings above and five below the "Zenobia's" present berth, and the remainder in ten sets of fixed Moorings on the Howrah side.

In conclusion I am desired to urge the necessity of your indenting without further delay for sufficient materials to increase the number of Moorings to 200, and on their arrival to re-arrange the present Moorings so as to secure a larger amount of accommodation than they now afford.

I have, &c.,

H. W. I. WOOD,

Secretary.

APPENDIX 6.

BILLS OF LADING.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Calcutta 12th June, 1855.

THE SECRETARY OF THE EAST INDIA AND CHINA ASSOCIATION, LONDON.

Sir.—The Bengal Chamber of Commerce has recently had its attention called to the anomalous and unjust position in which Endorses of Bills of Lading are placed by their legal disability to hold the rights and privileges to which original shippers become entitled by their contract with the Master or Owner of the ship.

The subject has been prominently brought to notice by a late decision of the Court of Small Causes and the confirming opinion of the Judges of the Supreme Court in a case (as per annexed report)* where goods were purchased and shipped by A of London, on account of B in Calcutta, but consigned to order, and the surrender of them made conditional on payment of a Bill for their value drawn by A on B, and remitted to a Firm here for realisation.

The Bill is paid by B, who thus obtains from the Captain delivery of the goods originally ordered by him.

For certain damages sustained by the goods during the voyage, B claims on the Master, but is *non-suited* in the Court of Small Causes, a decision subsequently upheld by the higher Court, on the ground that there was no evidence of the relationship of Vendor and Vendee subsisting between A and B at the time of shipment, and that there was no proof of the property having passed to B at date of contract by Master.

* Vide case of Shearman and Co, versus Smith, reported in the Small Cause Court Chronicle of 28th April 1855.

Notwithstanding the undisputed facts of the property having been ordered and paid for by B, and his right to possession having been recognized by delivery, yet his title to claim against the ship or Captain on account of injury to such property, or in other words his right to sue on the Bill of Lading, is held to be inadmissible, and it would seem to follow that the Captain, if so disposed, might equally have disputed the title of B to delivery at all.

By the existing constitution of the law, which declares contracts to be non-transferable, there appears to be no legal objection to the ruling of the Judges; but the Committee of this Chamber conceives that the law acts harshly and injuriously on the interests of Commerce, and ought to be amended to the extent of defining the liability of carriers, placing the *bona fide* holders of Bills of Lading, whether by blank or special endorsement, in the same position as original Consignees.

The same call for improved legislation may be pointed out in the case of Policies of Insurance, which in daily practice are transferred by endorsement, but in point of law are not thus transferrable.

In both instances it is submitted that the law ought to be made consonant with common sense and Mercantile practice, and I am instructed by the Committee urgently to solicit the aid of your powerful association to achieve this object.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) H. W. L. WOOD,

Secretary.

APPENDIX 7.

PENINSULAR AND ORIENTAL COMPANY.

No. 759.

FROM J. W. DALRYMPLE, ESQUIRE,
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of India,

TO H. W. I. WOOD, ESQUIRE,
Secy. to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

Dated the 15th June, 1855.

Home Department, Marine.

Sir,—With reference to the correspondence as per margin, I am directed to transmit for the information of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, the accompanying copy of a Dispatch from the Hon'ble the Court of Directors, No. 22 of 1855, dated 11th April, regarding the complaints made by the Chamber, respecting the arrangements of the Peninsular and Oriental Company for the performance of their Mail Contract.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) J. W. DALRYMPLE,
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of India.

COUNCIL CHAMBER,
The 15th June, 1855.

lxv

MARINE DEPARTMENT.

No. 22 of 1855.

OUR GOVERNOR GENERAL OF INDIA IN COUNCIL.

Having, on the receipt of your public letter, No. 78, dated 15th September last, addressed the Board of Admiralty on the subject of the complaints, therewith submitted, made by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, respecting the arrangements for the performance of the Contract Mail Service between Calcutta and Suez, we have now been informed by the Board, in reply, that "the inconvenience complained of by the Chamber of Commerce in regard to the dates of departure of the Packets from Calcutta, their principal grievance, has been remedied by arrangements made in October last, which provide for the departure of the Packet from Calcutta on the homeward voyage being delayed four days beyond the time formerly fixed, in order to give the inhabitants more time to reply to their letters." "This alteration," it is added, "came into operation in January last."

We are, &c.,

(Signed) J. OLIPHANT,

" E. MACNAGHTEN AND OTHER

DIRECTORS.

(True Copy).

(Signed) J. W. DALRYMPLE,

Under-Secy. to the Govt. of India.

LONDON,
The 11th April, 1855.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 19th June, 1855.

TO C. BEADON, ESQUIRE,
Secy. to the Govt. of India, Home Department,

FORT WILLIAM.

Sir,—I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 759, of the 15th instant, transmitting copy of a Despatch, dated 11th April, 1855, from the Hon'ble the Court of Directors, on the subject of the Chamber's representations to the Most Noble the Governor General, regarding the Contract Mail Service as conducted by the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company.

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The complaints then submitted to His Lordship, were under three distinct heads, *viz.*:

1. The unnecessary early departure of the Mail Steamers from Calcutta for Suez.
2. The increasing slowness of the Steamers, and
3. The absence of all controlling authority on the part of the Government of India.

The Hon'ble Court's Despatch now under acknowledgment, states that the Board of Admiralty had intimated the removal of one of the complaints preferred by the Chamber, by having arranged for the despatch of the Mail Packets four days later than the dates previously fixed for their departure.

This modification was announced to the Chamber by the Superintendent of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, on the 14th November last, and the alteration came into operation from the commencement of this year.

The removal of so great a public grievance has been the source of much satisfaction to the community, especially the Mercantile section of it.

But while the Chamber of Commerce accepts, with its respectful acknowledgments, the intimation conveyed in the Hon'ble Court's Despatch, it cannot conceal its deep disappointment that that communication should have been limited to only one of the three subjects contained in the Chamber's address to His Lordship the Governor General. No allusion whatever is made in the Despatch regarding the views of the Hon'ble Court on the other two points, which remain untouched by the Admiralty also.

The Committee nevertheless trusts that those important questions are receiving the attention due to them; and in concluding its acknowledgment of your letter again begs to call the special attention of Government to the third and last subject of remonstrance, *viz.*, that the head of the British Indian Government should have power not only to enforce the provisions of the contract, but also have an authority to which the Admiralty Agents attached to Mail Packets shall be subservient.

An early reform in this respect is urgently necessary, and the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce respectfully solicits the Hon'ble the President in Council to bring the matter again to the notice of the Court of Directors.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

FROM G. F. EDMONSTONE, ESQUIRE,
Secretary to the Government of India,
with the Governor General,

To H. W. I. WOOD, ESQUIRE,
Secretary to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce,
CALCUTTA.
Home Department.

Sir,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 19th June last, to the address of Mr. Secretary Beadon, representing that the Court of Directors were entirely silent on the last two points of complaint which were laid before them, in regard to the arrangements of the Peninsular and Oriental Company for the performance of their Mail Contracts.

2. In reply, I am desired to state that a copy of your letter will be forwarded for the consideration of the Hon'ble Court by the ensuing Mail, with an expression of the Governor General's earnest hope that the Hon'ble Court will not permit the grievances now brought to their notice to remain unaddressed, and that they will communicate their orders regarding them.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
G. F. EDMONSTONE,
Secy. to the Govt. of India,
with the Governor General.

OOTACAMUND,
The 15th August, 1855.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 21st June, 1855.
TO THE SECRETARY OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY
ASSOCIATION,
LONDON.

Sir,—The inefficient performance by the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company of their contract for the Overland Mail communication,

as particularised in a letter from the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to the Most Noble the Governor General in Council, was the subject of my letter to your address under date the 8th January; and I am now desired to call your attention to the Court of Directors' Despatch, conveying the result of that reference. Copies of that document, and of the Committee's acknowledgment thereof to the Government of India, are forwarded for your information.

Of the three important points submitted to the Governor General, one only has been noticed by the Admiralty and the Court, and the intimation respecting it, as contained in the Court's Despatch, has been furnished six months after the Indian public had been made aware of the alteration in the arrangements of the Peninsular and Oriental Company.

However much the concession involved in that modification was desired and is appreciated, the satisfaction of the Chamber of Commerce would have been more complete if that change had been accompanied by the other reforms alluded to.

In endeavouring to carry out those reforms, connected as they are with so many and important interests, the Committee can well understand the difficulties that may attend negotiation, and is prepared to learn that the results would by no means be immediate, or so early as could be wished; but the sentiments of the Admiralty and of the Hon'ble Court upon the suggestions submitted by the Committee would have been very acceptable.

The reforms pointed out to and understood by His Lordship the Governor General are of the greatest necessity and loudly called for; and their establishment cannot fail to secure the further public benefit which it is the object of the Chamber of Commerce to obtain.

Deeply interested as your powerful association has ever proved itself to be in the maintenance of an efficient and rapid Overland communication between Great Britain and British India, the Chamber of Commerce cannot omit to place you in possession of a knowledge of the efforts which are made to that end by the Commercial Community of Calcutta, and it trusts that your valuable co-operation will not fail to realise all the advantages that are desired.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) H. W. L. WOOD,
Secretary.

APPENDIX 8.

CUSTOM HOUSE GHAUT AND SHEDS.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 19th June, 1855.

W. GREY, Esquire,

Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

Sir,—On the 25th July last, I had the honor to submit, for the consideration of the Hon'ble the Lieutenant Governor, the views of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, regarding the Custom House Ghaut and Sheds, and your No. 386 of the 1st of the following month stated in reply that instructions had been issued to the Chief Engineer to cause a plan and estimate for the construction of a Shed in front of the Custom House to be submitted to Government.

On the 1st November, the Chamber received from that Officer a communication, from which it was glad to learn that it was the desire of Government to provide River-side accommodation commensurate with a large and extending Trade.

In the belief that the necessary works would be commenced without delay, no further reference was made by the Chamber till the 17th February last, and in reply to an inquiry as to what progress the Ghaut and Sheds had made, the Chief Engineer forwarded to this Office a copy of his letter No. 4386 of 10th March, 1855, submitting the design and estimate called for 8 months previously; and no other information has since reached the Committee.

It would appear, however, from the condition of the portion of the River front selected for the future buildings that little or no progress has been made; and the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce cannot but notice with regret that, after the lapse of so many months, the prospect of adequate River-side accommodation being available for the Trade of Calcutta is still indistinct and uncertain.

The rainy season having set in; the want of shelter and protection from the weather for a large portion of the enormous and valuable traffic of the Port, will

be severely felt; and I am desirous to express the disappointment of the Mercantile Community that the inconvenience complained of has not been removed already. The Committee begs respectfully to submit that the object of the Chamber's past and present representations is one of the highest importance; and it trusts that His Honor the Lieutenant Governor will be pleased to direct that no additional delay may occur in carrying on the works to a rapid and successful termination.

The Committee is given to understand that there is some difficulty in laying the foundation of the Ghaut, in consequence of the nature of the soil not admitting of the excavations being preserved, continuous accumulation of sand, &c., by each returning tide, filling up the space previously cleared: this would appear to be the chief obstacle, and while it exists, the works for the Ghaut must necessarily be suspended: but while this occasion of delay is admitted, the Committee conceives there can be no objection—in connection with it—to the erection of Sheds, which are more urgently required than an improvement of the River Bank, though the latter is also of much importance. If the simultaneous operation of building the Ghaut and Sheds is impracticable, the Committee would be glad to learn that the necessary orders for commencing and completing the latter were issued without delay, and respectfully suggests that measure for the consideration of the Lieutenant Governor.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 6th July, 1855.

W. GREY, Esq.,

Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

SIR,—I am instructed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to request you will submit for the consideration of His Honor the Lieutenant Governor, the following remarks in continuation of my letter of the 19th ultimo on the subject of Custom House Ghaut and Sheds.

From the Chief Engineer's letter No. 1293 of 11th August 1854, forwarded by the Civil Architect for the Chamber's information, the Com-

mittee was glad to learn that the question of building Sheds, as recommended by the Chamber, had been disposed of, and that the Civil Architect had been directed to prepare a plan and estimate for Sheds 600 feet in length and 50 feet in breadth; the Chamber was consulted as to the most convenient manner in which the Sheds should be placed, &c.; and from the tenor of the entire correspondence, the Committee entertained no doubt of an early realization of the object of the Chamber's representation to Government.

It would appear that the plan originally determined upon was to embrace a space in front of the Custom House premises sufficient for the Sheds, in three divisions, each of 200 feet by 50, with Roads between, with jetties at the North and South terminations, and a sloping Ghaut extending the entire length of the Sheds.

That arrangement would have given all the accommodation required.

Several months however having elapsed without any visible signs of progress of those works, the Committee was anxious to ascertain their actual extent and nature, and requested an interview with the Civil Architect; a Meeting was accordingly held on the 2nd instant, attended by that Officer, the Civil Engineer, Superintending Engineer, Chief Magistrate, Collector of Customs, and the Vice President of the Chamber.

The Committee was utterly unprepared for the result of inquiries then made, and received it with deep regret and disappointment. Instead of the accommodation applied for, and which it was believed had been authorized and proceeded with, the Committee was informed that only one Shed had been sanctioned, and that even that limited and insufficient extent is not likely to be available till long after the season during which shelter from the weather is so urgently needed.

Although the site for that single Shed had been fixed, its size had not been determined, as objections had been raised by the Chief Magistrate regarding an encroachment upon the boundary line of the Town Commissioners, and by the Collector of Customs with reference to the obstruction to the free access to and from the Import and Export entrances to the Custom House compound.

The Committee is assured that there is ample space on the River Bank where Sheds could be most conveniently erected without encroaching on the public thoroughfare along the Strand Road, or in any way interfering with the Custom House operations; the space alluded to is that piece of land extending from the corner of Fairlie Place to the South to Clive Street Ghaut to the North; it was formerly occupied by the various Mercantile Establishments in its immediate neighbourhood as accommodation for stabling and other conve-

niences, but the whole of the temporary sheds, huts, &c., having been removed, the ground is now generally covered with valuable goods of every description in transit to and from the shipping.

The Committee believes that this strip of land is not required for any public purpose, and respectfully submits that a modification of the original plan should be authorized, by which a portion of the recently cleared ground may be appropriated as the site for two of the three sheds. While these would be used for goods to be exported, as well as for those which are imported, but exempted by pre-payment of duty from the necessity of being sent to the Custom House, the first Shed would be well situated for the reception of goods not so exempted, by being erected on the site which has been selected for it.

The Committee has addressed the Hon'ble the Lieutenant Governor frequently and at length on this subject; its urgent application for a much wanted accommodation has been reiterated with much importunity; and all argument for its immediate necessity having been exhausted, it can now simply repeat its earnest hope that the Hon'ble the Lieutenant Governor will be pleased to approve of and sanction the suggested appropriation of the ground referred to, and to direct the early completion of an important and indispensably necessary provision for the Commerce of this city.

The condition of the Custom House Ghaut was characterized by the Chamber several months ago—in its letter of 25th July, 1854; and little or no improvement appears to have been since made.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) H. W. L. WOOD,
Secretary.

No. 317.

FROM THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL,
TO THE SECRETARY TO THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Dated Fort William, the 26th July, 1855.

SIR,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letters noted in the margin, and in reply to state that the Chief Engineer has been urged to expedite as much as possible the completion of the Shed already sanctioned, and that with respect to the

Public Works, Customs.

Dated 19th June, 1855.

4th July "

provision of more extended Shed accommodation, a reference has been made to the Supreme Government.

2. Regarding the condition of the Custom House Ghaut, a report has been called for from the Chief Engineer.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) W. GREY,
Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

No. 1979.

FROM THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL,
TO THE SECRETARY TO THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Dated Fort William, the 25th September, 1855.

Public Works, Customs.

SIR,—In continuation of my letter No. 317, dated the 26th July last, I am directed to state, for the information of the Chamber of Commerce, that the sanction of the Supreme Government has been given to the erection of extended Shed accommodation on the Custom House Wharf at an outlay of rupees *3,000, exclusive of the cost of the first Shed ordered.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) W. GREY,
Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

* Subsequently ascertained to have been a clerical error for 30,000.

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BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 28th September, 1855.

TO W. GREY, ESQUIRE,
Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

SIR,—The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce directs me to acknowledge the receipt of your No. 1979, of the 25th instant, and to inquire what the nature and extent of the additional Shed accommodation sanctioned by Government may be.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

No. 2038.

FROM THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL,
TO THE SECRETARY TO THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Dated Fort William, the 3rd October, 1855.

Public Works, Buildings, Customs.

SIR,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 28th ultimo, and in reply to inform you that the Chief Engineer has been directed to submit an estimate for the construction of a second Shed measuring 300 feet by 50 feet.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) W. GREY,
Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

N. B.—Since the above was in type, the Committee have had the satisfaction of ascertaining that an expenditure of thirty thousand rupees has been sanctioned by Government for the erection of a second Shed on the Custom House Wharf of 300 feet by 50; and that the Chief Engineer has been instructed to lose no time in carrying out this intention.

APPENDIX 9.

POST OFFICE.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 9th July, 1855.

J. R. B. BENNETT, ESQUIRE,
Post Master General of Bengal.

SIR,—I am instructed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, to inform you that it has received from the Merchants of Calcutta, a very unanimous expression of dissatisfaction at the careless manner in which letters, papers, and price currents, received by the Overland Mail, are distributed by the Post Office peons; and to request you will make such arrangements as will ensure a greater degree of accuracy in their delivery for the future.

Instances have been brought to the notice of the Committee in which newspapers and price currents which were posted in London, have not been received in Calcutta; and the wrong delivery of letters, &c., is so frequent, that some stringent measures appear to be absolutely necessary effectually to check the irregularities complained of.

I am, &c.,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

No. 1891.

FROM THE POST MASTER GENERAL OF BENGAL,
TO THE SECRETARY TO THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Calcutta, 18th July, 1855.

SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 9th instant, and to express my deep regret that there should have been any cause for the expression of dissatisfaction at the manner in which letters, papers and price currents, received by the Overland Mails, are distributed by the Post Office peons.

On the receipt of your letter, I called upon the Deputy Post Master General, who has now sole charge of the office, for explanation; his reply is annexed; and I am bound to add that officer spares no pains in endeavouring to give satisfaction and in superintending the distribution of the Overland Mails, and that I perfectly concur with him, the Superintendent of the office, and the Head Clerk in the Ship and Steam Department in believing, that all the letters received in the boxes are duly made over to the peons, and consequently that whatever faults exist, the blame is attributable chiefly, if not solely, to that class of officers.

I have again requested the most particular attention of the Deputy Post Master General and his subordinates to the distribution of the letters; it is, however, by far more difficult to ensure more attention on the part of the peons, who are invariably severely punished whenever their carelessness is brought to notice through the kindness of the public—the only means by which this department can learn their want of attention—as in the absence of complaint it is only to be supposed that the peons perform their duties satisfactorily.

Under the new system, as the Chamber is doubtless aware, Registers, Peons' Books &c., have been abolished, and under these circumstances, therefore, I fear nothing more can be done than is now done, viz., to punish most severely the parties convicted of inattention, &c., this department possessing no means of knowing what number of letters are delivered to the peons, or the addresses of the letters delivered to the peons for distribution.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) J. R. B. BENNETT,
Post Master General of Bengal.

No. 193.

FROM THE DEPUTY POST MASTER GENERAL,
TO THE POST MASTER GENERAL OF BENGAL.

Calcutta, General Post Office, the 11th July, 1855.

Sir,—With reference to the order passed on the accompanying letter from the Secretary, Chamber of Commerce, dated 9th instant, I have the honor to

submit copies of the reports called for by me, from the Superintendent and Mr. Deefholts, Manager of the Ship and Steam Department.

2nd. Since I have joined this office, I have invariably attended the opening and distributing of the English Mails, and can safely vouch that every letter, paper, price current, book or pamphlet, &c., received enclosed in the wooden and iron boxes, has been duly issued from this office for delivery.

3rd. That carelessness and inattention and even fraud has been committed by the delivery peons, has been clearly proved by the cases that have lately been brought before the public at the Police, and I have invariably punished most severely every case of carelessness and inattention proved against a delivery peon; consequently this office has done all that lies in its power under the present postal system to give every redress and satisfaction to the public.

4th. The Chamber, in their Secretary's letter under notice, request that such arrangements may be made as will ensure a greater degree of accuracy in the delivery of all letters, papers and price currents, received by the Overland Mail;—I should however wish them, whilst making this request, to suggest some feasible plan likely to ensure the accuracy they desire, and I have not the slightest doubt that, if feasible and compatible with the present postal system, it will be adopted, and if approved of by my superiors, I, for one, shall do all in my power to carry out the suggested plan.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) C. K. DOVE,
Deputy Post Master General.

REPORTS.

The Superintendent begs to state that he can only vouch to such price currents and newspapers as are received in the boxes, being safely delivered to the peons; but in the absence of the registration, it is impossible to say what number of newspapers or price currents, were received for each firm; neither can the Post Office vouch for the number delivered to each peon.

With regard to sending out the price currents with the paid and bearing letters, this might be managed, but the business will be retarded from half to one hour more than the time allowed by the Director General; if that time is allowed by the Director General, there is no objection to carry it out.

(Signed) E. BOTTELLHO,
Superintendent.

11th July, 1855.

To C. K. DOVE, ESQUIRE,
Deputy Post Master General.

Sir,—With reference to the letter from the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, dated the 9th instant, I beg to report that I can vouch for all letters and papers received in the Mail boxes being delivered to the peons, but what they do when taken out of the Post Office, I am unable to tell.

With regard to the price currents being sent out at the same time with the letters, I beg to say it will retard the delivery by at least one hour, if not more.

I am, &c.,

(Signed) R. DEEPHOLTS,
Manager.

11th July, 1855.

(True Copies.)

(Signed) C. K. DOVE,
Deputy Post Master General.

(True Copies.)

(Signed) J. R. B. BENNETT,
Post Master General of Bengal.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 23rd July, 1855.

H. B. RIDDELL, ESQUIRE,
Director General of the Post Office in India.

Sir,—The Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce lately received from upwards of 20 Mercantile Firms an expression of dissatisfaction at the careless manner in which letters, papers and price currents, received by the Overland Mail, are distributed by the Post Office peons.

In consequence of that representation the Committee addressed the Post Master General, who was requested to introduce such arrangements as would ensure a greater degree of accuracy for the future.

The Committee has received a prompt acknowledgment from the Post Master General, who affixes to his reply the remarks made by the Deputy Post Master General, and other employees. From the explanation contained in those communications, the Committee cannot question the proper performance by those Officers of their respective duties; and gladly accepts Mr. Bennett's assurances in confirmation of the statements made by his subordinates.

The evils complained of exist nevertheless; and the Committee conceives that the cause of them may be found in the system adopted at the Post Office, and which may be capable of modification and improvement.

The Committee will be glad if this present representation may be the means of removing any obstacles to the proper delivery of letters and papers, and of rendering that department of the Post Office more efficient than it has been proved to be: and in furtherance of the views of the Committee, I am instructed to say that they will be happy to wait on you at any time you may desire, if suggestions from the representatives of the Commercial Community will be likely to assist you in considering the matter now submitted.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

No. 686.

FROM H. B. RIDDELL, ESQUIRE,
Director General of the Post Office in India,

TO THE SECRETARY TO THE BENGAL CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE.

Calcutta, the 25th July, 1855.

Sir,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 23rd instant, representing on the part of the Chamber of Commerce, that the Mercantile Community and Public of Calcutta, have cause for dissatisfaction at the careless manner in which letters, papers, &c., received by the Overland Mails, are distributed by the Post Office peons.

2nd. From personal observation, I can bear testimony to the exertions made by the Deputy Post Master General, to ensure, as far as is in his power,

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the prompt and correct delivery of the Overland Mails, and I am glad to observe that the Committee of the Chamber do not impute negligence to him or his subordinate Clerks.

3rd. A modification of the present system of delivery may correct the evil complained of; I shall feel indebted for any suggestions which may be offered, either verbally or in writing, for the improvement of the plan of distribution now in force, and shall be most happy to meet the Committee of the Chamber in the Post Office at any time which may be convenient to the Members.

4th. Should I have misunderstood the last paragraph of your letter under reply, and should it not be the Committee's wish to discuss the matter verbally, I can only say that any suggestions which they may favor me with will receive the fullest consideration.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed)

H. B. RIDDELL,
*Director General of the Post Office
in India.*

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 24th August, 1855.

H. B. RIDDELL, ESQUIRE,
Director General of the Post Office.

Sir,—The correspondence that has recently taken place between yourself and the Post Master General and the Chamber of Commerce, regarding the irregular delivery of newspapers, price currents and other papers, was taken into consideration at a General Meeting held this day.

The process of sorting and distributing papers, was explained to the Meeting by a Member of the Committee, who was present at the Post Office, on the occasion of the arrival of the last Mail; and it was the unanimous opinion of the Meeting, that the present establishment is not sufficient for the heavy duties it has to perform, and that an increase of at least four clerks for the Superintendence of the assortment of papers was required for the more efficient working of that department.

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As the inconveniences already submitted to you are attributed to the smallness of the number of supervising clerks, the Committee trusts you will at once apply the simple and inexpensive remedy proposed.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

No. 1124.

FROM H. B. RIDDELL, ESQUIRE,
Director General of the Post Office in India,

TO THE SECRETARY TO THE BENGAL CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE.

Dated Camp, the 21st September, 1855.

Sir,—With reference to your communication of the 24th ultimo, I have the honor to inform you that the Chamber of Commerce is under a misapprehension in regard to the number of clerks employed in the distribution of the Overland Mail, and that in my opinion the present establishment is sufficient, and that an increase to the number of clerks would not in any way accelerate the distribution or prevent mistakes and misdelivery on the part of the letter carriers; 51 clerks were employed in the disposal of the 2nd Mail received in August, 1855.

I have taken measures, which will, I hope, raise the character and qualifications of the letter carriers, and have directed the adoption of arrangements which will, I trust, in some degree prevent the recurrence of the mistakes which have occurred.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed)

H. B. RIDDELL,
*Director General of the Post Office
in India.*

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APPENDIX 10.

SALVAGE CLAIMS BY THE HON'BLE COMPANY'S
STEAMERS, &c.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 15th August, 1855.

To W. GREY, ESQUIRE,
Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

SIR,—The attention of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce having been drawn to certain official documents, recently published in a local paper, having reference to the subject of salvage claims by the Hon'ble Company's Steamers and other of their vessels, I am desired to state that it is a matter of considerable importance to the shipping interests of this port to learn whether the memorandum issued by the Master Attendant, No. 1360 of the 29th June last, or the order contained in Mr. Secretary Young's letter, No. 245 of 5th April, 1853, is to be considered as official authority for the guidance of the public.

While the latter document states that the Government of Bengal had sanctioned the adoption at this Presidency of the rules passed by Her Majesty's Government, and extended to the Indian Navy, for regulating claims for salvage services, the instructions of the Master Attendant are to the effect that, in cases where Government Steamers may render service to vessels in distress, no claim except for work done will be preferred.

These statements being directly at variance, the Committee respectfully calls the attention of the Hon'ble the Lieutenant Governor to the conflicting directions they contain; and submits that the precise nature of orders issued by Government should be made known to the public, with a clear and unmistakable notification of the charges to which vessels may be subject in the event of assistance being rendered to them by Government Steamers.

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In conclusion, the Committee respectfully requests to be furnished for the future with copies of all papers forwarded to the General Insurance Committee by the Superintendent of Marine, in order that greater publicity may be given to them through the Chamber of Commerce.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

No. 323.

FROM THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL,
TO THE SECRETARY TO THE BENGAL CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE.

Dated Fort William, 29th August, 1855.

Marine.

SIR,—I am directed by the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th instant, regarding the existing rules on the subject of salvage claims by the Hon'ble Company's Steamers and other of their vessels.

2. In reply I am directed to state that the rules on this subject sanctioned by the Government of India, and now actually in force, are contained in Mr. Under-Secretary Young's letter to the Superintendent of Marine, No. 245 of the 5th April, 1853, and Mr. Secretary Beadon's letter to the Government of Bengal, No. 400 of the 16th March, 1855, of which a copy was furnished to the Superintendent of Marine on the 26th March, 1855. Of these two letters I am directed to append copies, as also of the rules alluded to in Mr. Young's letter above quoted.

3. The notification or memorandum issued by the Master Attendant, No. 1360 of the 29th June last is, as justly pointed out by the Chamber of Commerce, in conflict with, or excess of, the rules sanctioned by the Government of India, and he will be directed to recall it, and to substitute in its place copies of the actual rules, of which he will be furnished with printed copies for more general publication.

4. As requested in your letter, copies of all papers furnished to the General Insurance Committee by the Superintendent of Marine will also be forwarded by that officer to the Chamber of Commerce in order to their greater publicity. Instructions to this effect will now be given to the Superintendent of Marine.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

(Signed) W. GREY,
Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

No. 245.

FROM THE UNDER-SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF
BENGAL,
TO THE SUPERINTENDENT OF MARINE.

Dated Fort William, 5th April, 1852.

Marine.

Sir,—I am directed by the Most Noble the Governor of Bengal to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 39, dated 4th January last, with its enclosures, requesting, on behalf of the underwriters of this place, that the rules recently passed by Her Majesty's Government regulating claims for salvage services performed by Her Majesty's Navy, and which rules have been extended by the Government of Bombay to the Indian Navy, be made applicable to salvage services rendered by Steamers, Pilot and other vessels at this Presidency.

2. His Lordship has been pleased to sanction the adoption of the above rules at this Presidency.

3. The original enclosures which accompanied your letter are herewith returned.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) W. GORDON YOUNG,
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

(True Copy)

(Signed) G. G. MORRIS,
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

The Right Hon'ble the Governor in Council is pleased to direct that the following regulations regarding salvage claims for assistance rendered by the Hon'ble Company's ships and vessels of war to vessels in danger or distress, shall, in accordance with the Rules now in force in the Royal Navy, and with a view more particularly to define the circumstances under which claims to salvage may be made, be held to be in force from this date.

1. All officers in command of the Hon'ble Company's ships and vessels of the Indian Navy are, as heretofore, to afford every possible aid to vessels in distress or danger, or in want of casual assistance, and no claims for salvage are to be raised for such assistance, unless really important services, or services accompanied with hazard, have been rendered to such vessels.

2. When such services have been rendered, the commanding officer of the ship is to transmit a full report of the whole circumstances of the case, with a copy of the ship's log, to the Commander-in-Chief (through the senior naval officer of the station), whose written approval shall be requisite before any other officer under his command can raise a claim for salvage, and such approval is not to be given unless really important service, or service accompanied with hazard, has been rendered.

3. In cases where relays of men are sent for the purpose of affording assistance, and where a large portion of the crew have been employed, the salvage which may be awarded is to be distributed according to the provisions of the Prize Proclamation in force at the time, unless specially apportioned by the terms of any decree or award, or otherwise to be divided among the parties actually employed as may be directed.

4. All officers are to use their best efforts to save and protect property and stores, especially those belonging to the Crown or the Government, which may be on board any vessel placed in circumstances of danger or distress, and, if necessary, to remove such stores to a place of safety. The Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Navy is requested to transmit these instructions to officers employed at distant stations by the earliest opportunities.

By order of the Right Hon'ble the Governor in Council.

(Signed) J. G. LUMSDEN,
Secy. to Govt.

(True Copy)

(Signed) G. G. MORRIS,
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

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No. 400.

FROM C. DEADON, Esquire,
Secy. to the Govt. of India,

TO W. GREY, Esquire,
Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

Dated 16th March, 1855.

Home Department, Madras.

SIR,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 904, dated the 3rd ultimo, communicating observations on a suggestion by the Hon'ble the Court of Directors for the general adoption of the Rule obtaining in the Straits' Settlements regarding the charge to be made for assistance rendered by Government Steamers to vessels in distress.

2. The rule in question is, that in ordinary cases, no compulsory charge shall be made beyond the usual hire of the steamer, it being left to the owners of the aided vessels to offer what remuneration they may think proper to the crew of the steamer; and that in salvage cases the hire of the steamer shall be deducted from the amount of salvage.

3. After consideration of the replies received from the several Local Governments, the Hon'ble the President in Council is pleased to direct the adoption of the Straits' rule for all Government Steamers not being men-of-war (and to such it was not intended to apply,) with this addition, that in all cases where extra expenditure is incurred, such extra expenditure shall be charged in addition to the hire of the Steamer, and that in salvage cases this extra expenditure as well as the hire shall be deducted from the amount agreed upon or awarded. For men-of-war the only difference is that no hire should be charged in any case.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) CECIL DEADON,
Secy. to the Govt. of India.

COUNCIL CHAMBER,
The 16th March, 1855.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) G. G. MORRIS,
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

APPENDIX 11.

DRAWBACKS & REFUNDS AT THE CUSTOM HOUSE.

No. 179.

FROM THE OFFICIATING COLLECTOR OF CUSTOMS,
CALCUTTA,

TO H. W. I. WOOD, Esquire,
Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta.

The 18th July, 1855.

SIR,—In consequence of Government having recently been called upon to pay a second time to a Firm in Calcutta certain sums which had previously been paid as Drawback and Refunds to the Sircar who has for years past ordinarily conducted the Custom House business of that Firm, upon receipts produced by him bearing the signature of the Firm, but alleged to be forgeries, it has become necessary to take additional precautions for the future in the payment of money to applicants on behalf of parties to whom it is due. I shall greatly regret having recourse to any measures which may have a tendency to diminish the facilities for transacting business at the Custom House, but it seems scarcely possible to devise any mode of securing Government against frauds of this description which will not in some degree produce this effect.

2nd. The remedy which I have been advised to adopt is stated in the annexed extract from an opinion of the Officiating Advocate General, and my object in addressing you on the subject is to request the assistance of the Chamber of Commerce in making known to the Mercantile Community the restrictions which it has been found necessary to impose on the payment of money to the representatives of Firms at the Custom House, and the reasons for those restrictions. If any means occur to the Chamber by which the object in view could be attained with less inconvenience to Merchants than by

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those proposed by Mr. Cowie, I shall be much obliged by their favouring me with any suggestion they may be disposed to make.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) A. R. YOUNG,
Offg. Collector of Customs.

CUSTOM HOUSE, CALCUTTA,
The 18th July, 1855. }

Extract of an opinion of the Advocate General, dated 3rd July, 1855.

"The only remedy that I can suggest is for the Collector to intimate to the Mercantile Body (either by notice in the *Gazette*, or through the Chamber of Commerce, or by Circular) that it has been found necessary to adopt measures for the prevention of frauds by the production of forged receipts, and that in future no payments will be made to any Firm except on the personal demand of a Member or European Assistant of the Firm, or of a Native Assistant or Sircar specially authorized, as follows: Each Firm should be required to produce before the Collector, and to identify him by one of their Partners, the Native whom they may choose to employ in their Custom House business, and at the same time to deposit with the Collector a letter authorizing him to pay to such Native all Drawbacks, Refunds and other moneys for which he shall produce receipts purporting to be the receipts of the Firm.

True Extract.

(Signed) A. R. YOUNG,
Offg. Collector of Customs.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 30th July, 1855.

A. R. YOUNG, Esquire,
Offg. Collector of Customs,
Fort William.

Sir,—I am instructed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 179 of the 18th instant, informing

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the Chamber that, in consequence of a recent fraud and the probable loss to Government of certain sums in the shape of Drawbacks and Refunds, it had become necessary to take additional precautions for the future in payments on such accounts; and that the remedy which you have been advised by the Officiating Advocate General consists in requiring the personal attendance of a Member of each Firm, or of a European or Native Assistant specially authorised, to receive Drawbacks or other payments at the Custom House; in the identification of such Assistant; and in depositing with the Collector a letter from each Firm authorizing payment to such Assistant of all moneys for which he shall produce receipts purporting to be the receipts of the Firm.

In reply I am desired to state that the opinions of the entire body of the Chamber have been sought on your proposed change of system, and that a majority of them very strongly deprecate the alteration which you have been advised by the Officiating Advocate General to make, and which they submit the occurrence of a single case of fraud in a long series of years scarcely justifies.

In all Banking and Mercantile Communities, it is both law and practice that the party who pays on an endorsed document runs the risk of the endorsement being fraudulent; and it is for him, before payment, to take such precautions as may reduce that risk to a very slight one.

The General Treasury, the Bank of Bengal, the Salt and Opium Departments, and in short all public and private offices which have to deal with payments in money or delivery of goods, daily undergo this responsibility in transactions of very large extent; and the Committee cannot see why the Custom House should be specially exempted from it.

The Chamber would have objected to the system proposed by you on the broad principle that all attentions in the mode of collecting Duties or disbursing Drawbacks should be with the view of facilitating the operations of Commerce; but a much stronger objection is to be found in the wording of the proposed measure, *etc.*, that Mercantile Firms should authorize Assistants or Sircars to realize moneys for which receipts shall be produced purporting to be the receipts of the Firms. This appears to the Chamber of Commerce to be holding out a premium to forgery at the risk of the Merchant, and to be so far unreasonable that they trust you will, upon re-consideration, withdraw the proposal which contains it.

If it is considered that the existing system of payment of Drawbacks and other Refunds does not furnish sufficient security to the Custom House against the possibility of fraud or forgery, the Chamber would solicit you to make arrangements that all such payments shall for the future be made by warrants

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on the General Treasury, or Bank of Bengal, payable to order; or, if such arrangement is impracticable, by warrants issued upon the Treasurer of the Custom House, (which shall be payable only to the Banker, of the party in whose favor they are drawn, or in other words only on presentation through one of the known Banks of the place.

In conclusion, the Chamber desires to bring to your notice that one material safeguard against fraud in such matters will be a quick and efficient mode of recognising all claims for Drawback and Refunds of every description as soon as they are properly submitted and substantiated by the applicants, it being evident that the delay which sometimes takes place between application and adjustment offers opportunity for fraudulent tampering with the documents, to the possible injury of both the Revenue and the Merchants.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

No. 190.

FROM THE OFFICIATING COLLECTOR OF CUSTOMS,
CALCUTTA.

To H. W. I. WOOD, Esquire,
Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta.

The 31st July, 1855.

SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday's date, which I have forwarded to the Board of Revenue, and I shall be very willing to adopt any modification which the representations of the Chamber of Commerce may induce the Board to authorize in the instructions which I have received for my guidance in future in the payment of money to persons applying on behalf of Mercantile Firms.

2nd. Should the Board still consider that a change in the existing system of payments is necessary, it appears to me, I confess, that the precautions suggested by Mr. Cowie are less likely to interfere with the object (which I concur with the Chamber in thinking should always be kept in view) of facilitating the operations of Commerce, than either of the plans proposed in

your letter. The former involve only the inconvenience to a Partner of the Firm of calling once at the Custom House, whereas payments by warrants on the General Treasury or on the Cashier of this office, made payable only to the Banker of the party in whose favor they are drawn, would necessitate, on every occasion of money being paid, two or three references to different offices, and entail much additional trouble to the parties themselves, as well as to the Establishments concerned.

3rd. I entirely agree in the opinion of the Chamber that a speedy adjustment of demands for payment would diminish the chances of attempts to tamper with documents. Indeed the occurrence which has given rise to this correspondence and the proposed alteration in the system, is a case in point, in which there can be little doubt that the greater part of the frauds which have been successfully practised would not have been attempted, but for the delay on the part of the Firm in seeking the adjustment of its claims. The transactions in connection with which payment has only now been demanded by them, all, with two exceptions, belong to years prior to the current year, and in some instances go as far back as 1850—it is evident that had due and timely inquiry been made by the Firm in regard to the earlier claims, the alleged forgery of their signature would have been at once detected, and repetitions of the fraud would not have occurred.

4th. I am glad of the opportunity which your allusion to "the delay which sometimes takes place between the application and adjustment" affords me of removing a misapprehension which appears to exist in regard to the cause of this delay. It seems to be supposed that there are some tedious or complicated forms to be gone through in this office which occupy a considerable time, and this may, perhaps in some measure, account for the long interval which I may say generally elapses between claims being submitted, and the amount claimed being subsequently required for; very frequently, however, this delay must be attributable to the neglect of the persons employed to attend to the business of their employers. That it is owing to one or other of these causes, and not to any dilatoriness in this office will, I think, be obvious to the Chamber, when I mention that at this moment there are lying in this office ready for delivery, when called for, thirty-four Drawback Certificates, being all that are due up to this date, and no less than 221 Refunds, the claims to which have been admitted, are ready to be paid whenever they are asked for by those to whom they are due. In no ordinary case should the forms to be gone through when money is to be paid at the Custom House, (including a reference to the Board when necessary,) occupy more than three or four days, and I will undertake

that in every undisputed case the amount due shall be paid, if recalled for a week after the application is admitted. I should feel particularly obliged if the Chamber would make this generally known, and induce Merchants to instruct those whom they may empower to receive money for them to demand payment within the period I have mentioned. In regard to Refunds, I must confess, it appears to me that in a certain class of cases, in which no question can exist as to the right of applicants to the Refunds claimed, the form of applying to the Board for sanction for repayment might well be dispensed with; and this is a question which I propose to bring under the consideration of the Board. If the Board should approve of this proposal, Refunds might generally be paid immediately they are applied for.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) A. R. YOUNG,
Offg. Collector of Customs.

CUSTOM HOUSE, CALCUTTA,
The 31st July, 1855.

FROM THE OFFICIATING JUNIOR SECRETARY TO THE
BOARD OF REVENUE,
No. 212,
CALCUTTA,

To H. W. I. WOOD, ESQUIRE,
Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce.

The 9th August, 1855.

Sir,—In continuation of my letter, No. 190, dated the 31st ultimo, I have the honor to forward a copy of one of yesterday's date from the Board of Revenue to my address, from which the Chamber of Commerce will learn that their views in regard to the proposed change in the mode of making payments from the Custom House are not concurred in by the Board, and that I am directed to give effect to the arrangement suggested by the Advocate General, with this modification, that no distinction is to be observed between European and Native Assistants, but that in both cases the party to receive payments on behalf of a Firm, should be charged with special, and duly acknowledged, and

recorded authority from such Firm." This must therefore, in future be the Rule at the Custom House.

2nd. I am happy to say the Board have acquiesced in my proposal to dispense with the reference which has hitherto been made to them in all cases previous to the payment of Refunds, and in future any sums which parties establish a right to have returned to them will be paid on the day on which application is made, or as soon after as receipts are tendered for the amount due.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
(Signed) A. R. YOUNG,
Offg. Collector of Customs.

CUSTOM HOUSE, CALCUTTA,
The 9th August, 1855.

FROM THE OFFICIATING JUNIOR SECRETARY TO THE
BOARD OF REVENUE,
No. 1099,
CALCUTTA,

Fort William, the 8th August, 1855.

Sir,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 31st of July, No. 141, relating, *firstly*, to the precautions suggested by the Advocate General to secure the Custom

House from risk and liability on account of payments of Refunds to parties presenting receipts purporting to be on account of those entitled to such Refunds; and *secondly*, to a modification of the present system of Refunds; *viz.*, by the Collector having at once authority, without reference to the Board, to make these payments in cases where parties have an unquestionable right to them.

2nd. On the first point, the Board direct me to observe, that they cannot concur with the Chamber that the Custom House is to be exposed to risk or liability because Banks and Mercantile Communities may be so. The Board consider the proper principle for the Custom House to keep in view is, without any reference to the issues incurred by other public or private Establishments,

to facilitate Commercial transactions as far as can be done with proper security to the Government Revenue. It is for the officers responsible for that revenue to judge of the nature and extent of the precautions requisite.

3rd. The Advocate General states that, "the only remedy" is by a notice that no payment will be made except on the personal attendance of a Member or European Assistant of the Firm, or of a Native duly identified before the Collector by the Firm, and specially authorized by the latter to receive payments, for which he may produce receipts "purporting to be those of the Firm." The Board were of opinion* that no distinction could be drawn between the European and Native Assistants so appointed by a Mercantile Firm; and that in both cases the party to receive payments on behalf of a Firm should be charged with special and duly acknowledged and recorded authority from such Firm. The Board do not see the force of the objection urged in the 5th para. of the letter of the Chamber of Commerce. The risk to the Merchant would evidently be reduced to the lowest possible limit, if payments were only made on the production of receipts by an Assistant (Native or European) previously *duly identified and specially authorized* to receive payments.

4th. The Chamber proposes that such payments be made by orders on the General Treasury, the known Banks, or on your own Cashier, the latter "payable only to the Banker of the party in whose favor they are drawn;" you are of opinion that the plan suggested by the Advocate General gives more promise of carrying out the principle urged by the Chamber, *etc.*, "of facilitating the operations of Commerce," than that of the Chamber. The Board concur with you in this opinion. They consider the identification and authorization of a party to receive payments, and to give receipts on behalf of a Firm, as the most simple and safest course which can be adopted, with reference as well to the interests of Government as to those of the Commercial Community. The plan suggested by the Chamber are more complicated; and do not, so far as the Board can perceive, involve a greater degree of security. They accordingly request that you will give effect to these views in the manner indicated in the concluding para. of my letter of the 28th July.

5th. On the *second* point, the Board observe that the delay complained of by the Chamber is shown, in many cases, not to be attributable to delay in payment from your office, but to delay in demanding it on the part of those who had to receive. In order, however, to obviate the chance of any delay in

* 28th July, 1855.

receiving payments by those who do demand such Refunds, the Board authorize you, without reference to them, to pay at once all Refunds where there is an unquestionable right to receive them; cases of doubtful right only being referred by you to the Board. Errors of calculation, name, &c., can be checked in your own office by means of your separate Import and Export Establishments, and by your registers of payments.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) H. V. BAYLEY,
Offg. Junior Secretary.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) A. R. YOUNG,
Offg. Collector of Customs.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 28th August, 1855.

A. R. YOUNG, ESQUIRE,
Officiating Collector of Customs,
Calcutta.

Sir,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 31st July, on the subject of your proposed mode of paying Drawbacks and Refunds, a reply to which has been delayed pending the result of your reference to the Board of Revenue.

That result I have further the honor to acknowledge in the receipt of your letter of the 9th instant with copy of one from the Officiating Junior Secretary of the Board, No. 1099 of the 8th instant, in which you are instructed to carry out the mode of payment recommended by the Acting Advocate General.

These letters have been circulated to the Members of the Chamber of Commerce, and I am now instructed, in the belief that the decision of the Board of Revenue, as communicated, is not necessarily to be considered final, to solicit your attention to the following remarks.

You state that the proposed system will involve to the Mercantile Community only the inconvenience of a Partner in each Firm calling once at the Custom House, but I have to point out that this trifling inconvenience formed no part whatever of the grounds on which the Merchants complained of the alteration.

The complaint, shortly stated, is that the mode recommended by the Acting Advocate General throws upon the Merchant the responsibility of the genuineness of his signature to receipts for money, which in every department of business, public or private, large or small, has always been borne by the party who pays, and not by him who receives. Such a departure from universally recognized law and custom should have strong grounds to justify it, and these, the recently isolated cases of forgery scarcely furnish; while it appears to the Chamber that the trouble and risk to the Custom House Authorities in the frequent identification of an individual will hardly fall short of what ought to have been given to the verification of a signature. Had the fraud complained of been the receipt by the Custom House of a forged Bank Note, and had the Advocate General been requested to advise a remedy against such frauds for the future, he would with equal certainty have stated that the only remedy was to receive nothing but silver, but those who pay Customs' Duties could scarcely be expected to acquiesce in such a departure from ordinary practice, although it would not be a greater one than the present.

The Chamber is much obliged by the remarks in your letter No. 190, regarding the accumulation of audited claims for Drawbacks and Refunds in your office, and has no doubt that the publicity given to the subject will have called the attention of parties interested, and tend to prevent for the future such unreasonable carelessness and delay on the part of claimants; and I am further directed to return you the thanks of the Chamber for the application successfully made by you for permission to adjust at once all established Refunds without the necessity of a previous reference to the Board of Revenue.

With regard to the Board's letter No. 1099 to your address, I have the honor, on behalf of the Mercantile Community, to protest against the principle therein laid down, that the Custom House is not to be exposed to that risk and liability which attach to all other parties who pay money on written receipts.

Such liability is by no means confined to Banks and Mercantile Communities, but is the rule in all monetary transactions, public or private, and it appears to the Chamber that, if the right of the Custom House Authorities to set themselves above universal practice be tacitly submitted to, it is difficult to say where innovations may end.

The opinion of a Government Law officer has named the only remedy to relieve the Custom House from the possibility of being defrauded by forged receipts, but the Chamber of Commerce respectfully protests against the right

of the Custom House to such protection, in any mode other than by exercise of proper scrutiny and inquiry as to the authenticity of each signature.

Either of the modes suggested in my letter of the 30th ultimo would afford much additional security to the Custom House against forgery, and both would be far more acceptable to the Mercantile Community than payments in money to a "specially authorized sircar." Whether a Merchant's receipt for Drawback were accepted payable at the Treasury, or payable at the Custom House if "crossed" with the name of a Bank, I beg you will assure the Board that no inconvenience whatever would accrue to the receiver, as Calcutta Merchants are not behind their contemporaries in London in their desire to economize both labor and coin, through the medium of, cheques and transfers through Bankers.

I again solicit, on behalf of the Mercantile body, that you will apply to the Board of Revenue for their re-consideration of the question, and have the honor to be,

Sir, your most obedient Servant,

(Signed)

H. W. I. WOOD,

Secretary.

No. 252.

FROM THE OFFICIATING COLLECTOR OF CUSTOMS,
CALCUTTA,

To H. W. I. WOOD, Esquire,

Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta.

The 12th September, 1855.

Sir—Your letter of the 28th ultimo was duly submitted to the Board of Revenue in accordance with the wish of the Chamber of Commerce expressed therein, and I have now the honor to forward to you a copy of the Board's reply of this day's date, No. 1211.

I have the honor to be, &c.

(Signed)

A. R. YOUNG,

Offg. Collector of Customs.

CUSTOM HOUSE, CALCUTTA,
The 12th September, 1855.

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No. 1211.

FROM THE OFFICIATING JUNIOR SECRETARY TO THE
BOARD OF REVENUE,

TO THE OFFICIATING COLLECTOR OF CUSTOMS,
CALCUTTA.

Fort William, the 12th September, 1855.

Sir,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 5th instant, No. 168, forwarding a letter from the Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce, dated the 28th ultimo, relative to the system of identification of a recognized Agent on the part of Firms, to whom payments are to be made at the Custom House, on account of Refunds,

Drawbacks, &c.

2nd. In reply I am desired to observe that the Board are always anxious to consult the convenience of the Mercantile Community, so far as they can do so compatibly with due security to the Government interests committed to the charge of the Board; and, in this spirit, they have given due consideration to the further letter of the Chamber under acknowledgment.

3rd. The Board however do not think that the arguments adduced in the Secretary's letter are such as to render advisable any immediate alteration in the system of payments recently established under their authority. The Board do not go more into detail in the matter, because the Chamber's request for a reconsideration of the question is really grounded on the view of it as it had before taken, and which the Board had already considered on the occasion of their previous orders, *viz.*, that the Custom House Revenue was entitled to no more protection from risk than any private party or other institution. The Board differed as to these premises, and still do so. They must be allowed to exercise their own judgment in a matter so nearly affecting their own responsibility; and they act in this instance with the greater confidences, as they do so under the advice of the Officiating Advocate General.

4th. The system which the Board have authorized, having been *actually* introduced, should, in their opinion, have a full and fair trial. In the event of its being found, on experience, to be open to serious objection, the Board would be prepared to consider the propriety of either modifying or superseding it.

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5th.—The original enclosure of your letter is herewith returned.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) H. V. BAYLEY,
Offy. Junior Secretary.

True Copy,
(Signed) A. R. YOUNG,
Offy. Collector of Customs.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 9th October, 1855.

W. GREY, ESQUIRE,
Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

Sir,—By direction of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, I have the honor to forward copy of correspondence between the Chamber and the Collector of Customs, relating to the recent introduction of a system in regard to the payment of Drawbacks, Refunds, &c., at the Custom House: and I am instructed to request you will submit the same for the early consideration of the Hon'ble the Lieutenant Governor. The innovation involves a principle so totally at variance with that which is recognised in every other department of business, and so opposed to established and well-understood law and custom, that the Commercial Community most anxiously apply for its immediate removal.

The Chamber of Commerce respectfully submits that the introduction of such a measure is irregular, and that the grounds upon which it has been recommended cannot justify its adoption. The objections taken to such a departure from ordinary practice are stated at some length in the Chamber's letter of 28th August, and the Committee trusts that the Hon'ble the Lieutenant Governor will not only admit their force, but that he will be pleased to direct that the mode recommended by the Chamber for paying refunds and drawbacks be adopted.

In conclusion I am instructed to add, with the view of meeting an argument which may probably be brought forward, that although many firms have given the letter of indemnity required by the Collector, they have done so under compulsion, and their acquiescence is not to be understood as an abandonment of the objection raised by the Chamber.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) H. W. L. WOOD,
Secretary.

No. 539.

FROM THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL,
TO THE SECRETARY TO THE BENGAL CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE.

Dated Fort William, the 3rd November, 1855.

Miscellaneous Revenue, Customs.

Sir,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 9th ultimo, and in reply to forward herewith, for the information of the Chamber of Commerce, a copy of a letter* of this day's date, addressed to the Officiating Junior Secretary to the Board of Revenue.

2. On receipt of the Report called for from the Board of Revenue, a further communication will be made to the Chamber.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) W. GREY,
Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

No. 536.

FROM THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL,
TO THE OFFICIATING JUNIOR SECRETARY TO THE
BOARD OF REVENUE.

Dated Fort William, the 3rd November, 1855.

Miscellaneous Revenue, Customs.

Sir,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 26th ultimo, and in reply to state that the Lieutenant Governor, after a careful consideration of the correspondence which has passed between the Chamber of Commerce and the Government Authorities, in regard to the manner of making payments from the Custom House to Merchants on account of Drawbacks, is unable to acquiesce in the doctrine which is apparently maintained by the Chamber, namely, that the Custom House is bound to make

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such payments upon the written receipts of the Merchant, taking all risk of such receipts being forged.

2. The Lieutenant Governor thinks therefore that the Board were right in authorizing a change in the practice which had obtained up to the time when the forgeries by Messrs. Mackinnon, Mackenzie and Co.'s Sircar came to light, and His Honor sees nothing to object to in the system which was substituted, as it in fact imposes no risk whatever upon the Merchant except such as he may voluntarily choose to incur by authorizing an Agent to receive money which is due to him, instead of receiving it himself.

3. The Lieutenant Governor observes, however, that there was a third course suggested by the Chamber, which he is disposed to think should receive further consideration.

4. The Chamber suggested in one of their letters to the Collector of Customs, that payments from the Custom House should be made in future "by warrants on the General Treasury, or Bank of Bengal, payable to order." The Collector demurred to this proposition on the ground that such a system would "entail much additional trouble to the parties themselves, as well as to the establishments concerned."

5. The Lieutenant Governor does not, however, perceive how the system proposed by the Chamber would necessarily entail any additional trouble on the parties who were to receive the money, and although he can understand that an objection may exist to any measure which should tend to augment the current business of the General Treasury, he does not apprehend what objection there can be to the Custom House having an open account with the Bank of Bengal, as many other public establishments in Calcutta have. It seems possible, indeed, that by the adoption of such an arrangement it might be found practicable to simplify very much the cash transactions of the Custom House, and the Lieutenant Governor will be glad therefore if the Board, after communication with the Collector of Customs, will report their opinion on the subject.

6. The original enclosures received with your letter, are herewith returned.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) W. GREY,
Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.
(True Copy.)
G. G. MORRIS,
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

No. 605.

FROM THE UNDER-SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF
BENGAL,
TO THE SECRETARY TO THE BENGAL CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE.

Dated Fort William, the 4th December, 1855.

Miscellaneous Revenue, Customs.

Sir,—In continuation of my letter No. 539, dated the 3rd ultimo, I am directed to forward herewith, for the information of the Chamber of Commerce, a copy of a letter of this day's date, addressed to the Officiating Junior Secretary to the Board of Revenue, on the subject of the mode of payments of Drawbacks and Refunds to be adopted at the Custom House.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) G. G. MORRIS,
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

No. 604.

FROM THE UNDER-SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF
BENGAL,
TO THE OFFICIATING JUNIOR SECRETARY TO THE BOARD
OF REVENUE.

Dated Fort William, the 4th December, 1855.

Miscellaneous Revenue, Customs.

Sir,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1429, dated 27th ultimo, submitting the views of the Board of Revenue after further communication with the Collector of Customs, on the several modes of payment of money due to Merchants on account of Drawbacks and Refunds, &c.

2. In reply I am desired to state, that the Lieutenant Governor thinks that the Collector should be instructed to open an account with the Bank of Bengal

and to make payments by Cheques on that Bank so far as the Bank Rules will admit of his doing. In the event of any of the Merchants preferring to receive what is due to them from the Custom House in Coin or Bank Notes, their wish will of course be complied with.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) G. G. MORRIS,
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

(True Copy)

(Signed) G. G. MORRIS,
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 11th December, 1855.

G. G. MORRIS, Esquire,
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

Sir,—I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 605 of the 4th instant, with its enclosure, and to express their opinion that the mode of paying Drawbacks and Refunds by the Collector of Customs authorized by the Honorable the Lieutenant Governor is an arrangement which will be satisfactory and convenient to the Mercantile Community.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

NOTE.—These last two letters are published as concluding the above correspondence, though their dates are subsequent to the close of the half-year.

APPENDIX 12.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Madras, 19th June, 1855.

H. W. I. WOOD, ESQUIRE,
Secy. Chamber of Commerce,

CALCUTTA.

DEAR SIR,—I am desired by the Chamber of Commerce to request you will submit, for the consideration of your Committee, the desirableness of taking measures to promote the early introduction of an uniform system of Weights and Measures all over India.

2. This question was the subject of a correspondence between the Chamber and the Government of this Presidency, or rather of a Committee appointed by the latter, as far back as 1840, when it was proposed to introduce a system founded upon the Tola as an unit, and which would assimilate as near as possible the Weights in use at Madras with those of your Presidency, by making the Madras Maund exactly one-fourth of the Bengal Mun, the Viss one-fourth of the Passaure, and the Pollam half of the Chittack.

3. The Chamber, however, were of opinion, and are so still, that an uniform scale framed upon the decimal principle would be the simplest as well as the most useful that could be adopted. In this the Tola might still form the unit, and 10,000 Tolas be the weight of the highest denomination.

4. The matter has been allowed to slumber ever since 1840, and the Chamber are desirous of agitating it afresh, but would prefer its being taken up simultaneously by the Chambers of the three Presidencies, and I am therefore desired to invite your Committee to express their views on the subject.

I am, dear Sir,
Your's faithfully,
(Signed) R. CARDOZO,
Secretary.

CV

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 13th July, 1855.

R. CARDOZO, ESQUIRE,
Secy. to the Chamber of Commerce,

MADRAS.

DEAR SIR,—I am instructed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 19th ultimo, regarding the introduction throughout India of a uniform system of Weights and Measures, based on the decimal principle.

The Committee fully concurs in your view of the very great advantages which would follow the introduction of such uniformity, and will not fail to give its best attention to the subject: but the Committee conceives that, before application is made to Government for any legislative enactment, the Chamber ought to be prepared, if asked, to suggest the best standard for the alterations sought, or at all events to be in possession of more information on so intricate a subject than it has yet attained.

As a Commission composed of eminently scientific men has very recently concluded its report on the same subject in England, I am desired to suggest the expediency of the Chambers of Commerce in India possessing themselves of the result of that report, as it is highly probable that the recommendations which it contains may be found eminently useful in the consideration of the still greater changes called for in the Weights and Measures of this country; and any representations which the Chambers may make to Government on the subject will acquire double force if based upon the report in question.

The Committee will be glad if you can in the mean time furnish me with a copy of the correspondence of 1840, referred to in your letter.

I am, &c., &c.,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Madras, 7th August, 1855.

H. W. I. WOOD, ESQUIRE,
Secy. Chamber of Commerce,
CALCUTTA.

DEAR SIR,—I am directed by the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter, dated 13th ultimo, and to tender their thanks for the suggestions offered by your Committee as regards the expediency of deferring any application to Government for the revision of Weights and Measures in India, until the result of the inquiry that is being made by scientific men in England into the same subject is made known.

2. This Chamber fully coincides with your Committee in the view they take of this subject, and will wait the publication of the Home Report before they take any further steps. In the meanwhile they have much pleasure in furnishing, as desired, copies of their correspondence with the Committee appointed by this Government in 1840 to consider and report upon the subject.

3. The Bombay Chamber has been likewise requested to co-operate in the measure, and in reply the Committee have drawn attention to a correspondence which passed between them and the Government of their Presidency as recently as 1852, and which you will find embodied in their Report for the following year.

4. Since writing the above, intelligence has come to hand of a debate in the House of Commons, on the 12th June, on the subject of a decimal coinage, the result of which was a resolution that the initiation of a decimal coinage by the issue of the florin was declared eminently successful and satisfactory, and that its further extension will be of great public advantage. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said the Government were not prepared at once to take a step for the alteration of the coinage, but assured the House that the subject should receive their most careful consideration. In the course of the debate, the question of a decimal system of Weights and Measures was referred to; one speaker observed "that a decimal system of Weights and Measures ought to be adopted simultaneously with a decimal system of coinage," (*vide Times* of 13th June), and Mr. Hankey, in allusion to an opinion expressed that this question ought to be referred as before proposed to a congress of nations, said that he considered it was perfectly competent for them (the House of Commons) to act upon the information they possessed,

and adopt a decimal system without regard to any congress of nations. It would be only consistent with the general progress and intelligence of which Englishmen were in the habit of boasting to take some means to put an end to the present system, which appeared to him to be a disgrace and a discredit to this great Commercial country. The Honorable Member for South Lancashire was reproached for not proposing a decimal system of Weights and Measures as well as of Money, but he presumed the Honorable Member thought it was better to proceed by steps, and that he intended, if he convinced the House of the expediency of a decimal coinage, to follow it up with a similar system of Weights and Measures."

I am, dear Sir,
Your's faithfully,

(Signed) R. CARDOZO,
Secretary.

P. S.—Since the foregoing was drafted, a fresh communication has been received from the Bombay Chamber on the same subject, a copy of which is enclosed for the information of your Committee. This Chamber does not concur with that of Bombay in its opinion that any agitation of the subject at the present moment would be unavailing; present good may not result, but it does not therefore follow that we ought not now to agitate, as reforms are only carried by steady agitation. Should your Committee also think so, perhaps, to save time, it will think it advisable to address the Bombay Chamber direct on the subject, and to send this Chamber a copy of your letter.

R. C.

"On this subject the Committee have to refer to the following correspondence:—

"TO THE SECRETARY OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

SIR,—The Committee of Weights and Measures having been directed by the Government to advise them as to the best mode of adopting the Weights and Measures of this Presidency to a system founded upon the Tola as an

"unit, which has been finally resolved upon by the Supreme Government, I have the honor to request that you will oblige them by stating your opinion to which of the subjoined modes of attaining that object you would give the preference as being likely to be attended with the greatest benefits to the community, and to afford the surest prospect of improvement in the Commercial transactions of this country, if adopted in the establishment of an uniform system.

Mauud.	Viss.	Pollam.	Tola.
1.	8.	320.	960.
	1.	40.	100.
		1.	2½.
			1.

"By this first scale the maund is equal to 25lbs. Troy. This is a considerable reduction (about 18 per Cent.) below the weight of the maund at present recognized and in use at the Presidency, which latter is equal to 25lbs. Avoirdupois, but as some alteration must be made, since the Tola unit cannot be made to coincide with Avoirdupois weight by any system, it is thought that the inconvenience of a greater or less departure from the present standard will not be so much felt as might at first be supposed, more especially as great irregularity already prevails, particularly in the interior. The advantage in recommendation of the scale above given is, that its correspondence with that of the Bengal Presidency is so easy and simple as greedily to facilitate the mutual conversion of the weights of either Presidency, and also to afford the means of hereafter entirely assimilating the two by the gradual extension of the Madras to the dimensions of the Bengal scale. Thus the new Madras maund would be exactly one-fourth of the Bengal maund, the viss, one-fourth the pussaree, the pollam half of the chitack.

"The other scale which is proposed for your consideration has this strong

"recommendation that it makes the smallest possible alteration in the absolute weights of the scale now in force; it is as follows:—

Mauud.	Viss.	Pollam.	Tola.
1.	8.	320.	960.
	1.	40.	120.
		1.	3.
			1.

"Here the maund comes out equal to 30lbs. Troy, or 24.686lbs. Avoirdupois, or within one-eightieth of the present.

"The correspondence with the Bengal weights is also easy by this table, though not capable of being reduced to harmonize with it hereafter with so much ease. Thus the new Madras maund would equal 12 seers of the Bengal weight, the viss would equal 1½ seer, the pollam 3-5ths of the chitack.

"But whatever scale be adopted for Madras, the correspondence of Weights of various denominations throughout all India, can always be made by reducing each to tolas—so, it is chiefly with a view to the gradual further assimilation of Madras with Bengal by the adoption of the same scale of denominations in both Presidencies, that it is proposed to consider whether it be worth while to encounter the inconvenience of so large a departure as would be caused by the scale first proposed.

"Hoping that you will be so good as to favor the Committee at an early opportunity with your opinion upon the subject above referred to,

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) J. T. SMITH,
Captain, Engineers.
For the Committee of Weights and Measures.

MADRAS,
14th December, 1840. }

"To CAPTAIN J. T. SMITH, *Engineers.*

Sir,—I am desired by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 14th ultimo, requesting their opinion upon two scales of Weights and Measures, one of which it is proposed to adopt, with the view of introducing a system founded upon the Tola as an unit.

"The Committee are of opinion that no system will be perfect that does not reduce the Weights and Measures at all the three Presidencies to the same standard, and that any change whatever in the present scale will be attended with as much local inconvenience as one that should at once establish a uniform system throughout the country. They would therefore very much prefer the immediate adoption of the scale now in use in Bengal, and the application of the same to the Presidency of Bombay, to any change which should have the effect of disturbing the system which long usage has rendered familiar at Madras, without at the same time attaining the object of an assimilation to that of Bengal.

"But if it has been finally resolved upon that the Tola shall be adopted as an unit, and it be impracticable immediately to apply the Bengal scale to this Presidency, the Committee would prefer the adoption of the second scale contained in your letter, as that which entails the smallest deviation from established practice. They do not overlook the advantage you attach to the first proposed scale, that it affords the means of hereafter assimilating the two (those of Bengal and Madras) but they consider the greatest inconvenience must attend repeated alterations in the Weights and Measures, and that if the perfect system is not to be adopted at once, it is better to apply that which involves the least departure from the system now in use.

"I am further desired by the Committee to record their opinion that a uniform scale framed upon the decimal principle would be the simplest as well as the most useful that could be adopted. In this, the Tola might still form the unit, and 10,000 Tolas be the weight of the highest denomination. The Committee do not consider that a radical change of this nature would produce more confusion than any other change which in any measure disturbs the existing scale."

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

ARTHUR MACLEANE,

Secretary.

(Signed)
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
MADRAS,
4th January, 1841.

"To THE SECRETARY TO THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Sir,—Para. 1st. I am directed by the Committee of Weights and Measures to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant, and to state more particularly for the information of the Chamber of Commerce the exact relation between the proposed scale constituting the Pollan as equal to 2½ Tolas and the Bengal scale of Weights; since it appears that owing to a want of sufficient explanation, a misunderstanding has been come relative to the future changes which would be hereafter necessary to produce the desired assimilation between the two, which may most probably have influenced the opinion recorded by them on this subject.

"2nd. The Committee entirely coincide in the opinion expressed by the Chamber of Commerce as stated in your letter that the greatest inconvenience must attend repeated alterations in the Weights—but they hold this opinion as applicable much more to alterations in the absolute intrinsic value of the Weights themselves than to the ratio of the denominations by which these Weights may be connected in any scale for Commercial use. Thus, whilst they deem that any fresh alteration of the positive weight of the Madras Pollan would involve an inconvenience which ought by no means to be repeated, yet that the same objection would not attach to the introduction of a fresh denomination into the scale, which leaving every thing else exactly as before, should establish 2 Pollans as constituting one Chitack; which would then be identical with the weight of the like denomination in Bengal.

"3rd. Nor do the Committee think that after the new Maund shall have been fully established and the weights throughout the country been adjusted thereto, that such inconvenience would result from the extension of the scale by a regulation, which leaving every thing else untouched, and defining the Maund as the kutchu or smaller, should establish a larger Maund, equal to four of it, which would then be identical with the Indian Mun.

"4th. It would be by alterations such as these only that the entire assimilation of the two systems of weight would hereafter have to be carried into effect, and while the Committee entirely agree with the Chamber of Commerce as to the desirableness of a uniform system throughout the whole of India if practicable, which also they conceive to be the wish and intention of the Supreme Government, they feel that there is a much better chance for its introduction by its being engrained upon the system which long usage has familiarised and brought with the habits and prejudices of the people, than by any sudden introduction of an entirely new scheme.

"5th. But in order that the Chamber may be enabled to judge more exactly of what would remain to be done after the introduction of the first scale proposed in my letter of the 14th ultimo, I have the honor to subjoin the accompanying Table, showing the present value of the Bengal scale and the proposed value of the Madras, on the supposition of the Pollam being declared equal to 2½ Tolas, the weight of all the denominations being alike expressed in tolas.

	<i>Man.</i>	<i>Pussarce.</i>	<i>Scer.</i>	<i>Chitack.</i>	<i>Tola.</i>
Bengal	3,200	400	80	5	1
	<i>Pucka.</i>	<i>Maund.</i>	<i>Viss.</i>	<i>Pollam.</i>	<i>Tola.</i>
Madras	3,200	800	100	2½	1

"6th. From the above it will be seen that by the introduction hereafter of a new denomination of a Chitack equal to two Pollams, of a Pussarce equal to four Viss, and a pucka Maund equal to four of the common maunds, the correspondence of the Bengal and Madras scales would be exact, with the exception that the former would contain a Scer of 80 instead of the Madras Viss of 100 Tolas, and the Committee are of opinion that this last step in the assimilation of the two systems would be better effected by raising the value of the Bengal Scer, which suggestion they would make it their duty to offer to Government.

"7th. But their object in again troubling the Chamber of Commerce is to request them, after a consideration of the explanations contained in this letter, to advise them as to whether the ultimate benefits held out by the adoption of a scale founded upon a Pollam of 2½ Tolas are sufficient to compensate for the inconvenience of so great a deviation as 18 per Cent. in the intrinsic value of the Maund, or whether, to avoid such a disturbance, it would be preferable to abandon the prospect of assimilation with the Bengal scale altogether and adopt that in which the Pollam is equal to three Tolas.

"8th. The Committee will not fail to notice the recorded sentiments of the Chamber as to the value of a decimal system, but they are are prevented from acting thereupon in any way on this occasion, as their instructions limit them to an adaptation of the Tola to the existing Madras system of weights."

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) J. T. SMITH, *Captain,*
Corps of Engineers.

MADRAS,
16th January, 1841. }

TO CAPTAIN J. T. SMITH, *Engineers.*

"SIR.—I am desired by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 15th ultimo, in reply to the Committee's observations on the subject of the proposed new scale of Weights and Measures.

"On the fullest consideration the Committee adhere to their former opinion that if the object of an uniform scale throughout the country cannot be attained at one step, it would be better to abandon that object, and to adopt the scale which involves the smallest deviation from that now in use."

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) ARTHUR MACLEANE,
Secretary.
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
MADRAS,
5th February, 1841. }

TO R. CARDOZO, ESQUIRE,
Secy. to the Chamber of Commerce,
MADRAS.

DEAR SIR,—Referring to the last para. of my letter of the 6th instant, I have now to send you copy of the reply received from the local Government in answer to the application from this Chamber for further information on the subject of the proposed Act for establishing an uniform standard of Weights and Measures.

It will be seen that in consequence of instructions received from the Court of Directors, Government has for the present abandoned the idea of applying to the Legislature for its interference on the subject. Under such circumstances, the Committee of this Chamber apprehend that any agitation of the subject at the present moment would be unavailing.

I am, dear Sir,

Your's faithfully,

(Signed) JOHN MAWSON,
Acting Secretary.
DOMEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE. }
25th July, 1855. }

(Copy of letter from the Government to the Chamber.)

No. 2243 of 1855.

TO THE ACTING SECRETARY TO THE CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE.

General Department.

SIR,—In reply to your letter No. 68, dated 4th July, 1855, I am directed to acquaint you, for the information of the Chamber, that under instructions which were received from the Honorable the Court of Directors subsequent to the date of the Government letter quoted by you, the Right Honorable the Governor in Council has, for the present, been obliged to abandon the idea of applying to the Legislature to pass a Law for the compulsory introduction of a uniform standard of Weights and Measures throughout this Presidency.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

(Signed) W. HART,
Secretary to Government.

BOMBAY CASTLE, }
19th July, 1855. }

(True Copy.)

(Signed) JOHN MAWSON,
Acting Secretary.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 14th September, 1855.

R. CARDOZO, ESQUIRE,
Secy. Chamber of Commerce,

MADRAS.

DEAR SIR,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th ultimo, accompanied by copies of correspondence with the Committee appointed by the Madras Government in 1840, to report on the subject of a uniform system of Weights and Measures in India, together with copy of a letter from the Bombay Chamber.

In reply I am instructed to say that the Committee of this Chamber is fully alive to the importance of an early movement in the matter, and will not fail to embrace the first favourable opportunity for taking up the question. It nevertheless maintains the opinion already expressed that it will be better prepared to enter into a consideration of the question submitted by you after it has been furnished with the valuable record of the opinions and views of the eminent men who have represented the matter to H. M. Government.

I am, dear Sir,
Your's faithfully,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

APPENDIX 13.

USURY LAWS.

Act No. XXVIII of 1855.

An Act for the repeal of the Usury Laws.

WHEREAS it is expedient to repeal the laws now in force relating to Usury: It is enacted as follows:—

I. Section XXX of the Act of Parliament, passed in the thirteenth year of the reign of his late Majesty King George the Third, intituled "An Act for establishing certain Regulations for the better management of the affairs of the East India Company as well in India as in Europe," shall not apply in any part of the territories in the possession and under the Government of the said Company to any bond, contract, or assurance whatsoever, which shall be made or entered into within the said territories after the passing of this Act; and the several parts of Regulations mentioned in the Schedule hereto annexed, and all laws in force in any part of the said territories relating to Usury, are hereby repealed.

II. In any suit in which interest is recoverable, the amount shall be adjudged or decreed by the Court at the rate (if any) shall be decreed by the Court in any suit, agreed upon by the parties; and if no rate shall have been agreed upon, at such rate as the Court shall deem reasonable.

III. Whenever a Court shall direct, that a judgment or decree shall bear interest, or shall award interest upon a judgment or decree, it may order the interest to be calculated at the rate allowed in the judgment or decree upon the principal sum adjudged, or at such other rate as the Court shall think fit.

IV. A mortgage or other contract for the loan of money, by which it is agreed that the use or usufruct of any property shall be allowed in lieu of interest, shall be binding upon the parties.

Contract for the usufruct of property, in lieu of interest to be binding.

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V. Whenever, under the Regulations of the Bengal Code, a deposit may be made of the principal sum and interest due upon any mortgage or conditional sale of land hereafter to be entered into, the amount of interest to be deposited in certain cases of conditional sales under the Bengal Regulations, shall be at the rate stipulated in the contract, or, if no rate has been stipulated and interest be payable under the terms of the contract, at the rate of twelve per centum per annum. Provided that, in the latter case, the amount deposited shall be subject to the decision of the Court as to the rate at which interest shall be calculated.

VI. In any case in which an adjustment of accounts may become necessary between the lender and the borrower of money upon any mortgage, conditional sale of landed property, or other contract whatsoever, which may be entered into after the passing of this Act, interest shall be calculated at the rate stipulated therein; or, if no rate of interest shall have been stipulated and interest be payable under the terms of the contract, at such rate as the Court shall deem reasonable.

VII. Nothing hereinbefore contained shall prejudice or affect the rights or remedies of any person, or diminish or alter the liabilities of any person, in respect of any act done, or contract entered into, previously to the passing of this Act.

VIII. This Act shall commence and take effect from the 1st day of January, 1856.

Act.

SCHEDULE.

Sections IV, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, and XI, Regulation XV. 1793 of the Bengal Code.

Sections III, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, and X, Regulation XXXIV. 1803 of the same Code.

Clause 1, Section XXIII, Regulation VIII. 1805 of the same Code, so far as it extends the above-mentioned Sections of Regulation XXXIV. 1803 to the Zillahs therein referred to.

Clauses 3, 4, 5, and 6, Section IX, Regulation XIV. 1805 of the same Code; and so much of Section XI of the same Regulation as may be deemed

ed to have extended to the Zillah of Cuttack any of the Clauses or Sections above-mentioned or any law relating to Usury.

Section II, Regulation XVII. 1806 of the same Code, so far as it extends to the Province of Benares, subject to modifications, the above-mentioned Sections of Regulation XV. 1793; and Sections IV and VI of the same Regulation.

Sections II, IV, V, and VI, Regulation XXXIV. 1802 of the Madras Code, and Section VIII of the same Regulation, so far as it may be deemed to limit the rate of interest to be allowed on mortgaged bonds.

Section XXII, Regulation IV. 1816 of the same Code.

Section XIV, Regulation V. 1816 of the same Code.

Section XV, Regulation VI. 1816 of the same Code.

Section XIII, Regulation VII. 1816 of the same Code.

So much of Section VII, Regulation II. 1825 of the same Code as limits the rate of interest to be allowed by the Courts on bonds or other instruments which shall be entered into after the passing of this Act.

Sections X, XI, and XII, Regulation V. 1827 of the Bombay Code.

APPENDIX 14.

FREIGHTING VESSELS WITH SALT AT
KURRACHEE.

No. 514.

FROM THE UNDER-SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF
BENGAL,
TO THE SECRETARY TO THE BENGAL CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE.

Dated Fort William, the 23rd October, 1855.

Mis. Rev. Salt.

Sir,—I am directed by the Lieutenant Governor to forward herewith, for the information of the Chamber of Commerce, and with a view to general publicity, a copy of a letter No. 4296, dated the 12th instant, from the Officiating Chief Secretary to the Government of Bombay, and of its enclosure, on the subject of freighting vessels with Salt at Kurrachee.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) G. G. MORRIS,
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

No. 4296 of 1855.

FROM H. YOUNG, Esquire,
Officiating Chief Secretary to the Government of Bombay,

TO W. GREY, Esquire,
Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

Dated 12th October, 1855.

Res. Dept.

Sir,—I am directed by the Right Hon'ble the Governor in Council to forward to you, for submission to the Government of Bengal, Extract paras. 7 to 12 from the Digest of Intelligence of the Deputy Collector of Customs, Kurrachee, from 16th to 19th August, 1855, and to request that measures may be taken to make the matter therein referred to known to the Mercantile Community in the Bengal Presidency.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) H. YOUNG,
Offy. Chief Secretary to Government.

BOMBAY CASTLE,
12th October, 1855. }

Extract from Paras. 7 to 12 from the Digest of Intelligence of the Deputy Collector of Customs, from 16th to 29th August 1855.

7. The Kurrachee Salt Company commenced its operations in December last year. In a short time it had imported* upwards of

* From the Salt beds in the Eastern Delta towards Luckput. 1,00,000 maunds of Salt, nearly one-half of which has been already exported to Calcutta, and, though previously unknown there, it has commanded prices beyond the

prices obtained for Bombay Salt, which, next to Liverpool and Foreign European Salt, had heretofore stood in highest favor in the Calcutta market.

8. There is one cause which retards the development of this Trade, that is, the apparent ignorance in the mercantile circles in England that we have such an article as Salt in the Province, though some pains had been taken last year to give the fact publicity through the medium of the prospectus of the Salt Company.

9. Not one of the Commanders of the vessels which have arrived this season from England had the most remote idea, and they assured me that their Owners were equally ignorant, that Salt was obtainable at Kurrachee, otherwise it would doubtless, they said, have influenced the arrangements of their owners in England.

10. That this ignorance operates disadvantageously to Ship Owners and to Government, who freight these vessels from England, will be apparent on a perusal of the following facts. Two vessels which had arrived with Government Porter from England lately left Kurrachee in ballast for Bombay, where, finding freights unremunerative, they shipped Salt for Calcutta. Now, had the resources of this Province been known in England at the time of the departure of these vessels for Kurrachee, the instructions to the Commanders would, in all probability, have been to the effect that in the event of their finding the rates of freight unfavorable in Bombay, to load with Salt at Kurrachee for Calcutta, should freights be better there, which they generally are. Had the Commanders of these two vessels been so instructed, for it is not always that they are invested with discretionary power in such matters, they could have laden Salt here at a higher rate of freight than could be borne by Bombay Salt, from its inferiority to the pure natural Salt of this Province; which as it becomes better known, will, I feel convinced, command the market in a much higher degree than it does at present. These vessels could have been laden at Kurrachee in probably half the time required to load them in Bombay, where the Salt has to be brought, when required, from a distance of some miles, whereas, in Kurrachee, it is kept stored close to the anchorage ground. Further, they would have saved the Port charges in Bombay, amounting, during the monsoon season, on ordinary sized vessels, to about £70, besides a Commission of 5 per Cent. on the value of the shipment, and the expense of shipping and unshipping ballast, further adding from £30 to £40 to the expenses of the vessel, all which charges, amounting to about £125, exclusive of loss of time, would have been saved to each vessel by loading Salt at Kurrachee instead of at Bombay.

11. Ship Owners in England, unaware that export cargo is procurable at Kurrachee, base their calculations accordingly, and these, as a matter of course, tend to enhance the rate of freight which they demand; whereas, with a knowledge that freight was always obtainable at Kurrachee, in the event of circumstances rendering it expedient to ship Salt to Calcutta, relaxation in the rate of freight in England would be the natural consequence.

12. As it is equally then the interest of Government as of Ship Owners, that this apparent ignorance should no longer prevail, I would suggest for the consideration of the Commissioner in Scind, the advantage of having this subject brought prominently to the notice of the Hon'ble the Court of Directors, with a view as well to the interests of Government as the mercantile world.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) M. J. M. STEWART,
Assistant Commissioner.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) H. YOUNG,
Offg. Chief Secy. to Govt.

(True Copies.)

(Signed) G. G. MORRIS,
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 5th November, 1855.

To W. GREY, ESQUIRE,
Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

SIR,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 514, of the 23rd ultimo, forwarding copies of Communications from the Government of Bombay on the subject of Salt at Kurrachee being available as freight.

With the view to give that important matter as much publicity as possible, copies of the papers received from you have been printed and circulated among the Mercantile Community.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION WITH CEYLON.

No. 1009.

FROM C. BEADON, ESQUIRE,
Secy. to the Govt. of India,

TO THE BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Dated the 10th August, 1855.

*Home Department,
Electric Telegraph.*

GENTLEMEN,—I am directed to acquaint you that the Government of Ceylon has invited an expression of the views of the Government of India in regard to the expediency of carrying the Indian Telegraph Wires to Galle, and as to the extent to which it would be disposed to co-operate with the Colonial Government in the construction of a line from Mannar to Galle. Before, however, offering any opinion on this proposition, the Hon'ble the President in Council is desirous of ascertaining the views of the Chamber, as to whether the Telegraphic connection of the Island of Ceylon with the continent of India is of sufficient commercial importance to justify the expenditure which the measure contemplated by the Colonial Government would necessarily involve.

I have the honor to be,
Gentlemen,
Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) CECIL BEADON,
Secy. to the Govt. of India.

COUNCIL CHAMBER, }
The 10th August, 1855.

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BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 20th August, 1855.

To C. BEADON, Esquire,
Secy. to the Govt. of India, Home Department,

FORT WILLIAM.

Sir,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 1009, of the 10th instant, acquainting the Chamber of Commerce that the Government of Ceylon has invited an expression of the views of the Government of India in regard to the expediency of carrying the Indian Telegraph Wires to Galle, and as to the extent to which it would be disposed to co-operate with the Colonial Government in the construction of a line from Mannar to Galle; and requesting the opinion of the Chamber as to whether the Telegraph connection of the Island of Ceylon with the continent of India is of sufficient commercial importance to justify the necessary expenditure.

I am desired by the Committee of the Chamber to state in reply, that it does not appear that such communication would abridge the time occupied in the transmission of news from Europe to India, as from the geographical position of Bombay that port will still remain the first recipient of intelligence *via* Suez and Aden, and consequently the first distributor of such news to all other parts of this country.

The advantages of Telegraphic communication with Ceylon would consequently seem to be confined to benefiting the trade between that Colony and India, and between the latter and the Australian Colonies,—whenever steamers shall again run between Sydney and Galle—and to abridging the communication between India and China.

These advantages are of no small importance, and they will probably in the course of years become much more so; but as the Committee has received no proximate estimate whatever of the cost of establishing the Telegraph to Ceylon, it can at present only state its general impression that the present and prospective importance of such a work would not justify a very large expenditure, which other public works may perhaps with greater fairness demand.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

TOWN OF DALHOUSIE,—BASSEIN.

No. 3377.

FROM THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,
TO THE SECRETARY TO THE BENGAL CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE.

Dated Fort William, the 18th September, 1855.

Foreign Department.

Sir,—I am directed by the Honorable the President in Council to forward to the Chamber the accompanying copy of a letter from the Secretary to the Government of India with the Governor General, and with reference to its

7th paragraph to invite the Chamber to depute some gentleman to act with the officers of Government in finally determining the site of the new town at the mouth of the Bassein River. His Honor desires me to intimate that the Government will defray all the expenses of the gentleman who may be selected by the Chamber, while absent for this purpose. The Commissioner has been requested to report when the Committee will be ready to commence their investigation, and his reply will be communicated to the Chamber.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) CECIL BEADON,
Secy. to the Govt. of India.

FORT WILLIAM,
The 18th September, 1855.

FROM G. F. EDMONSTONE, Esquire,
*Secretary to the Government of India, with the
Governor General,*

TO CECIL BEADON, Esquire,
Offg. Secy. to the Govt. of India, Foreign Department,
FORT WILLIAM.

Dated Ootacamund, 10th August, 1855.

Foreign Department.

SIR,—During the past years two separate examinations were made of the site on which it was proposed to place a new Town at the mouth of the Bassein River. A site on the main land was chosen; and reasons, which seemed to be good, were adduced in favor of the position which had been selected.

2nd. When at Ceylon, on His Lordship's way to these Hills, he saw a gentleman of the name of Armitage, a Member of the Legislative Council, and the most considerable Merchant in the Island, who was then on his way to Bassein, in order to choose a lot in the new Town on which he wished to place an establishment and an agency of his own. Upon his return, he communicated the observations upon the proposed site of the Town, which are contained in the annexed extract from a letter from him to His Lordship, dated the 1st May last.

3rd. The objections which he entertains to the site designed for the Town are founded mainly on commercial considerations. With the information at present before the Government, His Lordship does not feel qualified to estimate with confidence the weight of the objections Mr. Armitage has stated; or to judge correctly whether the objections which are known to be felt by the Political and Medical Officers to the site on Negrais Island, which he presses can be obviated, or whether, if those objections cannot be removed, they are outweighed by the commercial advantages which the site on Negrais Island commands.

4th. The question is one of the utmost moment to the success of the settlement which the Government has proposed. His Lordship therefore thinks that it ought to be further investigated.

5th. The previous examinations have been made in concert by the Political, Military and Engineer Officers of the Government. It is possible that they may have laid less stress on the commercial considerations which are involved than ought to have been paid to them.

6th. Accordingly His Lordship would propose that, when the Mission returns from Umeerapoor, and when the monsoon is over, a fresh examination of the site should be made by the Officers of Government as before, but that one or more commercial gentlemen should be associated with them in the inquiry.

7th. The Bengal Chamber of Commerce must have a direct and strong interest in the establishment of this port on the most eligible site which can be found. The Chamber might, therefore, be disposed to depute some gentleman to act with the Officers of Government in their re-examination of the Bassein River.

8th. His Lordship has already addressed Mr. Armitage to know if his engagements would admit of his taking part in the inquiry. If his reply should be favorable, his name may be added to the Committee.

9th. In the mean time, His Lordship desires me to submit these remarks for the consideration of the Honorable the President in Council, and for such preliminary steps as His Honor in Council may deem it right to take.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

(Signed)

G. F. EDMONSTONE,
*Secretary to the Government of India,
with the Governor General.*

OOTACAMUND,
The 10th August, 1855.

*Extract from a letter from J. Armitage, Esquire, to the Most Noble
the Governor General of India, dated Colombo, 1st May, 1855.*

I think I cannot better convey my gratitude for the kind introduction you gave me to Major Pleyre than by giving you my impressions of the embryo City that is to bear your name, and later information as to what is doing there than can have reached you through the usual official channels. I was not so fortunate as to meet with Major Pleyre; he was absent on the frontier; but

Major Fyche went down the river with me on the 2nd April, in the "Dianna", and remained till the 6th, during which time we were enabled to survey the River from Fyche Point to the Sea, and also to explore the adjacent country to some extent. Subsequently after Major Fyche's departure, I remained as the guest of Mr. Edgecombe, the Engineer, till the arrival of our Schooner the "Sarah Armitage," on the 9th, on which date I embarked in her for Trincomali.

Of one thing you may rest assured, viz., that in a sanitary point of view the advantages of "Dalhousie" have not been over-rated. I was out exposed to the sun or in the forest during the entire time of my stay, wading through nullahs and exposed to exhalations of every kind, so that if there had been any fever lurking in the jungles, I think we should have found it; whereas I never felt better; and Mr. Edgecombe informs me that of 350 Coolies now cutting forest under him, there is not one laid up with sickness, and of those who have complained, the maladies have been slight, such as sore throat, &c., from which no country can be exempt.

With regard to "Dalhousie" as a great commercial emporium, I will give your Lordship my ideas candidly, as I have already done to Fyche, and to the Engineer. I do not think that there is any point on the main land favorable for the construction of either godowns or offices; for from Fyche Point down to the lower end of Negrain there is a mud bank of half a mile in breadth uncovered at low water, and it is only at Fyche Point, and at the lower point opposite the high land of Negrain Island (which the Engineer proposes calling "Fyche Point"), that piers could be conveniently erected, and of these the upper one would be exposed to the full force of the South-West Monsoon, or nearly so. But let the plan be changed so far. Let the City of "Dalhousie" occupy its intended site, but let the Port of "Dalhousie" be on the Island of Negrain, and every difficulty will disappear, and you will have one of the finest Ports in the world, with deep water close to the shore, and perfectly sheltered. In Mr. Courtenay's sketch sent to Mr. Macarthy, the Island of Negrain is mentioned as being *too low for human habitation*, and at the present moment it is certainly a mere mangrove swamp. But I have been over a great part of this lowland with the Engineer during the spring tides, and we could find no trace of the land being actually overflowed. It can, then, be easily drained, and let the drains be virtually canals as in the annexed sketch (giving the canals exactly the same distance from each other as the main streets in the neighbouring city of "Dalhousie,") the expense will hardly exceed that of making streets, and the material dug out will raise the interven-

ing squares sufficiently high for building purposes. Twice every 24 hours the tide would wash away the litter from the place, the sea-breeze would sweep through it continually, the Burmans coming down the river to trade could enter into the heart of the Town, sell their produce, and lay in their purchases without ever getting out of their boats (which Fyche says would be just to their trade,) and in case of fire there would be an inexhaustible supply of water permeating the Town in every direction. There will be no difficulty from the character of the soil, which is clay with a slight admixture of sand in it, and if a moderate inclination were given to the banks, neither piles nor masonry would be required. By adopting the above plan not only would you get rid of a swamp, the appearance of which is not captivating (though possibly it may have little effect on the salubrity of the place) but you would banish the litter, noise, confusion, and dirt—inseparable from a commercial emporium from the City, which in itself would be no trifling gain to the residents. Of course I conclude that, along with others, the Merchants would ultimately reside on the main land, either in the City or in Villas in the neighbourhood, but for the reasons already given, I think they will always find it requisite to have their places of business on the Island. At all events I have applied for a tract there just on the borders of the swamp, and will take my chance.

The sketch I transmit to your Lordship is a copy of one made by the Engineer on the eve of my departure, and embodies his views as to the laying out of the City in addition to my own. No doubt it will reach you officially in course of time.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) G. F. EDMONSTONE,
Secretary to the Government of India,
with the Governor General.

(True Copies.)

(Signed) CECIL BEADON,
Secy. to the Govt. of India.

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BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 8th October, 1855.

To C. BEADON, Esquire,
Secy. to the Govt. of India,
FOREIGN DEPARTMENT.

SIR,—I am instructed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 3377, of the 18th ultimo, forwarding copies of a letter from the Secretary to Government with the Governor General and of its enclosures, relative to the selection of a site for a new Town at the mouth of the Bassein River, and inviting the Chamber of Commerce to depute some gentleman to act with the Officers of Government in finally determining that locality.

In reply I am desired by the Committee of the Chamber to state, that, though fully alive to the great importance of the appointment placed at its disposal, it has not been able to induce any member competent to the task to undertake it.

While the Committee regrets to announce its want of success in this respect, it trusts that in the consideration of the question by the Committee nominated by the Governor General, due opportunity will be given to the European inhabitants of Rangoon and Bassein, who are engaged in commercial pursuits, to state their views upon the eligibility of the proposed site.

I have the honor, &c.,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

SPECIAL CHINA MAIL FOR KEDGEREE.

H. P. LOVELL, Esquire,
Superintendent, P. and O. S. N. Co.,
CALCUTTA.

SIR,—Under the orders of the Government of India, the Post Master at Hongkong was directed to make up, if required, a separate bag for Kedgerree independent of the ordinary Mail for Calcutta, for the special purpose of allowing the public the privilege of sending by that opportunity messages for transmission from Kedgerree to Calcutta by the Electric Telegraph, in anticipation of the Steamer's arrival off town.

That arrangement was, as you are aware, the result of the Chamber's representation to Government regarding the erroneous quotations of Opium, &c., which formed the subject of a correspondence between your *locum tenens* and the Chamber of Commerce last September.

Anxious to obtain for the use of the Chamber the latest and most accurate commercial intelligence from China, our correspondent at Hongkong was requested to avail himself of the separate Mail for Kedgerree, and to send his reports by it for transmission by Telegraph from that station.

By the earlier arrival of the *Lancefield*, the Chamber was advised of a message having been forwarded by the *Shanghai*: it was addressed to the Superintendent of the Electric Telegraph, Kedgerree, and, with some other covers, put into the separate bag for that station.

The message has reached the Chamber; but as it did not come through the proper channel, inquiry has been made, and it appears that the report was conveyed not by the Telegraph from Kedgerree, as it should have been, but by the Post Office in Calcutta, where it was received with the ordinary Mail.

The separate bag for Kedgerree was distinctly addressed to that place, and there it should have been delivered by the Commander of the *Shanghai*: and it is upon this most material point that I am desired to beg you will call for some explanation from that Officer.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
CALCUTTA,
31st August, 1855.

H. W. I. WOOD, ESQUIRE,
Secretary to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

DEAR SIR,—In reply to your favor of 31st ultimo, requesting me to obtain from Captain Munro some explanation relative to the receipt, through the Calcutta Post Office, instead of from Kedgee direct, of a packet said to have been put on board the *Shanghai* Steamer in Hongkong, I refer you to the accompanying copy of a letter from Captain Munro to myself, and remain,

Dear Sir, yours faithfully,

(Signed) H. P. LOVELL,
Superintendent.

P. AND O. S. N. CO.,
CALCUTTA,
5th September, 1855.

(Copy.)

CAPTAIN LOVELL,
Superintendent, P. and O. S. N. Co.

SIR,—In reply to your note of 31st ultimo, I have to state that in a conversation I had with Mr. Heyland, Post Master of Hongkong, he distinctly stated he could not recognise Kedgee as a port for which a separate Mail was to be addressed to.

By the same rule that were I to stop off Malacca, I would not deliver the Mail put usually on board *en route* to Singapore; but carry it onward to my port of destination, and until I have instructions from you, or a demand from the Post Master at Kedgee for the Mails, I would not forward a single packet, but deliver all the Mails on board.

During your absence in England, it was generally supposed that Telegraphic Reports had been sent by Officers or Commanders of the P. and O. China Steamers, and illiberal remarks made upon that subject, and had there been on board the *Shanghai* a packet addressed to the Superintendent of the Electric Telegraph, should I have acted right in forwarding it when the general report received in the river (for the Electric Telegraph) is usually filled up and forwarded?

On Saturday, I called upon the Post Master General and explained the circumstances of receiving the letter enclosed, and I believe no blame is attributable to me, as no demand was made for the Mails by the Post Master at Kedgee. In conclusion I have to state neither myself nor my Officers have seen any packet on board the *Shanghai* addressed as stated in the letter from the Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) D. G. MUNRO.

CALCUTTA,
3rd September, 1855.

H. P. LOVELL, ESQUIRE,
Superintendent, P. and O. S. N. Co.

CALCUTTA.

DEAR SIR,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th instant, with copy of one to your address from the Commander of the *Shanghai*, regarding the non-delivery at Kedgee of a packet addressed to the Post Master at that station.

In reply I have to remark, with reference to Captain Munro's assertion that the Post Master at Hongkong distinctly stated he could not recognise Kedgee as a port for which a separate Mail was to be addressed to, that Captain Munro must have completely misunderstood the Post Master, as that official had been directed by Her Majesty's Post Master General to comply with the request of the Government of India to make up a separate bag for Kedgee, independent of the Mails for Calcutta. That order was complied with; for as you will observe by the annexed copy of a Post Office Notice, dated Hongkong, 14th July, 1855, the authorised arrangement was publicly announced, and the delivery at Kedgee of the separate Mail was directed to be made immediately on the arrival of the vessel off that station.

It is therefore impossible to reconcile Captain Munro's statement with the official proceeding of the Post Master at Hongkong, which is completely at variance with his asserted non-recognition of Kedgee as a Post Office station.

I also annex, as in connection with the above, copy of a notice issued by the Post Master General of Bengal, not only intimating the same arrangement, but

also announcing the *special object* for which that arrangement was sanctioned, viz., to enable parties to send to the Officer in charge of the Electric Telegraph at Kedgeeree letters containing messages for transmission to their constituents in Calcutta.

Captain Munro further states that neither he nor his Officers had seen any packet on board the *Shanghai* addressed as mentioned in my last letter, but here also Captain Munro is evidently in error, as you will learn from the accompanying copy of a letter from the Deputy Post Master General that such a packet from Hongkong was delivered at Calcutta, and consequently must have been formally received on board from the Post Office at Hongkong.

Having noticed the first and last paragraphs of Captain Munro's letter, which are the only portion of it bearing on the question submitted to you, I need not trouble you with any comment upon the rest of his communication, but simply beg the favor of your making further inquiry into the subject of this reference.

I am, dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
CALCUTTA,
8th September, 1855.

POST OFFICE NOTICE.

The Government of India, having requested that a *separate bag* be made up at this office for Kedgeeree, independent of the Mails for Calcutta, the Post Master General has been pleased to authorise the arrangement; and in future, this additional bag will be made up with the general Mails, to be delivered at Kedgeeree immediately on the arrival of the packet at the mouth of the Ganges.

(Signed) THOMAS HEYLAND,
Post Master.

POST OFFICE, HONGKONG,
14th July, 1855.

Notice is hereby given that separate Mail bags for Kedgeeree, independent of the Calcutta Mails, will in future be made up at Hongkong, Singapore and Penang, to enable Merchants and others residing at those places to send to the officer in charge of the Electric Telegraph at Kedgeeree, letters containing messages for their constituents in Calcutta.

(Signed) J. R. BURLTON BENNETT,
Post Master General.

CALCUTTA,
21st April, 1855.

FROM C. K. DOVE, ESQUIRE,
Deputy Post Master General, Bengal,

TO H. W. I. WOOD, ESQUIRE,
Secretary Chamber of Commerce.

Sir,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this day's date, and, as requested, beg to forward the following replies to your questions.

1st. That orders have been issued by both Her Majesty's Post Master General and the Post Master General of Bengal to the Post Masters of Hongkong, Singapore and Penang, to make up separate bags for Kedgeeree independent of the Mails for Calcutta.

2nd. That one packet for Kedgeeree from Hongkong was delivered by the *Shanghai* at Calcutta, instead of at Kedgeeree.

3rd. That the packet did contain a letter for the Superintendent of the Electric Telegraph at Kedgeeree; and lastly, that I am of opinion the Commanders of the Peninsular and Oriental Steamers, or any Steamers, are bound to deliver at Kedgeeree the Mails or packets they may have received addressed to Kedgeeree, and not to bring them up to Calcutta, unless by some accident or other cause beyond control, which may have prevented the landing of such Mails or packets addressed to Kedgeeree.

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I beg to enclose the cover of a letter which was found inside of the packet addressed to Keelgeree, and which cover contained a letter for *Bombay*.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

(Signed) C. K. DOVE,
Deputy Post Master General of Bengal.

CALCUTTA,
GENERAL POST OFFICE,
6th September, 1855.

H. W. I. WOOD, ESQUIRE,
Secretary to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

DEAR SIR,—Having forwarded your letter of 8th instant, to Captain Munro, of the *Shanghai*, herein I have the pleasure to enclose his reply, and remain,

Dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,

(Signed) H. P. LOVELL,
Superintendent.

P. AND O. S. N. Co.,
CALCUTTA,
13th September, 1855.

TO H. W. I. WOOD, ESQUIRE,
Secy. to the Chamber of Commerce.

SIR,—Captain Lovell, having submitted to me your letter of 8th September, I have to state that the circular notice No. 2305 is of date 21st April, 1855, and I suppose was published on Monday 23rd April. I left for China early on Sunday 22nd April.

Of the second notice, under date, Hongkong, 14th July, I was not made aware of either by the Peninsular and Oriental Superintendent or Post Office authorities, and it will be observed it bears date 14th July. The *Shanghai* left Hongkong 18th July. The conversation alluded to in my former letter between Mr. Heyland and myself took place some few days after my arrival from Shanghai, between the 8th and 14th—I think about the time of the *Lancefield's* arrival from Calcutta.

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I declare I was entirely ignorant of the existence of either Post Master General's notice or of the Hongkong Post Office notice until yesterday.

Dozens of letters are thrown into my cabin quitting China, at the moment of departure, which I find after leaving, and generally forward loose to the Post Office at Singapore or Penang, amongst those perhaps the letter alluded to may have fallen.

I have the honor to be, &c.,
(Signed) D. G. MUNRO,
Commander S. S. Shanghai.

CALCUTTA,
11th September, 1855.

H. P. LOVELL, ESQUIRE,
Superintendent P. and O. S. N. Co.,
CALCUTTA.

DEAR SIR,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday's date, and to state in reply to Captain Munro's communication to which it gave cover, that the explanation given by him is considered by the Chamber of Commerce as exceedingly unsatisfactory.

Captain Munro concludes his letter by remarking that the separate packet for Keelgeree may have fallen among some loose letters and been forwarded to the Post Office at Singapore or Penang.

But the Deputy Post Master General's letter—copy of which you hold—removes all ground for any such probability; and I am authorised to state that the packet came direct from Hongkong and not through the Post Office of either of the intermediate Ports.

The Chamber of Commerce admits, but with reluctance, Captain Munro's asserted ignorance of the two Notifications pointed out to him, as a palliation of the error he has committed; but the further apology now offered is so totally at variance with his admission in my presence of the irregularity complained of, that the recourse had to it to screen his error is regarded by the Chamber as remarkably disingenuous.

I am, dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
CALCUTTA,
14th September, 1855.

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PUBLICATION OF GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTS.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Madras, 23rd June, 1855.

H. W. I. WOOD, ESQUIRE,
Secretary Chamber of Commerce,

CALCUTTA.

DEAR SIR,—By desire of the Chamber of Commerce I beg to forward, for the information of your Committee, copy of a letter addressed to Mr. Bright, M. P., by the Chairman, on the subject of the 5 per Cent. Loan, and to solicit their co-operation in endeavouring to obtain an order of Parliament obliging the Government of India to publish Quarterly Statements of their accounts, and a Yearly Budget of anticipated revenue and expenditure.

I remain, dear Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,

R. CARDOZO,
Secretary.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Madras, 23rd June 1855.

JOHN BRIGHT, ESQUIRE.
&c., &c., &c.

SIR,—I am directed by the Chamber of Commerce to address you on the subject of the evils arising from the system of secrecy pursued by the Government of India in regard to their financial arrangements, illustrated by the recent unexpected opening of a 5 per Cent. Loan; and, with the view to obviate the recurrence of such evils, the Chamber has ventured to trouble you with this communication, in consequence of the acknowledged interest you take in the affairs of India.

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On the morning of the day on which the 5 per Cent. Loan was announced, 4 per Cent. Loan notes were quoted at the price of 95 to 96 per centum. On the evening of the same day they were quoted at 80 to 82 per Centum, a fall of 15 to 16 per centum.

The announcement of the late Loan in England caused a fall in consols of only 2 and $\frac{1}{2}$ per centum. The India Loan was for £2,750,000. That of England was for £16,000,000.

The sudden fluctuations in the value of the securities of this country may be traced to one main cause, the ignorance in which the people are kept as to the accounts, finances, and estimated yearly expenditure of the Country.

You will probably be surprised to learn that no means exist by which the public can by an exercise of foresight prepare for the possible pecuniary wants of the Government.

Such being the case, the Chamber begs me to suggest for your consideration the advisability of urging in Parliament that the Government of India shall adopt for general information an organized system of public accounts.

The Chamber suggests that these accounts should be published quarterly, and that they should contain, under classed heads, the total amounts of expenditure and the total amounts of revenue for the three months immediately preceding, and that the debtor and creditor sides of these accounts should be made to balance by the last and present balances of cash.

The Chamber is further of opinion that it would be desirable that the Government of India should publish an Annual Budget of its anticipated revenue, as well as of its anticipated expenditure, ordinary and extraordinary, for each year about to ensue.

The Chamber attaches much importance to a yearly Statement of anticipated revenue and expenditure. It considers that such is essential to the safety of a commercial community.

The Chamber does not consider it necessary to occupy your time by detailing the advantages which, in its opinion, would attend a proper system of published Government accounts. It thinks that they will be at once felt and understood by practical men of business.

It is needless to state that the above suggestion is made in no spirit of hostility to the Government; on the contrary, the Chamber is of the opinion that a proper system of public accounts would tend to foster a feeling of confidence in the people towards the Government, and it is also of the opinion that such a system would prove eventually of substantial service to the Government, inasmuch as the people, always seeking for a safe investment, would, were they

allowed to exercise their foresight, prepare to meet the wants of Government, and thus enable it to do in one day that which it has failed to do in one hundred.

The Chamber does not enter upon any of the current opinions of the day regarding the financial measure which has induced this letter; it confines itself simply to a suggestion, which it hopes may, if adopted, prove an antidote to the sudden and violent disturbance of the money market, such as has hitherto attended the financial measures of the Government. This suggestion it places in your hands, and in doing so it is satisfied it could not be in better.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) R. O. CAMPBELL,
Chairman.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 17th July, 1855.

R. CARDOZO, ESQUIRE,
Secretary Chamber of Commerce,

MADRAS.

DEAR SIR,—In acknowledging your letter of the 23rd ultimo, on the subject of the financial arrangements of the Government and your letter to Mr. Bright, M. P., regarding them, I have the pleasure to annex copy of a letter addressed by this Chamber to the East India and China Association.

You will observe how completely in unison the opinions of the two Chambers are on the questions submitted by you, and I am instructed to say that in endeavouring to obtain so desirable an object as that in view the Bengal Chamber of Commerce will most heartily co-operate with that of Madras.

I am, dear Sir,
Your's faithfully,

(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 17th July, 1855.
TO THE SECRETARY EAST INDIA AND CHINA
ASSOCIATION,
LONDON.

SIR,—I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to solicit the aid of your Association towards the highly desirable object of inducing the Government of India to lay aside the secrecy which has always attended its financial arrangements, and which has so frequently been productive of heavy loss to all classes of this community.

On the recent occasion of the opening of the Public Works Loan of 2½ Crores of Rupees, there had not been the smallest suspicion on the part of the public that Government could possibly require funds. On the contrary it was reasonable to infer, from the previous conversion of the 5 per Cent. Loans, that the Indian Exchequer was unusually well filled, but the circumstance of the Loan having been advertised at a time when the value of money at all three Presidencies was at its highest legal rate of 12 per Cent. per annum, justifies the conclusion that the exigency which called for such a Loan was great in the extreme.

The depreciation in the value of existing Loans, and the loss and distress consequent thereon, are matters of such notoriety that I will not enlarge upon them. The remedy against the recurrence of such evils appears the simple one of requiring the Government of India to publish half-yearly, if not quarterly, statements of past income and expenditure and future estimates of the same.

The last named, whether issued quarterly, half-yearly, or annually, will prove of real service, not only to the numerous creditors of this Government but to all directly or indirectly connected with the commerce of India. It appears to the Chamber of Commerce that Parliament alone can efficiently enforce this change of the system of secrecy which has always characterized Indian finance, and I am desired to beg your earnest efforts to procure such an enactment.

The Madras Chamber of Commerce has addressed a Member of the House of Commons to similar purport, and the Bombay Chamber, I am led to believe, has also exerted itself to bring the matter before the House.

I have, &c., &c.
(Signed) H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

OF THE

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Adopted at a General Meeting of the Chamber, on Monday, the 9th day of May 1853.

- First*..... That the Society shall be styled "THE BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE."
- Second*... That the object of the Chamber shall be to watch over and protect the general interests of Commerce; to collect information on all matters of interest to the Mercantile Community, and to use every means within its power, for the removal of evils, the redress of grievances, and the promotion of the common good; to communicate with authorities and individual parties thereupon; to form a code of practice whereby the transaction of business may be simplified and facilitated; to receive references and to arbitrate between disputants. The decisions in such references being recorded for future guidance.
- Third*..... That it being highly desirable not to recognize any principle of exclusion, all persons engaged or interested in the Commerce or Shipping of Bengal, shall, upon payment of the Subscription and on signature of the

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- Rules and Regulations, be admissible as Members in the manner hereinafter described.
- Fourth*.... That Candidates for admission, proposed by one Member and seconded by another, shall be balloted for, and a majority of votes shall decide the election.
- Fifth*..... That voting by proxy, or by Members whose Subscriptions are in arrear, be not allowed.
- Sixth*..... That the Chamber reserves to itself the right of expelling any of its Members; such expulsion to be decided by the votes of three-fourths of the Members of the Chamber.
- Seventh*... That a majority of the firms constituting the Chamber shall be held sufficient to form any General Meeting, at which although two or more partners of one firm be present, they are to count in voting as only one Member; and no two Members of one firm can be at the same time Members of the Committee.
- Eighth*... That the monthly Subscription of each Member or firm be Rupees 16, subject hereafter to increase or reduction as may be decided by a General Meeting.
- Ninth*..... That the business and funds of the Chamber shall be managed by a Committee of seven Members, consisting of the President and Vice-President, and five Members, to be elected annually at a General Meeting of the Chamber in the month of May; the President, or, in his absence, the Vice-President, being Ex-Officio Chairman of the Committee, and in the absence of the President and Vice-President, the Committee to elect its own Chairman. Four to form a quorum; the Chairman in cases of equality having the casting vote.
- Tenth*..... That the Committee shall meet on such day of every week as it may fix as most convenient, for the purpose of transacting such business as may come within

the limits of the objects of the Chamber, and that its proceedings be laid on the table open to the inspection of Members, subject to such regulations as the Committee may deem expedient.

Eleventh. That vacancies in the Committee created by the absence of Members from the Presidency for two months, or by departure for Europe, or by death, be filled up at a General Meeting by a majority of the Members present thereat.

Twelfth. That the Secretary be elected by the Committee; such election to be subject to confirmation at the next ensuing General Meeting.

Thirteenth. That the General Meetings of the Chamber be held from time to time as the Committee for the time being may deem necessary. That a Special General Meeting shall be called by the President, or, in his absence, by the Vice-President, or by his order on the requisition of any five firms, Members of the Chamber, to be held within five days subsequent to the receipt of such requisition.

Fourteenth. That all proceedings of the Committee be subject to approval or otherwise of General Meetings duly convened.

Fifteenth. That strangers visiting the Presidency may be introduced as Honourary Members for two months by any Member of the Chamber, inserting their names in a book to be kept for that purpose.

Sixteenth. That the Committee be empowered to make Bye-laws, which shall not be of any force until approved of by a General Meeting.

Seventeenth. That an Annual Report of the Proceedings be prepared; and, after being approved of at a General Meeting, printed and circulated.

Eighteenth. That the above Rules be added to, or altered, only by a majority of Members of the Chamber.

Nineteenth. That the foregoing Rules be printed, and an authenticated copy, subscribed by each Member on admission, be kept as part of the records of the Chamber. That printed copies be forwarded to Members of the Chamber, to the Secretary to Government, and to such other parties or authorities as it may be desirable to make acquainted with the objects and Rules of the Association.

** The Seventh Rule, as modified at a General Meeting of the Chamber, held on Monday, the 27th day of November, 1854.*

That any number of Members present shall be held to constitute a General Meeting, called in conformity with the Rules of the Chamber, for the despatch of ordinary business; but that no change in the Rules of the Society can be considered except at a General Meeting at which the majority of the Members of the Chamber shall be present.

† The following Rules were adopted at a General Meeting of the Chamber, held on the 18th May 1853:—

That the Subscription for individual Members of the Chamber be 10 Rupees per mensem, while those alone carrying on business under any style or firm, do pay the 16 Rupees per mensem, as resolved at the Chamber's last Meeting.

That the Subscription for Mofussil Members be two Gold Mohurs or Co.'s Rs. 32 per Annum.

