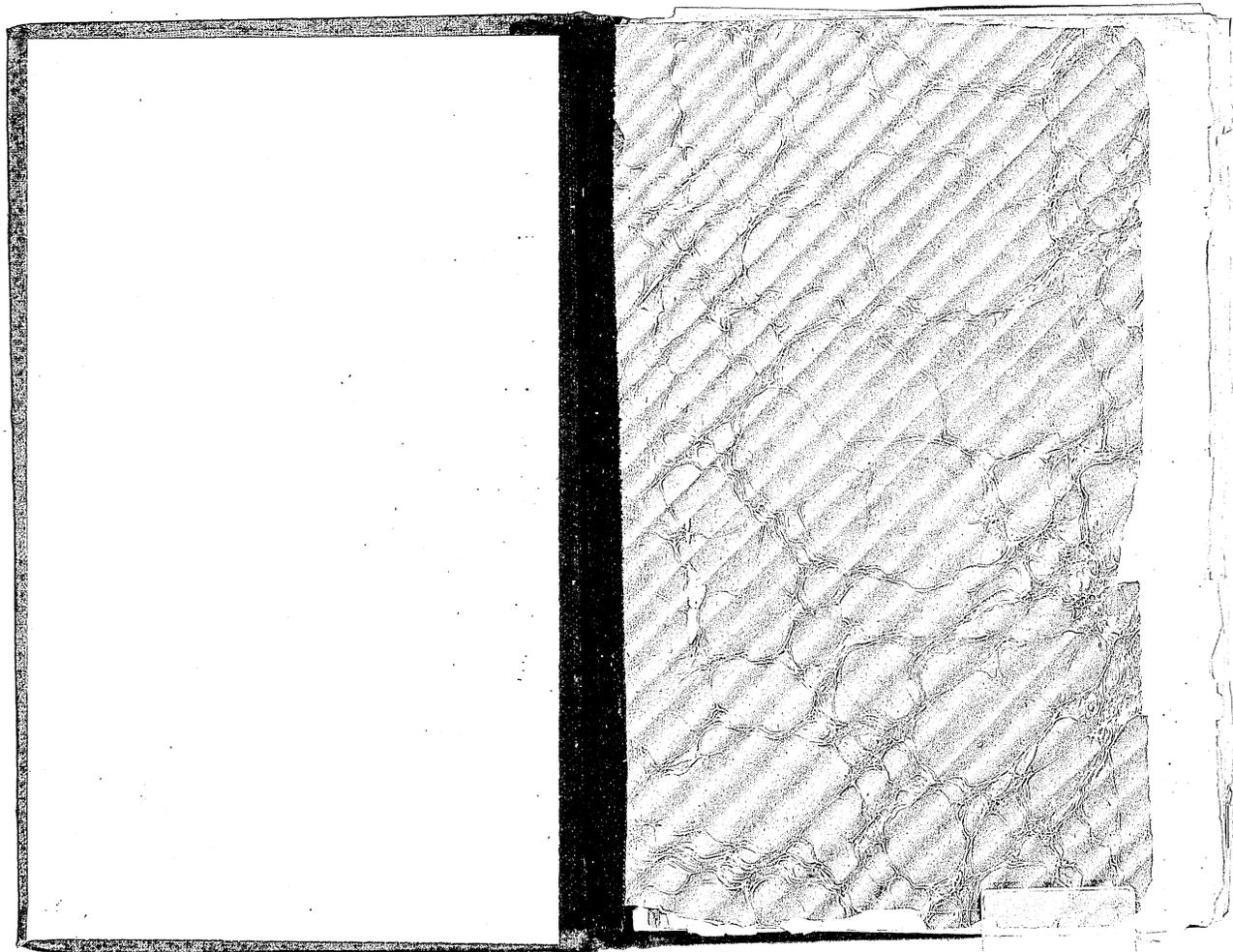
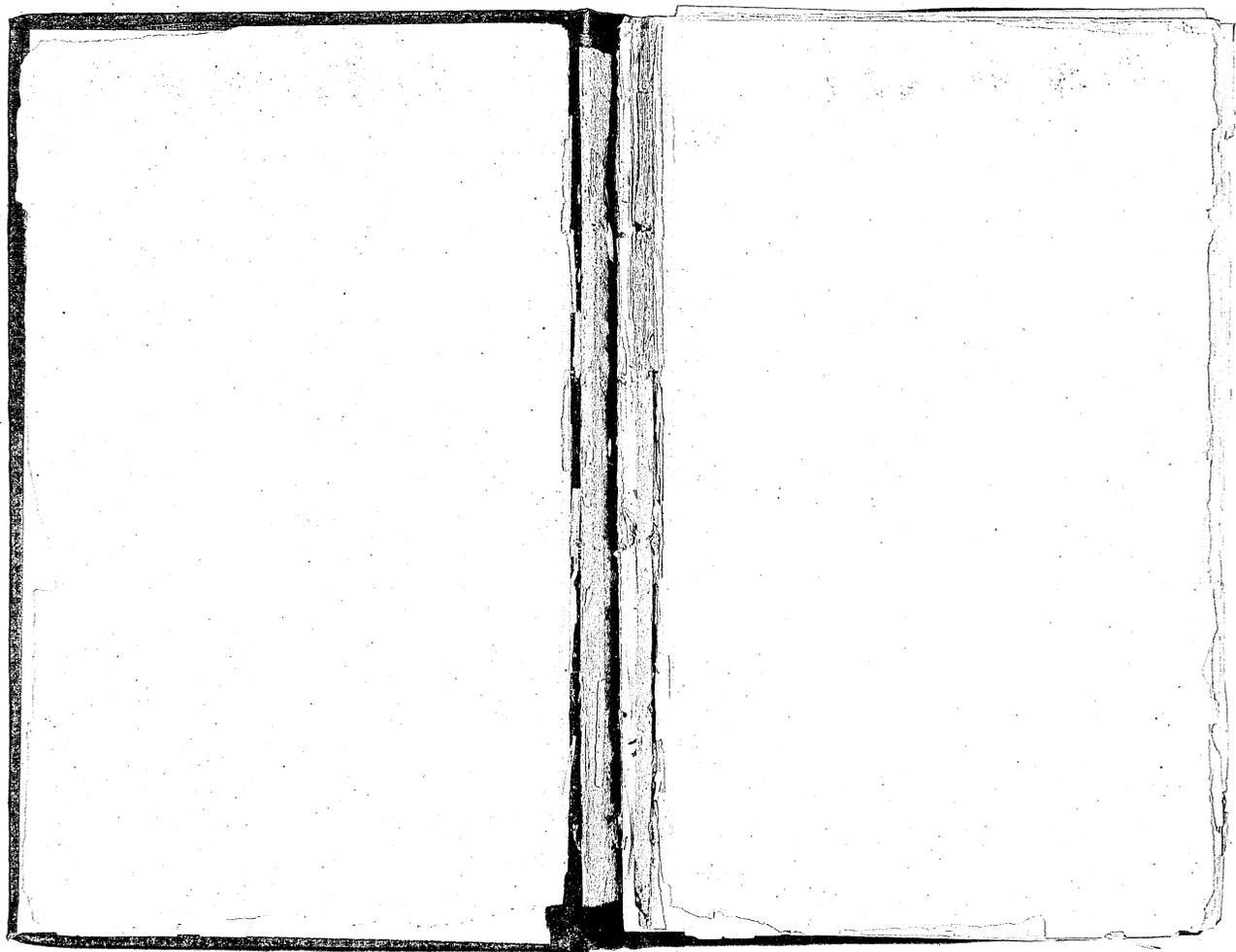


REPORT
OF THE
BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
FROM 1ST NOVEMBER 1869 TO 30TH APRIL 1870





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REPORT

OF

THE COMMITTEE

OF THE

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

From 1st November 1869 to 30th April 1870.

Calcutta:

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*Proceedings of the Half-yearly General Meeting
of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce held on
Tuesday, the 31st May 1870.*

The President—the Hon'ble J. R. Bullen Smith—having taken the Chair, read the advertisement under which the meeting was convened and spoke as follows :—

Your Committee have again the pleasure to render an account of their stewardship of your interests during the past half-year. The record of that stewardship is contained in the Report which has already been some days in your hands, and assuming that, as upon previous occasions, the same may be taken as read, I will with your permission make a few remarks on some of the principal subjects noticed in the Report before formally moving its adoption.

The first paragraph contains the usual notice of the Budget for the current year, on which, however, it is not my intention to dwell, for although few topics can possess more interest for a Commercial Association like this than the statement of the ways and means of the country, so much public discussion has already taken place upon this particular budget that there is little left

to say on an occasion like the present. My own opinions as to the unsound principle upon which this Budget is framed, and the severe and heavy measure of new taxation by which surplus is arrived at, are well known and remain unchanged; nor will I affect to deny that it is to myself, and I doubt not also to my friend Mr. Cowie, matter of satisfaction to find the views we expressed in Council so largely acquiesced in by our fellow-merchants.

Passing on to the second paragraph, I need scarcely say how much I was disappointed at the decision of Government in the matter of the rice duties, all the more that I had somewhat confidently expected a different result. It seemed to me that the Finance Minister was scarcely prepared for the startling statistics we put before him on the occasion of the deputation to which reference is made in the Report, and certainly the detailed figures of the Bangkok and Saigon trade subsequently sent in did not tend to weaken our case. The principle of our request for remission has been entirely admitted by Government, and had we been refused on the ground of financial exigency alone, there might perhaps have been less to complain of, although the wisdom of the policy adopted is, to my mind, more than questionable even from this point of view.

But our Finance Minister goes further and distinctly says that we have made out no case for relief, that we have not shown to his satisfaction that the duty *per se* has tended to injure any portion of our rice trade. Now to most people the figures put forward by the Chamber seem strong enough, and I confess I do not know what kind of further proof Sir Richard Temple looks for at our hands. We have never said that the export duty was the only or even the principal cause of the decay in our trade; on the contrary, we have said that new and increased competition was the cause; we have carefully guarded ourselves from the assertion that the mere removal of these duties would, as a matter of course, restore our trade to its former dimensions, but we have asserted that this export duty materially decreases our chance of successful competition, which surely none can deny; and on this broad ground, and to this extent only, we have asked for relief. I submit that it is impossible for us to say exactly how far the export duty enters into our competition; that it is sufficient to know that our rice trade to certain quarters is exposed to a competition under which it apparently cannot live to entitle it to relief, so that it may at least run its race unfettered. Our Finance Minister lays some stress upon the fact that

exportation of rice to China had begun again, and sees in this circumstance fresh ground for retaining his export-duty. Most of you are aware of the exceptional circumstances to which this trifling resuscitation is due, and have an opinion as to how long it is likely to last; but assuming it to be normal, I scarcely see in it a reason for continuing a burden, but rather reason for all the encouragement which can legitimately be given with a view to the permanent revival of what was once an important trade.

Next in order comes the Port Fund, with which the Committee's Report deals so fully that I need not occupy your time further. As a member of the Commission appointed at your request, I will only say, and I think I may speak for my friend on the left, as well as for myself, that we found the need for enquiry greater even than we had anticipated. This unfortunate Port Fund seems to have been a sort of scape goat of the Bankshall. How much it was overcharged or how much short it was credited, (and we found flagrant instances of both) no one seems to have known, and no one seems to have cared; and thus it has been that year by year a large balance has been carried to its debit, but with so little care and discrimination that the accounts are totally

unreliable. / Mr. Eldridge and I could not well embody in our official report the impression left in our minds, which, however, was simply this, that the Marine Department had worked up regularly to its authorised Budget grants, the remainder of expenditure being passed to the Port Fund, where there was no Budget granted to give trouble.

Under the new Trust, I look for a very different and infinitely better administration of the affairs of the port; the necessary legislative measure for its establishment is now nearly complete, and I hope before long we shall hear of the Board of Commissioners having held their first sitting. Your Committee have carefully watched the progress of the Bill through the local Council, and those members who will take the trouble to read the correspondence bearing on this subject as given in the Report, will, I believe, find that our representations have not been unattended with benefit to commercial interests. I have every hope that you will approve of the action taken by your Committee, in not at present seeking for the management of the river beyond the limits of the port. That will follow in due time. Meanwhile the whole port proper will be under the Board of Commissioners, and for the first time since Calcutta became a port those who contribut

towards its income will have a direct executive control over its expenditure.

Since our last half-yearly meeting a Bill has been passed for the reform and assimilation of the weights and measures of British India, and, despite all that has been said and written against it, I am distinctly of opinion that no measure more urgently needed, or more likely to prove useful, has perhaps ever been put before the Legislative Council. With increased means of communication between different parts of the country came an absolute need to attempt something in the way of assimilating the innumerable standards now existing, and it is well known that the great railway Companies have pressed this matter upon the Government of India. With through railway communication comes as a matter of course a demand for through booking of merchandise, and the railway Companies felt that it would be futile to attempt anything of the kind with advantage to the public and convenience to themselves without a uniform standard of weight all along the line. At the same time there is, I believe, no intention of pressing this change hastily or rashly, its adoption by the railway Companies, by the Commissariat, and other large Government departments, will gradually accustom the natives

of this country to the new system, and pave the way for its more general adoption. As to the particular new standards selected, I believe they are those chiefly in use on the Continent of Europe, and that there is a growing desire in Great Britain to conform to them. This being so, Government decided, and I think wisely, to adopt at once for their new standards those so largely in use on the Continent, and which may at no distant date be adopted in England.

You will notice, gentlemen, that your Committee thought it right to address to M. de Lesseps a few lines of congratulation on the opening of his canal. How great an enterprise this is you all know, and how largely it will alter the conditions of Eastern trade may be inferred from the fact that already nearly the whole of the Bombay import of Lancashire fabrics and a heavy percentage of our own supply come *via* Suez. The past six months have not only witnessed the practical opening of the Suez Canal, but also the completion of through railway communication between Calcutta and Bombay, and the laying of the Red Sea Cable, which, as also the Indo-European line, has since been working with an accuracy and despatch which leave nothing to desire in the way of facility of communication.

During the above period also Canning has been

declared a free port as regards dues and mooring hire,—with what advantage remains to be seen. Morrellgunge has also been declared a port since we met together; and as our Vice-President and myself formed members of the party which, thanks to the most liberal hospitality of the Messrs. Morrell, made such a pleasant trip to the new port in January last, I hope he will at a later stage of the meeting say a few words as to his own impressions of this new outlet for the trade of Eastern Bengal, at which I understand two ships have already loaded rice this season, with economy to the shippers, and perfect health to those employed in the work.

The President further laid before the meeting the proceedings of the Committee in regard to the fund raised on behalf of the widow of the late Mr. Piddington, reported the final closure of the Venables' Testimonial Fund which had been for twelve years under the charge of the Chamber, and, after expressing the views of the Committee in the proposed alterations in the mode of electing office bearers, concluded by formally moving the adoption of the report.

1ST RESOLUTION.

Proposed by the President,

Seconded by Manockjee Rustomjee, Esq. and carried,

That the Report of the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce for the half-year ended 30th April 1870 be received and adopted.

2ND RESOLUTION.

Proposed by the President,

Seconded by H. H. Sutherland, Esq. and carried,

That the Committee's conditional election of Messrs. Ede and Hobson, Messrs. Agelasto and Sagrandi, and Messrs. D. Freck and Co., as members of the Chamber of Commerce, be confirmed.

The examination of the voting papers for the election of a Committee for the ensuing year was then proceeded with, during which Mr. ELDRIDGE said,—The President has asked me to make a few remarks upon the new port which we visited last cold season. The Hurrungotta river, on which it is situated, is a noble one, free from the shoals and constant changes in the channels so prevalent in the Hooghly, and the navigation is by no means difficult, there being a sufficient depth of water, to allow the largest vessels to go up on a single tide.

You will not expect me to describe Morrell-gunge as a city filled with public buildings and palatial residences, for you, of course, know the place is in its infancy. A roomy and substantial house belonging to the Messrs. Morrell stands back a few rods from the river bank; and within a short distance there is a large and, apparently, flourishing mart, or bazar, into which large quantities of rice were being brought for transportation to Calcutta, and it was selling at from 4 to 6 annas per maund under our bazar quotations here. Surrounding the place, as far as the eye could reach, we saw a tract of fertile country on which large crops are regularly raised, whilst we were assured that an indefinite expanse of uncleared land extended beyond our vision waiting only for an increased population to make it productive. While we were there, some hundreds of native boats came past on their way through the Soonderbunds to Calcutta with rice, &c., which I am sure the owners would gladly have sold at low prices to avoid the detention and dangers of the Soonderbunds navigation. The great want would appear to be return cargoes for these boats; if a few imports could be had there, such as salt, piece goods, &c., a flourishing trade would undoubtedly spring up. Rhea grows well in the vicinity; indeed Messrs. Morrell informed us that they

could obtain no less than 5 or 6 crops per annum!—which ought to satisfy most anybody. This article, which is sometimes called *China Grass*, is of great commercial value, but the difficulty has always been to find a means of separating the fibre without injuring it, and, at same time, without making the cost too great. To show the value Government puts upon it and their desire to see it largely cultivated, the State has deemed it sufficiently important to offer a premium of £5,000 for the best machine to accomplish the above result; and, if I may judge from an extract I saw only this morning in an up-country journal, they appear in a fair way to get one, as the paragraph stated that 100 specimens are on the way out from England to compete for the prize! I did not intend to have made any remarks, but as the opening of such a port comes within our province as the *Bengal Chamber of Commerce*, I hope you will pardon me for having trespassed on your time in alluding to matters not strictly belonging to Calcutta.

Mr. SUTHERLAND.—I have read with care the remarks in the Report on the overland mail from Bombay, and I think the Committee deserve thanks for the way in which they have acted in this matter. I am told that the manner in which the

mail is conveyed from Armenian Ghat to the Post Office is by means of a huge van dragged by coolies. I think that a great deal of unnecessary delay is caused by this, and that it should be remedied.

THE PRESIDENT.—The Post Office do not hold themselves in any way responsible for the delay occasioned, the cause of which is said to be the great want of punctuality on the Great Indian Peninsular Line. I believe that the Bombay Government will not allow trains to go over the Ghâts at night. (The President here read a letter from the Post Master General to the Chamber of Commerce, regarding the delay of the mail.)

MR. HUTCHISON.—I may mention that trains do pass over the Ghâts at night, as I have passed over them at that time.

MR. ELDRIDGE.—Not since the accident which occurred there in 1868.

MR. HUTCHISON.—I think it would be an improvement if the number of the Committee was increased, say from 5 to 10, so as to admit of all the different nationalities engaged in the trade of Calcutta being represented thereon. I think this a

matter of much importance, as tending to increase the amount of interest taken in the Chamber by the members generally.

THE PRESIDENT.—I entirely share Mr. Hutchison's sentiments as regards the importance of enlisting to the utmost the interest and sympathy of individual members of the Chamber, and if it is thought the plan he proposes will have the desired effect I shall be happy to give it my support. I think it very desirable that the Committee should represent as largely as possible the various branches of our mercantile community, and on the occasion of a recent vacancy I took the liberty of personally canvassing for our present colleague Mr. A. T. Ralli, because I learned that his election would be very acceptable to the other Greek merchants, who, I think, with reference to their large and important business operations, should always be represented by one seat in the Committee.

MR. HUTCHISON.—I do not wish to press this matter, but if the Committee think it desirable and are of opinion that the change will increase the effective working of the Committee, I should like the sense of the present meeting taken upon my proposal.

THE PRESIDENT.—I have already said that I would be glad to support Mr. Hutchison's proposal if it is believed that an increase to the number of the Committee will tend to heighten the interest taken in the Chamber's operations by its members generally. I am, however, hardly with him when he proposes increase on the ground that the work of the Committee would thereby be better done. I am rather of the contrary opinion, believing that, as a rule, small Committees are found to work better than those of larger dimensions, and from this point of view I cannot see any necessity for the proposed change.

Mr. Hutchison's motion that it is desirable to increase the number of the Committee was then put to the meeting, but, not finding a seconder, fell to the ground.

Mr. HUTCHISON.—I wish to make a few remarks about the enormous and most disgraceful waste of goods that goes on on the ghâts. I say that all goods should be measured and weighed under shelter, and not exposed to the inclemencies of the weather, which would be sure to spoil them altogether or else seriously damage them. *Shellac*, for instance, is sent down to the river and allowed to remain in the sun, instead of being covered over with tarpaulins; and people are surprised

because it turns out *blocked*. The coolies also have a habit of dropping cases of wines and spirits from their heads, and so breaking all the bottles inside, and then coolly sucking at the contents of the damaged box.

MR. ELDRIDGE.—I do not quite agree with Mr. Hutchison in some of his remarks, and I will give an instance which will prove that, in spite of the utmost carefulness, certain goods sometimes arrive at their destination damaged or worthless. Delivery was taken of a consignment of shell lac at seven o'clock in the morning, but it was not removed from the godown until seven p. m. that evening, so that it could not have been exposed to the sun; and yet every case of it arrived at its destination hard-blocked.

Mr. HUTCHISON.—I think that Mr. Eldridge has misunderstood some of my remarks. Only the other morning, when I was passing along the river, I saw a quantity of valuable cargo lying regularly imbedded in the mud; it had been there all night under water, and the tide had receded and left it in the mud. But this is only one of many instances; you would be astonished at the waste that goes on.

THE PRESIDENT.—I think gentlemen, that this is rather a tedious way of having the votes decided, and I would suggest that you accord to

the Committee permission on future occasions to invite two members of the Chamber, not members of Committee, to attend half an hour before the advertised time of meeting for the purpose of ascertaining and reporting the result of the voting. (The result of the voting was here handed to the President who read it out to the meeting). I thank you sincerely, gentlemen, for the honor you have done me of re-electing me Chairman, and also re-electing the Committee. You may depend that we will do all in our power to promote the interests of the Chamber of Commerce.

The following gentlemen were re-elected —*The President*, Hon. J. R. Bullen Smith, *Vice-President*, F. G. Eldridge, Esq., *Members of Committee*, A. Stirling, Esq., T. A. Apear, Esq., J. M. Ross, Esq., A. T. Ralli, Esq., and B. D. Colvin, Esq.

3RD RESOLUTION.

Proposed by J. C. Murray, Esq.

Seconded by H. H. Sutherland, Esq., and carried unanimously.

That the cordial thanks of the Chamber of Commerce be given to the Committee for their services during the past half year.

The meeting then separated.

H. W. I. WOOD,

Secretary

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE HALF-YEAR
ENDED 30TH. APRIL, 1870.

The Committee have the pleasure to submit their Report on the principal subjects which have come under their consideration during the last half-year.

The Budget for 1870-71.

The annual financial statement of the Government of India was submitted to the Legislative Council of the Governor General on the 2nd April by the Hon'ble Sir Richard Temple, and, like too many of its predecessors, declared a state of affairs by no means satisfactory. True, a prospective excess of receipts over expenditure to the extent of £163,440 was exhibited, but such a surplus on a revenue of 52 millions sterling is scarcely deserving of the name, and when arrived at by increasing the Income Tax to 3½ per cent., in time of peace, can hardly be accepted as indicating a prosperous exchequer. In fact financial equilibrium has only

been arrived at this year as last by an increase of direct taxation in its most obnoxious form. In their last report the Committee pointed out that the deficit of 1869-70 was mainly owing to the adoption of the principle of paying out of revenue the cost of expensive public works, the benefits of which will be largely shared by those who come after us, and the expenditure on which ought therefore to have been spread over a series of years. The same principle has been applied in the budget now under notice, although to a smaller extent, and the Committee desire again to put on record their strong objection to the pursuance of a system which, with reference to the circumstances of a country like India in which pressing current requirements fully keep pace with the growth in the revenue, appears unsound and inequitable, and a persistence in which seems to the Committee to postpone indefinitely the restoration of Indian Finance to a sound and healthy position. The Committee especially view with alarm and distrust the severe addition to the Income Tax, as indicating a lavish readiness to stretch to the uttermost an impost which should be regarded as a reserve only to be thus availed of in time of extremity. The measure was opposed by both the Members of this Chamber who at present occupy seats in the Legis-

lative Council; the action of these gentlemen the Committee entirely approve; and if they have not taken on behalf of the Chamber any further special steps in reference to this matter, it is because they believe all its members have joined in the more general public movement which was initiated, and which has been responded to throughout the country. The Committee cannot but think ultimate benefit will result from the amount of discussion which has taken place in connection with this budget. They view with satisfaction the efforts made lately by Government to reduce expenditure in various directions, but they believe much more remains to be done, notably, in the thorough re-organization of the Public Works Department and in the item of English expenditure, which latter swallows up a large percentage of the revenue of the empire.

Export Duty on Rice.

It will be in the recollection of Members that this question occupied a prominent place in the proceedings of the last half-yearly meeting of the Chamber. Falling in with the views then expressed, your Committee lost no time in soliciting an interview with the Hon'ble Sir Richard

Temple, the Member of Government in charge of the Finances, and their request having been promptly granted, a large deputation waited upon that gentleman on the 20th December. The deputation pointed out to Sir Richard the unsatisfactory conditions under which the export rice trade of Burmah had for some time been carried on, and especially urged upon him the rapidly declining nature of the same trade from Calcutta—a decline amounting in the case of China to little less than absolute cessation. They brought to notice the enormously increased production of Bangkok and Saigon, showing the severe competition to which British Indian grown rice was in consequence exposed, a competition proved by the fact that the increased export from these ports was greatest to the quarters in which the Bengal trade showed the most serious reduction. The deputation placed before Sir Richard the statistics bearing on the statements they had advanced, and prayed that he would move the Government of India to the immediate removal of the duty complained of, by which substantial relief would be afforded to the rice trade, and the pledge given by the Right Hon'ble Mr. Massey on the part of Government redeemed. Having received from the Finance Minister an assurance that the facts and arguments put forward should receive careful at-

tention the deputation withdrew upon the 7th January the Chamber were informed. Immediate remission could not be granted, the prayer of the Chamber would be borne in mind when making the financial arrangements for the coming year 1870-71. In this communication the general objections to the duty were freely admitted, and its whole tenor seemed so favorable to remission in the coming Budget that the Committee felt justified in asking that although the change could not be made at once, it should, when ordered, have retrospective effect as from 1st January, and that assistance might, meantime, be given to the trade by a declaration to this effect. This application was refused, and it was, on the contrary, distinctly intimated that any future remission would not be retrospective. The whole correspondence on the subject of this rice duty will be found below, and the Committee believe every Member of the Chamber will share their disappointment at the final result as announced in the Budget, to the effect that the duty is to be neither remitted nor reduced, but retained in its entirety for another year. The reasons set forth by Sir Richard Temple for the retention are three in number, *viz.*, financial exigency, a denial that the duty is operating injuriously, and the appearance of some revival in the

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trade, especially towards China. This report is
hardly a place to discuss these reasons in
detail with regard to the second the Com-
missioners do not hesitate to express their opinion that
the facts and figures they put forward do fully
justify the belief that the operation of this duty
is attended with injurious effects, and they are at
a loss to know what more direct or better defined
evidence Government expect at the hands of the
mercantile community to entitle them to the re-
demption of Mr. Massey's pledge.

< From Govt. of India to the President of the
Chamber of Commerce.

Calcutta, 7th January 1870.

The Government of India has given particular con-
sideration to the facts and arguments bearing upon the
alleged injurious operation of the export duty levied
upon rice and paddy which were presented to the Hon'ble
Sir R. Temple by the deputation which you introduced
to him on the 20th December last. The subject had, for
some time previously, engaged the serious attention of
the Government.

2. I am desired by His Excellency the Governor
General in Council now to inform you, that he fully
admits that the levy of an export duty upon grain is
justifiable only upon grounds of the most stringent finan-
cial necessity, and that the Government of India will

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carefully consider in making the financial arrangements
of the coming year, whether it may be possible, by the
adoption of any expedient, to provide for the remission
of the duties of which you complain. At the same time
I am to say, that His Excellency in Council is unable
absolutely to pledge himself to their remission at any
particular time.

3. It is hoped that the present announcement will
enable those engaged in the trade to make such provi-
sional arrangements as will prevent any material incon-
venience arising from the remission of the duty in the
middle of the shipping season, should the Government
find it practicable to dispense with it from the com-
mencement of the ensuing financial year.

From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of India.

Calcutta, 12th January 1870.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have
received from their President your letter to his address,
dated the 7th instant, in which you have been so good
as to communicate the decision of the Government of
India regarding the export duty on rice.

The declaration by His Excellency the Governor
General in Council of the circumstances which alone can
justify the levy of a duty upon one of the chief staples
of the export trade of Bengal, and the principal export
from British Burmah and the Rice Ports, confirms the
view held by the Chamber of Commerce as to the policy
which exceptional causes and the gravest expediency
may temporarily sanction.

The admission by His Excellency to that extent is received with satisfaction, inasmuch as it indicates a desire to remove the burden with which that trade is weighted, if the requirements for the public service can be adequately provided from legitimate sources of revenue; and the Committee desire respectfully to acknowledge His Excellency's assurance that the Chamber's representation will be carefully considered.

The Committee scarcely understand however in what way merchants can give effect to the suggestion, contained in the closing paragraph of your letter, for making "such provisional arrangements as will prevent any material inconvenience arising from the remission of the duty in the middle of the shipping season, should Government find it practicable to dispense with the duty from the ensuing financial year."

It appears evident that transactions in an important trade cannot be carried on for nearly 3 months on an unsettled or provisional basis: if operations are entered upon, it must be at the cost of the day and not with reference to a possible or probable material reduction in March next: and the Committee need scarcely point out the great disadvantage at which the shipments of the next few weeks will be placed, arriving as they will do at their various destinations simultaneously with the news that they are likely to be followed at an early date by others costing much less. The knowledge that there is such a strong probability of the duty being taken off in March, will naturally make shippers hold back as much as possible for some time previously, and it may

therefore be found that the refusal of Government to give now the hope for relief—based as that refusal is solely on financial reasons—has after all been attended with little advantage to the revenue of the State, although with "material inconvenience" to all interested in the trade.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce are of opinion that this question is one which, even in the present season of deficit, might fairly be considered on other than financial grounds: they believe they have shewn that the rice trade of British India is now exposed to a competition which did not exist to anything like the same extent when the grain duties were first imposed, and in the case of British Burmah the staple trade of that province is said to be in danger.

The total annual revenue derivable from those duties on their present enhanced scale was estimated by the late Finance Minister at £480,000, and the proportion of that amount collectable between the present time and March next can surely not be of such importance in the revenue of the Empire as to override the weighty considerations the Committee have endeavoured to put forward.

The Committee therefore respectfully submit their earnest hope that should the Government of India be enabled to remit the rice duty in the next Budget, such remission may have retrospective effect as from the 1st instant, and that His Excellency the Governor General in Council will, in the meantime, be pleased to assist the trade by a declaration to that effect.

*From Govt. of India to Chamber of Commerce.
Calcutta, 28th January 1870.*

I have received and laid before His Excellency the Governor General in Council your Secretary's letter of the 12th instant, requesting, with reference to the previous correspondence on the subject, that should the Government of India be enabled to remit the export duty on rice in the provision to be made for the ways and means of the next financial year, such remission may have retrospective effect.

2. In reply, I am directed to state that His Excellency in Council is not able now to say more on the subject than has been already said in my letter of the 7th instant, No. 149, except that if hereafter the Government of India decide on remitting the export duty on rice, the remission will not have effect retrospectively.

Port Fund.

In their last half-yearly report the Committee briefly alluded to the report of the Commission, appointed to enquire into the working of the Port Fund, which had just been sent up to the Bengal Government. Many Members of the Chamber have since had an opportunity of perusing this document, but for the sake of those who have not, and for the purpose of future reference, it is included in the report now submitted.

It will be remembered that the occasion of the request for the appointment of this Commission was a proposal on the part of the local Government to enhance the dues leviable on tonnage, but feeling how heavily the charges of this otherwise expensive Port already weighed upon the shipping, the Committee felt justified in asking for delay, pending an enquiry into the working of the Port Fund, specially as to whether the Fund received credit for the full amount of its dues, and whether it had been charged with items not properly belonging to it. Those Members of the Chamber who have read the report of the Commission will, the Committee believe, find in it ample justification of the course adopted and substantial reason why objection was raised to the measure of enhancing the dues, which it is satisfactory to think has not again been brought forward. The Commission found that in the matter of establishment the Fund had been largely overcharged, and that from the circumstance of all stores being procured through the medium of the Government Dockyard the working of the Fund had been carried on at an excessive cost. The Commission found that in the single year 1867-68, the Port Fund had been overcharged by the Dockyard to the extent of Rs. 1,15,000, and short credited by Rs. 93,000, making the result of that one year appear worse, than the facts warranted, by more

than two lacs of rupees. Anything more unsatisfactory than the whole system of accounts existing between the Dockyard and the Port Fund it would be impossible to conceive; having regard to which and to the actual errors ascertained, the Commission had no hesitation in recording (see para. 24 of their report) their opinion that the balance shown against the Fund, and which formed one of the chief grounds for the proposed enhancement of the dues, was altogether inadmissible. The report of the Commission goes on to make sundry recommendations for the future more economical and satisfactory working of the Fund, which will probably commend themselves to the Chamber, but which become of less importance in view of the radical change in the management of the Port now impending, and which forms the subject of the succeeding paragraph.

To the Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

Fort William, the 18th January 1870.

SIR,—In accordance with the wishes of the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor, conveyed to us in your letter No. 2171 of 11th June last, we have the honor to submit the following report on the affairs and condition of the Calcutta Port Fund.

2. The Fund was formed in 1856-57, agreeably to Act XXII. of 1855, for the regulation of Ports and Port-dues. In the seven years which succeeded its creation

and ended on 30th April 1864, it became largely indebted to Government, which compounded the debt for a sum of Rs. 4,00,000, leaving to the Fund, free of all encumbrances, a cash balance of Rs. 97,609-15 7, un-realised bills amounting to Rs. 60,771-5-0, and floating stock valued at Rs. 7,81,450, making a total of Rs. 9,39,831-4-7. In the five years which have since elapsed the Fund is reported by the Accountant General, Bengal, to have incurred a fresh debt of Rs. 27,64,221-1-7, and this amount is exclusive of the expenditure on account of the Port in the Public Works Department, provided hitherto from the resources of the State. This expenditure may be stated as follows:—

	Amount sanctioned. Rs.	Expended to 31st July 1869. Rs.
Removing Moyapore Shoal...	2,42,000	1,23,379
Jetties on the Strand ...	5,06,000	3,43,887
Landing Stage at Aheeritolla (Hautkholah) Ghât ...	1,05,950	56,357
	<u>8,53,950</u>	<u>5,23,623</u>

3. Adopting the course of enquiry indicated in your letter and suggested by the condition of the Fund, the first question requiring notice appears to be, whether the Fund receives credit for the full amount of its dues, and whether it is charged with any items that do not properly belong to it.

4. In regard to receipts we find that Government vessels of all descriptions are exempted from the payment of Port dues and fees, and that this exemption rests apparently on Section 60 of Act XXII. of 1855, which states that "nothing in this Act shall extend to any vessel belonging to or in the service of Her Majesty, or of the

East India Company." So far as the financial question under notice is concerned, this clause, in our opinion, only affirms the privilege which is usually conceded to ships of war and State yachts, of entering a port or harbour without the payment of local dues, and in this view, vessels like the "Czarewitch," the Pilot brigs, and the river steamers belonging to Government, seem in no way to be entitled to the exemption. Even as regards ships of war and State yachts whether belonging to the British Government or Foreign Powers, it seems to us that there is no adequate reason why the accommodation and appliances of the Port should be afforded to them at the expense of a special interest. We do not consider that such vessels should be treated on the same terms as the other vessels which visit the Port, and that Port dues and fees should be actually levied on them; but, in our opinion the Port Fund should be paid for the accommodation afforded to Government vessels generally out of the public revenue, and this with other reasons to which we shall have occasion to refer, make it proper that the State should, to some extent, contribute directly to the maintenance of the Port.

5. Another instance, in which the Fund does not appear to have received the full amount due to it, has reference to the employment of the steam dredge *Agitator* by the Government. The claim against the Government for the services of this vessel has been based upon the proportion of her expenses with reference to the number of days she is employed by the Government and the Port Fund respectively. This mode of calculation does not seem to be correct, as it has been ascertained that when employed by Government the *Agitator* is many more hours per day under steam than when she is dredg-

ing the channels, and the claim therefore should be founded on the number of hours, and not on the number of days, she is employed by Government. We have caused revised bills to be prepared for submission to Government, and the result shews a sum of Rs. 49,862 to be due to the Port Fund on account of the years 1866-67 and 1867-68. The particulars of this sum will be found in Appendix A, and the claim submitted to Government for the year 1868-69 has been stated according to this calculation.

6. The loss to the Port Fund from the non-payment of port charges by Government vessels, and from the short payment on account of the hire of the *Agitator*, is not limited to the actual sum made up by those items, but includes also the interest at 5 per cent. on so much of the Government debt as would not have been incurred had those receipts been duly obtained. There has also been a loss of the same kind, though not to the same extent upon the bills for Port charges against merchant vessels. These bills are realized through the agency of the Collector of Customs, and the amounts which remained unpaid on 31st March last were as follows:—

On account of—

				Rs.	A.	P.
1862-63	...	...	...	43	0	0
1863-64	...	..	...	760	14	0
1864-65	...	...	...	2,602	0	0
1865-66	...	...	...	3,145	13	0
1866-67	...	...	...	906	1	0
1867-68	...	...	...	5,022	7	0
1868-69	...	...	...	48,287	0	6
Total	...	...	...	61,367	3	6

These figures are not satisfactory, as they show a sum of Rs. 13,080-3-0 to be unrealized for periods ranging from one to six years. We understand that under Section 50 of Act XXII. of 1855, the recovery of Port-dues should be very prompt, as no Port-clearance is to be granted for vessels until these claims have been discharged. The outstandings of 1868-69 have since been realised.

7. The charges against the Port are not susceptible of examination to the same extent as the receipts, details being available of such items only as are paid directly from the Fund. The large and important expenditure on account of Dockyard supplies and services has hitherto been admitted on statements which show merely the total charge in each month on account of each description of vessel and of each department. Charges on account of the establishments of the Master Attendant's office and of the Dockyard have been made on general statements of the same character, and for the charges in the Public Works Department no particulars whatever have been furnished to the Fund. This practice has been modified in the accounts of 1868-69 with regard to the stores supplied from the Naval Store-keeper's Department, but the rest of the charges still remain unvouched, and hence in lieu of a systematic examination of the accounts we have been able only to institute special enquiries into particular items.

8. The Fund is charged with the entire salary of the first Assistant Master Attendant, amounting to Rs. 9,000 per annum, and with a fourth part of the salaries of the other officers, and of the establishment and contingent expenses of the Master Attendant's Department, making

a further charge of upwards of Rs. 13,000 a year. The orders of Government bearing on this subject are contained in Financial Resolution No. 498, dated 24th January 1867, paras. 10 and 17, and show that the Committee of Enquiry into the affairs of the Fund, appointed in 1866, having stated that the Fund should pay a fourth of the salaries of the Master Attendant and his first Assistant, the Government dissented from that conclusion to the extent that the payment should comprise the full salary of the latter officer. In other words, it was ordered that the Fund should be debited with Rs. 6,000 on account of the salary of the Master Attendant, and Rs. 9,000 on account of that of his first Assistant, or Rs. 15,000 in all, whereas the actual charge has been upwards of Rs. 22,000, or more by Rs. 7,000 a year than the authorized amount. Considering that the establishment of the Port Fund performs for Government, without charge, the duties connected with the recovery of pilotage fees, and the payment of the Pilot establishments, even the contribution, Rs. 15,000 a year, seems large, and we would recommend a return to the arrangement proposed in 1866. The orders of Government directing that the whole of the pay of the first Assistant Master Attendant should be charged to the Port Fund appear to have been passed under a mis-apprehension, and in the belief that the duties of this Officer, in connection with the Port, occupy the whole of his time, but under any circumstances the charge to the Port Fund should not exceed Rs. 15,000 per annum.

9. The Fund is also charged with a fourth part, or

25 per cent. of the establishment and office expenses of the Kiddarpore Dockyard, comprising the Departments of the Superintendent, Naval Store-keeper, Builder, and Engineer. The authority for this charge appears to be Financial Resolution No. 160A, dated 28th August 1862, which ruled that, in the statement of work done at the Dockyard for the Port Fund, "a fair percentage of the cost of the establishment, actually engaged in such services, should be added to the statement of extra charges specially incurred on their account, in order that the aggregate may be debited to the Port Fund." In the case of work done for the Fund by the Builder's and Engineer's Departments, a commission of 15 and 10 per cent., respectively, is charged on the cost of work and materials, and this, in our opinion, is a full equivalent for the "fair percentage" prescribed by Government, considering that the establishment would be maintained irrespective of the requirements of the Port, and we do not think that there should be a further charge of 25 per cent., or nearly Rs. 9,000 per annum, on account of establishment. As regards the charges on account of the Superintendent and Naval Store-keeper's Departments, the case is somewhat different, as no commission is charged on the value of stores supplied to the Port Fund by the Naval Store-keeper, and hence a "fair percentage" may very properly be charged by Government. But this percentage should be in the form of a commission, which may properly be fixed at 5 per cent., rather than a proportion of the expenditure on account of establishment. This method is not proposed with the view of effecting any saving to the Fund, but it will be

satisfactory, as under it the actual expenditure on stores will be ascertained and tested with reference to current market rates, which cannot be done at present.

10. Of the boats kept up at the expense of the Port Fund are three which are reserved for the use of the Master Attendant, the Agent for Transports and Government Consignments, and the Builder and Surveyor. The costs of these boats, involving an expenditure of Rs. 1,500 per annum on account of establishment, and about Rs. 2,400 for stores, &c., should, we consider, be defrayed by Government for the business of which they are chiefly employed.

11. The debits raised against the Fund by the Public Works Department include expenditure on account of the light-house at False Point, which has been completely separated from the Calcutta Port Fund, by the orders of Government No. 498 of 24th January 1867. This will have to be written back.

12. We have endeavoured to "make a full scrutiny of the expenditure which is being incurred on account of the Fund in providing ships, boats, stores, and other appliances, and also in the working of the establishments." On the latter point, namely—establishments, the present arrangements seem consistent with efficiency in regard to the services to be rendered, and with the safety of vessels visiting the Port. The expenditure also does not seem to be excessive, but we do not include in these remarks the items noticed in paragraphs 8, 9, and 10.

13. The stores and appliances required by the Port Fund being obtained exclusively from the Government Dockyard at Kidderpore, the mode by which the latter establishment is supplied, and the course of business adopted by it, have necessarily come under our notice, and in both respects the present arrangements seem unsatisfactory, and have had an unfavorable effect on the finances of the Port.

14. We find that a large proportion of the more important stores, including all buoys, ground chains, mooring tackle and canvas are sent direct from England, on indent through the Secretary of State; the balance, comprising timber, a proportion of coal and all petty stores and provisions being procured here. As regards the stores from England, the anchors for moorings and other requirements of the Port were supplied in 1868-69 at the rate of Rs. 20-15 per cwt., a rate which we believe from enquiries we have made, to be in excess of what the same could have been obtained through other agency. When the screw moorings are complete, the number of anchors required will be largely diminished, and we would suggest that indents for them on the Secretary of State should be discontinued, and the wants of the Port supplied here. Periodical public sales are held of anchors recovered from the bed of the river by the boats of the Fund, and unclaimed, and we see no reason why if suitable anchors are available, the Fund should not purchase at such sales, which generally result in very moderate prices.

15. In connection also with the subject of stores

obtained from England, we have endeavoured, but have not obtained the means, to ascertain the first cost at which the new screw pile moorings have been supplied to the Port Fund, the whole having been shipped from England, and having formed a heavy item of expenditure in the accounts we have had before us; but judging from the invoices, the arrangements for shipping these stores have been carried out on such extravagant terms, that the final cost to the Port Fund must have been largely and unnecessarily increased. We may instance the case of the *Latona*, by which vessel was shipped to Port Canning about 366 tons of Government stores, including 158 tons of chain cable for the Calcutta Port Fund, at 44 shillings per ton, or nearly double the current rate of the day by first class ships to Calcutta direct. The cost of bringing these stores to Calcutta was, exclusive of boats supplied by the Port Fund, Rs. 3,237-4-9, and cannot altogether be estimated at less than Rs. 10 per ton. We thus find the effect of the Home arrangements to have been that the Port Fund and other stores intended for Calcutta were sent to Canning, that for being thus mis-sent a rate of freight was paid double that which would have brought them to their destination by a direct opportunity, and finally, they have had to bear a further charge of nearly 50 per cent. on the original freight for conveyance from Canning to Calcutta. As further instances of excessive charge we would notice the cases of the *John Ritson*, *Alice Ritson*, *T. B. Ord* and *Phaeton*, all of which ships left England between April and August 1868, and received freight for the Government stores they conveyed at 50 shillings 6 pence per ton, alike for weight and measurement. A large propor-

tion of the supplies brought by these ships were for the use of the Port Fund, the injustice done to which by the existing system may be inferred from the fact that during the above period, outward freight from London in the finest ships ranged from 20 to 30 shillings per ton. Two steamers which brought some stores round the Cape received the enormous freights of £10 and £13 per ton respectively. Facts like the above need little comment, but it is evident, that under such a system of overcharge the Port Fund must have suffered severely, and that a radical change in the mode of supply is necessary.

16. Supplies obtained in Calcutta are regulated by quarterly or other periodical requisitions from the various departments of the Dockyard upon the Superintendent, and a certain amount of stock which it is considered expedient always to have on hand. The Superintendent calls for tenders by advertisement, but no maximum price is fixed, the lowest tender being as a rule accepted. In regard to the minor stores, including provisions for the lascar crews employed on board the various vessels, although we find that in some cases the Dockyard charges are decidedly higher than those for which the articles might have been procured elsewhere, we are disposed to think the existing system of supply as good, on the whole, as any other, the articles being of a very miscellaneous nature, and the tenders such as are likely to be responded to only by a limited class of native dealers who lay themselves out for this kind of business. As a matter of fact we understand that very few tenders are made for these miscellaneous indents, and, as we are told security is always taken for due performance, we believe

that with ordinary care on the part of the officer in charge, the stores in question may, under the present method, be laid in on fairly reasonable terms.

17. As regards the important items of coal and timber the present system of supply seems open to objection, as under it higher prices are paid than the state of the market justifies, and in our opinion considerable alterations must be made, if the Dockyard, and therefore the Port Fund, are to be supplied on the same terms as other consumers. For instance, the price charged to the Fund for English coal supplied to the *Agitator* in 1867-68 was Rs. 35-5 per ton, the average selling rate of the article in the open market at the time having been Rs. 24-8, or adding 10 per cent. for the difference between screened and unscreened coal, Rs. 26 per ton. Here there is a difference against the Dockyard of Rs. 9 per ton, increasing the expense of the *Agitator* during the year in question for the single article of coal by Rs. 12,807, or more than Rs. 1,000 per mensem, and this excess of charge may be traced in a great measure to the conditions of delivery enforced on contractors. First of all is the condition that the coal shall be screened, the necessity for which we cannot admit. Doubtless, the Engineers of the various steam vessels supplied by the Dockyard, if allowed the option, will always prefer screened to unscreened coal, but in this preference is hardly to be found sufficient reason for the great extra expense thereby incurred, especially as in the Peninsular and Oriental, and in the British India Steam Companies, as well as in the China opium steamers unscreened coal is used, and yet these vessels do not on that account perform their work with less efficiency,

while many of them run at a much higher speed than the Government vessels. Secondly, the coal is screened at the Dockyard, the actual practice being as follows:—The coal is loaded into boats at the seller's dépôt and taken to the Dockyard, where the contractor has to unload the boats carry the coal to the sheds or other spot indicated, and stack it there. Finally, he has to unstack it, and all that will not pass through an inch sieve is weighed and accepted. At each of the four processes of loading, unloading, stacking, and unstacking, the coal is unavoidably much broken, and the percentage of small pieces largely increased, and the whole cost of these processes falls upon the contractor, who has also to remove at his own expense all the coal that passes through the sieve. It will be readily conceived that no merchants can tender to the Dockyard, except at a very heavy advance on market rates, an advance, we believe, wholly out of proportion, in a pecuniary point of view, to the advantage derived from using screened coal.

18. The mode in which delivery is taken of timber, although not perhaps so cumbersome as coal, is still calculated largely to increase the cost, as the contractor has to raft all he intends to offer, and float it down to the Dockyard, where much of it may not pass the ordeal of inspection, entailing upon him the further cost of reconveyance to his own dépôt. All this must be, and is, doubtless, taken into account by him in fixing the price. We are also of opinion that economy would be promoted by greater attention being paid to the class of timber suitable for different kinds of work executed at the Dockyard.

19. If the existing system of supply of local and timber by public competition is to be continued, we would recommend that in the advertisement calling for tenders notice should be given of a maximum price having been kept in reserve. This maximum price should be fixed by the Superintendent, or other officer, after enquiry into the state of the market at the time. Further, the tenders might with advantage be made returnable at the Bankshall instead of the Dockyard, the former being more convenient for the trade, and because, from his more central position, the Master Attendant is more accessible to brokers and others from whom information may be obtained, than the Superintendent of the Dockyard, far removed, as he is, from the business part of the town.

20. In the next place we are of opinion that the deposit named in the advertisement calling for tenders should in all cases be exacted. We are well aware that there are many firms whose tenders might be accepted with full confidence that they will be duly carried out in the absence of any more material guarantee, but in the case of others similar security could not be felt. We deprecate any public officer being placed in the invidious position of deciding who is, and who is not, worthy of credit, and as we have it in evidence that the desire not to give offence has been the main reason for discontinuing the practice of taking security, we have the less hesitation in recommending that security be always taken in future for the due performance of the accepted tender. By this course the Department will be placed in the position which is the chief aim of the contract

system; namely, security against increase of price in consideration of the relinquishment by the purchaser of the advantage he might derive from a fall in the market.

21. Lastly, it would be advisable to omit the condition of "screening" the coal from future calls for tenders, and to take delivery of coal and timber from alongside the ship or from the dépot of the sellers, as the case may be, after previous approval, thereby relieving the contractor from the expense of conveying and reconveying rejections, and enabling him to reduce his price accordingly.

22. We make these recommendations on the assumption that the present system of public contracts is to be maintained, but we are inclined to think supplies might be laid in more economically by leaving wider discretion to the officer at the head of the Department. The market for both the important articles of which we now write is very fluctuating, and it seems only reasonable that the Dockyard, as a regular consumer, with means at command, should take advantage of periods of low prices. The Superintendent has informed us that he has not authority to buy more than the quantity indicated in the regular quarterly indents. Some years ago the Builder and Surveyor was occasionally, with the sanction of the Superintendent of Marine, allowed to buy timber either by public sale or private bargain, and he stated in his examination that both as regards price and quality the Dockyard was better supplied then than now. This plan appears to have been in

abeyance, and we would recommend a return to it all the more that the timber requirements of the Dockyard are now much smaller than formerly. In coal also we would be disposed to give the Superintendent discretion beyond mere existing requirements when prices are unusually low; and authorise him to purchase by private contract when the tenders offered in reply to his public advertisement are in excess of the fair and reasonable figure fixed as the maximum price. We are aware of, and have not overlooked, the general objection to business on Government account being carried out otherwise than by public competition, but we think it would be overcome by ordering the purchasing officer to report his purchases in such form as would seem most likely to ensure for them the notice of the mercantile and trading community. Coal and timber are now such important articles of import, and their value is so well known from day to day, that any extravagant or dear purchase would at once attract attention and remark. The knowledge of this would in itself render the purchasing officer cautious in his operations; and with the information always available to him as to market value, stocks on hand, and quantities on the way, there should not be much room for mistake. Indeed, as already remarked, the amount of work done at the Dockyard is now so much reduced that it seems more than ever reasonable to look there for the same economy and prudent management as would obtain in a private yard, but this can never be attained in the matter of purchases unless the officer in charge has more freedom of action than at present.

23. We have had before us the principal officers of the Dockyard, and, in reply to our enquiry, all denied having ever had complaints made to them of difficulties thrown in the way of contractors at the time of delivery by the subordinates of the establishment. These subordinates, we are assured, have not the power in any way either to facilitate or retard the operations of contractors, and the officers alluded to declared themselves entirely ignorant of anything which does or can necessitate extra or irregular disbursements on the part of such contractors. There is, we think, a current belief in some quarters that contractors have been in the habit of making irregular disbursements, and we therefore feel bound to state that no evidence of irregularities of this character has come before us.

24. It has been the custom hitherto to charge the claims of the Dockyard against the Fund in the annual account which is furnished to it by the Accountant General, Bengal, the charge being supported by statements which show merely the total expenditure in each month on account of each ship and department. As an illustration of the working of this system, we would mention that the Dockyard statements for 1867-68 contained overcharges to the extent of Rs. 1,15,000, while credits due to the Fund for stores, &c., taken by the Dockyard, but not allowed for amounted in the same year to Rs. 93,000. These errors have been corrected in the accounts for 1868-69, and there is also some improvement, as stated above in paragraph 7, in the returns furnished by the Dockyard for this year;

but still the fact remains that the Fund is without any information for a whole year in regard to its liabilities to the Dockyard, forming, as they do, so large a portion of its expenditure. Indeed, from the overcharges and short-credits which have come to our notice, we do not hesitate to say that the accounts of the past few years are quite unreliable, and that without a thorough re-opening and investigation thereof, it is impossible to say how much of the Dockyard expenditure charged to the Port Fund has been properly and fairly debited thereto. Judging from the accounts we have taken up, the presumption is that the Fund has been greatly overcharged, for it must be remembered that, but for the appointment of this Committee, the items we have caused to be re-adjusted might have remained unnoticed, and the Fund have suffered proportionately. We consider that the Dockyard should present a bill at the close of every month for the stores and provisions supplied to the Port Fund, together with the original indents and acknowledgments of the officers to whom delivery is given. Bills for repairs and construction should be in detail, and should be sent to the Port Fund immediately after completion of each work. The system of charging these bills in the Government account with the Fund should also be discontinued, and the Government should present its claims to the Fund like any private creditor, and allow a reasonable time for examination and acceptance, after which payment should be made by cheque on the Bank of Bengal. The Fund should adopt the same course with regard to its demands against the Government.

25. The financial position of the Fund, taking the accounts as they now stand, may be thus described:—

Rs.

The debt to Government at the close of the year 1868-69 was	...	27,64,221
The value of the block at the same time was	...	22,12,610
Showing a deficiency of	...	5,51,611
At the end of 1869-70 the debt, it is expected, will have increased to	...	35,00,000.
And the value of block to	...	26,65,000.
Thus augmenting the deficiency, which will amount to about	...	8,35,000
And shewing (see Appendix B) an annual deficit of about 3½ lacs of rupees.		

26. The debt of the Fund has been incurred mainly in renewing the ships, moorings and other appliances of the Port, and this has been done to such an extent as may be said to amount to renovation of the whole block. The necessity for this expenditure may be attributed in a great measure to the cyclones of 1864 and 1867, which proved so destructive to the property of the Port Fund; but even without them it would have been necessary, we believe, to lay out a large sum on the block. The expenditure, without doubt, was increased by the circumstances mentioned in paragraphs 14 to 24, and the debt would have been smaller had the Fund received all the income appertaining to it, and been relieved of the charges on account of the Master Attendant's Department and of the Dockyard.

27. As there has sometimes been misapprehension on the point, we would observe that the existence of a large debt to the Government is quite compatible with perfect soundness in the position of the Fund, and that, indeed, were there no debt, there would be ground for the belief that the charges on the Shipping had been too high; in order, however, that a clear distinction may be preserved between the legitimate debt connected with the capital account of the Fund, and the debt, if any, arising from inadequacy of income to meet all charges belonging properly to the Profit and Loss Account of the year, we would recommend that the capital debt account be kept separately, and that no addition be made to it without the authority of the Government specially obtained.

28. The charges properly belonging to the Profit and Loss or Revenue and Charge Account of the year are at present understood to comprise all expenses for establishments, working and repairs, interest on debt, and a sufficient sum to represent the depreciation of Port vessels mooring, gear and other stock. This we consider to be quite correct, and it is essential, if the finances of the Fund are to be put on a thoroughly satisfactory footing, that the income should be sufficient to leave a moderate margin after providing for all these objects.

29. We propose then that the proper amount of the capital debt of the Fund having been once determined, the same should ordinarily remain unchanged, the annual amount of any surplus income, being carried to a reserve account, instead of being applied to the reduction of the

capital debt. The objection that in this way the Fund will be subjected to a unnecessarily high charge for interest, will be met by the investment of the reserve fund. We attach some importance to this proposal, as it appears impossible to avoid the idea that the state of the Fund is unsatisfactory, if it is necessary to take advance from the public Treasury on every occasion of the renewal of any part of the Port block.

30. The Port having been once equipped with such appliances as are considered necessary, all subsequent renewals should be made from the Fund formed out of surplus income.

31. Should there be any considerable accumulation of reserve funds at any future time, it would be matter for consideration whether there should be any re-adjustment of the Port charges, or whether the fund should be applied to improvements or to reduction of the capital debt.

32. With respect to the deficit caused by the excess of ordinary expenditure over ordinary income, we have duly considered the sources of revenue available to the Fund, and the nature of the charges borne by it. The revenue, we find, is obtained partly under Act XXX. of 1857, and partly under orders of the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor. The Port dues and Harbour Masters' fees come under the first class, and in both cases the rates levied are the highest allowed by law. Of the second class are mooring hire and fees for use of the wreck and anchor boats, the scale of charge being entirely under

the control of the local Government. There are also some miscellaneous receipts, as the earnings of the steam dredge *Agilator* and the tank boat, sale proceeds of stores, and magazine fees.

33. Among the items requiring special notice, the first appears to be the Port-dues, which are in fact a tonnage duty on vessels entering the Port, and have been paid hitherto by the merchant shipping only. They reached the highest figure in 1864-65, and gradually declined in the two succeeding years owing to the commercial depression of that period; but they have since steadily increased, and may be expected to yield in future a sum of Rs. 2 lacs annually. There is no probability of any immediate or material advance beyond this limit at the present rate of duty, and to obtain a sufficient sum to cover the deficit, will entail an increase of the tonnage duty to 10 annas per ton. We do not consider that such an enhancement of the duty would be politic in the present circumstances of the Port, as we shall have occasion to explain.

34. No material increase can be expected of the income from Harbour Masters' fees and earnings of anchor boats, and the completion of the jetties may diminish the proceeds of mooring hire, which is daily a rate of charge for the occupation of the Port moorings, fixed and swinging. It is levied according to a progressive scale, which increases in the ratio of 8 annas for every additional 100 tons up to 1,000, and thereafter in the proportion of one rupee for every additional 250 tons. The rates charged in the months of June to October are double those which prevail in the rest of the year. This source of income was

greatly affected in 1864-65 and in 1867-68 by the cyclones of those years, which damaged the moorings and rendered them unprofitable for a time. The damage has since been repaired, and the receipts in 1868-69 show a corresponding increase.

35. The earnings of the steam dredge *Agilator* are derived principally from Government, and the large receipts in 1866-67 and 1867-68 arose from the employment of that vessel during the famine in Orissa. It is only in certain seasons of the year, and under certain conditions, that the *Agilator* can be engaged with advantage on the special work of keeping the channels open, and when she cannot be so employed, she is placed, as occasion requires, at the disposal of Government.

36. Advertising to the expenditure of the Port, it has been indicated in paragraph 12 that the charges for establishment are not susceptible of reduction, and this view is fully borne out by the accounts for 1867-68 and 1868-69, and the expenditure incurred to date in the present year. On the other hand the expenditure for stores may be reduced by judicious and economical management, as already pointed out, and in view of the present efficient state of the block, we have allowed for a probable diminution of charge under this head in our estimate for 1869-70, Appendix B. The rate of interest now charged by Government is 5 per cent, but in our opinion it may properly be reduced to 4½ per cent. with effect from the present year, as that is the rate proposed in the Bill which it is intended to introduce into the Council of the Lieutenant-Governor "better to provide for the maintenance and improvement of the Port of

Calcutta." Further relief may be afforded to the Revenue Account by reducing the charge for depreciation on the cost of the screw moorings from 10 to 2½ per cent., and this reduction, in our opinion, is necessary and quite unobjectionable.* It would also be proper to reduce the charge for depreciation on the value of the fire engine boat from 10 to 5 per cent., as she is built of iron and is subject to very little wear and tear.

37. Supposing effect were given to the foregoing propositions for reducing the charges of the Fund, their financial result would be as follows, and would still leave a considerable deficiency to be covered either by an addition to the taxation of the Port, or by an annual contribution from Government.

	Rs.
Estimated deficit in 1869-70, <i>vide</i> Appendix B.	3,29,400
Deduct—	
Abatement of charge on account of	
Master Attendant's Office ...	Rs. 7,400
Abatement of charge on account of	
Bholeahs	,, 3,900
Abatement of charge on account of	
Dockyard establishments	,, 8,900
Abatement of interest	,, 13,820
Abatement of depreciation	,, 78,000
	1,12,020
Deficit still remaining	Rs. 2,17,380

* When 10 per cent. was fixed as the rate for depreciation, regard was had to the fact that the more durable and costly part of the mooring stock, the heavy anchors and cables, had been already supplied by the Government without charge, and that it was mainly to the cost of new buoys, shackles, and smaller gear liable to injury that the percentage would apply. The larger part of the expense of the new moorings consists in the cost of the massive ground chain and the piles, both of which are calculated to last for very many years.

38. From what we have stated it will be seen that, while possibly greater economy can be exercised in the administration of affairs relating to the Port Fund, it is hardly probable that, even with the most rigid scrutiny, the annual ordinary expenditure can be kept within a sum which will be covered by the receipts from the Shipping on the present basis of taxation. A Bill before His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor's Council proposes to double the Port-dues, but in consideration of the very fair share towards the cost of maintaining the Port in an efficient state, which is already borne by the special class of property that would be most affected by such an increase, and the prominent position which it at present occupies as one of, if not the most expensive Port in the world, it seems to us that such a measure should only be resorted to as a last resource.

39. As the case stands at present, the Shipping has nominally to bear the entire expenses of lighting and buoying the river from the Sandheads to Calcutta, keeping open and surveying the channels, and laying down and preserving in a state of efficiency the moorings within the limits of the Port, together with the various establishments necessary therefor. Practically, the Supreme Government is obliged to come forward and meet from the National Exchequer large deficiencies in the Port Fund, and of late at short intervals, as shown by the sum written off during the first seven years of its existence: say, Rs. 9,39,831-4-7 (*vide* para. 2), and an indebtedness which it is estimated will amount to 35,00,000 by the end of 1869-70. It cannot of course be expected that the Shipping should be taxed for the repayment of such sums as these, which have, to a great extent, been incurred by reason of frequent cyclones; and

His Excellency the Governor General in Council has admitted the responsibility of Government in the matter by offering to remit a large portion of the debt so soon as the Port Fund is put in a solvent condition in regard to ordinary annual income and expenditure. It has been shown that the latter cannot be effected if even the Port-dues are doubled; and it cannot be doubted, from the immediate opposition shown in India and England to the proposed measure of that nature, what the effect of it would be on the Port.

40. Instead of adopting such a course, it seems to us that it would be better for the Imperial Government to annually contribute an amount sufficient to cover the expense of lighting and buoying the river, taking 3 out of the 4 annas at present contributed by the Shipping under the head of Port-dues towards reducing the cost. We think we can show that by this plan the rest of the annual expenditure debited to the Port Fund would be so much less than the receipts from mooring hire and Harbour Masters' fees as to leave a surplus each year towards a sinking fund for the renewal of moorings in case of further-cyclones, after paying interest on the capital debt of the Fund.

41. As Government is already forced to come to the aid of the Port Fund whenever it is in difficulties, and the limit of such assistance is only bounded by its necessities, the change to a voluntary annual contribution would be more apparent than real, while it would doubtless be more satisfactory to know that only a moderate sum would be required for a series of years, and to have

this amount regulated with tolerable exactness. Nor does it seem unreasonable to ask that Government should bear a share of the expense necessary for the proper lighting, surveying, and buoying of the channel, leading to the capital of India. Assuming that the cost of maintaining these works is at present kept as low as possible, it is evident that the same annual outlay would be required whether the Port were visited by 100 vessels in a year or by 1,000, while if from any cause the trade of Calcutta should decrease to such an extent as to require only the smaller number of ships, it would never be expected that the Port-dues should cover the expenditure. It is clear therefore that the cost of keeping open navigable communication between Calcutta and the Sandheads is not in fairness entirely chargeable to commerce, for, on political grounds alone, this Port being the only one of importance in Bengal, must be preserved.

42. That the Imperial Revenue is largely benefited by the increased trade of Calcutta need hardly be pointed out, nor the fact that producers of staple articles of export are enriched in proportion to the quantity for which a market is found, and the prices obtainable. Whatever tends to enhance the cost of transporting must operate to the disadvantage of the masses, especially of an agricultural country, for the produce has to compete in foreign markets with productions more or less similar in character of other States which may have advantages of proximity, or of various other kinds, to offset the cheap labor of more remote regions. From this point of view, the proposed question of raising the Port-dues becomes divested of its local character.

43. The Government of India has already acknowledged its liability to contribute to the maintenance of Ports in the orders recently issued respecting the indebtedness of the Port Funds in British Burmah, the orders being to the following effect:—"The Governor General in Council is convinced that it would be highly impolitic to add to the charges of the Ports of British Burmah, which already compete at a disadvantage with neighboring foreign provinces, and he does not wish to press for the amalgamation of the Port Funds of Bassein and Rangoon, in order to provide for the deficit of the one from the surplus of the other. To appropriate in this way any portion of the small surplus of the Rangoon Fund would endanger its solvency, and the interests of the two Ports are not sufficiently connected to make the measure just. The Government of India will, therefore, in case of need, be prepared to relieve these Ports of all the obligations now due from them, and to contribute in future such funds as may be sufficient to maintain them in a state of efficiency without overburdening the Shipping with charges."

44. The obligation of the Government to grant such assistance is beginning to be recognised in England, and in a recent debate in Parliament, although the House did not record a decision, weighty arguments were put forward in favor of this view which has already been adopted in the United States and in some of the leading countries of Europe. In 1867 Parliament passed a Bill authorizing the Government to compound with the Limerick Harbour Commissioners a debt amounting with interest to £230,000, and to advance to them a further

sum not exceeding £20,000 for the purpose of constructing a graving-dock, and otherwise improving the Port. The grounds on which this assistance was granted appear to have been that various projects for the improvement of the Harbour, and especially a bridge which was to have cost about £23,000, but had involved the expenditure of £89,000, had caused such a drain on the available funds, that it became necessary to keep up shipping rates and other Port-dues to an amount which had been found to interfere most seriously with the progress of the city. While Waterford, Cork, Belfast, and other places had been rapidly increasing in the amount of their tonnage, Limerick alone was going back, and Parliament accordingly compounded the debt for a sum of £65,000, of which £55,000 were commuted into a rent charge of 4·0729 per cent. to be paid by half-yearly instalments for a period of fifty years, and the balance of £10,000 was ordered to be made a first charge on the tolls of the bridge at 3½ per cent. per annum. These concessions, it was considered, would relieve the Harbour from the heavy dues which had tended to diminish the trade of the Port; and to place it on a level with the other neighbouring Ports, a special advance of £20,000 was ordered for the construction of a graving-dock and other improvements. As a further instance of the same character, we may refer to the law which was passed in France in 1866, by which was abolished the tonnage-dues, which weighed heavily on ships entering French Ports. The same principle has been in operation with respect to the London Port-dues, in reference to which it has been stated "that it is highly desirable that expert pilots, brilliant lights, and every other means that it is possible

to devise, should be afforded to render navigation safe and expeditious. But to secure these advantages, it is indispensable that the charges on their account should be moderate. If they be otherwise, navigators are not unfrequently tempted to resort to what are less expensive, though less secure, channels. This principle has not, however obvious, been always kept sufficiently in view either in this or in other countries. During the latter years of the war, and down to 1825, the charges on account of docks, lights, pilotage, &c., on ships in the Thames, and most other British Ports, were exceedingly heavy, and would, no doubt, had they been maintained, have materially injured our commerce. We are glad, however, to have to state that the circumstances now alluded to have been materially, or rather wholly, changed within the last 20 or 30 years. In 1825 the various dock monopolies expired; and a very great reduction has since been made in the charges on account of the docks, which, as already seen, are now very moderate."

45. We propose therefore that the expenses of the Port outside the boundaries, comprising the cost of lighting, surveying, and buoying the channels, should be defrayed by the State, which should take credit for 3 annas per ton, or 75 per cent. of the Port-dues. The expense to Government which this arrangement would involve may be stated as follows:—

Establishments of the "Agitator," Survey and	Rs.
Buoy Vessels, Light Vessels and Light	
Houses ...	1,53,500
Cost of stores and repairs ...	2,10,000
Two-thirds of the cost of the Office Estab-	
lishment of the Port Fund ...	19,500
	<u>3,83,000</u>
DEDUCT—Port-dues at 3 annas per	
ton ... Rs. 1,50,000	
Sale proceeds of stores, &c., ...	10,000
	<u>1,60,000</u>
	<u>2,23,000</u>

Rs. 2,23,000 represents the charge for the present year 1869-70. In addition to this, the State would provide the cost of the two new Lights Vessels which are set down in Appendix B. at Rs. 2,05,000, and would take over from the Fund the *Agitator*, the Light Houses, and the Surveying, Buoy, and Light Vessels.

46. In considering the effect on the Fund itself of the arrangements we now propose, the first point is that of the amount of the capital debt of the Fund. We think that to facilitate a settlement, the Fund may properly accept as a part of the debt the aggregate of the losses on the Profit and Loss Accounts of the past five years, as stated in the published accounts of the Fund. The remainder of the debt must be such a sum as will cover the value of the present block of the Port, and the value of such

1864-65 ... Rs.	2,85,629
1865-66 ... "	1,73,633
1866-67 ... "	1,49,623
1867-68 ... "	3,17,670
1868-69 ... "	3,46,151
Total Rs. ...	<u>12,78,811</u>

additional block as may be necessary for the complete equipment of the Port.

These sums may be taken as follows:—

Aggregate of deficits on Profit and Loss Ac-	Rs.
count, 1864-65 to 1868-69 ...	12,79,000
Block on 1st April 1869 Appendix C, about	12,55,000
Amount required to complete moorings,	
&c, say ...	5,66,000
	<u>Total Rs. 31,00,000</u>

The interest on Rs. 31,00,000 will be Rs. 1,39,500, and the position of the Fund will be as follows:—

	Rs.	Rs.
Port-dues at 1 anna per ton ...	50,000	
Moorings hire ...	2,75,000	
Harbour Masters' fees ...	1,25,000	
Other receipts ...	47,000	
	<u>4,97,000</u>	
Establishment of the Harbour		
Master's Department, Boats, and		
Moyapore Magazine ...	2,00,000	
Stores and repairs ...	75,000	
One-third cost of Office Establishment	9,800	
Interest on debt ...	1,39,500	
	<u>4,24,300</u>	
Balance Rs. ...	<u>72,700</u>	

47. His Excellency the Viceroy in Council has expressed a willingness to remit a large portion of the existing debt whenever the Fund may be put on a basis to meet ordinary annual expenditure out of ordinary annual income, and there can be but little doubt that sooner or later the entire amount would have to be can-

celled, as it is shown in paras. 33 and 39 of this report, that even the proposed measure of doubling the Port-dues would not suffice to meet the deficit, much less to allow of any reduction of the sum for which the Fund is indebted to Government. This debt is expected at the close of the present financial year to stand at Rs. 35,00,000 (para. 25), and if to this sum be added simple interest at $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, the debt at the close of a further period of 10 years will amount to Rs. 50,75,000. On the other hand, should the Government be pleased to accept the proposal we have sketched, they would have to pay Rs. 2,23,000 per annum (para. 45), or at the close of 10 years Rs. 22,30,000, shewing a difference in favor of the scheme suggested of nearly Rs. 24,00,000 after allowing for interest on the annual payments. Under this same scheme the Port Fund will not only be able to meet its annual expenditure, including interest to Government at $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, on the debt of Rs. 31,00,000 mentioned in para. 46, but will also have accumulated Rs. 72,700 annually (para. 46), or Rs. 7,27,000 at the end of 10 years, provided there are no extraordinary demands on the Fund for replacement of block. The accumulated sum of Rs. 7,27,000 would yield by investment Rs. 1,65,000 as interest. It will be seen further that repairs have been provided for in the estimated expenditure (para. 46), so that the whole of this accumulated balance would be available for renewal of or additions to block, or, if not required for these purposes, to the partial liquidation of the debt due to Government. Should the amount available for transfer to the Reserve Fund prove to be less than the sum expected, and equal only to Rs. 50,000 annually, still the Fund in 10 years will have

accumulated Rs. 6,14,000. At all events an end would be put by these arrangements to those repeated calls on the Government for assistance which have proved so inconvenient and unsatisfactory.

48. We had intended to submit, for the consideration of Government, a recommendation that the affairs of the Port should be administered by a Board, in which the commercial and trading interests should be represented, and that its accounts should be audited by an agency independent of the Marine Department. These objects, however, will be fully secured by the appointment of the proposed Commissioners, and by the audit contemplated in Section 52 of the proposed Bill.

49. The conclusions at which we have arrived may be recapitulated as follows :—

I.—That the Fund in some instances has not received credit for all its dues, and has been charged with items not belonging to it. (Paras. 4 to 11.)

II.—That the system of obtaining Dockyard supplies is susceptible of improvement. (Paras. 14 to 22.)

III.—That the Fund cannot be placed in a solvent and satisfactory condition by any increase to its present sources of income, or by a reduction of its expenditure. (Paras. 25 to 39.)

IV.—That the Government participates in the benefit of the Port, and should therefore share in the expenses of it. (Paras. 4, and 40 to 44.)

To remedy the existing evils, we have recommended—
I.—That the action of the Port Fund should be confined to the limits of the Port.

II.—That the Government should undertake to keep open the communication between the Port and the sea.

III.—That, if the last point is agreed to, the Government shall appropriate three-fourths of the present Port-due of 4 annas a ton.

IV.—That the account of the capital debt of the Fund be revised and placed on a new footing.

We have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servants,

E. F. HARRISON,

H. HOWE,

F. G. ELDRIDGE,

J. R. BULLEN SMITH.

E. W. KELLNER.

Although I do not quite agree with all that is stated in the report, I have not thought it necessary to record any dissent, and have therefore signed the report; being ready, if called upon by Government, to submit any explanation that may be demanded. The principal points on which I differ are contained in paras. 17 and 18.

H. HOWE.

APPENDIX A.

STEAM DREDGE ACQUISITION.

From 1st April 1886 to 31st March 1887.

	EMPLOYMENT.		EXPENDITURE.		Rs.
	Days.	Hours.	Tons.	Rs.	
Dredging and Surveying ...	on 27	245	Coal, English	48,912	
Towing Port Fund Vessels ...	on 14	122	Country	1667	3,832
Towing Government Vessels ...	on 16	167	Oil	389	2,816
Towing Vessels of Government ...	on 15	104	Other stores	14,394	
			Builder's account for repairs	6,483	
			Engineer's account	5,406	
			Food and water	2,223	
			Assess	2,223	
			Establishment	10,656	
			Depreciation	11,022	
					61,207
				110,810	

DIVISION OF THE REMOISSE EXPENDITURE.

	Port Fund.		Famine.		Rs.
	Rs.	Annas.	Rs.	Annas.	
Cost of English Coal to be divided between Port Fund (for towing days) Famine Account, and Government of Bengal	11%	of 48,912=	9,379	38,010	5,830
Cost of Country Coal for dredging, to be borne equally by Port Fund and Famine	11%	of 48,912=	5,322		
Engine-room stores divided proportionately to hours under steam—					
Port Fund	387	of 14,394	683	1,576	
Famine	104	of 14,394			
Government, Bengal	104	of 14,394			280

DIVISION OF THE FOREGOING EXPENDITURE.

	Port Fund.	Famine.	Govt. of Bengal.
All other stores, establishment, depreciation, &c., to be divided proportionately to days of active employment	1/3 of 61,207 = 20,402	1/3 of 61,207 = 20,402	1/3 of 61,207 = 20,402
...
...
Total	Rs. 22,252	Rs. 22,252	Rs. 22,252
Total amount to be credited to Port Fund	Rs. A. P. 94,567 0 0		
Amount already admitted and paid	73,927 8 6		
Amount to be brought to credit	20,639 7 6		

STEAM DREDGE AGITATOR.

From 1st April 1867 to 31st March 1868.

EMPLOYMENT.			EXPENDITURE.		
	Days.	Hours.	Tons.	Rs.	Rs.
Dredging, Surveying, &c.	on 117	636	Coal, English	1,423	50,500
Towing Port Fund Vessels	on 7	33	" Country	616	6,338
Famine Relief Operations	on 35	323	Oil and Engine-room stores	...	4,229
Towing and proceeding on account of Government of Bengal	on 72	742	Other stores	...	8,563
			Builder's account for repairs	...	4,305
			Engineers' "	...	7,123
			Provisions	...	2,482
			Arsenal stores	...	799
Expenditure of Coal per hour, English	Cwt. 22.9		Establishment	...	24,677
Country	27.0		Depreciation	...	11,566
					60,000
					1,21,573

DIVISION OF THE ABOVE EXPENDITURE.

Coal supplied for Dredging was half country and half English. Price of 1 ton mixed coal Rs. 23-8.

	Cwt.	Tons.	Port Fund.	Famine.	Govt. Bengal.
24.78 cwt. mixed coal lasts 1 hour, consumption of 696 hours =	696 × 24.78 =	862			
Cost at Rs. 23-8 per ton =	Rs. 20,257 =		20,257		
English Coal for Famine Relief operations, expenditure for 322 hours at	Cwt. 22.9 =	369 at	35-8 =	13,099	
Balance of Coal Rs. 23,983 to be divided between Port Fund and Government, Bengal, in proportion to hours employed in Towing					
Oil and Engine-room Stores divided in proportion to hours under-steam			23982 =	1,025	22,957
			4229 =	1,720	
			4229 =	759	
All other Stores, establishment, depreciation, &c., to be divided proportionately to days of active employment			4229 =	1,750	
			60000 =	31,798	
			60000 =	9,745	
			60000 =	18,463	
			Total.	54,800	23,603 43,170
Total amount to be credited to Port Fund	Rs. A. P. 66,773 0 0				
Amount of claim already adjusted	37,550 8 0				
Balance to be brought to credit	29,222 8 0				
Balance due on account of 1866-67	20,639 7 6				
	49,861 15 6				

E. W. KELLNER,
Secretary to the Committee.

APPENDIX B.

REVENUE.

INCOME.	ACTUALS, 1868-69.	ESTIMATE, 1869-70.	EXPLANATORY REMARKS.
	Rs.	Rs.	
Port-dues	1,94,070	2,00,000	
Mooring hire	2,75,174	2,75,000	
Harbour Masters' fees ...	1,26,070	1,25,000	
Wreck and Anchor Department	34,585	35,000	This includes refunds on account of salvage paid to divers.
Tank Boat	3,951	4,000	
Moyapore Magazine...	3,345	3,500	
Earnings of <i>Agitator</i> ...	28,862	25,000	
Fines	819	1,000	
Miscellaneous	1,100	1,000	
Sale of old Stores	23,204	12,000	The credit in 1868-69 comprised the proceeds of 2 years.
Deficit	3,46,181	3,29,400	
	10,37,759	10,10,000	

ACCOUNT.

EXPENDITURE.	ACTUALS, 1868-69.	ESTIMATE, 1869-70.	EXPLANATORY REMARKS.
Establishments —	Rs.	Rs.	
<i>Agitator</i>	24,159	26,300	
Survey and Buoy Vessels ...	59,500	60,000	
Floating Light Vessels ...	65,716	60,500	
Light Houses	7,068	6,700	
Harbour Master's Department	1,44,292	1,51,500	The excess in 1869-70 provides for the salary of 5 additional men sanctioned by Government but not yet entertained.
Bholedus and Panways ...	3,000	3,000	
Office	29,417	21,000	Annual increment to pay of establishment.
Master Attendant's Office (1)	13,366	13,400	
Superintendent, Dockyard (1)	5,227	5,200	
Builder and Surveyor . (1)	5,267	5,300	
Chief Engineer ... (1)	3,557	3,000	
Naval Store-keeper ... (1)	5,087	5,100	
Custom House	1,181	1,200	
Miscellaneous	124	...	
Fire Engine Boats	6,393	6,400	
Moyapore Magazine	2,933	3,000	
Mooring Boats, Experiment, &c.	29,321	29,200	
Tank Boat	956	900	
Wreck and Anchor Boats ...	10,248	10,300	

EXPENDITURE.	ACTUALS, 1868-69.	ESTIMATE, 1869-70.	EXPLANATORY REMARKS.
Divers paid by Salvage ...	5,504	6,000	
Destruction of Wrecks	404	.....
Interest	1,09,687	1,38,200	Interest at 5 per cent. on Rs. 27,64,000.
Arsenal for blue lights ...	8,002	8,000	
Dockyard for Stores & Repairs.	3,38,361	2,75,000	Probability of smaller repairs than in 1868-69, and reduc- tion generally in dockyard charges.
Depreciation	1,62,318	1,80,000	Enhanced value of block.
Bad Bills written off	13,914	.....
Miscellaneous	237	.....
	10,37,759	10,10,900	

CAPITAL ACCOUNT.

Light Vessels	1,13,782	2,05,000	} <i>McCor.</i> ...Rs. 1,25,000 <i>Planet</i> 80,000 One Row Boat.
Surveying Vessels and Boats...	3,080	2,200	
Wreck and Anchor Boats ...	12,495	nil.	
Harbour Master's Boats ...	33,628	10,000	One heave-up Boat.
Moorings	1,61,820	4,00,000	Actual expenditure to September Rs. 2,02,000. The new moorings are now being laid in the nor- thern division of the Port.
Channel Buoys	9,060	9,000	
Fire Engine Boats, &c. ...	612	nil.	
	3,84,477	6,25,200	

E. W. KELLNER,

Secretary to the Committee.

APPENDIX C.

Value on 1st April 1869 of the Block of the Calcutta Port Fund.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY.	VALUE.	TOTAL.
	Rs.	Rs.
OUTSIDE BOUNDARIES—		
Channel Buoys	52,021	
Diamond Harbour Moorings ...	980	
Floating Light Vessels	4,60,513	
Light Houses	78,326	
<i>Agitator</i>	2,31,424	
Surveying Vessels	1,29,625	
		9,52,850
WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES—		
Anchor Moorings	2,42,757	
Screw Moorings	6,48,611	
Harbour Masters' Boats	1,43,351	
Fire Engine Boats	82,003	
Wreck and Anchor Boats..	51,679	
Tank Boat	7,152	
Bholahs and Panaways	° 8,848	
Moyapore Magazine	74,307	
		12,59,721
		22,12,610

* Of this sum Rs. 4,328 are the value of the Bholahs stated in para. 10 to be charge-
able to Government.

E. W. KELLNER,

Secretary to the Committee.

Port Improvement Trust.

The necessary legislation for the constitution of this body was introduced into the local Council some months ago, but finding that the measure proposed only to give the Commissioners charge of the river bank, excluding them from the management of the Port proper, the Committee at once communicated with the Government of Bengal with a view to obtaining for the Bill before the Council a somewhat wider scope. These communications will be found below, and their result may be briefly stated,—to the effect that although the Lieutenant-Governor did not consider the Committee of the Chamber entitled, with reference to anything which had passed previously, to express disappointment at the Bill as originally introduced, His Honor has been pleased largely to concur in their views, and has added to the Bill certain clauses empowering the local Government at any time to extend the sphere of the Board of Commissioners by making over to them the duties and powers of conservators of the Port as defined by the Act. The effect of this would be what the Committee desire, *viz.* that the whole Port proper should be under the exclusive control of the Commissioners in all its departments, an arrangement from which the Committee would

anticipate the best results as regards economical and efficient management. Although the clauses referred to merely give power to the Bengal Government to hand over the whole Port to the Commissioners when they think proper, the Committee are led to hope, from the letter dated 29th April to the Government of India, (*vide page 76*) that, should the propositions contained therein be approved of, the Lieutenant-Governor looks forward to the completion of the Trust on the more extended basis at no very distant date. It will be observed that the Lieutenant-Governor does not propose to give the Commissioners any control over the river beyond the limits of the Port, and although the Committee did at one time advocate a measure by which the whole 120 miles of Pilots' water should be under the Board, more mature consideration has led them to acquiesce in the less extensive scheme. The management of the Port proper will afford the Commissioners at first a not excessive and well defined sphere of action, and the Committee doubt not that, in the event of this experiment proving as successful as they anticipate, Government will not be indisposed to consider hereafter the larger measure which will probably, by that time, be freed from some of the difficulties which now surround its adoption.

From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of Bengal.

Calcutta, 28th February 1870.

I am desired by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to request you will be so good as to state for the information of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor that they are in receipt of intelligence regarding the proposed Bill to provide for the maintenance and improvement of the Port of Calcutta which, if it be confirmed by the Report of the Select Committee, places the entire question of the Port Trust at complete variance with its constitution and objects as defined by the supreme Government and understood by the Chamber of Commerce.

If the Report of the Select Committee has been presented to the Government of Bengal, and if His Honor will permit the Chamber to be furnished with a copy of it, the Committee will be glad of the opportunity of considering in what respects the provisions of the Bill are likely to be modified.

From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of Bengal.

Calcutta, 9th March 1870.

Although the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have not received an acknowledgment of their letter of the 28th ultimo, regarding the Bill for the maintenance and improvement of the Port, the apprehensions they then expressed as to the probable modification of the constitution of the proposed Port Trust have been amply

confirmed by the publication in this day's Gazette of the Select Committee's Report on the Bill and of the Bill as amended in accordance with that report: and they are of opinion that while the proposals of the Select Committee do not warrant their recommendation that the Bill may be passed as amended, there is abundant reason why the Bill in its original unaltered state should be re-committed for further consideration: and they respectfully appeal to the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor that the amended Bill be not proceeded with in His Honor's Council.

After the many years' discussion which has attended the original plan of a River Trust it is impossible for the Committee to refrain from expressing their disappointment at the singular issue involved in this last report.

The proposed establishment of a Trust the jurisdiction of which was to have extended from the northern limit of the Port to the Sandheads, the entire river establishment in every department under Government being placed under the authority of the Trustees, has been dwarfed to a plan of a commission entrusted with the charge of the wharves and jetties of the Port, and a large and comprehensive scheme has been reduced to the dimensions of an insignificant measure capable of being conducted without the elaborate machinery of a formal legislative enactment, and the supervision of a corporation whose duties would appear to be not very far removed from the duties of ordinary wharfingers, and which could be sufficiently discharged by an agency less costly and less cumbersome than is now proposed.

In asking for the re-commitment of this Bill for alterations and additions the Committee do so in the earnest hope that His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor will give such instructions as shall restore the measure to its former character as always understood by the Chamber and implied in the original title which was a Bill to provide for the maintenance and improvement of the Port of Calcutta, and not a Bill for merely facilitating the landing and shipping of goods.

The Committee are of opinion that if such a Trust is desirable and is to be capable of rendering good service alike to the Government, and the Trade of Calcutta it must have under it the whole management and control of the Port, within the limits of which no other authority must exist save always that of the local Government.

The Committee beg leave to remind the Lieutenant-Governor how the revenues of the Port have been wasted in time past, and would respectfully but earnestly express the conviction that any measure which does not put the whole income and expenditure of the Port under the proposed Trust will fail to command the confidence and practical co-operation of the Mercantile community whose support His Honor has expressed himself desirous of obtaining.

From Govt. of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce.

Calcutta, 29th March 1870.

I am directed by the Lieutenant-Governor to acknow-

No. 879, dated this day, and
draft of sections referred
to in paragraphs 8
ledge the receipt of your letters of
the 28th ultimo and 9th instant, and
to forward for the information of the Chamber, copy of
the letter marginally noted, addressed to the Government
of India in the Public Works Department, on the points
raised by the Chamber, in connection with the measures
now under discussion for the maintenance and improve-
ment of the Port of Calcutta.

From Government of Bengal to Government of India.

Calcutta, 29th March 1870.

After the correspondence with the Government of
From Government of Bengal, to Government of India, No. 2109, dated 31st May 1869. India, marginally noted,
From Government of India, No. 415, dated 5th July 1869 a Bill better
" " of Bengal, " 4156, " 28th " to provide for
" " of India, " 529, " 9th Aug. 1869 the mainte-
" " of Bengal, " 4747, " 14th " nance and improvement of the Port of Calcutta,' was
" " of India, " 558, " 31st " prepared by the Assistant Secretary to this Government in
the Legislative Department, and was published in the
Calcutta Gazette during the month of September.

2. The Bill was subsequently brought before the Lieutenant-Governor's Council on the 15th of January, was referred to a Select Committee, and was again published in the *Calcutta Gazette*.

3. While the Bill was before the Select Committee, the Lieutenant-Governor was given to understand that some of the clauses restricting the powers of the Com-

missioners were regarded with disfavor by the non-official members of the Council, but eventually the clauses relating to the functions and authority of the Commissioners were for the most part accepted by the Committee, the only material exception being the elision of Section 27 of the Bill, which provided that the Commissioners should be obliged to record any resolution when directed by the Lieutenant-Governor to do so. This section was inserted in compliance with the orders of the Government of India, that the local Government should be able not only to exercise a power of veto on all the proceedings of the Trust, but also to require the Trust to give effect to any instructions issued for its guidance.

4. It was not until the 10th of March that the Lieutenant-Governor became aware that the Bill was likely to be received with disfavor by the mercantile community. A letter then received from the Chamber of Commerce, dated 9th March, informed the Lieutenant-Governor that disappointment was felt with the general scope of the measure, while subsequent communications from the President of the Chamber, and a letter from Messrs. Gladstone, Wylie and Co., (which firm does not belong to the Chamber of Commerce) have evinced a very strong feeling against the restrictions which the Bill imposes on the authority of the Commissioners.

5. With respect to the first point, *viz.*, the general scope of the measure, the following extracts from the letter of the Chamber of Commerce will best show the views which are entertained:—

“After the many years discussion which has attended the original plan of a river Trust, it is impossible for the Committee to refrain from expressing their disappointment at the singular issue involved in this last report. The proposed establishment of a Trust, the jurisdiction of which was to have extended from the northern limit of the Port to the Sandheads, the entire river establishment in every department under Government being placed under the authority of the Trustees, has been dwarfed to a plan of a commission entrusted with the charge of the wharfs and jetties of the Port, and a large and comprehensive scheme has been reduced to the dimensions of an insignificant measure capable of being conducted without the elaborate machinery of a formal legislative enactment, and the supervision of a corporation whose duties would appear to be not very far removed from the duties of ordinary wharfingers, and which could be sufficiently discharged by an agency less costly and less cumbersome than is now proposed.

“The Committee are of opinion that if such a Trust is desirable and is to be capable of rendering good service alike to the Government and the trade of Calcutta, it must have under it the whole management and control of the Port, within the limits of which no other authority must exist save always that of the local Government.

“The Committee beg leave to remind the Lieutenant-Governor how the revenues of the Port have been wasted in time past, and would respectfully but earnestly express the conviction that any measure which does not

" put the whole income and expenditure of the Port under
 " the proposed Trust, will fail to command the confidence
 " and practical co-operation of the mercantile community."

6. It will be remarked that in these extracts the views of the Chamber are not signified with precision. In one paragraph they speak of a jurisdiction from the northern limit of the Port to the Sandheads: in another they appear to limit their suggestion to the management and control of the Port. The Lieutenant-Governor believes that the latter expresses the real wishes of the mercantile community, for in a report recently made by a Committee, of which the President and Vice-President of the Chamber were members, on the affairs of the Port Fund, the specific proposal is that the Port only shall be made over to a Trust or Board of Commissioners, the navigable channels beyond the limits of the Port remaining, as at present, under the Government.

7. The Lieutenant-Governor is of opinion that the arrangements connected either with such a measure as that last referred to, or with the larger measure of placing both the Port and the river down to the Sandheads, including the light vessels, under a Board of Commissioners, will require very careful consideration, and that it would be inexpedient to take any such step until the Commissioners under the Bill as it now stands have been some little time established, and experience has been obtained of the working of such a constitution in connection with the immediate objects of the Bill as now drawn.

8. But the Lieutenant-Governor has no objection

to look forward to the possible extension of the Commissioners' functions, and would propose in that view, with the approval of His Excellency the Governor General, to add to the present Bill some sections which will enable such an extension to be carried out hereafter. I am desirous to submit a draft of sections which have been prepared for this purpose for His Excellency's consideration.

9. The Lieutenant-Governor feels bound, however, to add upon this part of the subject that the history of the case does not appear to warrant either the expectation which the Chamber of Commerce appear to have entertained, or the feeling of disappointment which is expressed in their letter. It is true that in June 1863, it was proposed by the Government of India to create a Trust which should have charge of the Port and the river and " be entrusted with the care of the moorings, lights, &c. pilotage of the Hooghly,—everything in short as far as the Sandheads," and that the proposal was at the time accepted with favor by the Chamber of Commerce. But this proposal was at no time taken up by the local Government, nor was it pressed by the Government of India. For nearly two years it remained without notice; and in March 1865 the local Government reported in strong terms against it. Meanwhile the Committee of which the Hon'ble Mr. Taylor was President had been appointed by the Government of India, to report on the question of a railway bridge over the Hooghly, and " on other matters connected with the convenience of the trade and shipping of Calcutta." The

mercantile community was represented on this Committee by Mr. D. Cowie, Mr. J. N. Bullen and Mr. G. Ross. The Committee did not adopt the extensive plan put forward by the Government of India in 1863, but limited their recommendations to a measure of exactly the dimensions subsequently assumed by the Bengal Act X. of 1866. Nor, when that Act was passed, was it in any way disapproved by the mercantile community, so far as the Lieutenant-Governor is aware, save in respect to the one point of the Trust being connected with the Municipality of Calcutta, in a manner which was deemed likely to be injurious to the interests for which the Trust was specially created.

10. Hence, when it became necessary to supersede Act X. of 1866, the only object in view was to change the constitution of the Trust, not to enlarge the purposes for which it was created.

11. With respect to the second ground of objection taken to the Bill, *viz.*, the restrictions imposed on the authority of the Commissioners, the Lieutenant-Governor thinks that again he cannot more clearly show the views which are entertained than by giving the following extracts from the letter received from Messrs. Gladstone, Wylie and Co., and from a communication made to the Lieutenant-Governor by the President of the Chamber of Commerce:—

Letter from Messrs. Gladstone, Wylie and Co.

2. "We consider this Bill objectionable both in prin-

"ciple and detail,—in principle because all the powers it confers are practically conferred on the Government of Bengal, not on the Commissioners, and in detail as regards many of its most important provisions.

3. "It seems to us that there are only two ways in which the Trust, which it is now proposed to create, can be worked with any approach to efficiency,—either by constituting it a Government Department, administered entirely by Government officers and subject as such to the orders of Government in every respect, or by constituting it an independent body with all the necessary powers and authority, and subject to Government control only in matters of the first importance, the nature and scope of which should be clearly defined. Of these alterations we decidedly prefer the second, inasmuch as we do not think that the work of the Trust can be carried on so satisfactorily *without* as it might be *with* the assistance of persons versed in mercantile affairs, but we should rather learn that the first alternative would be resorted to than that the present Bill, which appears to us to reduce the powers of the Commissioners to a point incompatible with any real efficiency, had been passed into law. It is unreasonable, we think, to expect that merchants whose time is already sufficiently occupied, should devote themselves with the necessary diligence to the working of an Act which practically constitutes them little more than subordinate executive officers of Government.

4. "Having expressed so decided an opinion regarding the principle of the Bill, it is perhaps hardly neces-

"sary to trouble you with any lengthened remarks on its
 "details, but it seems to us that some of these are very
 "objectionable; those, for example, which provide for
 "the appointment of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman
 "by Government alone, without reference to the general
 "body of Commissioners; which interfere with the
 "effective control of the Commissioners over their officers;
 "and which authorise the Government to disallow
 "any and every resolution of the Commissioners. We
 "think that the provisions relating to the estimates and
 "the compulsory clauses are also objectionable, and there
 "are other points, some of them perhaps of minor im-
 "portance, which seem to call for amendment.

5. "We think the whole scope and meaning of the
 "Act as it now stands is to constitute the Lieutenant-
 "Governor "the Commissioner," with certain very sub-
 "ordinate officers under him, and if that is the intention
 "that it would be better to declare it and to avoid the
 "complications and divided responsibility likely to ensue
 "under the provisions now proposed."

Letter from President of the Chamber.

"We never anticipated a control of the detailed and
 "cumbersome nature provided in the Bill, by which the
 "members of the Trust become nothing more than sub-
 "ordinate officers of the Government of Bengal, having
 "really little power or discretion left to them of any
 "kind. The control looked for was a general, yet well-
 "defined one, in matters great, such as the trusteeship
 "and alienation of lands or works; appointment of Com-

"missioners; raising of loans; audit, and payment of
 "interest to Government. With full control over these
 "and perhaps also over large contracts, and with the
 "further inalienable provision that the same authority
 "which called the Trust into existence would at any time
 "determine it, surely the Government is sufficiently se-
 "cured, without the endless references and vetoes intro-
 "duced. I understood this measure was to be an approach
 "to the system of Harbour Trusts so common and so suc-
 "cessful in their working at home, but if Government really
 "mean this and think a body of Commissioners desirable,
 "then they must be prepared to put in them a far larger
 "amount of confidence than the Bill imparts. I cannot
 "think such was the intention, but the practical rendering
 "is very much this,—that Commissioners are to be
 "appointed, but to be endowed with the minimum of
 "power and discretion, and to be distrusted at every
 "turn. I feel myself constrained to object to this ex-
 "cessive and detailed interference, as likely to prove
 "most cumbersome in working, and as indicating a
 "want of confidence which will tend to keep away from
 "the Board those whom Government in the interests
 "of the Port would be most likely to select, but who
 "will not give their time and attention unless they
 "see prospect of real benefit resulting to the interests
 "they represent."

12. The Lieutenant-Governor has already stated in
 his minute of the 23rd July last that, in his opinion, the
 instructions communicated to him by the Government of
 India, enjoined a closer and more absolute control over
 the proceedings of the Commissioners than is necessary,

but he hopes that if some moderate concession on the point is made, and if the proposed additional duties enlarging the scope of the measure are approved by the Government of India, no serious difficulty will arise from this cause.

13. As regards the appointment of both Chairman and Vice-Chairman being made by the Government, it may be explained that this has been thought advisable, because under the Bill as now amended, it is contemplated that either the Chairman or the Vice-Chairman may be the paid and working member of the Commission. It is intended that in the first instance the Vice-Chairman shall hold this position, but inasmuch as hereafter it may seem desirable to give the position to the Chairman, provision for that contingency has been made by vesting the appointment of both Chairman and Vice-Chairman in the Government.

14. It has been already mentioned that the clause empowering the Lieutenant-Governor "to require the Trust to give effect to any instructions issued for its guidance" has been struck out of the Bill. The Lieutenant-Governor hopes that this will not be objected to by the Governor General in Council, and he will be glad if His Excellency in Council should also be willing to consent to the omission of the clause which enables the Lieutenant-Governor "to exercise a power of *вето* on all the proceedings of the Trust."

15. In respect of their executive functions, the Lieutenant-Governor is of opinion that large authority may

properly and safely be given to the Commissioners, and that it is not expedient that they should be put, in respect of those functions, in a position of such complete subordination to Government as would constitute them in fact servants of the Government, and as such liable to receive orders from day to day, or whenever the Government might see fit, as to the manner of discharging the ordinary and current duties of their trust.

16. It may be said perhaps that it cannot be reasonably contemplated that the Government would use the unrestricted power of interference given to it by law, except when it was clearly necessary to do so for the protection of public interests. A long experience of public business in this country, and of the complex conditions and influences under which much of the business of Government is necessarily transacted here as elsewhere, leads the Lieutenant-Governor to believe that this cannot be safely assumed. And even if it could be, it is obvious to remark that even the most confident assurances that interference was not contemplated by Government, except in matters of importance, would still, it is probable, fail to reconcile the non-official gentlemen whose co-operation it is intended to invite, to the position which the Commissioners will occupy, if, under the terms of the Act which incorporates them, the Government is vested with "a complete power of control over all their proceedings," and is enabled "to require them to give effect to any instructions issued for their guidance."

17. With respect to other matters the Lieutenant-

Governor quite agrees that the power of Government to intervene and control should be full and effective. He considers, for example, that the objection stated by Messrs. Gladstone, Wylie and Co. to the provisions relating to the estimates goes too far. The sections of the Bill which relate to estimates are section 35 and sections 47 to 49. Section 35 refers to estimates for new works and requires that no new work shall be commenced until the estimate has been sanctioned by the local Government or the Government of India, as the case may be. Such a provision as this is considered by the Lieutenant-Governor to be indispensable, having regard to the circumstances under which the Trust will be constituted, and to the almost certainty that, besides the original debt to the State, the money required for future operations will also be advanced by the State. Sections 47 to 49 refer to the annual estimate of income and expenditure, and here also it seems to the Lieutenant-Governor to be proper that the estimate should be submitted to Government, and should be subject to such modification, as regards the proposed expenditure more particularly as the Government may think it right to require.

18. The enclosures of this letter are a copy of the Bill as amended by the Select Committee, and a draft of the additional sections, to the general object of which the approval of the Governor General in Council is solicited.

DRAFT SECTIONS.

It shall be lawful for the Lieutenant-Governor of

Bengal, with the previous sanction of the Governor General in Council, at any time after the passing of this Act, by an order published in the *Calcutta Gazette*, to confer on the Commissioners the powers of the Conservator of the Port of Calcutta within the port, and such portions of the navigable rivers and channels leading thereto and connected therewith as shall be specified in such order, and from time to time by any other order to be in like manner published, to confer on the Commissioners the same powers in any other portion of the said river and channels; provided always that no such order shall be made without the consent of the Commissioners at a meeting.

Every such order shall prescribe and define the proportion of the port dues payable by vessels entering or leaving the said port, or being or lying therein or using the said port, which shall be received or retained by the Commissioners, and shall also specify the amount, if any, of charge to which the Commissioners shall be liable in respect thereof.

From and after the publication of any such order, the Commissioners shall have within the port and the portion of the said navigable rivers and channels specified in (any) such order all and singular the rights, powers, and authorities in and by Act XXII. of 1855 passed by the Legislative Council of India, or any other Act, conferred on the Conservator of the Port, and may exercise such rights, powers, and authorities by any officer to be by them thereunto appointed, and the said rights, powers,

and authorities shall not be exercised by any other person within the said port or portion of the said navigable rivers and channels.

From and after the publication of such order, all port dues payable in respect of any vessel entering or leaving the said harbour or being therein shall be payable to the Commissioners, and the Commissioners shall retain thereout the proportion which under such order they shall be entitled to retain, and shall pay the residue thereof to the Secretary of State for India in Council, and the amount which they shall be so entitled to retain shall be deemed to be a portion of their income and shall be included in their annual estimates and accounts.

From and after the publication of such order, the Commissioners may execute within the port and the portion of such navigable rivers and channels in such order mentioned, such works for the improvement of the port and the approaches thereto as they at a meeting may determine, and all the powers, authorities, restrictions and provisions hereinbefore contained respecting the works and appliances mentioned in Section XXXVIII. shall apply to such works.

If in any such order the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal shall specify any amount of charge to which the Commissioners shall be liable in respect of the said port dues, the same shall be deemed to be a sum of money advanced by the Secretary of State for India in Council under the provisions of this Act.

From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of Bengal.

Calcutta, 7th April 1870.

I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 881 of the 29th ultimo.

Referring to para. 6 of the letter of the Government of Bengal to the Government of India wherein a want of precision on the part of the Chamber in the expression of their views is referred to, I am directed to state that the wishes of the Chamber are by His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor rightly believed to confine themselves for the present to the limits of the Port proper.

There are difficulties and objections connected with the assumption by the Trust of the entire management of the river down to the Sandheads, which do not apply to the more limited scheme now contemplated, and the Committee are of opinion that looking to the tentative nature of the proposed measure it is probably better that a commencement should be made with the Port proper leaving the management of the river and pilotage for the present to existing arrangements.

Should the new Trust be found to work satisfactorily after sufficient trial, the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce would have the more confidence in asking, and probably the Government of Bengal would be more disposed to grant, an extension of its provisions.

If in the letter of the Chamber from which His Honor

quotes in the communication to the Government of India now under notice, reference was made to a larger scheme than the Committee have lately been advocating, it was with the view of pointing out to the Lieutenant-Governor that from the earliest time at which a Trust had been mooted, something much more effective and entire than the mere change of wharves and jetties was contemplated.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce.

Calcutta, 9th April 1870.

In continuation of my letter No. 881, dated 29th ultimo, I am directed to forward, for the information of the Chamber, the accompanying copy of a letter* from the Government of India in the Public Works Department, accepting the views and recommendations of the Lieutenant-Governor relative to the better maintenance and improvement of the port of Calcutta.

From Government of India to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 4th April 1870.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 879, dated 29th March 1870, forwarding, with certain recommendations by the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor, a copy of the Bill to provide facilities for the landing and shipment of goods in the port of Calcutta,

as amended by the Select Committee, together with a draft of certain proposed additional sections, and in reply to state that the Government of India generally accepts the Lieutenant-Governor's views and proposals referred to in paragraph 8 of your letter.

2. As regards the matters referred to in paragraphs 12 to 17 of your letter, I am directed to remark that the Government of India will be quite satisfied, if a really effectual power is given to the Lieutenant-Governor to control all expenditure, to leave administrative details to the discretion of the Trust, to any extent that the Lieutenant-Governor and his Council may think fit.

3. If no expenditure on works or establishments can be incurred unless in accordance with the general budget sanction of the year, or with special sanction of the Lieutenant-Governor, and if works are not allowed to be carried out without proper estimates, (which in the case of large operations will require the approval of the Government of India,) the Governor General in Council considers that all that is desired will be secured.

4. With reference to section 62 of the Bill, I am to explain that the Government of India has no wish to restrict the rate leviable as security for the advances made from the revenues of India to a charge on tonnage, and that, if it is preferred, the charge may be made to fall on the cargo or on goods landed or shipped.

5. It will be necessary, however, to see that complete provision is made for securing the payment of money

due to the Secretary of State in preference to other claims, and in a manner that cannot be rendered inoperative by the action of other creditors. So long as this is done, the precise form given to this part of the Bill is not considered material.

From Chamber of Commerce to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 23rd April 1870.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce direct me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1006 of the 9th instant accompanied by copy of a letter from the Government of India accepting the views and recommendations of the Lieutenant-Governor, relative to the better maintenance and improvement of the Port of Calcutta; and I am instructed to express the satisfaction with which they learn that the Government of India have consented to accept in a large and liberal spirit the recommendation of the Lieutenant-Governor for less restricted administrative powers to be exercised by the Commission than were originally proposed.

The Committee trust that the arrangements which His Honor has made for the organisation of the Commission, will enable the Government to announce its first sitting on the day appointed by His Excellency the Viceroy, or as soon thereafter as circumstances will permit.

From Govt. of Bengal to Govt. of India.

Calcutta, 29th April 1870.

In continuation of my letter No. 872, dated the 29th

ultimo, I am desired by the Lieutenant-Governor to submit for consideration the following specific proposals for the adjustment of the affairs of the Calcutta Port Fund, which His Honor believes to be in accordance with the views of the Governor-General in Council, as specified to him at a meeting of the Council on the 1st instant:—

(a.) That the whole of the debt, as shewn by the present account, be remitted, except such portion of it as is represented by the block actually now belonging to, and in use by, the *Port of Calcutta*.

(b.) That a complete separation be made for the future between the charges of the port and the charges connected with the river leading thereto.

(c.) That for the purpose of defraying the former (including the interest on the debt, which will represent the value of the block), the *port fees*, levied under Act XXX. of 1857, be assigned, and that for the purpose of defraying the latter, the *port dues* levied under the same Act be assigned.

(d.) That under the separation above stated, it be understood that the charge of the *Port* will, as soon as convenient after the passing of the Bill now before the Lieutenant-Governor's Council for constituting Commissioners for the improvement of the port of Calcutta, be made over to the said Commissioners, while the charge of the river leading to the port, including the buoying and lighting, and all other operations connected with the navigation of the river, will remain with the Government.

2nd. The Lieutenant-Governor would propose that the exact amount of the debt to be retained against the port should be settled by a Committee consisting of the Master Attendant or some Officer of his Department, some Officer of the Government Account Department, and a non-official gentleman to be named by the Chamber of Commerce, and that any point as to which the Committee are unable to agree should be referred for the decision of the local Government. This latter arrangement seems to the Lieutenant-Governor preferable to allowing the decision of a majority of the Committee to prevail. It is supposed that the debt, as thus settled, will prove to be something near 18 lakhs, as shewn in the last two items of the statement at the bottom of page 15 of the Committee's report. It is understood that the greater portion of the last of these two items, *viz.*, "amount required to complete moorings, &c., say Rs. 5,66,000" has already been expended, or is due on account of liabilities incurred.

3rd. With regard to the proposed separation of the management of the port from that of the navigable channel leading thereto, I am to state that the Bill now before the Lieutenant-Governor's Council will make it possible to transfer the whole to the Commissioners for the improvement of the port, should such a course at some future time recommend itself, but that it is contemplated at first to make over to the Commissioners the management of the port only.

The New Jetties.

The continuous use of the four new Jetties

and the prompt discharge of inward cargoes afford the best testimony to the utility of these much desired appliances for facilitating the traffic of the Port. Considering the limited amount of tonnage in the river during the last six months the number of vessels that have discharged at the jetties bears a fair proportion to those that have put out their cargoes by the ordinary means; and it is believed that the new system will be found to work satisfactorily and to be attended with all the advantages of economy of time and labor, and reduced risks of breakage, pilfering, &c.

The scale of charges for landing packages on the jetties having, in some instances, been considered too high, the Committee communicated to the Collector of Customs the opinions expressed by consignees, and they believe that the rates will be duly modified and reduced to a point which importers will not find excessive.

The letter from Government referred to in the President's Address at the last General Meeting is here recorded; it confirms the objection raised by the Committee to the proposed annual charge for the lands transferred by Government to the Port Trust, and which materially increased the

amount to be recovered by the rates levied on goods landed at the jetties.

From Govt. of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce.

Calcutta, the 29th November 1869.

With reference to your letter dated the 4th September last, on the subject of the proposed arrangements for the management of the new jetties in this port, I am directed by the Lieutenant-Governor to forward herewith, for the information of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, the accompanying copy of a communication* received from the Board of Revenue, and of the letter† from the Collector of Customs referred to in paragraph 4 thereof. I am to

* No. 4973C, dated 6th instant.

† No. 548, dated 7th ultimo.

state that the Lieutenant-Governor agrees with the Committee in the opinion that no charge should be made for the land which the Government offers to make over rent-free to the Board of Trustees. This item will accordingly be struck out of the Customs Collector's estimate of expenditure to be incurred in carrying out the new system.

2. In regard to the Committee's recommendation that a charge of Rupees 20 per diem should be levied on every vessel discharging at a jetty, irrespective of other port charges, the Lieutenant-Governor has approved of the scale of charges shown in paragraph 3 of the Board's letter above cited, and specified on the margin.

† For jetty with one crane, Rs. 10 daily.
For jetty with two cranes, Rs. 16 daily.

3. It will be observed that it is also intended that the proposed rates for landing cargo should be modified.

From Board of Revenue to Govt. of Bengal.

Calcutta, 6th November 1869.

With advertence to Government orders No. 3360, dated the 14th September 1869, I am directed to submit,

for the information of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, copy of the correspondence marginally cited; and to state that the Board agree with the Government on the general

principle, that a concession to a trust is no reason why that trust should not gain by such concession. But, in the present case, the difficulty seems to be as to the intent of the Supreme Government in abandoning all demand on its own account for the land given, *i. e.*, whether the intent was to benefit the trust only, as representative of the public interest, or, in addition, through the trust to relieve the shipping interest.

2. It is stated in paragraph 5 of the Government resolution that the income of the trust is, in the *first place*, to be derived from the works and conveniences provided by the trust, and, in the *second*, by a general rate. The Board are of opinion that a charge for land obtained free by the trust certainly does not come under the second head; and it seems doubtful whether it can be held to come under the first. The Board, therefore, have come to the conclusion that the Supreme Government had better be consulted as

to its intentions, or, if this be thought unnecessary, that the charge for land should be omitted.

3. With reference to the recommendation made by the Chamber of Commerce in their letter of the 4th of September, to your address, to the effect that a charge of Rupees 20 a day should be levied on every vessel discharging at a jetty, irrespective of other port charges, I am directed to state that, after consulting the Collector of Customs, the Board are of opinion that the following charges should be levied daily from ships making use of the jetties. For jetty with one crane, Rupees 10; for jetty with two cranes, Rupees 16; and have issued orders accordingly to the Collector.

4. Referring to Government orders No. 3428, dated 22nd September last, I am directed to forward the annexed copy of a letter* from the Collector of Customs, Calcutta, submitting a report on the remarks made by the Committee of the Trades' Association on the subject of the management of the new jetties. With reference to the remarks contained in paragraph 3 of the Collector's letter, the Board observe that, in all probability, there will be a large number of applications from commanders of vessels for accommodation at the jetties. If this is the case, the Collector would be able to publish, from time to time, a list of those vessels, together with an estimate of the dates at which accommodation will be available for each. After a little experience of the rate at which the jetties will work, the Collector ought, the Board think, to be able to form a tolerably correct estimate; and he has been instructed accordingly.

* No. 548, dated 7th October 1869.

5. With reference to the rates for landing cargo lately sanctioned by the Government, I am to observe that the Collector having brought to the notice of the Board that ships objected to using the jetties owing to the high rate of charges fixed, the Board have, in anticipation of Government sanction, which will be requested in a separate communication, somewhat modified the rates. The jetties will now, it is expected, be freely resorted to.

From Collector of Customs to Board of Revenue.

Calcutta, 7th October 1869.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your memorandum No. 4599C. of the 30th ultimo.

2. With regard to paragraph 3 of the letter of 18th ultimo, from the Secretary, Calcutta Trades' Association, to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, I am of opinion that there will be no practical difficulty in working the rule 7, as they require it to be worked. In fact, the spirit of the whole Customs' Act is based on the number of days, being working days, and the same ruling should be applied to the lesser period of hours.

3. With regard to paragraph 4, I do not see how the notice is to be given. When the extra two jetties are built, only six vessels will be able to unload at one time, and to put any restriction on the commencement of unloading would, I think, be very impolitic; for instance, it might so happen that, when one or more jetties become vacant, there might be no vessels to come into the jetties, for I do not think that a vessel which had once commenc-

ed working in moorings would move out of her berth. In such a case a vessel might come direct in from sea and proceed to a jetty, and it would be an unnecessary waste of time to keep her forty-eight hours without working. Consignees have all the forms of Bills of Entry, and they could easily make out the entries for the goods, of which they have the bills of lading, in anticipation, leaving merely the date to be filled in. In fact, I see no reason why a consignee should not be able to get his bill of entry passed the same day on which the vessel is entered.

4. Whatever may be the case with the consignments of the members of the Trades' Association, the real difficulty, with a great number of importers, will be as it has hitherto been, the difficulty of retiring their bills of lading from the banks to which they have been hypothecated for advances.

5. With regard to paragraph 5, I have the honor to state that the ratés to be charged were drawn up by me after consultation with the President of the Chamber of Commerce, and were based on the charges of two landing firms, Messrs. Fraser and Co., and the Calcutta Landing and Shipping Company. It is very possible that parties landing for themselves may land cheaper; but then it must also be borne in mind that there will be no loss of time by the sircars waiting at the ship's side for fifteen days and not getting their goods, as has been so often complained. This fact ought to have some pecuniary value at any rate.

6. I have little doubt that the rates will allow of re-

duction hereafter. This is a question for after settlement on the result of the working of the jetties.

The Chamber is indebted to the Officiating Master Attendant for a monthly statement of the depth of water at each jetty; this return was asked for with the view of watching the progress of silting which it was feared might result from the position of the new works, but not only has the depth of water been generally maintained, but there has been a material improvement, and at No. 4, there is now 27 feet at dead low water spring tide—shewing an increased depth of 4 feet during the last six months.

Floating Bridge over the Hooghly.

In connection with this important subject, the chief feature noticeable during the past half-year has been the final decision of the Government of India that the work shall be constructed by the State and not given over to a private Company: the reasons for this conclusion and also the various suggestions made by the Government of India to the Government of Bengal for the future management of the bridge will be found in the following letter. The Committee understand that the bridge is to be constructed according to the design and under the superintendence of Mr. Brad-

ford Leslie; and trust that this much needed source of accommodation to the trade of Calcutta will now be pushed vigorously forward.

From Govt. of India, P. W. Dept., to Government of Bengal, P. W. Dept.

24th February 1870.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of Major Taylor's letter No. 46G, dated 8th ultimo, relative to the construction of the proposed floating bridge across the Hooghly, and Mr. Leslie's superintendence of the work.

2. Premising that the recent orders of the Secretary of State have finally settled that the floating bridge shall be carried out in preference to a permanent fixed bridge, the first point that calls for remark is the agency under which the work is to be executed. The Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor, in the letter now under reply, repeats the conclusions stated in his Minute of the 30th June 1869, that the Government should construct the bridge, and that it should neither be given to a Company, nor entrusted to the Calcutta Municipality, as suggested by the Secretary of State in reference to the fixed bridge. The Lieutenant-Governor, while expressing his concurrence in the opinion to the above effect given by the Commission on the bridge, does not state the specific grounds that have led him to the conclusion beyond saying, as regards the Municipality, that the work is one which should be undertaken by the State rather than by a local body, who have no special interest in

the matter, and whose general functions and constitution do not point them out as being particularly well adapted to undertake such a work.

3. Referring to the Report of the Commission, it is seen that no specific reasons are given for the conclusions arrived at, that the Government should construct it, and that it should not be given over to a Company.

4. On the best consideration that the Governor General in Council has been able to give to the matter, the conclusion of the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor and the Commission on this point appear to be sound. The grounds on which this is arrived at may be stated.

5. First, the Government of India agree with the Commission that if it be practicable, the bridge should be toll-free. The precise manner in which it is thought such a result might be secured will be mentioned hereafter, but under no circumstances does this seem compatible with the construction of the work by a private Company. Further, the Government of India fears that the risk of unforeseen claims for compensation, arising from the possible necessity for removing the bridge, or from any of the arrangements made with a Company, proving in practice to be incompatible with the proper navigation of the river, or (as in the case of the levy of tolls) with the convenience of the traffic passing over the bridge, is such as to render the intervention of a Company inexpedient if other equally satisfactory means of carrying out the work can be obtained.

6. The suggestions that have been made for removing objections of the sort last mentioned do not seem to the Governor General in Council to be satisfactory. His Excellency in Council by no means affirms that such a bridge as is now proposed will lead to any serious difficulties in its construction or maintenance, or interfere objectionably with the navigation of the river. But it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that if public inconvenience be caused in any way by the bridge, and if its construction be permitted by the Government, the Government will be so far responsible that they would be bound to see that immediate measures were taken for remedying such inconveniences; and doing this might readily involve heavy pecuniary liabilities. The suggestions of Mr. Leslie as to the terms on which the bridge, if made by a Company, could be taken possession of by the Government, do not appear to meet the point in a sufficient way.

7. The Government of India would have been glad if the requirements of the case had been compatible with the acceptance of the offers of private capitalists to carry out the undertaking without Government interference. But in the nature of the case, it seems impossible to accomplish such a result, and on a full consideration of the circumstances, the conclusion seems unavoidable, that the Government should construct the bridge itself.

8. The Governor General in Council continues to be of opinion that the general management of the bridge

during its construction, as well as after it is opened, may best be handed over to a Trust, something of the nature of that about to be constituted for the improvement of the Port of Calcutta. It appears to His Excellency in Council, indeed, that there is no reason why the same body of Commissioners should not manage the bridge and the port improvements; it being understood that an entirely separate account would be kept for the bridge, which should financially be considered as altogether a distinct undertaking, a special Commissioner being perhaps added in the case of the bridge, in the interest of Howrah. The Office establishments and subordinate establishments, &c., of the Commissioners would be perfectly suited for the purposes of the bridge, and the engineering operations would, to a great extent, be alike in the two cases.

9. Such an arrangement would not, it appears to His Excellency in Council, at all interfere with the proposed employment of Mr. Leslie as Engineer for the bridge. Under any circumstances he must communicate with the Lieutenant-Governor through some established Office, and the intervention of the Commissioners would not seem to be likely to lead to inconvenience, and would have some positive advantages.

10. It has already been explained to the Lieutenant-Governor that the Government of India is not in a position at the present moment to offer continued employment to Mr. Leslie. It would consequently appear to be the best plan to make an arrangement with him, by which his remuneration should be fixed for the con-

pletion of the whole work in a lump sum. The Government of India would not object to the time during which he might be employed on the bridge being eventually reckoned as service under Government, should it be found possible to take Mr. Leslie into the service of the Government permanently on the completion of this work. Any arrangement that may be suggested by the Government of Bengal for giving effect to the above suggestion will receive immediate attention.

11. The Governor General in Council would have been unable to enter upon any question of specially allowing time to Mr. Leslie for pension, had he entered the service of the Government, for reason which have been explained in reference to the claims of like nature made by officers of the East India Irrigation Company.

12. As to the amount of salary to be proposed to Mr. Leslie, the Government of India thinks that a sum equivalent say to 2 years' salary on a liberal scale might be named, a portion to be paid as the works went on, and the balance on completion. In this sense a total sum of £4,000 might be now suggested as suitable, it being left to the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor to modify the offer as he thinks fit, the final approval of the Governor General in Council being reserved to anything in excess of that amount.

13. It will no doubt be necessary to communicate with the Board of the Eastern Bengal Railway as to Mr. Leslie's undertaking the work of the bridge. Any plan that is agreed to by the Board, and supported by

His Honor, is likely to receive the assent of the Government of India, and the further steps to be taken in this matter are left to the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor.

14. When an arrangement has been come to with Mr. Leslie, his advice might properly be taken as to the precise mode of proceeding further in respect to the preparation of designs and estimates, and setting about the execution of the works by contract or otherwise.

15. It only remains for me to refer to the financial part of the question. The Government of India, on a further consideration of the matter, is disposed to think that the needful security for the payment of interest on the capital required, which would be advanced by the Government of India, and the necessary contributions to a Sinking Fund may be very conveniently obtained by placing a charge on the passengers and goods traffic of the East Indian Railway leaving and arriving at Howrah. A suggestion of this sort, it is understood, has been made by Mr. Leonard in an unofficial form, and there is reason to believe that the plan would be agreed to by the Railway Company.

16. The Governor General in Council is informed that a very small terminal charge on the Railway passengers and goods, which would fully meet all probable requirements for the bridge, would be less onerous than the actual existing cost of crossing the river by the East Indian Railway Company's steam ferry. The convenience of a free bridge to the passengers and goods seeking or leav-

ing the Howrah Station would be very great, and the advantage would be felt alike by the Railway Company and its customers. The Railway Company might properly be paid a moderate percentage on the terminal rate which they received for the Bridge Trust.

17. It would, however, be right to consider at the same time whether a charge should not be put on carriages and carts crossing the bridge, not going to or from the Railway Station. It is believed that by a very simple arrangement the Railway Station traffic could be led from or to the bridge on the Howrah side of the river, by a different road to that used by the Howrah town traffic, and a toll could be put on the latter at a place far enough removed from the bridge, to prevent all risk of obstruction by the stopping of carts, &c., while paying toll. The Governor General in Council would be disposed to permit the foot passengers to cross free, if on a further calculation the income was thought likely to be sufficient without making such a charge.

18. In order to be prepared for all eventualities, however, His Excellency in Council thinks it will be better to take power to put tolls on the bridge or its approaches, as well as to levy the Railway terminal charge. It might also be considered whether a power should not be taken to commute the Howrah toll for a payment to be made from the Howrah Municipal Fund. These are points left for the consideration of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor.

19. A Legislative enactment may probably be found

necessary to give effect to the conclusions come to, both as to the levy of tolls, &c., and the constitution of the Special Trust, and the disposal of surplus funds. Also, perhaps, some powers may be needed in respect to the erection of the bridge, and the obstruction it will cause in the river, so as to guard against risk of claims for compensation, based on real or alleged inconveniences to individuals or damage arising from accidents. This should be considered.

20. In conclusion, I am to observe that the views of the Governor-General in Council on some of the points above noticed have been now stated in detail, with the object of facilitating an early decision as to the basis on which the construction and management of the bridge is to be placed, but the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor is requested to understand that the Governor General in Council has no desire to prejudice the questions that have been discussed, and will be glad if His Honor will favor the Government of India with any further remarks or suggestions on any point relating to any part of the subject, which are deemed likely to lead to an early and satisfactory settlement of the matters now calling for attention.

Customs.

The Collector has lately introduced some beneficial changes in the practice of passing imported merchandise : and bills of entry in duplicate while facilitating the issue of passes and clearance

of packages from the Custom House have led to the further improvement involved in the abolition of the old cumbersome form of duty bills.

From Collector of Customs to Chamber of Commerce.

Calcutta, 22nd November 1869.

I have the honor to draw your attention to a notification which appears in to-day's *Exchange Gazette*, in which importers are requested to put in their Bills of Entry in duplicate, and to request that you will kindly draw the attention of the Members of your Chamber to it.

2. The object of this notification which is in terms of Section 176 of Act VI. of 1863, and is in accordance with the practice of the English Custom Houses, is to facilitate the issue of the passes for goods. In fact it is merely carrying out with regard to duty paid goods the same practice which has so long obtained in regard to free goods. Instead of importers being any longer delayed by the writing out of a separate pass, the duplicate Bill of Entry will, after payment of duty, be endorsed with the word "Pass" under the signature of the Deputy or Assistant Collector as the case may be. Importers will thus be able to obtain at once such of their goods as are landed less the percentage retained for examination.

3. The separation of goods going at different rates of duty will also much facilitate the disposal of the Bills of Entry.

4. The necessity for this change was patent directly the unloading at the jetties began, and the second day's dispatch of business proved beyond a doubt the benefit of the change in practice. There is no question that the new system will effect a complete revolution in the unloading of goods, and I am anxious to co-operate, as much as possible, with importers as well as the consignees of vessels. Should, therefore, any further improvements suggest themselves to you, I shall be obliged by your making them known to me, and I shall be prepared to give them every attention so far as lies in my power.

From Chamber of Commerce to Collector of Customs.

Calcutta, 25th November 1869.

I am desired by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1335 of the 22nd instant, and to state that they fully approve of the proposal made by you regarding the presentation by importers of their Bills of Entry in duplicate.

The Committee will have your communication printed for circulation among Members of the Chamber with a request to be furnished with any suggestion for promoting the satisfactory working of the system lately introduced.

*From Collector of Customs to Chamber of
Commerce.*

Calcutta, 17th December 1869.

I have the honor to inform you that for the future, except in the case of salt and of duties short levied, the duty bills heretofore made out will no longer be issued.

2. Bills of Entry, as you are aware, are now made out in duplicate, the duplicate being the pass for the goods, and not being issued till the duty has been paid. This being the case, importers and exporters who have sent money by their sircars to be paid as duty, can ascertain whether the money has been paid by the sircar by requiring him either to produce the pass, or duplicate Bill of Entry, or the goods to which the pass refers.

3. Should any importer, however, require or wish for a separate receipt, the cashier will furnish him with a slip bearing the following particulars :—

Accountant's No.
Cashier's No.
Payer's Name
Amount
On what account

4. You will be able to judge what an amount of labour has hitherto been thrown away in the preparation of these bills, when I mention that in the year 1868,

42,690 bills were made out, of these 16,000 bills still remain in the Custom House uncalled for and unclaimed.

5. I purpose enforcing the abolition of the duty bills directly I am in possession of the printed slips for the cashier, say from the new year.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Collector of
Customs.*

Calcutta, 10th January 1870.

The arrangement proposed in your letter No. 1481 of 17th ultimo appears to the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce likely to be attended with considerable economy of time and labour, and under the circumstances mentioned by you, they are of opinion that parties transacting business at the Custom House will find it convenient to dispense with the duty bills heretofore prepared.

Marine Bills.

The system of realising the dues and charges payable by vessels visiting this port having been found practically inconvenient, the Officiating Master Attendant has announced that, under the orders of the Government of India, other arrangements more suitable for the purpose have been introduced, with effect from the 1st April. Before

a vessel can obtain her port clearance the master, agent, or owner, is required to lodge with the Collector of Customs a sum estimated to cover all charges, any excess of such deposit being refunded on production of a certificate that the vessel had been left at sea by the Pilot in charge.

There appears to be no objection to the new plan, provided there is no delay in preparing a ship's accounts for adjustment and in making the necessary refund; and in replying to the Officiating Master Attendant the Committee suggested one or two points which, if attended to, will they believe facilitate the object had in view by modifying the former plan of collecting marine bills.

**Telegraph Station between Calcutta and
Atcheepore.**

The Committee submitted with their last report the correspondence which had passed on this subject, and, in view of the favorable manner in which their request was taken up by the Government of India, they fully expected that by this time the new station would have been in working order. In this, however, they have been disappointed; for, although a new estimate

was framed and sanctioned, the Telegraph Department neglected to include the amount in their budget-estimate for 1870-71, in consequence of which the construction of the line has been ordered to stand over for the present. The Committee feel that in this matter the declared desire of His Excellency the Viceroy to meet the wishes of the mercantile community has not been cordially responded to by the head of the Telegraph Department, and they have not failed to express their regret and surprise that a work of much importance and involving small outlay should have been thus set aside after nearly a year's correspondence on the subject.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Director-General
of Telegraphs.*

Calcutta, 24th February 1870.

I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to request you will be so good as to inform them what prospect there is of the establishment of the additional Telegraph Station between Atcheepore and the Southern limit of the Port as already applied for by the Chamber, and if any orders have been given for the commencement of that line, will you oblige by saying when it is likely the station will be open for messages.

The favor of an early reply will much oblige.

*From Director-General of Telegraphs in India to
Chamber of Commerce.*

Calcutta, 26th February 1870.

With reference to your letter dated the 24th instant, I have the honor to state that the question of an additional Telegraph Station on the river between this Port and Atchepore is still under the consideration of the Government of India.

From Govt. of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce.

Calcutta, 11th April 1870.

With reference to your letter of the 11th August last, I am directed to forward, for the information of the Chamber, the accompanying copies of letters,* with their annexures, from the Government of India, Foreign Department, regarding the proposed establishment of a Telegraph Office at a place below Garden Reach.

Memorandum from Government of India.

Calcutta, 10th March 1870.

Copy of the following letter, and of the Director-General's No. 488, forwarded to the Government of Bengal, with reference to the correspondence ending with

their Officiating Under-Secretary's docket No. 2946, dated 18th August 1869.

*From Director-General of Telegraphs in India
to Government of India.*

Simla, 10th September 1869.

Replying to your letter of 13th July last, I have now the honor to give the information therein called for.

2. The Executive Engineer reports that he can provide a temporary mat house, such as His Excellency the Governor General in Council suggests, for rupees two thousand or thereabouts.

3. This is four times as much as the sum mentioned by you; but as the signallers must be on duty from dawn until dark (to observe the shipping passing up and down), it will be necessary to have enough accommodation to enable them to live on the premises. There is no place in the vicinity where they could live. The actual point is already occupied by a more substantial building of brick belonging to the lessees of the land, Messrs. Mackintosh, Burn and Company, and consequently, if an office be built for this department, it must be in rear of, and have its view somewhat obstructed by this building. The Executive Engineer recommends that instead of building a mat house, which would be very unsafe in stormy weather, the Government purchase this building, which only requires some petty repairs to put it in good order,

and which has just sufficient accommodation for one or two native signallers.

4. Messrs. Mackintosh, Burn and Company are willing to sell for rupees two thousand seven hundred and fifty (Rs. 2,750), but will not rent. The land could be taken up on the usual condition for a public purpose.

5. Hangman's Point, which might in future be called Garden Reach Point, is three and a half miles from the Atcheepore road, where the telegraph line is. The cost of erecting a line in old half standard, of which we have some in the neighbourhood, is estimated

* Rough estimate at Rs. 2,060.* By dispensing with insulation this may be reduced to

Rs. 1,800, making the total cost of material, including house and repairs, a trifle under Rs. 5,000.

6. As regards establishment. There must be two signallers, one of whom would be deputy telegraph master, as it is absolutely necessary that the responsibility and management shall rest on somebody. The cost then would be—

	Rs.	A.	P.
Two native signallers at Rs. 75 each	...	150	0 0
Charge allowance	...	20	0 0
One peon at Rs. 6, and one sweeper at Rs. 4 each	...	10	0 0
Total	...	180	0 0

7. I do not think it will be either wise or expedient

to fix a special tariff for this office; if done for one, it should be done for all non-paying offices; and to fix a fluctuating tariff, sliding up and down according to receipts, I need hardly say is not practicable.

8. But I see no reason why the boat-hire at all these rivers and sea offices should not be increased to a rate that shall cover the expense of maintaining boats and boatmen, and I see no reason why economy should not be studied by giving charge of the Saugor Light-house to the Telegraph Master stationed there. The Light-house work is mere routine, there is not employment for both, and the consequence is incessant squabbling.

Rough estimate of the cost of erecting the line referred to in 5th paragraph of No. from Director-General of Telegraphs. Three and half miles of line at twenty posts per mile.

VALUE OF STORES.

	Rs.	Rs.	As.	P.	Rs.	As.	P.
70 half standards							
intermediate at	5-	350	0	0			
70 sockets do. "	5-9	413	0	0			
140 cross feet do. "	7-	98	0	0			
70 lightning dischargers	" 3-	21	0	0			
70 caps	" 625	43	0	0			
70 teak tops, each							
6 ft.	" 3-	210	0	0			

	Rs.	Rs.	As.	P.	Rs.	As.	P.
140 insulators,							
Robinson, in-							
termediate at 125		175	0	0			
140 brackets,							
tubular „ 53		74	0	0			
7 miles No. 5½							
wire „ 67 per mile		469	0	0			
					1,853	0	0

Cost of labor and carriage.

Carriage of half standards from							
Diamond Harbour by boat ...	30	0	0				
Do. of wire from store de-							
partment ...	10	0	0				
Carriage across country of stand-							
ards and wire ...	80	0	0				
Labor, Rs. 25. per mile ...	87	8	0				
					207	8	0
Total cost of line ...		2,060	8	0			

From Govt. of India to Director-General of Tele-
graphs in India.

Calcutta, 10th March 1870.

With reference to your letter No. 488, dated 10th Sep-
tember 1869, I am now directed to communicate the
orders of the Viceroy and Governor General in Council

on the proposal to establish telegraphic communication
with a place below Garden Reach, hitherto known as
Hangman's Point, but which His Excellency in Council
prefers should henceforth in official correspondence be
styled Garden Reach Point.

2. On the supposition that the cost of this undertak-
ing has been provided for in the coming year's budget
estimates, His Excellency in Council sanctions the pur-
chase of the brick-built house at this place belonging to
Messrs. Mackintosh, Burn and Co. for Rs. 2,750, and
authorizes an outlay not exceeding Rs. 200 on account of
any repairs that may be needed to this building.

3. His Excellency in Council also sanctions the con-
struction of a telegraph line connecting this place with
the line from Atecheppore at an expenditure of Rs. 1,800,
as recommended by you, and an establishment * at a cost
not exceeding Rs. 180 per annum, according to the
details given in the mar-

Two native signallers at Rs. 75 each	Rs. 150
Charge allowance	20
One peon at Rs. 6, and one sweeper	10
at Rs. 4 each	10
Total	190

gin.

4. The annual cost of maintaining this line is esti-
mated at Rs. 2,635, of which Rs. 2,160 will be for estab-
lishment and Rs. 475 for wear and tear. The latter sum
is calculated at the usual rate of 10 per cent. on the ori-
ginal outlay. The simplest plan, in the opinion of His
Excellency in Council, would be for the Chamber of Com-
merce to undertake to guarantee year by year the differ-
ence between this sum of Rs. 2,635 and the aggregate
of the receipts, should the latter fall short of it. In

the event of this suggestion not proving acceptable to the Chamber, it would then be time enough to consider the special rates which should be levied on this particular line.

5. In the last paragraph of your letter under acknowledgment, you suggest that the charge of the Light-house at Saugor should be made over to the telegraph Master of that place. On this subject His Excellency in Council desires to have a report from you, with special reference to its probable financial results. The Marine Department will similarly be requested to favor this department with an expression of its opinion on the expediency and benefit of the measure.

Memorandum from Government of India.

Calcutta, 25th March 1870.

Forwarded to the Government of Bengal, in continuation of the docket from this office No. 206T, dated 10th instant.

From Government of India to Director-General of Telegraphs in India.

Calcutta, 25th March 1870.

With reference to Mr. Teale's letter, No. 103, dated 12th March 1870, I am directed to state that as no provision has been made for the establishment of a telegraph station at Garden Reach Point, and as there are

many more important projects on foot, it is the desire of the Viceroy and Governor General in Council that the construction of this line should lie over for the present. You are at liberty, if you think fit, to propose it in the estimates for 1871-72.

From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of Bengal.

Calcutta, 23rd April 1870.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1025 of 11th instant, accompanied by copies of correspondence regarding the proposed establishment of a Telegraph Office at some place below Garden Reach.

From these papers the Committee learn that although the Governor General in Council had been pleased to sanction the construction of a telegraph line to connect the proposed new station with the line from Acheepore, and to authorise other arrangements for completing the plan for a new office, His Excellency's intentions had been completely frustrated by the omission to include in the budget estimate for the current year the probable cost of the new station, and that in consequence of such neglect the construction of the line has been deferred for a 12 months.

The Committee cannot but regard this result with extreme dissatisfaction and record their surprise that an important matter which has been the subject of official correspondence for so many months, and ultimately

sanctioned by the Government should have been permitted to suffer further delay by departmental inattention.

The reasons why the Chamber originally applied for the new station have been fully set forth; but as an illustration of what material service it might have been in a recent case of a ship's safety being endangered by her tug breaking down, and the necessity for prompt assistance from Calcutta, His Honor's attention is respectfully called to the case of the ship *St. Bernard* which was taken out of a very perilous position by the accidental arrival of another steamer.

With regard to the suggestion contained in the 4th para. of the Government of India letter, No. 205 of 10th ultimo, the Committee can only refer to their previous remarks, and express their inability to enter into the proposed guarantee, which would affect not merely the interests of the Members of the Chamber, but a large section of the commercial public who do not support the Chamber.

**Port Rule No. 17, regulating the speed of
Steamers within the limits of the Port.**

The Committee having been informed that the stringent observance of the Port rule which regulates the speed of the steamers within the limits of the Port occasioned great delay and inconvenience, Communicated with the Officiating

Master Attendant with the view to the rule being modified to the extent of allowing steamers to proceed at half speed on the flood; but the reply to their reference satisfied the Committee that the rule was a proper one and could not be safely relaxed.

The following extract from Captain Howe's letter contains the reasons why the rule was introduced and why it should be adhered to:—

“The immediate cause of the rule being framed was the sinking in March 1858 of two cargo boats laden with coal through the swell created in the river by the steam tug “*Mary Stuart*,” while proceeding at half power.

2. The Government required a more stringent and definite rule and one more likely to be effectual to be submitted for approval, and the result was that rule 17 was framed, and approved of by Government.

3. I certainly am of opinion from daily observation that it would not be safe to relax the rule as regards the rate of speed.

4. It is difficult even with the rule to maintain the safe navigation of the river by boats.

"5. My experience and observation shew me that commanders of steamers are very prone to steamthrough the port at a dangerous rate of speed, regardless of the swell which they create to the imminent risk of life of those in boats on the river.

6. I am constantly directing the Harbour Master's attention to the subject, and calling upon commanders of steam tugs for an explanation of their conduct in committing a breach of the Port rule whereby accidents have been caused.

7. Several instances have occurred during the last twelve months which suffice to shew the necessity of maintaining the existing rule.

8. In November 1868 the Steamer "Union" fouled and sunk a boat off Hautkolah, while steaming down on the ebb-tide contrary to regulations, and within the last three months I have myself seen three hawsers boats floating past my house bottom up, with the crew clinging to the wreck for their lives, the accidents having been caused by the dangerous rate of speed at which steamers were towing.

9. For these special reasons in addition to those which led to the adoption of the rule I

consider that it would not be right to allow of any relaxation of it, but would rather seek the assistance of the Chamber to aid by its influence in preventing a too frequent disregard of the Port rule in question."

Overland Mail via Bombay.

The Committee mentioned in their last report that a reference had been made to the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company in London on the subject of the proposed reduction of the monsoon allowance of four days. In reply, the Company declined to agree to the full reduction of 48 hours proposed by the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, but agreed tentatively to give up one day, a proposal which the Director General of the Post Office in this country has only accepted to the extent of one-half. The Committee regret that during the south-west monsoon of the current year the Calcutta mail will thus close on Saturday, to the practical temporary abolition of the half-holiday usually enjoyed on that day; but under existing circumstances, and in view of the required regular arrival of the Indian mails in London, they do not see any present remedy for this inconvenience.

*From Director-General of the Post Office
of India to Chamber of Commerce.*

Simla, 20th November 1869.

In continuation of my letter No. 2275, dated the 2nd September, I have the honor to state that the Secretary, General Post Office, London, considers it impossible under the existing contract to reduce the monsoon allowance (4 days) now given for the trip from Bombay to Suez.

2. I have asked the Secretary to the General Post Office, London, to submit to the Directors of the Company the reasonableness of their consenting to a reduction of the allowance from 4 to 2 days.

*From Secretary of the General Post Office, London,
to Director-General Post Office of India.*

7th January 1870.

I am directed by the Post Master General to inform you that on receipt of your further letter, No. 3509, dated the 20th November last, respecting the extra allowance given to the contract Mail Packets on their voyages from Bombay to Suez during the S. W. monsoon season, His Lordship communicated with the Peninsular and -Oriental Steam Navigation Company with a view to the reduction of that allowance; and I am to transmit to you the enclosed copy of their reply, in which they signify their willingness to fix the departures from Bombay one day later than at present.

His Lordship has expressed to the Company his approval of their proposition to communicate with their Agent at Bombay before altering the present Time Table.

*From the Peninsular and Oriental S. N. Company,
London, to the Secretary of the General Post
Office.*

5th January 1870.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 31st ultimo (No. 91,650), stating that the Director-General of the Post Office of India has suggested a reduction to two days of the extra allowance of four days now given to the packets on their voyage from Bombay to Suez during the S. W. monsoon, and enquiring whether the Directors of this Company are willing to agree to the proposed charge.

In reply I am instructed to state that, as explained in my letter of 27th July 1868, in which a curtailment of the then existing monsoon allowances was suggested, the object of the Directors in stipulating for the allowances now in force was to secure the regular arrival of the mail in England. It appears from the experience of the past season that, with the powerful steamers now on the line, this object can be attained with a smaller extra allowance than at present, but the Directors do not think that it would be prudent, without further experience, to make so large a reduction as that suggested by Mr. Monteah.

With the view, however, of meeting the wishes of the Post Office as far as possible, they are willing to consent to the departures from Bombay being fixed one day later than at present, on the understanding that the old system shall be

reverted to if the change is not found to work well, and that the full allowance shall remain in force as far as the adjustment of penalties is concerned.

I am instructed to add that the Directors do not propose to alter the Time Table for the current year until they have communicated with the Company's Agent at Bombay, as the alteration of the day of departure may involve other changes which can be more conveniently arranged between that gentleman and the Indian Post Office; and they will, therefore, if you see no objection, send a copy of this correspondence to Captain Henry by the next mail.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Director-General
of the Post Office in India.*

Calcutta, 9th February 1870.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have had under consideration the result of the reference made by H. M. Post Master General in London to the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company relative to the proposed reduction of the time at present allowed to the contract Mail Packets on their voyage from Bombay to Suez during the S. W. monsoon season, as communicated in the Post Master General's letter to your address, dated the 7th ultimo, which you have been good enough to place before them.

The original suggestion emanating from the Bombay Chamber of Commerce was that the allowance of 4 days should be reduced to 2, so that the mail steamers should leave Bombay 2 days later, that is, on *Thursdays*, instead of on *Tuesdays*, as at present.

The Peninsular and Oriental Company, in answer to the Post Master General's inquiry, say that they are willing to consent to the departure from Bombay being fixed one day later, but do not propose to alter the Time Tables until they have communicated with their Agent at Bombay as the alteration of the day of departure may involve other changes which can be more conveniently arranged in this country.

The Committee would have been glad to have had an expression of opinion from that officer, but as it is necessary to place you early in possession of their own views, they proceed to discuss the matter independently of it.

In their previous correspondence with you on this question the Committee stated that while the suggested modification would be, obviously, a convenience to the community of Bombay it might disadvantageously affect the mail service in connection with the Madras and Bengal Presidencies, and in your reply of the 2nd September last you were inclined to confirm their apprehensions in that respect.

Under present arrangements the overland mail from Calcutta is despatched during the S. W. monsoon on Fridays, reaching Bombay on Tuesday in time for the mail ready to start for Suez that evening.

If the Bombay Chamber's plan were adopted, the mail would be closed in Calcutta nominally on Sunday, but practically on Saturday, so that the Bombay public would be securing an advantage of 2 days at the expense of this community, who would be deprived of 24 hours in their weekly correspondence with Europe, in addition to the loss of rest and recreation on Saturdays, which are generally observed here as half-holidays.

If, on the other hand, the concession by the Peninsular and Oriental Company is accepted, and the Bombay mail is detained one day later than heretofore during the S. W. monsoon, we shall have to despatch our correspondence from Calcutta on Saturday instead of Friday.

That arrangement would, at present, be attended with no material inconvenience except the surrender of the Saturday half-holiday; but bearing in mind that the completion of the railway between the two presidencies will expedite the transit of the mails by 24 hours and that we may look for an early opening of through communication between Calcutta and Bombay, the effect of the alteration will be precisely similar to the result of the Chamber's proposal.

On these grounds, therefore, the Committee are opposed to the half measure involved in the concession by the P. & O. Company; and their objection to the Chamber's suggestion will not be removed until the time arrives when the through transit by rail to Bombay will enable the Post Office to despatch the Calcutta Overland Mail on Monday evening to reach Bombay in time for the steamer leaving for Suez on Thursday night.

Thus much for Bengal.

As regards Madras, the Committee imagine that similar objections will be raised there under similar circumstances; and it is for you to consider whether the preponderating inconveniences to which two presidencies would be exposed will not outweigh the partial advantage, Bombay would derive from the measures under discussion, and to communicate accordingly with Her Majesty's Post Master General.

*From Director-General of the Post Office of India,
to Chamber of Commerce.*

Calcutta, 15th February 1870.

In reply to your letter of the 9th instant, I have the honor to state that for the present I have not accepted the offer of the Peninsular and Oriental Company to start the steamers from Bombay one day later during the monsoon, but have instead arranged for their starting 12 hours later all the year round, commencing with the first steamer after the opening of the Great India Peninsular Railway to Jubbalpore (expected in March next.)

2. I did this not merely because the acceptance of the offer would have thrown the Calcutta Overland Mail date on a Sunday, but because it would have been necessary to start the mail train from Calcutta at a very early hour (5½ p. m. at latest) so as to secure its reaching Bombay sufficiently early in the day to admit of the mails being got ready for the afternoon steamer.

3. The Madras mails also reach Bombay in the evening, so that for the present at least a morning departure of the mail steamer is a great boon, both to Calcutta and Madras.

**Standards of Weights and Measures in British
India.**

The Bill which after long discussion and consideration was introduced into the Legislative

Council of the Governor General for the purpose of reforming the Weights and Measures of British India received His Excellency's assent on the 1st instant; there is, therefore, a fair prospect of the provisions of this important Act being speedily applied so as to create a uniform system which shall gradually displace the diversified practice which has so long prevailed.

The following statement of Objects and Reasons fully details the proposed action of Government in dealing with the subject, and the Committee anticipate satisfactory results from the measure.

Statement of Objects and Reasons.

The object of the present Bill is to give effect to the conclusions that have recently been adopted by the Governor General in Council, and concurred in by the Secretary of State, as to the steps to be taken for reforming the Weights and Measures of British India.

These conclusions are contained in the following extract of a despatch from the Government of India to the Secretary of State:—

Home Department, No. 163,
dated 6th November 1868,
paragraph 11.

"We therefore consider that the new unit of weight should be a ser equal to the kilogramme, or 2.205

lbs. avoirdupois, and

that a system of decimal multiples and sub-divisions of the unit of weight should be accepted as a fundamental part of the new scale to be recognized by law. We are, however, of opinion, for the reasons stated by Mr. Strachey in his Minute, that other multiples and sub-divisions should not be prohibited wherever their continued use appears to be demanded on considerations of present convenience and expediency, and

that while it is desirable that the new system of weights should be brought into general use as speedily as possible, it should not be forced on any class of the community until such class is to some extent prepared to accept it. The best preparation for the general adoption of the new weights will undoubtedly be their introduction and authoritative use in the public departments of the Government, which are so widely scattered over the whole of the country.

"We therefore propose that the new unit of weight, with a system of decimal multiples and sub-divisions should be authoritatively adopted in all departments of the Government, by all municipal bodies, and on the railways, as soon as practical convenience will admit."

In an earlier part of the same despatch, the following remarks were made as to the reasons that led the Government of India to the conclusion that immediate measures of reform were needed:—

"The perusal of the voluminous papers which are

now before us, has satisfied us that an immediate reform of Indian weights and measures is urgently required. On this point there is no difference of opinion among all the authorities that have been consulted.

"The existing diversity of weights and measures in this country is a most serious evil, and reform is needed, as observed by our hon'ble colleague, His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, not only to facilitate and simplify commercial operations, but also as an essential preliminary towards the suppression of the fraudulent practices which are now so common among retail dealers."

The whole of the documents, on the consideration of which the Government of India adopted these views, were published in the *Gazette of India* on the 18th February 1869, and in that collection of papers will be found at length the arguments which led the Governor-General in Council to the conclusion that it was not expedient to introduce the weights of Great Britain in India, and that the unit of the metrical system was more suitable, and should be preferred.

It is apparent that the introduction of uniform weights and measures into a country so large as British India, and having a population so little educated, must be a task of much difficulty, and must in practice be spread over a considerable period of time. Every step in the change must be carefully watched, and great freedom of action must be permitted to the Government to prevent serious inconveniences.

The Bill proposes to declare what shall be the new standards and units of weight and length that are eventually to be adopted. The executive Government is to be empowered to frame scales of weights and measures based on these new standards and units, which are to be regarded as the authorized weights and measures of India.

But although the new authorized weights and measures will thus be defined, their use will only be made obligatory by specific orders of the executive Government, and then only under certain limitations.

The use of the new weights and measures may be made obligatory on Government departments, and municipal offices, and railway companies, when the Government is satisfied that proper standards are made available for the use of these departments, offices and companies. Of course it will also be an essential preliminary that the new weights and measures shall be provided for use before any of them are introduced.

For the community generally, no power is taken to make obligatory the use of the new measures, but only of the new weights. Further, the general obligatory use of the new weights in any locality can only be required when the Government has been satisfied, after a public local enquiry, that introduction of the new weights is expedient. It will necessarily be an essential point in such an enquiry to ascertain that the locality is furnished with the means of providing the new weights to all persons who will be compelled to use them, and it will therefore be obligatory on the Govern-

ment to see that a sufficient supply of the new weights is available for sale before the compulsory powers given are carried into effect.

Experience shows that, to ensure proper regularity and accuracy in the weights and measures of any country, a system of verification and inspection is necessary. To carry out these duties, officers are to be appointed, to be termed wardens, and to these only is to be entrusted the power of putting in force the penalties imposed under the new law.

These penalties will only take effect after they have been specially made applicable in any locality. They provide small fines for selling or using the new authorized weights when correct, unless they have been verified, and somewhat higher fines for using incorrect unverified weights of the authorized description, or unauthorized weights after the compulsory use of the new weights has come into operation, as well as for neglecting to submit weights for periodical verification.

Powers are proposed to be given to the Governor General in Council to make rules to regulate various details of administration relating to the system under which weights and measures are verified. Such rules have been universally found to be necessary. In England, they are supplied by a large number of legal enactments, but in other countries it has been thought better to leave such matters to the executive Government, and this course it is proposed to follow for India.

Analysis of the Currency.

The Head Commissioner of Paper Currency having requested the assistance of the Chamber in preparing an analysis of the currency of the country for publication in his annual report, the Committee, concurring in the opinion that it would be useful and interesting to know the relative proportions of specie and currency notes, and the auxiliary currency represented by drafts, cheques, hundies and bills of all kinds, recommended the subject to the attention of Members, with a request to give the necessary returns for the month of May.

The Suez Canal.

On the announcement of the opening and through navigation of the Suez Canal the Committee considered it due to its eminent projector, Monsieur Ferdinand de Lesseps, to express the cordial congratulations of this Chamber on the accomplishment of the gigantic enterprise which for so many years he had pursued with invincible industry and energy and undaunted courage to a triumphant conclusion.

The Canal was opened on the 19th November

in the presence of Her Majesty the Empress of France and a great company of illustrious and distinguished persons; and the passage of a large fleet of vessels, of all nationalities, from Port Said to Suez proclaimed the successful junction of the waters of the Mediterranean and the Red Sea.

The undertaking having been thus auspiciously inaugurated, the Canal was thrown open to the navigation and maritime traffic of all countries, and its practical utility has been demonstrated and placed beyond all doubt by the large amount of steam-shipping that has already passed through it; and the recently reported fact of one of the largest vessels afloat—H. M. Troopship "Jumna"—having made the passage from India to England by that route has emphatically established the capability of the Canal for the purposes for which it was designed.

The course of trade between Europe and the East will probably be much altered hereafter by reason of the large steam fleets, which will certainly adopt the newly established passage, competing for the traffic hitherto monopolised by the Cape route, for it will naturally be diverted into the channel which affords greater facilities for rapidity of transporting merchandise and the

more frequent repetition of commercial operations; and the amount of steam tonnage that has already passed through the Canal for Bombay and Calcutta is a fair indication of the change that will be effected in course of time. >

Communication with China via Assam.

In their last report the Committee expressed a hope to present on this occasion an account of the successful issue of Mr. Cooper's endeavours to reach Chinese territory from our Assam frontier; but they regret to announce that that enterprising traveller was met by difficulties which induced him to retrace his steps after having journeyed a considerable distance towards his destination.

In reporting to the Chamber his failure to open a communication between *Sudya* in Assam and *Bathang* in Eastern Thibet, Mr. Cooper wrote—"I have no further hope that any individual effort of mine will lead to success. On our side of the Thibetan frontier no obstacles to trade exist that cannot easily be overcome, but on the other side Chinese jealousy still remains the chief barrier to anything like unrestricted trade with the Thibetans and can only be removed by the action of Government, either at Peking or Lassa."

Notwithstanding this disappointing result it is satisfactory to learn from Mr. Cooper's narrative that his intercourse with the tribe of *Meju Mishmees* inhabiting a large tract of country between our own frontier and Thibet was friendly and hospitable, and that under the guidance of a chief of the *Kampti* tribe, who border on Assam, he was enabled to pursue his journey and to return to British territory unmolested.

Mr. Cooper has proceeded to England, but before he left Calcutta his labors were acknowledged by the Chamber in the following terms:—

23rd March, 1870.

DEAR SIR,—I have submitted to the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce your letter of 28th ultimo, in which you give an account of your journey from Sudyra through the Mishmee country towards Bathang in Eastern Thibet, supplemented by a description of the Mishmee tribe, and a sketch map of the route which you took in endeavouring to reach your proposed destination.

The Committee desire me to thank you, in behalf of the Chamber of Commerce, for these interesting papers and to assure you of their sympathy in the unsuccessful result of your endeavours to attain the important object of your self-imposed mission.

They cordially recognise all that you have labored to realise, and desire to record their conviction that if the

success of your enterprising travels had been dependent on your individual efforts to secure it the attempt to open a trade route from the British Frontier in Assam to the Thibetian and Chinese territories would have been attended with the most gratifying results.

The Committee share with you the disappointment you have expressed, and trust that the exertions you may hereafter make in exploring any useful channels for the extension of British commerce in the East may have a more satisfactory termination than that which has attended your recent travels.

Fort Canning.

By an order of the Government of Bengal, dated the 29th of last month, it was notified that all charges for moorings in the river Mutlah, as well as the levy of port dues in the port of Canning on that river would be suspended from the 1st April 1870, and that 6 months' notice would be given before any such charges were reimposed.

If this action on the part of Government is attended with encouraging results and the promotion of the interests of Fort Canning, the Committee will rejoice that the considerate liberality of the State has helped the settlement

towards future progress and prosperity, and that the adverse opinion expressed by them in their letter to Government, dated 28th July 1869, and recorded in their last report, has been proved to be an erroneous estimate of the capabilities and facilities of that place.

Morrellgunge.

By a Notification dated 20th November last, the Government of Bengal declared Morrellgunge a Port, during the North-east monsoon, for the shipment, landing and warehousing of merchandise.

The Port is named after the Messrs. Morrell who settled there some 20 years ago.

Situated on the right bank of the Hooringotta—a broad, deep and easily navigable river, about 60 miles from the sea and 150 to the eastward of Calcutta—Morrellgunge is accessible to vessels of heavy draft which can moor close off the bank in 6 & 7 fathoms of fresh water.

Its position commands a large portion of the traffic in rice and country produce passing from the eastern districts through the Sunder-

bands to Calcutta; the population is increasing, and an extensive cultivation is changing the primeval character and condition of the country into a fertile and healthy settlement. Morrellgunge is well placed as an outlet for the rice trade of Eastern Bengal, and its freedom from port dues and charges, its local facilities, and easy communication with the sea will probably persuade shippers of rice to test the capabilities of the new port.

The Committee understand that 2 vessels have already loaded there with rice during the past season.

Address to H. R. H. The Duke of Edinburgh.

His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor General having permitted the Chamber to present an Address of Welcome to His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh on his arrival in India, and His Royal Highness having been pleased to accept the same, a very large deputation of Members had the honor of waiting upon His Royal Highness at Government House on Wednesday the 29th December.

The Address was read by the President and

graciously acknowledged by His Royal Highness ; and after the Members of the Committee had been introduced to His Royal Highness, the deputation withdrew.

TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

PRINCE ALFRED ERNEST ALBERT,

*Duke of Edinburgh, Earl of Kent, Earl of Ulster,
Captain, Royal Navy, Knight of the Most
Noble Order of the Garter, Knight of the Most
Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle,
Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished
Order of St. Michael and St. George, Lord of
Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council.*

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS,

We, the President, Vice-President, and Members of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, desire to approach Your Royal Highness with the assurance of our profound respect, and the tender of our sincere and hearty welcome to the Metropolis of British India.

It is a source of unexampled gratification to the citizens of Calcutta that upon them has earliest fallen the honor of receiving Your Royal Highness on your visit to the greatest of Her Majesty's Eastern Dominions.

Your Royal Highness' advent will be ever memorable in the annals of the Indian Empire, and History will

record how happy and abiding have been its influences upon the sympathies and affections of a loyal people.

We hail your Royal Presence as a gracious testimony to the high regard in which the welfare of Her Majesty's far distant subjects is held by Her Most Excellent Majesty the Queen : the Nation will rejoice to be thus assured that in the multitude of the cares and anxieties which surround their Sovereign Her Majesty is not unmindful of the many millions who inhabit the vast Territories which constitute Her Majesty's Realm in the East : and we are persuaded that the experience of Your Royal Highness will justify the announcement to Her Majesty that a zealous and devoted Attachment to the British Throne pervades every grade of Her Majesty's subjects, and that their Allegiance to the Crown of England is the glory of the Princes and Chiefs and People of India.

These sentiments are cordially shared by the many citizens of other countries, resident in this Capital, who have the privilege of enjoying the innumerable advantages arising from the protection of a just and liberal Government ; and their feelings of respect and affection for Your August Mother are second only to those of Her Majesty's most loyal subjects.

We trust Your Royal Highness will not be unfavourably impressed with the enthusiastic reception which all classes of the public are eager to accord ; and that the demonstrations of the Greatness and Grandeur and Power of Her Majesty's Eastern Empire, and evidences of the

Prosperity and Contentment of the People—the fruits of a wise and beneficent administration of the State and of the peaceful industry of Commerce—will appeal to Your Royal Highness as worthy of being cherished among the gratifying recollections of your visit to this Country.

If the ardent aspirations of those who have the honor of addressing Your Royal Highness may be vouchsafed by Him in whose Rule and Governances are the hearts of Kings, we can desire for Your Royal Highness no greater renown and happiness than that Your Royal Highness may be long preserved to live the noble life of Your Royal Father, whose memory is revered for the virtues that adorned an imperishable name.

We have the honor to remain,

Your Royal Highness'

Faithful and obedient Servants,

(Signed by 150 members.)

CALCUTTA, }
Dec. 20th, 1869. }

GENTLEMEN,—The address you have just presented to me, in which you so kindly welcome me, demands my warm acknowledgments.

The impression made upon me by the kind and cordial reception which has been accorded to me on this my first visit to India can never fade from my mind; and deeply will The Queen be gratified by the proof which it affords, that the interest which she takes in the welfare of this portion of Her Empire is met, on the part of Her Majes-

ty's subjects here, by feelings of affectionate devotion to Herself and Her Family.

For myself I rejoice at the opportunity that has been afforded me of visiting this great Capital, whose trade and prosperity offers so striking an example of what may be effected by energy and enterprise, under the influence of free Institutions.

As to the pleasing influences which you sugar will result from my arrival among you, I can only assure you that—bearing in mind the noble example which my Father has set me—it will be the aim and end of my visit to India to bring your prophecy to a happy fulfilment.

ALFRED.

TO THE PRESIDENT, VICE-PRESIDENT,
AND MEMBERS OF THE BENGAL
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Piddington Fund.

The circumstances under which the Committee appealed to Members of this Chamber and to the public of Calcutta, as well as to the Chambers of Commerce and the communities of other cities, on behalf of the aged widow of the late Mr. Henry Piddington, were briefly set forth in their circular of 19th January; and the Committee have great pleasure in acknowledging the liberal response

with which their appeal has been received. The subscription at present amounts to Rs. 8,859, which will enable the Committee to secure for Mrs. Piddington a material addition to her income.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 19th January 1870.

To

THE MEMBERS OF THE
BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

DEAR SIRS,—The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce request you will do them the favour of giving your indulgent attention to the narrative hereto appended, taken from a recent issue of *The Friend of India*.

Upon the circumstances which that narrative discloses the Committee venture to base an appeal to you in behalf of the widow of a man who has rendered incalculable service in the cause of humanity and scientific knowledge, and by which the interests of merchants, and ship-owners and underwriters have, in countless instances and to an extent impossible to estimate, been protected and preserved.

To the late Mr. Piddington the maritime world is indebted for one of the most valuable results of scientific research, and his exposition of the Law of Storms is a treasury of knowledge to all whose profession it is to encounter and control the perils of the sea, and to whose care and skill and judgment life and property are unhesitatingly committed.

But the life-long labours of so great a benefactor have hitherto been unrequited; and the occasion which now presents them to your special notice affords this Chamber the opportunity of testifying its sense of the value of those labours by a substantial gift to his widow, whose circumstances your Committee have, after special inquiry, ascertained to be very slender.

The admission of her claim to your sympathy and your bounty will be the acknowledgment of your appreciation of her husband's meritorious services; and by initiating a movement which the commercial community at home and abroad will be invited to support, this Chamber of Commerce will perform a duty which the Committee consider it due to the memory of Mr. Piddington to discharge.

With the view of avoiding any exclusiveness in this matter, and of enabling other institutions and the public generally to subscribe to a common fund, the Committee think that individual subscriptions need not be too liberal; and that 100 rupees should be the maximum.

I am,

Dear Sirs,

Yours faithfully,

H. W. I. WOOD,

Secretary.

HENRY PIDDINGTON—A MODERN STORY.

A heap of old documents, in manuscript, in print, tied up in many packets by bits of tape of many colours, by

bits of string, dogeared, much worn by use, discoloured by time! Official records? Scarcely, or only such in part. Returns of condemned stores duly filed, pigeon-holed to the crack of doom? Scarcely. Too much love is here, too much reverence, evinced in delicacy of arrangement, notes attached to this paper and to that, in what would seem to be a woman's hand-writing: little nothings impossible to mistake. And printed forms too, wide margined, numbered and dated past all computation, peep here and there from amidst the heap. A story of mixed interest, no doubt, telling possibly of private endeavour, toil, patience, tears, sealed up with red wax, red tape, ignored, docketed, evermore set aside on public grounds. Public grounds, of course, slippery grounds, offering no standing room for honest men, denying all hope of redress to all; grounds appertaining to a public never consulted, hugely ignorant of the injustices perpetrated under its august name. Even so. Such the simple story which lies buried in the old thumb worn documents before us. It may be very briefly told.

From 1822 to 1858. Within those not very far divided dates a manly, upward, scientific, and, to the public, most eminently useful life was commenced and ended in our midst, here in Calcutta and the Eastern seas. Henry Piddington, midshipman in the East India Company's service, reached India in 1822, and continued his career as a sailor for some ten years, during which he doubtless acquired the rudiments of a science the subsequent elaboration of which won for him the approbation of the maritime world, of all scientific men, Herschel not excepted. Leaving the sea, yet ever dreaming

of it, toiling constantly to give a practical use, a local application to Sir William Reid's theory of storms, Henry Piddington discharged for the next fourteen years the office of Coroner for the town of Calcutta, upon the munificent monthly salary of £30. True, indeed, his predecessors had drawn well nigh three times £30 for discharging precisely similar work, but the sailor, sailor like, made no appeal, striving only, true public servant, to do the duty given to his hands. The Journals of the Asiatic Society of those days, from 1839 forwards, contain many-sided evidence of the intelligence, the industry of the man, all pointing seaward, all tending to indicate the progressive steps by which Henry Piddington was permitted, little by little, to unravel the laws by which the most terrible of all atmospheric convulsions are mercifully overruled. Those researches, it is needless to remark, were conducted under many difficulties, pecuniary and other. In 1846 the Government of Bengal was further pleased to add the office of President of the Marine Court to that of Coroner: position of laborious responsibility, demanding considerable knowledge of marine legal procedure, British and foreign, at sea, in river, in harbour: theory and practice of seamanship; perfect familiarity with the Sandheads and dangerous navigation of the river Hooghly. Whereon, in consideration of the multifarious duties of the appointment, £15 per mensem was allowed to the said Piddington, above and beyond the £30 already mentioned, raising the salary of the President of the Marine Court, and Coroner for the town of Calcutta, to somewhat less than that of a Captain in a marching regiment.

Nothing daunted by poverty, Henry Piddington continued to distribute gratuitously from his private pocket, copies of his nautical books and pamphlets to the Royal and Mercantile navies, seeking thereby to interest his fellow-sailors in those researches, to induce them to contribute materials for their further advancement. Touched at length by the noble unselfishness and self-sacrifice of the man, the Right Honourable the Lord Commissioners of Her Majesty's Admiralty in 1847 made a grant—little sack for so much good bread!—of £100 to assist him in the prosecution of his investigations, the importance of which even a British Admiralty could not fail to acknowledge. Not, however, until 1848 did Henry Piddington publish the Sailor's Horn-book, exposition of the Law of Storms, especially as applicable to our Eastern Seas, so admirable, accurate and exhaustive that, whilst it has gone through three editions within the last twenty years, and been translated into almost every European tongue, it continues to be, without qualification, the one standard work upon the subject. By it the cyclone or typhoon caught mariner is taught to know the precise position occupied by his ship in the circling hurricane; the storm's course, direct as well as rotatory; the shortest and safest route by which to escape from that fatal embrace. To the teaching of its modest pages hundreds owe their lives; millions sterling of floating property have been economized by its wisdom. The Sailor's Horn-book received the highest commendation from Herschel, Sir William Reid, and other eminent men of science: H. M.'s Admiralty expressed their approbation by assigning to it a place in the chart-chests, of

their ships; the officers of the Peninsular and Oriental Navigation Company publicly testified their high opinion of its worth: by direction of the Government of Bengal all ships taken up by Government, coolie and other, were required to carry this work. There is not to-day an educated Captain of a ship trading to Calcutta, or other Indian port, who will not endorse the opinions then expressed. Time and experience have only further demonstrated the soundness of the basis upon which the Horn-book was reasoned by its author from alpha to omega. The work, the loving work of a life, accomplished, there remained little to Henry Piddington, writing figuratively, save a heaving of wood and drawing of water. He continued nevertheless to find in the pages of the Asiatic Journal scientific relaxation from the heavy duties of a life now gradually drawing to a close.

On the 7th April 1858 the old sailor, of world-wide reputation, self made, self-educated, a noble instance of self-help, was called away, leaving little to his widow and children, except the memory of a good man. Pension there was none whatever. What mattered it? The public, the Government, served well for five and twenty years, would make provision for them, so whispered his sailor heart, lying there, slow sinking to rest. And who dares assert provision had not been made for the widow? But alas, public troubles past—1857,—present—1858, future—1859, terrible in poignancy, drove from the public mind all lesser sense of public duty, men in presence of national calamity take small count of private suffering: in a word, the claims of the widow of Henry:

Piddington were overlooked. Little world-wise, having few friends, Mrs. Piddington, instead of appealing direct to the quick instincts of Lord Canning, submitted to the Court of Directors a memorial begging for some small pension in recognition of the services of her late husband. The Court replied with fine sense of satire that, "while duly appreciating the scientific attainments of the late Mr. Piddington it could see no sufficient reason for granting a pension to his widow." Of course not. Had the grant solicited been for the use of Jagganath's car, the case would have excited a much larger sympathy in the hearts of those Leadenhall-street Samaritans. Seven years later another memorial, burdened with the same cry for justice, travelled home; this time to the Secretary of State for India. "Mon mari," exclaimed the old lady of French descent, with something of pride, "mon mari n'a jamais manqué à son devoir, et le gouvernement anglais est trop honorable de manquer au sien." Obviously this poor French woman had not mastered India House ethics. At length an answer came, the character of which will be inferred from the fact that it was dictated by Sir Charles Wood. The widow begged for such pittance "as will rescue her from her present straitened circumstances and place her beyond the reach of poverty." Sir Charles declared that her prayer could not be acceded to:—absolutely not another word.

And now, in olden phraseology, our story is done, at least, nearly so. It is susceptible, our readers will well observe, of a touching, a most natural, a not impossible termination if, only, we have succeeded in enlisting, on

behalf of its aged heroine, the sympathies of Lord and Lady Mayo, and those also of the public of Calcutta.

Election of Office Bearers.

At last half-yearly meeting some discussion took place on this subject, which was ultimately referred to the Committee with instructions to report on this occasion. The Committee are fully alive to the evils complained of in the existing system of election, but after giving every consideration to the subject they have felt themselves unable to propose to this meeting any other plan which in their opinion would be at once remedial, and at same time leave the matter of election as fully in the hands of members as has hitherto been, and should always be, the case. In the abstract the Committee accept the view taken by Mr. Reinhold at last meeting, to the effect that a certain proportion of their number should retire yearly in rotation, but reference to the records of the Chamber shows that, owing to the fluctuations in our mercantile community, changes in the Committee are already of necessity very frequent, and that, consequently, the proposed compulsory retirement is hardly necessary and would not be likely to increase the efficiency of the managing body. In regard, however, to the offices of President and Vice-President, the Committee are inclin-

ed to think compulsory retirement at the end of two or three years' tenure might be attended with advantage, and such a regulation would be in conformity with the practice of various other Chambers of Commerce. The Committee would, in conclusion, remind members that, as the above, or any kindred, proposition will involve practically an addition to rule VII of the Chamber, the same must be, in conformity with rule XX, brought forward at a special general meeting to be held after three months' previous notice.

New Members.

Messrs. Ede and Hobson, Agelasto and Sagrandi, and D. Freck and Co. have been admitted, by the Committee, as Members of the Chamber subject to the usual confirmation.

Funds of the Chamber.

The half-yearly balance of the Funds of the Chamber amounts to Rs. 338-14-3, exclusive of the Reserve of Rs. 12,000 in 4 per cent. Government Securities.

J. R. BULLEN SMITH,

President.

APPENDIX.

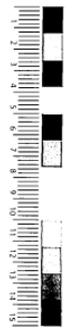
OVERLAND MAILS FOR 1869.

Agency	Overland Mails for 1869	Departures		
Long Day	Via Mediterranean	Overland	Via Bombay and Madras	Reached London
Jan 1st	Jan 1st	Jan 1st	Jan 1st	Jan 1st
Jan 2nd	Jan 2nd	Jan 2nd	Jan 2nd	Jan 2nd
Jan 3rd	Jan 3rd	Jan 3rd	Jan 3rd	Jan 3rd
Jan 4th	Jan 4th	Jan 4th	Jan 4th	Jan 4th
Jan 5th	Jan 5th	Jan 5th	Jan 5th	Jan 5th
Jan 6th	Jan 6th	Jan 6th	Jan 6th	Jan 6th
Jan 7th	Jan 7th	Jan 7th	Jan 7th	Jan 7th
Jan 8th	Jan 8th	Jan 8th	Jan 8th	Jan 8th
Jan 9th	Jan 9th	Jan 9th	Jan 9th	Jan 9th
Jan 10th	Jan 10th	Jan 10th	Jan 10th	Jan 10th
Jan 11th	Jan 11th	Jan 11th	Jan 11th	Jan 11th
Jan 12th	Jan 12th	Jan 12th	Jan 12th	Jan 12th
Jan 13th	Jan 13th	Jan 13th	Jan 13th	Jan 13th
Jan 14th	Jan 14th	Jan 14th	Jan 14th	Jan 14th
Jan 15th	Jan 15th	Jan 15th	Jan 15th	Jan 15th
Jan 16th	Jan 16th	Jan 16th	Jan 16th	Jan 16th
Jan 17th	Jan 17th	Jan 17th	Jan 17th	Jan 17th
Jan 18th	Jan 18th	Jan 18th	Jan 18th	Jan 18th
Jan 19th	Jan 19th	Jan 19th	Jan 19th	Jan 19th
Jan 20th	Jan 20th	Jan 20th	Jan 20th	Jan 20th
Jan 21st	Jan 21st	Jan 21st	Jan 21st	Jan 21st
Jan 22nd	Jan 22nd	Jan 22nd	Jan 22nd	Jan 22nd
Jan 23rd	Jan 23rd	Jan 23rd	Jan 23rd	Jan 23rd
Jan 24th	Jan 24th	Jan 24th	Jan 24th	Jan 24th
Jan 25th	Jan 25th	Jan 25th	Jan 25th	Jan 25th
Jan 26th	Jan 26th	Jan 26th	Jan 26th	Jan 26th
Jan 27th	Jan 27th	Jan 27th	Jan 27th	Jan 27th
Jan 28th	Jan 28th	Jan 28th	Jan 28th	Jan 28th
Jan 29th	Jan 29th	Jan 29th	Jan 29th	Jan 29th
Jan 30th	Jan 30th	Jan 30th	Jan 30th	Jan 30th
Jan 31st	Jan 31st	Jan 31st	Jan 31st	Jan 31st

* The "Overland" route is the most direct and is usually made by the Red Sea in the summer of the 18th Mo.

Bank of England Returns; Discount; Current, Shipments of Gold and Silver from Europe to the East, Price of Silver in London, in the year 1869.

BANK OF ENGLAND RETURNS				DISCOUNT		CURRENT		SHIPMENTS OF GOLD AND SILVER FROM EUROPE TO THE EAST FROM JANUARY TO THE BEGINNING 1869.				PRICE OF SILVER IN LONDON.			
Date.	Circulation.	Deposits.	Reserve.	Current Balances.	Rate of Discount.	Rate of Current.	Rate of Shipments.	Gold.	Silver.	Total.	Rate.	Rate of Silver.	Rate of Silver.	Rate of Silver.	
															£
1868.	£	£	£	£	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Jan. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Feb. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Mar. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Apr. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
May 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Jun. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Jul. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Aug. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Sep. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Oct. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Nov. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Dec. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
1869.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Jan. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Feb. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Mar. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Apr. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
May 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Jun. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Jul. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Aug. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Sep. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Oct. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Nov. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Dec. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
1870.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Jan. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Feb. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Mar. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Apr. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
May 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Jun. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Jul. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Aug. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Sep. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Oct. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Nov. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	
Dec. 1st.	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	1,141,000	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	105.	



12. On guaranteeing Bills, Bonds, or other engagements, and on becoming security for administration of Estates, or to Government for the disbursement of public money	... 2½ per cent.
13. On <i>decretare</i> or guaranteeing the due realization of sales	... 2½ "
14. On the management of Estates for Executors or Administrators	... 2½ "
15. On chartering ships or engaging tonnage for constituents for vessels to proceed to outports for loading	... 2½ "
16. On advertising as the Agents for Owners or Commanders of ships for cabin passengers, on the amount of passage money, whether the same shall pass through the Agent's hands or not	... 2½ "
17. On procuring freight for a ship by a shipping order or charter, or on procuring employment for a ship on monthly hire, or acting as Agents for owners, Captain, or charterers of a vessel upon the gross amount of freight, brokerage inclusive	5 "
18. On engaging Asiatic Emigrants for a ship to the Mauritius, the West Indies, or elsewhere, upon the gross amount of earnings	... 5 "
19. On engaging troops for a ship to Great Britain or elsewhere, on the gross amount of passage money for rank and file	... 2½ "
20. On realising inward freight, inward troop, Emigrant, or Cabin passage money	... 2½ "
21. On landing and re-shipping goods from any vessel in distress, or on landing and selling by auction damaged goods from any such vessel, and acting as Agent for the Master on behalf of all concerned on the declared value of all such goods as may be re-shipped, and on the net proceeds of all such goods as may be publicly sold	... 5 "
If Opium, Indigo, Raw Silk, or Silk Piece Goods	... 2½ "
If Treasure, Precious Stones, or Jewellery	... 1 "

23. On effecting Insurances, whether on lives or property	... ½ per cent.
23. On settling Insurance claims, losses, and averages of all classes, and on procuring returns of premium	... 2½ "
24. On drawing, purchasing, selling, or negotiating Bills of Exchange	... 1 "
25. On debts or other claims when a process at law or arbitration is incurred in claiming them	... 2½ "
Or if recovered by such means	... 5 "
26. On Bills of Exchange returned dishonored	... 1 "
27. On collecting House Rent	... 2½ "
28. On ship's Disbursements	... 2½ "
29. On realising Detourney Bonds, or negotiating any loan on <i>respondentia</i>	... 2½ "
30. On granting Letters of Credit	... 1 "
31. On sale or purchase of Government Securities and Bank or other Joint Stock Shares, and on every exchange or transfer not by purchase from one class to another	... ½ "
32. On delivering up Government Securities and Bank or other Joint Stock Shares, on the market value	½ "
33. On all amounts debited and credited within the year (less the balance brought forward) upon which no Commission amounting to 5 per cent has been charged	... ½ "

☞ Brokerage when paid is to be separately charged.

H. W. I. WOOD,

Secretary.

ARTICLES.	Cwt. per Ton Netlt.	Cubic Feet per Ton.
Rum, in Casks	2 puclicons or 4 lbs.	
Safflower, in Bls. p. Ton of 5 Bls. not exdgd.	52	
Sago, in Cases	50	
Sai-anonias, in Bags	20	cwt. gross.
" Boxes	20	
Saltpetro	20	
Salt	20	
Sapan Wood for Duinge	50	
Sealing Wax, in Cases	50	
Secd-lac, in Cases	16	
" Bags	60	
Senna,	20	
Shells, Rough, in Bags	50	
Shell-lac, in Cases	16	
" Bags	50	
Silk Piece Goods	14	
Skins	50	
Soap, Country, in Cases	15	
" Bar	20	
Stick Lac, in Cases	16	
" Bags	20	
Sugar	20	
Tallow, in Cases or Casks	20	
Talc	20	
Tapioca	50	
Tea	50	
Teel Seed	20	
Timber, Round	50	
" Squared	16	
Tobacco, in Bales	50	
Tortoise Shells, in Chests	16	
Turneric	20	
Wheat	50	
Wood		

N. B.—Goods in Casks or Cases to be calculated gross weight when paying freight by weight; and where freight is made payable on measurement, the measurement be taken on the Customs House wharf, or other shipping wharf within the limits of the Port of Calcutta.

II. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

CALCUTTA,
15th March 1868.

MEMBERS OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Agobetto and Sagrandi.	Mackillop, Stewart and Co.
Aisner and Co.	Mackinnon, Mackenzie and Co.
Anstruther and Co.	Mackenzie, Lyall and Co.
Argent, Schilzi and Co.	Macknight, Anderson and Co.
Atkinson, Tilson and Co.	Morris, W. and Co.
Atkinson, John and Co.	Manojkee Rustojee.
Amerson, D., <i>Manager, National Bank of India.</i>	Pearee, Bourne and Co.
Balmer, Laverie and Co.	Phyfiar, Duncan and Co.
Barlow and Co.	Petrosschano Brothers.
Beze, Dunlop and Co.	Peel, Ross and Co.
Blackie, G. M.	Prentice, P., <i>Agent of the Eastern Bengal Railway Company.</i>
Borrachalle, Schiller and Co.	Pranvinsion Law and Co.
Burdick, E. G.	Treston, Alfred.
Casini, Lamoureux and Co.	Ralli Brothers.
Cardies Sephowa and Co.	Ralli and Mavoranjani.
Cohn, Feldmann and Co.	Ram Gopal Ghose and Co.
Colvin, Cowie and Co.	Robert and Charhol.
Crooke, Home and Co.	Reid, J. M., <i>Agent, Chartered Mercantile Bank of India, London, and China.</i>
Chisje, F., <i>Manager, Comptoir D'Escompte de Paris.</i>	Routledge and Co.
Cochrane, S., <i>Manager, Agra Bank, Limited.</i>	Robinson, S. H.
DeSouza, Thos. and Co.	Robinson, T. M., <i>Managing Director of the Bengal Coal Company.</i>
Darrschmidt, Grob and Co.	Ross and Co.
Deasaknath Dutt and Co.	Schilzi and Co.
Ede and Holson.	Schlander, Futz and Co.
Emmattson and Ousterley.	Schweder, Smith and Co.
Erang and Co.	Schuetler, J. P.
Elliott, John and Co.	Schoene, Kilburn and Co.
Ezra, E. D. I.	Shaud, Fabrie and Co.
Ferguson, J. H. and Co.	Shaw, Jameson and Co.
Finlay, Hoyes and Co.	Smith, D. A. and Co.
Fontana and Humi.	Smith, Samuel, Sons and Co.
Freck, D., and Co.	Strygerson, J. S., <i>Agent, Oriental Bank Corporation.</i>
Giborne and Co.	Stevenson, B., <i>Agent, Hong-Kong & Shanghai Banking Corporation.</i>
Graf and Ruziger.	Thomson, J. and Co.
Graham and Co.	Turner, Morrison and Co.
Gulboy, Elias S.	Toulmin, L. W. and Co.
Hajee Jucknath Mahomed and Co.	Ullmann, Hirschhorn and Co.
Henderson and Co.	Wattenbach, Heilgers and Co.
Heere, Miller and Co.	Weinhold Brothers.
Hulver and Co.	Whites, G. A., <i>Agent, Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China.</i>
Jarling, Skinner and Co.	Whitney Brothers and Co.
Kettlewell, Bulke and Co.	Williamson Brothers and Co.
Kelly and Co.	Wiseman, Mitchell, Reid and Co.
Ker, Dade and Co.	Watson, Green and Hart.
Knowles, H., <i>Agent, Doraco Company.</i>	Weeks, C.
Lataple, R. V., and Co.	Wollf, Wilmaus and Co.
Lovell, H. V., <i>Super, P. & O. Steam Navigation Company.</i>	Yule, Andrew and Co.
Lyall, Remin and Co.	
Macalister, R., <i>Agent, Tuleo Company.</i>	

RESPECTFUL MEMBERS.

Becher, Wm.— <i>Coalholy, Assam.</i>	Harwood Brothers.— <i>Mirzapore.</i>
Gale, John.— <i>Bankal.</i>	Todd, Findlay and Co.— <i>Westonia.</i>
Hamilton, Brown and Co.— <i>Mirzapore.</i>	

RULES AND REGULATIONS

OF THE

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

*Revised and adopted at a Special General Meeting
held on Tuesday, the 10th July, 1866.*

- First* That the Society shall be styled "THE BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE."
- Second*.... That the object and duty of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce shall be to watch over and protect the general commercial interests of the Presidency of Bengal and specially those of the port of Calcutta ; to employ all means within its power for the removal of evils, the redress of grievances, and the promotion of the common good ; and, with that view, to communicate with Government, public authorities, associations, and individuals ; to receive references from, and to arbitrate between, parties willing to abide by the judgment and decision of the Chamber ; and to form a code of practice to simplify and facilitate transaction of business.
- Third*.... That merchants, bankers, ship-owners, and brokers shall alone be admissible as members of the Chamber.
- Fourth*.... That candidates for admission as members of the Chamber shall be proposed

and seconded by two members, and may be elected by the Committee provisionally, such election being subject to confirmation at the next ensuing General Meeting.

- Fifth*..... That the subscription of firms and banks shall be 16 rupees per mensem, of individual members 10 rupees per mensem, and of mofussil members 32 rupees per annum.
- Sixth* ... That any member of the Chamber whose subscription shall be three months in arrears shall cease to be a member, and his name shall be removed by the Committee from the list of members after one month's notice of such default.
- Seventh*... That the business and funds of the Chamber shall be managed by a Committee of seven Members, consisting of a 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.
- Eighth*.... Annual elections of President, Vice-President, and members of the Com-

mittee shall be determined by a majority of votes of members, such votes being given in voting cards to be issued by the Secretary,—numbered and bearing his signature ; and no voting card shall be received for such purpose unless so authenticated : and all vacancies created by the absence of the President, Vice-President, or any of the members of the Committee from the Presidency for three months or by departure for Europe, or by death, shall be forthwith filled up, and the election determined by votes to be taken as above and declared by the Committee.

- Ninth...* That parties holding powers of procuration shall, in the absence of their principals, be eligible to serve as members of the Committee.
- Tenth...* Two members of a firm or representatives of a bank shall not serve on the Committee at the same time.
- Eleventh.* That the Committee shall meet for the purpose of transacting such business as may come within the province of the Chamber at such times as may suit their convenience, and that the record of their proceedings be open to the inspection of

members, subject to such regulations as the Committee may deem expedient.

- Twelfth.* That all proceedings of the Committee be subject to approval or otherwise of General Meetings duly convened.
- Thirteenth.* That a half-yearly report of the proceedings of the Committee be prepared, printed, and circulated for information of members three days previous to the General Meeting, at which such report and proceedings of the Committee shall be submitted for approval.
- Fourteenth.* That the Secretary shall be elected by the Committee ; such election to be subject to confirmation at the next ensuing General Meeting.
- Fifteenth.* That General Meetings of the Chamber shall be held at such times as the Committee may consider convenient for the despatch of business.
- Sixteenth.* 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.
- Seventeenth.* That on the requisition of any five members of the Chamber, the President, or, in his absence, the Vice-President, or

Chairman of Committee, shall call a Special General Meeting to be held within 15 days subsequent to receipt of such requisition.

Eighteenth. That every subscribing firm or bank shall be entitled to one vote only, and that the Chairman of Committee and Chairman of General Meetings and Special General Meetings shall have a casting vote in cases of equality of votes.

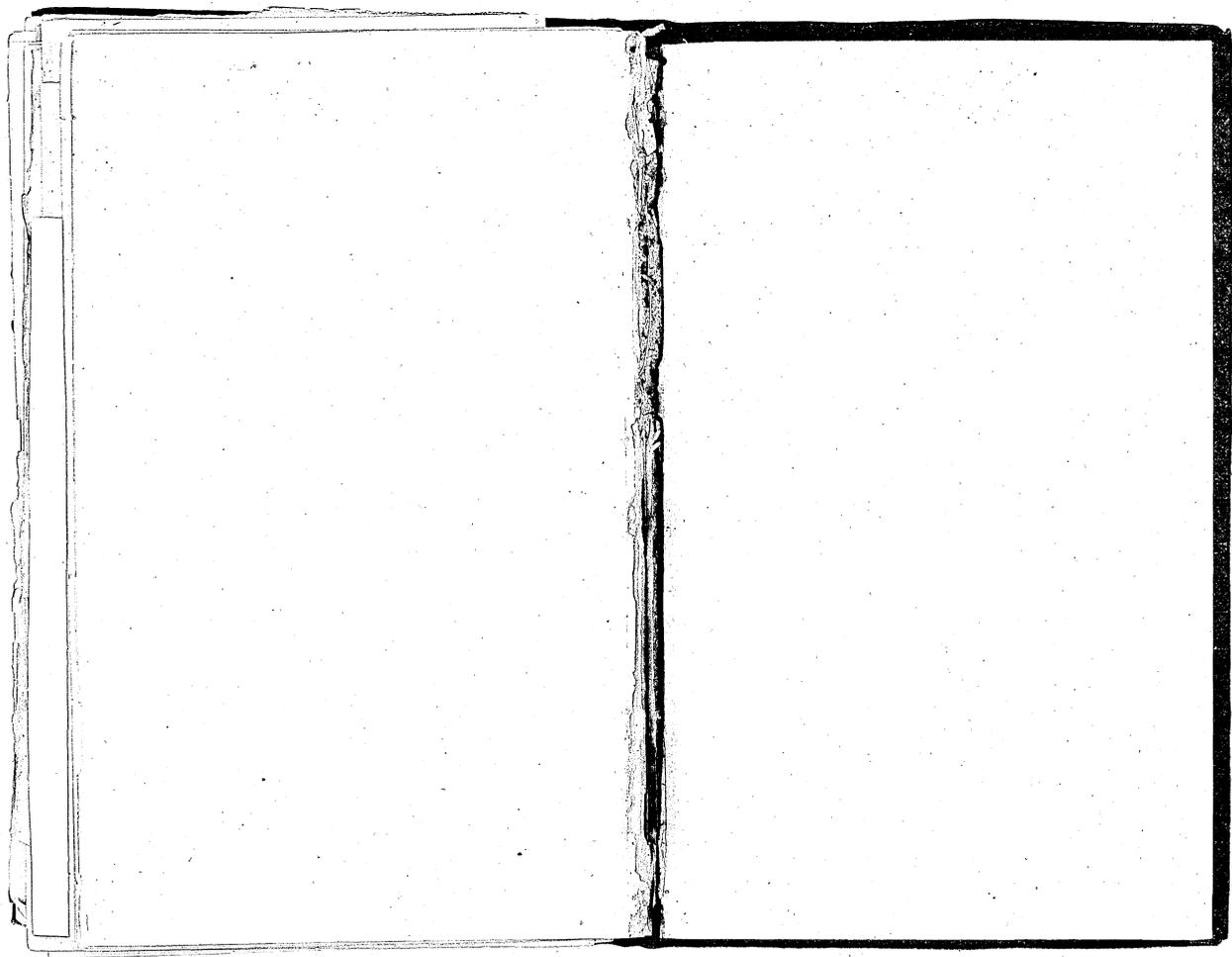
Nineteenth. That parties holding powers of procuration shall, in the absence of their principals, be entitled to vote.

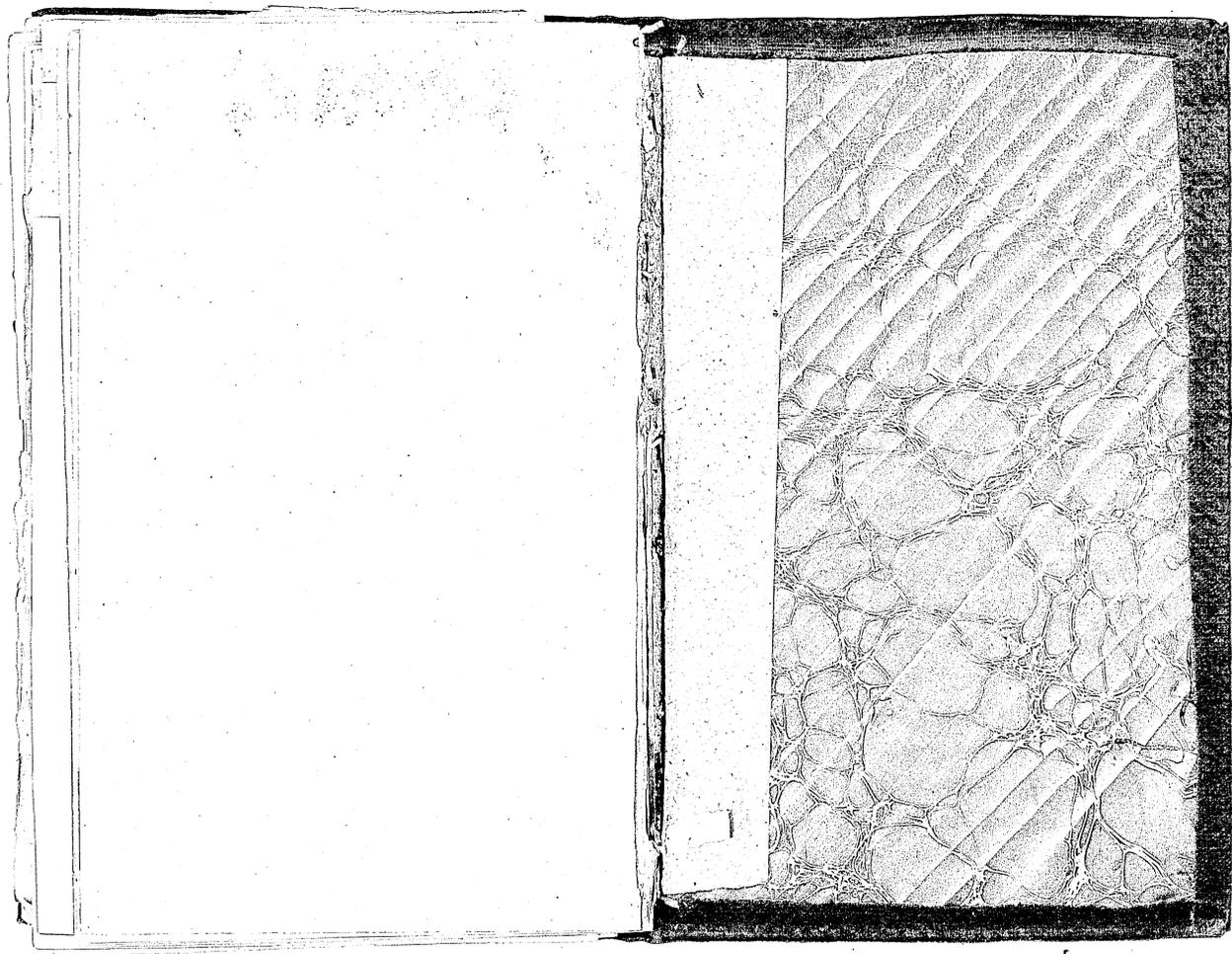
Twentieth. That voting by proxy shall be allowed; provided proxies are in favour of members of the Chamber.

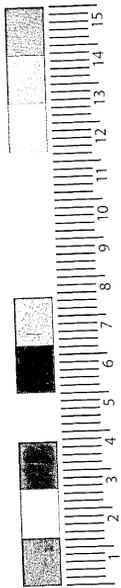
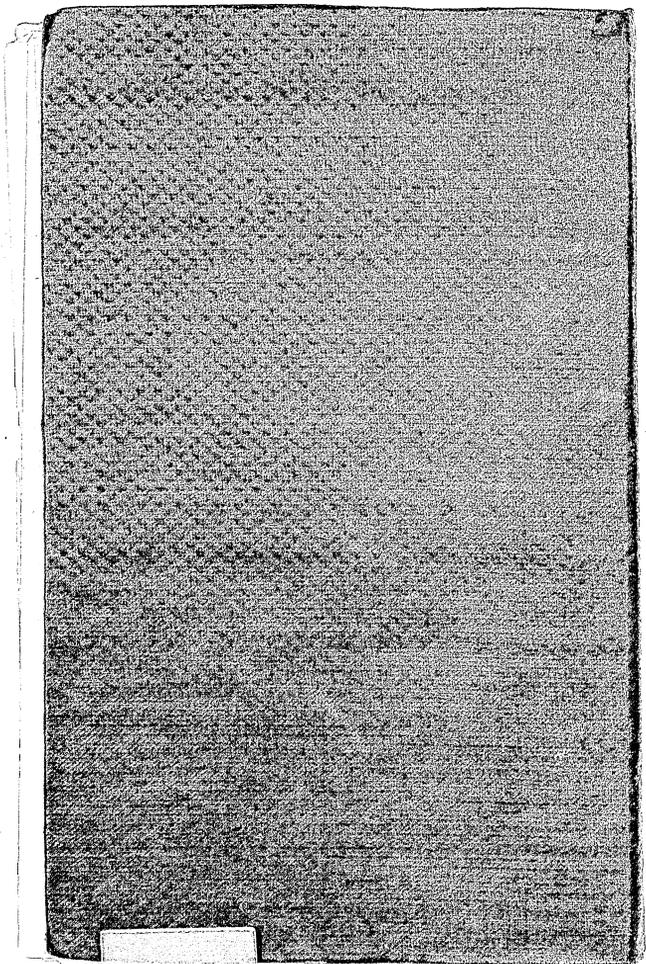
Twenty-first. That the Chamber reserves to itself the right of expelling any of its members; such expulsion to be decided by the votes of three-fourths of members present in person or by proxy at any Special General Meeting of the Chamber convened for the consideration of such expulsion.

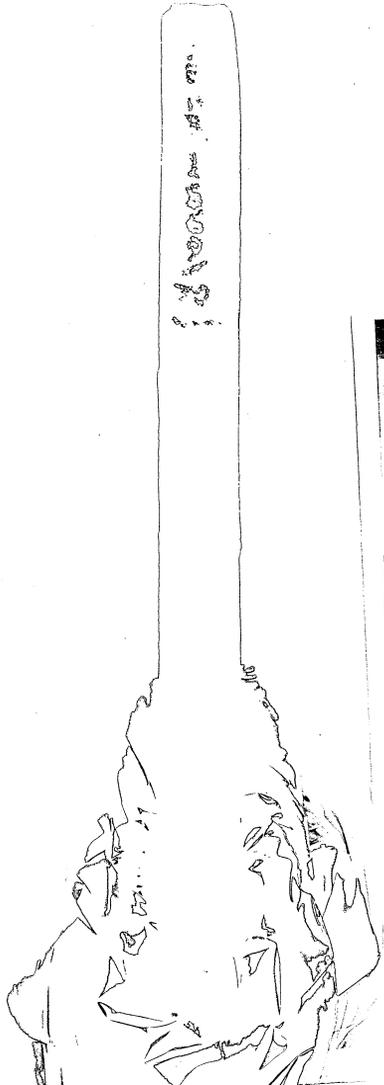
Twenty-second. That strangers visiting the Presidency may be admitted by the Committee as honorary members for a period not exceeding two months.

Twenty-third. That no change in the rules and regulations of the Chamber shall be made except by the votes of a majority of the members of the Chamber present in person or by proxy at a Special General Meeting to be held after previous notice of three months.









1870-1871

