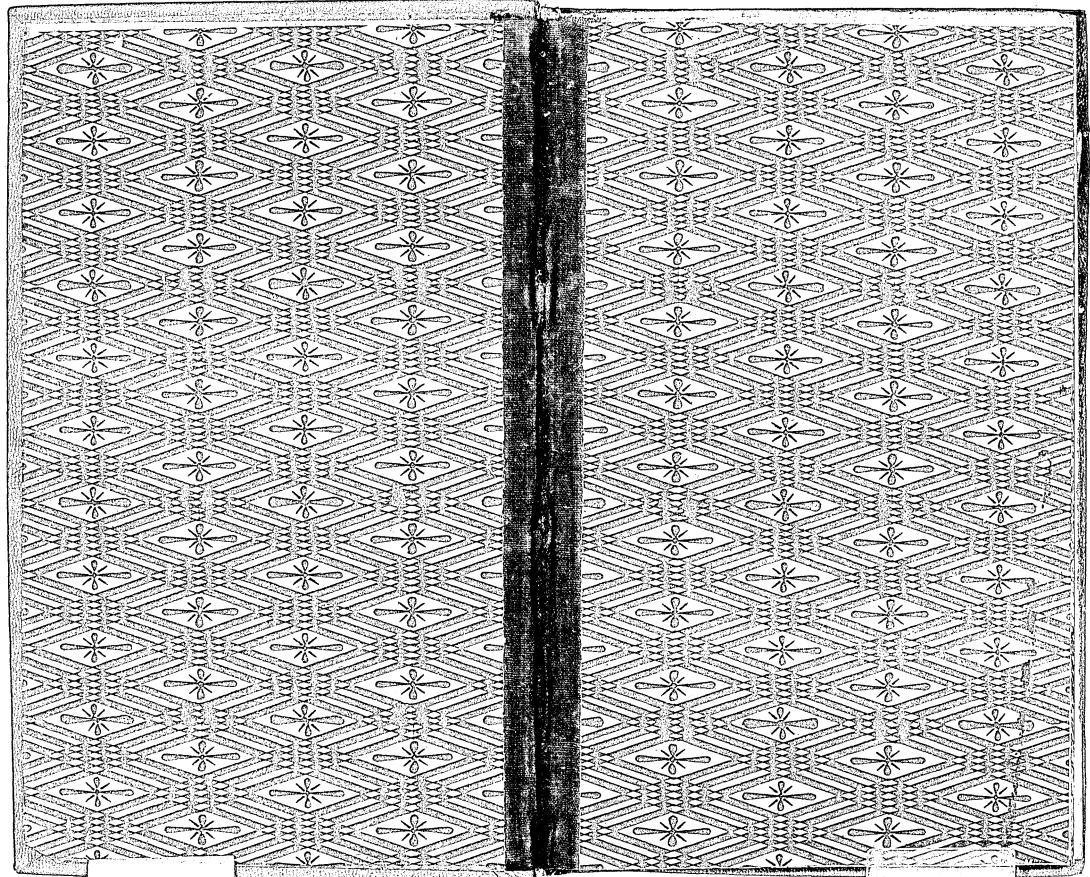


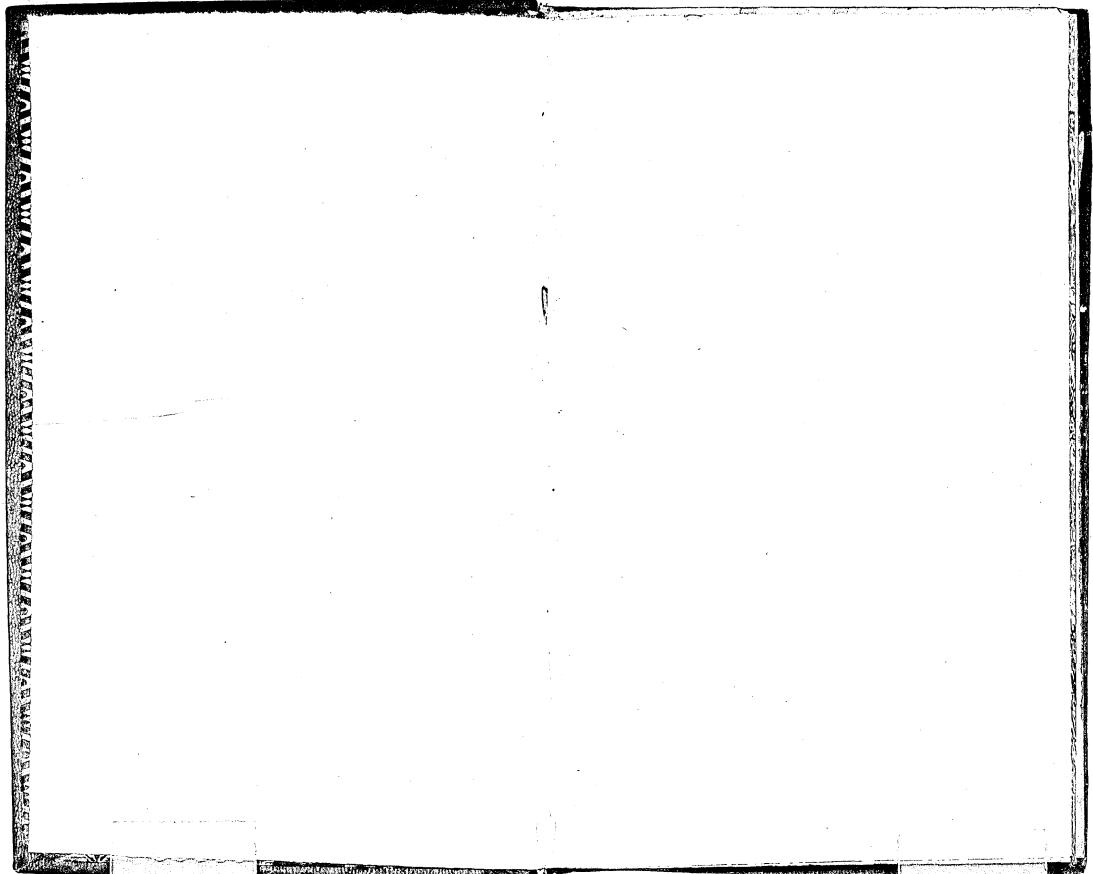
REPORT

OF THE

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

1ST NOVEMBER 1876-30TH APRIL 1877





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REPORT

OF

THE COMMITTEE

OF THE

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

From 1st November 1876 to 30th April 1877.

Calcutta:

JONES & CO., No. 303, Bow BAZAR STREET.

1877.

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PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
HALF-YEARLY GENERAL MEETING  
OF THE  
BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,  
held on Wednesday the 30th May 1877.

J. C. MURRAY, Esq., President, in the Chair.

The Chairman addressed the Meeting in the following remarks :—

Gentlemen,—You will not find many new subjects treated in this Report, the majority of them being matters that have been already before you. The *Budget* is of course new. We have only given in the Report an abstract of the speech delivered before the Legislative Council—a speech, I may remark, from its clear, comprehensive, and lucid exposition of the views and position of the Government, presenting a striking contrast to the bare array of figures and dry details to which we were formerly treated. The weak point in this otherwise able speech is the uncertainty in which the action of the Government in respect of their loans and the issue of the Council Bills is shrouded. There is certainly a shadowy programme put forward; but the Government do not pledge themselves to carry it out, and they distinctly reserve to them-

selves the right of departing from the line indicated, and being guided solely by circumstances as they may arise. This reservation was perhaps only a wise caution at the time: but two months and a half have passed away, and the commercial public are still left in the dark as to their intentions. As the prosperity of commerce is so intimately connected with the steps that Government may take, and as it is so necessary to us to have early intimation of their intentions, and that such intentions once announced should be rigidly adhered to, the Committee had determined to address the Government on the subject. In this they have, however, been forestalled by the Bombay Chamber, who have lately sent us a copy of their memorial on the subject, and asked for our co-operation. We have not yet had time to write to the Government, but we have promised the Bombay Chamber our hearty support. In making this promise, I knew that I was pledging our successors, and under ordinary circumstances I would have been chary of giving such a promise. This is a subject, however, that has been so often before, and so freely and fully, discussed in this room, and the inconvenience arising from the previous vacillating policy of the Government last year is still so fresh in our minds, that I believe I have but promised what the new Committee will be only too glad to fulfil.

The second point in the Report to which I shall allude, and far the longest one in it, is the *Block on the East Indian Railway*. The Committee generally, and myself especially, have been blamed by some for supposed inactivity in the matter. A perusal of the Report will, however, acquit us of this accusation. In fact, no amount of energy on the part of the Committee, or myself, could have given the Railway Companies additional carrying power. We took the subject up before our last meeting, as far back as the 18th January, and we were informed in reply that an indent for 1,000 new wagons had been before the Government of India for sanction for some time. Writing on the 20th March, the Agent of the East Indian Railway tells us that the insufficiency of their rolling stock was represented to the Government about three months previously, and their request for the construction of 1,000 new wagons was submitted about a month subsequent; "that attention had been drawn to this request on more than one occasion, but up to the present time no definite intimation of sanction or other action has been received." This is strong writing on his part, but it is not stronger than circumstances warranted. Why should there have been delay in giving the required sanction? The enlargement of our *wheat* trade, if they had known anything of the trade of the country, ought to have been fully recog-

nized by the Government; and they cannot plead ignorance of their own famine requirements; and yet, with all this before them, it was not till the 6th April that the sanction was given. The Chamber, who had a full knowledge of all these facts, are on the 1st May informed, in the quietest manner possible, that the sanction was given "at the very earliest moment consistent with a verification of the representation." Truly, complications, losses, law suits, the disorganization of the trade of the two largest ports in the Country, are as nothing in the eyes of the Circumlocution Office.

While on the subject of the East Indian Railway, I would express a hope that the recent notification reducing the free time at Howrah to 24 hours is not to be permanent. It is quite necessary in times like the present to keep the terminus clear, but it would be a hardship to shippers to continue it after the block is over.

*The terminal tax on Coal* has continued to claim the attention of the Committee. The subject is still under the consideration of the Government, and this great industry must continue to bear the unjust impost till they decide on its removal.

*Jetty Charges.*—This was referred to at our last meeting, and the Committee have protested

against any deviation of revenue for increase to block. This principle has been clearly laid down in the case of Railways by the Secretary of State, and it should also be strictly carried out in the matter of the Jetties.

The Survey of the river and proper regulations for *Cargo boats* are matters remaining for the pleasure of the Government. The new Merchant Seamen's and Custom's acts are to settle these, but it is impossible to prophesy when they will be brought forward.

*Trade Marks*, the *Coolie Strike*, and the *Jute Warehouse Act* in the inequality of its administration, are all subjects that have been taken up by the Committee, but have not sufficiently advanced to be included in our report. I recommend them to the careful attention of the new Committee. With regard to the coolie strike I may say that the recommendation of the Commissioner of Police has been for some weeks before members for suggestions. Up to this time the replies we have received are very few. The Commissioner's proposal to place the coolies under the Stevedores, who are to form themselves into a sort of "*guild*," appears to me open to the worst evils of "*trade unions*," and that it would place us in a worse position than ever in the event of another strike.

You will remember that in our last Report we took up the question of the way in which so-called distressed seamen are, under a late Act, forced on ships. It has come to my knowledge that the surplus fees from the Shipping Master's office, amounting to a fair sum at the end of the year, are regularly carried to the credit of Government. As this money is received from sailors, it appears nothing but fair that any surplus should be used for the benefit of sailors in distress by providing them with regular passages. At present, a so-called distressed seaman is not obliged to work on board, and we all know there is no more fruitful source of danger than an idle man in the forecastle of a ship.

These are all the remarks I have to make on the Report, and I will therefore now propose "that the Committee's Report for the half-year ended 30th April 1877 be adopted."

The resolution was seconded by Mr. A. B. Inglis, and carried.

Mr. W. P. Duff said:—Sir, I rise to propose that the action of the Committee in electing Mr. Crawford as an honorary member of the Chamber be confirmed. It affords me great satisfaction to be allowed to put this resolution forward for your confirmation, for Mr. Crawford is an

old friend of mine. I have known him for many years, and I am sure the Committee's appreciation of his services is fully merited. I have to propose "that the Committee's election of Mr. J. A. Crawford, Collector of Customs, Calcutta, as an honorary member of the Chamber be confirmed."

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Evan A. Jack, and carried.

The Chairman said:—It was in contemplation to bring forward a third resolution for the purpose of amending one of the standing rules of the Chamber; but it has been lately brought to our knowledge that the last portion of the resolution has been called into question. As therefore it is a large subject, and cannot very properly be discussed just now, it had better be postponed, and left to the new Committee to deal with, either themselves or by a Sub-Committee.

I will now call upon the scrutineers to declare the result of the votes for the Committee for the present year.

Messrs. Elliot and Clarke declared the result to be as follows:—Mr. B. D. Colvin, President; Mr. J. Flemington, Vice-President; Messrs. A. B. Inglis, D. Mackinnon, S. A. Miculachi, G.

Froeschmann, and Evan A. Jack, *Members of Committee.*\*

Mr. INGLIS proposed a vote of thanks to the retiring President and members of the Committee for their services during the past year. The motion was seconded by Mr. John Horne, and carried.

The Chairman on behalf of himself and the members of the Committee returned thanks, and the meeting came to a close.

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

\* *Messrs. Colvin and Flemington being unable to accept the offices to which they were elected, the usual procedure will be adopted.*

## BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Report of the Committee for the half-year ended 30th April 1877.

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

## THE BUDGET FOR 1877-78.

THE system inaugurated in 1861 by the late Right Hon'ble Mr. James Wilson of submitting annually to the Legislative Council of the Government of India a statement of the financial condition of the country was continued till March 1873.

On that occasion as there was no legislative measure of taxation to be brought forward in connection with the Budget of the ensuing year the usual statement was not made in Council, in conformity with the Indian Councils Act; and for the same reason a like course has been since adopted until this year.

On the 15th March last the reverting to the former practice was justified by the necessity for submitting two important bills for legislative deliberation and approval ; and in introducing those measures the Budget was presented by the Finance Minister, the Hon'ble Sir John Strachey, in a most clear and comprehensive exposition of the financial circumstances of the country, of the present position of Government, its future policy, and various methods and means for amending and improving its condition.

The accounts for 1875-76, the regular estimates for 1876-77, and the budget estimates for 1877-78, exhibit surplus of revenue over expenditure ; but the charges for famine and extraordinary works have not only absorbed those balances but closed the accounts of each year with heavy deficits.

The salient points of the Budget are that there will be no fresh imperial taxation this year, but a levy of £375,000 for Bengal and the North-Western Provinces on account of local public works ; that loans will be opened in England and India for 6½ millions sterling : that the cost of unremunerative public works and expenditure incurred on account of periodical famines shall be treated as ordinary charges to be provided from revenue ; that the Inland Customs Lines and

Sugar duties shall be abolished as soon as practicable ; that the Salt duties shall be equalised and reduced ; that the import duties on cotton goods shall be removed with the least possible delay : but that all measures of fiscal relief shall be postponed this year on account of famine. The amount of Bills to be drawn upon Indian treasuries by the Secretary of State in 1877-78 is estimated at Rupees 13,85,00,000 or £12,250,000 at exchange of 1s. 9½d. per rupee.

#### DEPRECIATION OF SILVER.

Annexed is copy of letter to the Chamber from the Government of India, as to the effect on trade, remittances, and prices, of the recent fall in the price of silver. This reference has been made at the instance of the Secretary of State. The Chamber's reply is also added.

*From Govt. of India to Chamber of Commerce.*

*Calcutta, 16th January 1877.*

In forwarding a copy of a despatch from the Secretary of State No. 112 dated 31st October 1876, I am directed to request that the Governor General in Council may be favored, as early as convenient, with the opinion of the Chamber of Commerce on the effect which the fall in the price of silver may have had on trade, on remittances and on prices in India.

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2. As indicated in the last paragraph of the despatch, any facts given to the latest date possible, which throw any light on the subject of the effect of the depreciation of silver, will be helpful and very acceptable.

*India Office,*

*London, 31st October 1876.*

*Statistics and Commerce,*

No. 112.

*To His Excellency the Right Honourable the Governor General of India in Council.*

My LORD,—Para. 1. In a letter addressed to the Foreign Office on the 28th of August, of which a copy is herewith forwarded, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was requested to issue instructions to Her Majesty's Ministers abroad for the transmission, in time for presentation to Parliament at the beginning of the next Session, of all information which could be obtained respecting the measures adopted, or in progress, that have any bearing on the question of the depreciation of silver.

2. I shall be glad to be furnished at the same time with a note conveying in a succinct form all information that it may be in the power of Your Excellency to supply regarding the effect which the fall in the price of silver may have had on trade or remittances, and on prices in India, as well as a narrative of any applications made to your Government with the view of supplying a remedy

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for the existing state of things, and of the action you have taken thereon.

3. It is not desirable that this note should enter on a discussion of the question, further than to recapitulate such arguments as may have been brought forward in the correspondence; but any facts which throw any light on the subject should be given to the latest date possible.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient humble Servant,  
(Signed) SALISBURY.

ENCLOSURE.

*India Office,*

*28th August 1876.*

Sir,—With reference to the letter addressed to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs on the 20th of last March by Mr. Goschen, the Chairman of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Depreciation of Silver, I am directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to request that the Earl of Derby will be so good as to issue instructions to Her Majesty's Representatives and Consuls in foreign countries to continue to supply from time to time all the information which it may be in their power to obtain with regard to the production and distribution of silver, the exports and imports of that metal, coinage, legislation respecting currency, and any other particulars that bear on the question of the present depreciation of silver. ▶

Lord Salisbury is particularly desirous of receiving any further information which can be procured from the United States regarding the yield of the mines, more particularly those in Nevada, in the years 1875 and 1876, and their probable future production during the next few years; regarding the exports of silver from California as well as New York; and regarding the legislative measures adopted or contemplated for the regulation of the currency, and the demands of the Government for the domestic use of the country. Lord Salisbury would also be glad to learn the result of any inquiries which it may be in Sir Edward Thornton's power to institute respecting the effect produced by the recent discoveries on the working of the Mexican and other mines on which the supply mainly depended in former years.

Information of a similar character respecting the South American mines, and the exports from the several republics of South America, is also very desirable.

With regard to Germany, Lord Salisbury will be glad to be furnished with any information that can from time to time be procured regarding the disposal of the surplus stock of silver, the extent to which the disused currency is withdrawn from circulation, the demand which may arise for further supplies of silver as subsidiary coinage, and the operations of the Government or the legislature for the further demonetisation of the silver currency.

Particulars regarding the progress of demonetisation, and the exports of silver, in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark would also be of value.

The attitude of the Government of France at the present time is of peculiar interest, and Lord Salisbury will be glad of any reports from Lord Lyons in regard to the suspension of the coining of silver five-franc pieces, the accumulation of gold and silver relatively in the Bank of France, and the issue of coin for the use either of the French people or of the other States forming the Latin Union. Information with respect to the imports and exports of silver, and the operations of the currency, might also be obtained from Belgium, Italy, and Switzerland; and it is especially interesting to ascertain the course adopted in Holland under the peculiar circumstances in which that country is placed.

Lord Salisbury will also be glad to learn how far the absorption of silver by Russia and Spain continues.

In all these cases it is not his desire to limit the reports, which he trusts Her Majesty's Representatives will furnish, to the particular points mentioned, as it is only by carefully noting any information that can be obtained respecting the relation between the demand for silver and its production that the Government can hope to be in the position of arriving at accurate conclusions regarding the influence of the present depression of silver on the finances of India.

It would be convenient that the reports should be made from time to time in the event of any information being available, and that in the case of each country, an account should be supplied of the position of affairs towards the end of the year, so as to admit of the documents being-

prepared for presentation to Parliament on its reassembling next year.

I am, &c.,  
 (Signed) LOUIS MALLET.  
 The Under Secretary  
 of State for Foreign  
 Affairs.

<From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of India,  
 Financial Department.

Calcutta, 10th March 1877.

I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt, with its enclosures, of your letter No. 162 of the 16th January, requesting the opinion of the Chamber on the effect which the fall in the price of silver may have had on trade, on remittances, and on prices in India.

I am further directed to inform you in reply that in the opinion of the Committee the effect of the depreciation in the value of silver has been to cause heavy losses to all importers of piece goods, the values of which while they remained firm in England scarcely advanced here at all, and the proceeds when remitted home at the low exchange were insufficient to cover original cost. The evil was aggravated by the uncertainty that attended the course of the exchange market, which prevented importers having any solid basis of calculation for their transactions, and drove them in self-defence to secure their exchange beforehand. The effect on prices of exports was to raise their values in the Calcutta market, as the low rate of exchange

enabled the exporter to pay a higher rupee price without increasing the "laying down cost," or sterling value. This additional price was the profit made by the "native middlemen," or the holders of produce in the port of exports; the Committee have grave doubts whether any portion of this extra price ever found its way to the ryot and producer. Had the depreciation lasted longer, or should it again occur, the native merchant would no doubt have to share this profit with the producer, as the depreciation of a currency if continued sufficiently long must raise the value of all articles, even those of daily and necessary use, and the ryot would reap the benefit of such universal rise in enhanced rates for his produce. But they would neither of them gain much in the long run as, though they would both get higher prices for the produce of the land or of their labor, they would have to pay equivalently higher rates for all the necessities or luxuries that they would have to buy from others. The native dealer is quick to take advantage of every circumstance that would warrant higher prices from the exporter, but slow in recognizing the necessity of dropping prices, though he is sharp enough in demanding lower rates when he himself is the purchaser from the ryot or producer. It will be seen from this that prices may rise materially, and even continuously, on the European exporter at the large marts, and no benefit accrue to the cultivator, producer, or manufacturer in the interior of the country till prices of all necessities of life, or a general rise throughout the country, enable him to demand an enhanced rate. All articles of purely or mainly of European production are in some measure exceptions to this rule. Tea, for example, is grown only by Europeans; and as it is sold direct to the exporter at public auction no middleman is em-

ployed, and the tea planter reaps all the benefit of such extra price as the lower rate of exchange enables the exporter to pay. The coolies on the gardens are, however, under agreement and do not participate in this. In indigo and silk, which are almost entirely of European production or manufacture, no middlemen are, as a rule, employed, as those articles are sold here by public auction, or shipped to European markets on owners' account. The proprietor of the factory or filature gains the advantage of the rise of price, but this does not filter down to the native cultivator, except after some time, when prices have generally risen for other articles as well. On the whole, therefore, it may be assumed, as a general rule, that the depreciated value of silver and the consequent fall in the rate of sterling exchange made itself at once felt wherever the holder of produce came into close contact with the exporter, but its effect was not so apparent in the mofussil, nor did it last sufficiently long to admit of the lower laboring or working classes reaping any benefit.

To that large class of Europeans, with fixed incomes, who are forced to supply many of their daily necessary wants from stores of European shop-keepers, and who are under necessity of making remittances home for their families, the hardship has been very great. They found not only that the increased cost of their remittances seriously impaired the balance of income retained for their own support, but that even this reduced balance was still further cut into by the higher prices the European shop-keeper put on his goods. Though exchange has since risen, these higher prices are still retained, owing to the uncertainty as to the future. The hardship therefore to

all those requiring to make remittances to England, and are compelled to use goods of English manufacture, continues with little abatement.

#### THE BLOCK OF TRAFFIC ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

This matter was brought before Members at the last Half-yearly Meeting, and since then the inconvenience and latterly the comparatively almost entire stoppage of the traffic has been so serious, that the Committee have been in constant communication, both personal and by letter, with the Railway authorities. The mass of complaints they have received shows how very deeply the trade of the port is affected by the inability of the Railway Companies to cope with the suddenly largely increased traffic poured in on them. This increase has been so rapid, and their inability has been so largely added to by the strain on their resources, caused by the famine, that the Committee fear the case is hopeless for this season. Though the increase has been rapid it has not been unexpected, and both Railways and Government should, the Committee think, have taken precautions in time. With the opening of the rivers some alleviation may be expected, as a portion of the produce waiting carriage at the stations will

be diverted to boats, but no real or appreciable mitigation can be looked for until the rolling stock of both the E. I. R. & G. I. P. Railways is put on a fair and proper basis. It is acknowledged that as at present constituted it is utterly inadequate for the work it is required to do. The addition of the 1,000 extra wagons, and commensurate engine power, indentured for by the E. I. Railway will go far to, if it does not altogether, do away with any cause of complaint next year. For the present year there does not appear to be any remedy; the E. I. Railway by placing 6 engines at the disposal of the Bombay Railway, who are more deficient in hauling power, and supplementing their own wants by the loan of 300 wagons instead, have done the only thing possible for them to do in the emergency. The block still continues, and though the through daily traffic to Bombay has been reduced, the press of work tendered to the Railway is avowedly far beyond its present capacity to perform.

*From Chamber of Commerce to E. I. Railway,  
Calcutta, 18th January 1877.*

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to represent that very severe inconvenience and losses have been experienced by merchants in consequence of the check which railway traffic between Cal-

cutta and the Upper Provinces has received during the last 8 or 10 weeks, and which continues at the present moment to interfere with the prompt receipt and dispatch of merchandise at up-country stations and punctual delivery at its destination.

The Committee are aware that the block on the line has been caused by exceptional circumstances, arising partially from the Imperial Assemblage at Delhi, but principally from the transport of grain towards the famine districts of the Bombay and Madras Presidencies; but the former impediment has been removed and the latter has probably by this time been materially lessened.

The traffic, however, has not resumed its ordinary regularity, and the Committee are informed that the carrying power of the railway is unequal to the heavy service it has to perform; that the stock of wagons and trucks is insufficient to meet any suddenly increased requirements of trade, and that the locomotive department is unequal to the pressure of work thereby occasioned.

To the delays and irregularities thus created and which are of very serious moment to the commercial public, there have been added considerable losses by damage of perishable merchandise carried in uncovered wagons and unprotected from the rain which has fallen heavily all along the line between this and the North-West during the last week.

All these circumstances are in the Committee's judgment sufficient to justify the reference they desire to

make with the view to be informed what measures are being taken to admit of uninterrupted traffic and the full and sufficient supply of rolling stock for its conveyance, as well as to make provision for any similar recurrence of exceptional demands upon the resources of the Railway Company.

*From E. I. Railway to Chamber of Commerce.*

*Calcutta, 23rd January 1877.*

I am instructed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th instant, commenting on the inconvenience to merchants caused by the existing pressure of traffic and consequent delay in transport and delivery of produce and on the causes which are presumed to have conduced thereto.

The Agent very much regrets such of the present conditions as have led to your representation. The accession to the Company's traffic has been exceedingly heavy and sudden, but would not probably have been beyond the powers of the Company's present stock of wagons, if it had not been for the long lead of the grain traffic over the lines in Western India and the Madras Presidency, the terms of the working agreements between the Companies obliging each to allow loaded wagons to run through to destination.

At the same time the quantity of grain brought down to Howrah has been so unprecedentedly great that the resources of the labor contractors have been taxed to the very uttermost to provide coolies to unload and deliver

consignments, and there is no doubt there has been great delay in this respect.

The Agent is prepared to admit that the carrying power of the railway has not proved equal to the exceptional demands which have been and are still being made upon it, and an indent is now before the Government of India for sanction to the construction of a thousand new covered wagons of an improved type, to provide against future emergencies of the kind and for the increasing requirements of trade.

An indent for a proportionate number of additional engines is also in course of preparation.

The complaint that the Company has used uncovered wagons for conveyance of perishable merchandise is hardly consistent with the general object of your letter. These wagons have been used almost wholly for grain, and the Company was glad to utilize any vehicles which were available,—even the Engineer's ballast trains, horse boxes and carriage trucks having been pressed in to the service. There would probably have been no complaints on this score but for the unfortunate fall of rain a few days ago.

With regard to the protection of goods at Howrah, a proposition is also under consideration to more than double the present shed accommodation for goods brought down by rail, but this has not yet received the sanction of the Board of Directors, and it is difficult to form an opinion whether, at the present stage of the Company's

contract with the Government of India, the Board will be prepared to allow the necessary expenditure.

With regard to the prospects of reducing the traffic to its normal regularity, I am to remark that the famine traffic appears to have somewhat abated, but from intelligence just to hand there is a block of grain at Jubbulpore, and it has been found necessary to suspend temporarily the through booking of grain to Western India.

This will set free more wagons for despatches to Howrah, and a considerable increase in these may therefore be shortly expected; and the Agent will be glad if the Chamber of Commerce will call upon the merchants of Calcutta to assist the Company by being prepared to remove their consignments as quickly as delivery can be granted to them.

*From Chamber of Commerce to E. I. Railway.*

*Calcutta, 5th March 1877.*

At the General Meeting of the Chamber of Commerce held on 24th January the Chairman read your reply to the Committee's representation regarding the block on the East India Railway, and the publicity thus given to it was useful in bringing to the notice of consignees of merchandize your suggestion that they should be prepared to remove their goods as quickly as delivery could be granted.

It was satisfactory to the Meeting to learn that efforts were being made to increase the rolling and engine stock so as to provide against future emergencies and increasing requirements of trade: and the Committee of the Chamber desire me to say that they will be further obliged by your stating when the additional accommodation for which the sanction of Government had been asked is likely to be available, and generally how far your endeavours to meet the demands of goods traffic and to ease the pressure on your line have been successful.

The Committee are satisfied that it is your earnest desire to afford every facility to importers of produce from the Upper Provinces and to shippers thereof at this port; and they observe from the Notice published by you last week that the inconveniences still attending the heavy demands upon your resources have not been overlooked, and that with the view to lessen them or avoid them altogether if possible you have proposed a plan by which you believe that object may be secured.

While the Committee entirely credit you with the declared intention to accomplish that purpose, they desire me to say that in their judgment the Notice has been issued under a misapprehension of results that would follow its adoption, for the arrangement involves a deviation from the well recognised rule which entitles priority of tender to priority of acceptance, and a departure from the practice of satisfying the requirements of earliest applicants for traffic accommodation before later ones are dealt with: for if your notice is acted upon a preference would be given to merchants who could produce evidence of their ability to ship off their con-

signments immediately on delivery by pre-engagement of freight, to the manifest prejudice of others whose goods are first tendered for transmission, but who are not prepared to declare their future disposal of them, or may not be in a position to deal with them until after their receipt, either by sale on the spot to other purchasers, or by holding them for a more favorable freight market. A variety of circumstances may influence the consignees of produce not intended for immediate shipment, and it would be placing them in a most disadvantageous position to shut out their goods in order to make room for other merchandise previously arranged to be at once transferred from the railway terminus to ship board.

As a rule goods brought down to Calcutta by rail are not ready for immediate shipment, and it would be only in limited and exceptional instances where your Notice could operate; but its preferential provision would be a most improper contravention of the ordinary railway rule which applies alike to all cases irrespective of subsequent destination of the produce conveyed.

Your notice would create a monopoly of railway accommodation in favor of merchants whose goods may be prepared up-country ready for shipment; it would lead to speculative engagement of tonnage available only on the contingent receipt of produce which might not arrive in time to admit of the contract being observed; and would most probably involve the very objects which you desire to see prevented.

The Committee are of opinion that your proposal would operate partially and prejudicially; that it goes be-

yond the recognised authority of the Railway Company, inasmuch as it ignores their obligation to deal uniformly with all the interests they may be required to serve: and that the Notice should on these grounds be at once withdrawn.

*From E. I. Railway to Chamber of Commerce.*

*Calcutta, 20th March 1877.*

I am desired by the Agent to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 5th instant on the subject of the present pressure on the Company's resources for conveyance of traffic.

With regard to your enquiry I have to state that the increased requirements of the Company in respect of wagon stock were represented to the Government of India about three months ago, and a request for sanction to the construction of 1,000 new wagons was submitted to them about two months ago. Attention has been drawn to this request on more than one occasion, but up to the present no definite intimation of sanction or other action has been received.

In the absence of any information as to the intention of the Government in respect of the application it is impossible to say when any additional transport accommodation is likely to be available. The Agent much regrets this as he has reason to believe the present busy traffic will not soon subside and the absence of the required facilities involves a restriction in the development of trade and a loss of valuable traffic to the Company.

With regard to the notice of the 23rd ultimo, referred to, I have to remark that the Chamber appear to have supposed a wider scope to its operation than its actual wording would warrant. While doing so they at the same time observe that it would be only in limited and exceptional instances that it could operate and this view will coincide with the intention with which it was issued. It was only intended to apply to cases where particular consignments detained up-country for want of wagons were engaged for shipment in a particular vessel loading for despatch.

As, however, the principle involved is considered to be open to objection, the Agent has issued a second advertisement notifying that the arrangement is cancelled.

*From Chamber of Commerce to E. I. Railway.*

*Calcutta, 4th April 1877.*

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 20th ultimo in reply to their reference regarding the preferential conveyance of goods traffic as announced in your notice of 23rd February, and to cordially recognise the prompt cancellation of that notice in deference to the views submitted on behalf of the mercantile community.

But it is a matter of grave regret to the Committee to learn that the Agent is not in a position to inform them when his repeated application for the additional rolling stock so much needed by the requirements of commercial traffic is likely to be sanctioned by the Government of India.

The want of such accommodation unquestionably is already, and will continue to be, a material obstacle to the development of that traffic; and the expansion of the wheat trade—which has assumed very considerable dimensions—would appear to be limited only by the ready means of transport to enable it to complete in satisfying the demands of distant markets of consumption, and it would be most injurious to the growth of that trade (and obviously to the interests of the Railway Company) if it were restricted by insufficiency of accommodation for its conveyance.

The Committee will themselves therefore address the Government of India, urging on them the necessity of early sanction to your indent.

*From E. I. Railway to Chamber of Commerce.*

*Calcutta, 6th April 1877.*

I am desired by Mr. Leslie, with reference to your letter of the 4th instant, to inform you that the Government of India have now sanctioned the Company's indent for 1,000 additional wagons for conveyance of goods, and it will be forwarded to London by this day's mail for compliance.

The Board of Directors have already been advised by telegram of the sanction, and as they are in possession of the necessary particulars, it is probable that early action will be taken to have them constructed.

As the vehicles are to be entirely of iron to a new

design their construction will be carried out entirely in England, but the work must necessarily take some time, and the Agent cannot expect them to begin to arrive much before the end of the present year.

The indent for additional engines has not yet been sanctioned, but it is believed it will not be much longer delayed.

*From Chamber of Commerce to E. I. Railway.*

*Calcutta, 12th April 1877.*

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce are very glad to learn from your letter of the 6th instant that the Government of India have at length sanctioned your indent for 1,000 additional wagons, and they trust that the Railway Company will, with this increase to their rolling stock, be amply able to provide for the growing traffic on their line.

The necessary orders for a proportionate addition of engines will no doubt follow, but the loss of time occasioned by negotiating these accessions to the carrying power of the Railway Company is greatly to be regretted.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of India.*

*Calcutta, 4th April 1877.*

On the 19th of January last the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce represented to the Agent for the

East Indian Railway Company that severe inconvenience and loss had been sustained by merchants, in consequence of the check which railway traffic between Calcutta and the Upper Provinces had received during the previous 8 or 10 weeks, and which at the time of the Committee's representation continued to interfere with the prompt receipt and despatch of merchandise at up-country stations and punctual delivery at its terminal destination; and they submitted that the carrying power of the railway was unequal to the heavy service it had to perform, that the rolling stock was not sufficient to meet the increased and extraordinary requirements of trade, and that the locomotive department was also unequal to the pressure of work to be done. The Agent's reply fully confirmed that opinion, it being admitted that the carrying power of the railway had not proved equal to the exceptional demands made upon it, and that in consequence indents had been submitted to the Government of India for 1,000 additional wagons and a proportionate number of additional engines.

While the Committee could not receive without the gravest concern the confessed inability of the Railway Company to meet the demands on their resources, they were satisfied to learn that the absolute necessity of making efforts to place the railway in a more efficient condition had been anticipated by the Agent; and they were consequently encouraged to hope that the earliest sanction would be promptly given by Government for the construction of the additional rolling stock and locomotive so urgently needed.

In the belief that this most important matter was

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making desired progress the Committee refrained from introducing the subject to the attention of Government; but as they are informed on reply to a reference to the Railway Company, that it was impossible for them to say when any additional transport accommodation was likely to be available, as the intention of Government had not been intimated nor any definite action taken, the Committee venture to submit for the very earnest consideration of His Excellency the Governor General in Council that all the interests involved in the immediate compliance with the declared necessities of the Railway Company demand the earliest attention of the Government.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of India,*

*Calcutta, 12th April 1877.*

Since addressing you on the 4th instant the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have been informed by the East Indian Railway Company that their indent for 1,000 additional wagons for good traffic has been sanctioned by the Government of India.

The Committee have received this information with much satisfaction, and they trust that the construction of this increase to the rolling stock, as well as of a proportionate number of locomotives which they presume will also be ordered, will be rapidly proceeded with.

*From Chamber of Commerce to E. I. Railway,*

*Calcutta, 26th April 1877.*

The Committee have refrained from addressing you

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again on the subject of the block on the line, in the hope that with the cessation of the famine demand for wagons, the stream of traffic downwards would have again resumed its wonted regularity; but they regret that no diminution of the inconvenience and delay has been yet experienced. It is therefore clear that the rolling stock of the Company is unable to cope even with the ordinary traffic along the line, and to so great an extent is this the case that the Committee learn telegrams have been to-day received from Cawnpore announcing the complete stoppage of all traffic from the most important mart for grain and oil seeds. There have been large sales of wheat, grain and seeds made, and freight secured for them in dependence on their due and punctual receipt. Many of these contracts will drop through owing to the non-receipt of the goods, and the Committee need scarcely point out to you the very serious loss to individual merchants, as well as the disorganization of the whole trade of this port for months. The extra wagons ordered by you will do somewhat to prevent a recurrence of the block in future, but the Committee believe the greater portion of the inconvenience and trouble has been caused by the diversion of a large number of your wagons towards Bombay.

The Committee would submit that as the E. I. Railway was constructed for the carrying to Calcutta of the produce of the valley of the Ganges, and its rolling stock placed on a scale calculated for such produce, it is a departure from the original intention and plan that wagons and engines imperatively demanded for

the conveyance of our own traffic should be used to supplement the deficiencies of the G. I. P. railway.

If there were an excess of the rolling stock the Committee would cheerfully view the profitable employment of such surplus in the service of the other railway, but as long as our own trade suffers so severely from an insufficiency of carrying power they deprecate the alienation of any portion of your already too small means for another port.

The trade of Calcutta should not be stopped in order to place Bombay in a more favorable position. The G. I. P. Railway should follow the example of the East Indian, and at once take measures to place their own rolling stock in a position to cope more effectually with the requirements of its own trade, and not expect us to starve ourselves for their benefit.

Holding these opinions the Committee have learnt with surprise that a proposition is now under consideration to work the two Railways as if they were but one concern. Had the two Companies sufficient carrying power to admit of an equitable interchange between them, there might be little to object to in the proposed arrangement. At present, however, it seems to the Committee an arrangement entirely for the benefit of the Western railway and against the interests of the shareholders of the railway on this side of India.

While writing on the subject of this block of traffic the Committee desire me to point out to you, to be

placed before the Government for their consideration, the short-sighted policy in the construction of the Rajpootana State Railway on the *metre gauge*. If the Committee are rightly informed this railway has enough wagons lying idle which could have been utilized in the present emergency, but for the difference of the gauge on which they are built. We have therefore the anomaly of one railway with a superabundance of rolling stock, lying comparatively useless, while another railway, to which it is a feeder, is crippled for want of this very stock. Had the two lines been constructed, as the Chamber have constantly contended for, on the same gauge, not only would the E. I. railway have been relieved from a large share of the odium they have lately incurred, but the Government would have been no losers, for the hire of the wagons belonging to their railway, would, the Committee are informed, been more than sufficient to have paid for the extra cost of the line on the uniform gauge. The economy, looked at even in the light of present circumstances, appears to the Committee the most expensive course that could have been adopted, and they are confident that each year's experience will show this to be more and more the case.

*From E. I. Railway to Chamber of Commerce.*

*Calcutta, 30th April 1877.*

I am directed to acknowledge your letter of 26th instant.

A proposal was made by the G. I. P. Railway Company that this Company's engines and men should work

some goods trains daily between Jubbulpore and Sohagpore, distance 122 miles, and the Agent replied to the effect that this Company had more traffic than it could deal with, and that engines and men were fully employed.

Captain Surgeant, n. r., Officiating Government Examiner of Railway Accounts, has recently visited Bombay, at the instance of the Consulting Engineer, and has written a memorandum on the present state of the goods traffic on the E. I. Railway and G. I. P. Railway with special reference to the conveyance of grain from the interior to the Coast and famine districts. This memo. was read and discussed at a special meeting held at this office on 27th April. Your letter was also brought forward, as well as one from Messrs. Anderson, Wright and Co. and both are recorded on the minutes. I attach for the information of the Chamber a copy of the minutes of the proceeding, and would invite your attention to the particulars of the actual state of affairs as given in the Consulting Engineer's letter No. 977C of 26th April 1877, to the Government of India printed in the minutes.

The conclusions arrived at were that this Company should lend 6 goods engines to the G. I. P. Railway to be returned at a week's notice if required, and on the understanding that the G. I. P. Railway should lend this Company 300 wagons.

A modification of the working agreement between the two Companies was also proposed, under which only about 100 loaded wagons are to be passed through daily from the E. I. Railway to the G. I. P. Railway at Jub-

bulpore, during the present pressure of traffic. This has been increased to 110, and it is thought that these proposals, if accepted by the G. I. P. Railway Company, will tend to alleviate the present pressure and set free more wagons for the traffic to Howrah.

The Agent regrets that it is out of his province to enter into a discussion on the merits of the question of the Gauge of the Rajputana (State) Railway.

He would however suggest that it might be satisfactory to the Chamber if you could arrange to call and see Col. Taylor, the Consulting Engineer to Government for Guaranteed railways, at his office at 21, Dalhousie Square, who might be able to give you information with respect to the rolling stock of that railway.

NO. 26 OF 1877.

EAST INDIAN RAILWAY COMPANY.

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*Minutes of a Special Meeting.*

Held at Calcutta

on

FRIDAY, 27th APRIL, 1877.

to

*Consider a proposition for the Great Indian Peninsula Railway to borrow engine power from this Company to facilitate through traffic via Jubbulpore, and a recommendation from the Government Consulting Engineer's Department that the G. I. P. Railway should lend an equivalent in wagon stock to this Company.*

## Present:

MR. BRADFORD LESLIE, C.E., Agent.

LIEUT-COL. F. SHERWOOD TAYLOR, R. E., Consgr. Engr. to  
the Govt. of India, for Guaranteed Railways, Calcutta.  
CAPTAIN W. A. J. WALLACE, R. E., Dy. Consgr. Engr. to the  
Govt. of India, for Guaranteed Railways, Calcutta.  
CAPTAIN R. A. SARGEANT, R. E., Offg. Govt. Exmr. of Ry.  
Accounts, Calcutta.

MR. ROBERT ROBERTS, Chief Auditor.  
„ J. C. BATCHILLOR, Traffic Manager.  
„ D. W. CAMPBELL, Loco. Supdt.  
„ R. W. PEARCE, Carriage and Wagon Supdt.  
„ W. H. RUSSELL, Secretary.

READ the following:—

*Memoorandum by Captain R. A. Sargeant, R. E., Offg. Govt.  
Exmr. of Ry. Accounts, dated Calcutta, 21st April, 1877,  
on the present state of goods traffic on the East India Rail-  
way, and Great Indian Peninsula Railway, with special  
reference to the conveyance of grain from the interior to  
the Coast and Famine Districts.*

"1. The negotiations between the G. I. P. and E. I. R., which were opened with a view to obtain some assistance from the latter in working the traffic of the former have fallen through, as the Agent of the East Indian Railway states that he has as much work on his own line as he can at present attend to, i.e., that the resources of the line are fully employed.

"2. Thinking, however, that the matter should not be allowed to drop in this way without some further en-

quiry, I have collected certain information on the present state of the traffic on both lines.

"3. At the present time there is a large quantity of grain at the country stations of both lines, a portion of which is awaiting conveyance to the famine districts, and a portion has been purchased for export from Calcutta and Bombay. But the capacity of the Railways is not equal to the demand, and at both ports many merchants bitterly complain that they are unable to get their grain down for shipment, in many cases tonnage having been secured which they are obliged to undersell at great loss, in some cases obtaining merely nominal rates. But beyond this personal inconvenience the general welfare of the country has to be considered, and it must be borne in mind that this will suffer in proportion to the amount of grain intended for export which still remains in the mofussil at the commencement of the rains, when doubtless much will be damaged if not destroyed.

"4. The question then is, are both these lines doing as much work as possible, or could they not by some mutual arrangement do more?

"5. On account of the famine in Madras and the south of the Bombay Presidency the G. I. P. has a double task to perform; were it not for this famine the difficulty would be considerably diminished, if not entirely disappear; both lines would be heavily worked, in fact their stock and power would be overworked for a short period, but they would probably be equal to the occasion. No through grain from the East Indian would go beyond

Bombay, and from there the stock could be rapidly returned, and the large quantity of foreign wagons running on the G. I. P. would be reduced and a greater number available for work on the parent line.

"6. Speaking roughly, about  $\frac{1}{3}$ rd through grain from the East Indian Railway goes to Bombay, of which a large portion is for export to Europe. A considerable quantity, however, is there shipped down the Coast, and finds its way to the famine districts; a small quantity too is, as it suits the convenience of the merchants, sent by rail to Sholapore, Adoni, Bellary or other famine depots. At this time about 100 wagons with famine grain are passed over the Bhore Ghaut daily. I estimate that  $\frac{1}{3}$ rd of the grain and  $\frac{1}{3}$ th of the total goods traffic of the G. I. P. Railway is due to the famine.

"7. The number of wagons passing on to the G. I. P. at Jubbulpore during March averaged 107 per diem, of which average 13 were O. & R. and S. P. & D. stock, and these ran chiefly to Bombay, Poona, Sholapore and Bellary :-details are appended. The greatest number passed in one day was 190; and during the present month I am informed that the average has been upwards of 120. No assistance in the way of empties is received from the Madras Line, and there is now no transhipment of grain.

"8. The traffic over the Thull Ghaut has not reached its maximum as regards the number of trains that can be worked. Some difficulty was experienced on the line north of Bhosawal, but new crossing sidings have been

put in, and a greater number of trains could be worked than those now running, if sufficient power were available. The supplies of coal and water are ample.

"9. As regards the through traffic from the East Indian Railway, the Traffic Manager, Mr. Conder, states that all wagons, with few exceptions such as must always occur, are returned within the contract time, and it is asserted that in no way have the terms of the through booking agreement been infringed on the part of the G. I. P. The number of wagons sent through would, in the natural course, be regulated by the flow of traffic, and if all the foreign stock is quickly returned well within the contract time as asserted, there does not appear to be any grounds for complaint against the G. I. P.: not that I am aware of any such complaints having been seriously made. There is no doubt however, that if the G. I. P. had more engine power, the foreign stock could be returned more quickly than at present.

"10. Looking at the whole question from a disinterested point of view, we come back to the original point, viz., are these two trunk lines combining their powers to the greatest advantage of themselves and the community at large? The export trade of grain which is now going on is in a great measure new, and only a few months ago was quite unanticipated, and it is to the interests of the Railway Companies that this should be in every way encouraged, and not meet with unnecessary difficulties at its outset. In fact all party spirit, if such exists, should be set aside, and the two Companies should work harmoniously together to do the

best in their power to bring from the interior to the Coast the greatest possible amount of produce before the rains set in.

"11. Looking at the portion of wagon stock to engine power, I find that under the present circumstances, which must be accepted and cannot be immediately altered, the ratio is very different on the two lines; in fact on similar data for both, the daily train mileage, including empty running, worked by each engine in running order works out as follows:-

<i>Passenger and Goods Engines.</i>	<i>Goods Engines only.</i>
68.2 <sup>2</sup>	E. I. R.                    53 miles.
94.7	G. I. P.                    Information not to hand.

"12. From this it may be reasonably inferred that some redistribution is necessary, and I am convinced, from what I have seen on the two lines, that it would be to the advantage of both, and of all concerned, if some equitable arrangement were made, by which the G. I. P. should hand over to the E. I. R. a certain number of wagons for its own use, and receive a proportionate number of engines in return, proper charges, of course being made on each side. It has been said that if the E. I. R. does not get more wagons, they will only run on to the G. I. P. with through traffic, but it is not so. I am assured by the G. I. P. management, that it would inconvenience them to have the through traffic increased, and there will be therefore no occasion for the Traffic Manager to send one more wagon on to the G. I. P. than at

\* Allowing for 6 engines hired to Government. These figures relate to quarter ending 31st March 1877.

present, and, if he chooses, he can employ any additional stock that he may get entirely on the traffic to Calcutta.

"13. I am aware that the G. I. P. authorities say that they cannot spare wagons, just as the E. I. R. authorities say that they cannot spare engines. In fact, to speak plainly, one will not help the other without getting something in return, and each is unwilling to move in the matter, even if the opportunity has become apparent. But this I maintain is not the state of affairs which should be allowed to exist. It appears that some action is required, seeing that these two Companies are hampered, as at present, (one from the want of stock, and the other from the want of engine power), when the proportion of work per engine in running order is as above shewn.

"14. I do not think that any very great improvement can now be made, but something can be done: we may expect six weeks of open weather before the monsoon, and every extra train load that can be worked daily during that period is so much to the good.

"15. Having discussed the question with the Consulting Engineer and the Agent in Bombay, I am aware to what extent the management of the G. I. P. Railway is prepared to go, and if the Agent of the E. I. Railway will consider how far he can increase the mileage of his engines, I think some small advantage may be gained, by an exchange of stock for power, and a limit to the through booking as above suggested.

Statement giving number of waggons running through  
Jubbulpore during March, to the undermentioned  
Stations on the G. I. P. and Madras Railways.

Names of Stations.	Grain.	Miscella-neous.
Bomlay	1,700	81
Poona	505	9
Bellary	223	.....
Sholapur	97	.....
Khandwa	26	20
Bycula	1	69
Choral	.....	.....
Hyderabad	55	34
Seonee	30	2
Kareli	1	7
Ommavattiee	.....	3
Vaniembady	.....	5
Nassick	1	1
Niphah	14	20
Challisgaon	11	.....
Unchisur	4	3
Nursingpore	.....	2
Sanwad	.....	1
Babhai	1	.....
Akola	.....	1
Moortizapore	24	2
Mummar	5	.....
Madras	27	14
Hurdur	6	12
Egutpoorah	9	7
Lussulgoan	4	.....
Myhijee	18	1
Dcolale	11	1
Sowdah	7	.....
Burhampore	10	12
Rawer	12	7
Nagpur	9	.....
	1	4

Names of Stations.	Grain.	Miscel-laneous.
Julgarn	8	1
Tallegon	3	.....
Etarsie	.....	5
Bhosawal	.....	1
Bangalore	2	.....
Tana	2	.....
Khirwari	7	.....
Karili	.....	1
Dadur	1	1
Bulsar	.....	1
Karki	.....	1
Bavoda	.....	1
Ahmedabad	2	2
Kalian	9	.....
Raichore	.....	11
Mulkapore	9	.....
Sooptara	1	.....
Gooty	10	.....
Bunkeri	.....	1
Chandwara	1	5
Sheagoan	35	8
Nandgaon	11	.....
Adon	8	.....
Cudaphah	2	.....
Boali	.....	1
Bognal	.....	1
Yerrigoottha	2	.....
Goondaeol	7	.....
Karvan	.....	1
Mundhra	2	.....
Karolhi	2	.....
Ghumpan	3	2
Kusgan	6	.....
Boysleharoo	1	.....
Gondwarah	.....	12
Total ...	2,928	366

No. 961.

"Copy of the above memo. forwarded to Agent, E. I. R., for early consideration. The undersigned is of opinion that the number of loaded E. I. R. wagons to be transferred daily at Jubulpore might with advantage to both Companies be limited in future to 100, and 6 goods Engines, with drivers, might then be lent to the G. I. P. for working the length between Jubulpore and Garawara.

"If the G. I. P. afterwards find that they have a surplus of engine power, the E. I. R. might undertake to receive say 25 G. I. P. empties daily at Jubulpore, and work them to and from Cawnpore. If open wagons are sent the risk should be taken by G. I. P."

*Note by Mr. B. Leslie, dated Calcutta, 26th April, 1877,  
on Captain Sargeant's memorandum.*

"PARA. 3. In 1876, the grain exported included much that had been stored from the crops of former seasons, and in the spring of 1877, all the godowns were emptied, as the trade in both wheat and seeds almost ceased for a time.

"This being the case, there need be no apprehension of difficulty in storing the balance of this season's crops, which cannot be brought down before the rainy season.

PARA. 10. Export trade was anticipated, designs were prepared and indents for increased rolling stock submitted in January 1877.

PARA. 11. The comparative weight of E. I. R. and

G. I. P. trains must be taken into account, also the speed at which they are hauled. A train of 450 tons at 20 miles an hour equals 9,000 ton-miles per hour. A train of 350 tons at 13 miles equals 4,550 ton-miles per hour. The engine hauling the first train does double the work of the engine hauling the latter.

"How many G. I. P. engines are in hospital through over work? If the G. I. P. Railway has overtaxed the power of endurance of its engines and consequently disabled a large proportion, it would account for the excessive mileage exacted from those which are still in working order, but would not justify the E. I. Railway in doing likewise."

*Letter No. 977C, dated Calcutta, 26th April, 1877, from  
the Consig. Engr. to the Govt. of India for Guaranteed  
Rys. to the Socy. to the Govt. of India, P. W. D.*

"In continuation of my telegram of the 23rd inst., I have the honor to forward for the information of the Government of India a copy of Captain Sargeant's memo. of the 21st inst., on the present state of the goods traffic on the East Indian and G. I. P. Railways, which has been sent to the Agent, East Indian Railway, under cover of my docket No. 961.

"2. You will observe that Captain Sargeant estimates that about  $\frac{3}{4}$ th of the entire traffic of the G. I. P. is famine traffic, and, as far as I can ascertain, the proportion on the E. I. R. is about  $\frac{3}{8}$ th.

"3. The gross earnings of the G. I. P. from goods traffic are considerably larger than those of the E. I. R.

but the tonnage carried by the E. I. R. is more than double that of the G. I. P. R.

"4. The Traffic Manager of the East Indian Railway estimated, at the beginning of this month, that about 2,500 of his covered goods wagons were working traffic consigned to Bombay. This is about  $\frac{2}{3}$ ds of the entire carrying power of the line available for the grain traffic, but by limiting the number of E. I. R. wagons transferred daily at Jubulpore to 100, as recommended by me, the carrying power of the line will, I think, be tolerably equally divided between Calcutta and Bombay, and if this balance can be maintained as long as the present pressure of traffic continues, the E. I. Railway Company will, I consider, be doing their best to treat the public of Calcutta and Bombay with fairness.

"5. The East Indian Railway has hitherto endeavoured to furnish as many wagons as were needed for the through traffic to Bombay, notwithstanding the inequality of the vehicle mileage run by the stock of the two lines, but it is clearly necessary to draw the line somewhere, and I would suggest that the G. I. P. Railway be called on to arrange to contribute a fair share of stock for the joint traffic.

"6. The East India Railway are, as you are aware, building 1,000 new goods wagons, and I think the G. I. P. Railway should be prepared with a fresh reserve of not less than 500 covered wagons to meet the rapidly increasing traffic to Bombay.

"7. The G. I. P. Railway have, I hear, arranged to

improve the carrying capacity of their existing wagons, but they do not as yet contemplate making any addition to their goods stock."

*Letter dated Calcutta, 26th April, 1877, from the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, to the Agent, East Indian Railway Company.*

[See page 24.]

*Letter dated Calcutta, 26th April, 1877, from Messrs. Anderson, Wright & Co., to the Agent, East Indian Railway.*

"We learn by wire from Cawnpore that the traffic from there is again closed from to-day on account of want of rolling stock. We also hear that you have undertaken the working of 150 miles of G. I. P. Railway, thereby reducing the carrying power of your own line, when you are not able to cope with the traffic offered to you for it. We beg to give you notice that in case of any of our cargo being thrown late for shipment by this action of yours, we shall hold you liable for all damages which we may thus incur. We have over 2,000 tons of seeds, &c., coming from Cawnpore during the next three weeks, for which freight has been engaged, and we believe your liability is undoubted, if you cause us loss by diverting your rolling stock to channels with which you have no legitimate right."

In reference to para. 11 of Capt. Sargeant's memo, Mr. Campbell produces the following statement showing the average Train and Engine mileage run by each Engine per month and day over the Main and Jubbulpore Lines from January to March, 1877:

Months,	Total Train mileage, Total Train mileage from Jubbulpore and other stations.	Average miles per annum.	Average miles per month.	Average miles per day.	Remarks.
1877.					
January, ...	751,447	9,110,231	500	.....	10 tent to Baghpat, Dugar, and one Wana Valley, 5 miles, and 10 miles, 6 Miles Ay, and 10 miles, 6 Wana Valley state by. 10 miles, 9 districts, and 1 taluk.
February, ...	661,870	7,50,825	494	.....	
March, ...	7,50,491	8,56,971	494	.....	
Total, ...	22,06,765	25,18,821	1,185	.....	
Average of 3 months,	7,34,579	8,35,205	496	1,181	1,652
Attego per annum,	...	...	491	501	

JUBBULPORE,

The 26th April, 1877.

PROTHAS GURU,

Accountant.

D. W. CAMPBELL,

Locomotive Super't.

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He remarked that that was the true test of how the engine stock was employed, and that it shewed a result better than is attained on the London and North-Western Railway in England. Mr. Campbell further stated that he was not prepared to agree to Capt. Sargeant's figures, as they did not appear to him to afford a correct basis of calculation. The Agent and Chief Auditor concurred in Mr Campbell's remarks.

Mr. Campbell stated further that by working overtime in the shops the number of engines constantly under repair would be reduced; and by this arrangement he could place six engines at the disposal of the G. I. P. Railway Company if considered advisable, but he could not spare Drivers for working them—

617. RESOLVED that the East Indian Railway Company are prepared to offer to the G. I. P. Railway Company 6 goods engines without Drivers, and will undertake to deliver them at Jubbulpore in about 10 days from date of requisition, the rate of hire to be Rs. 50 per day for each engine. These engines are to be let on hire on the understanding that they are to be returned at one week's notice if required, and in the same good order in which they are received, the G. I. P. Railway Company to pay freight from Jumalpore to Jubbulpore and back, at 12 annas per mile each.

This offer is also conditional on the G. I. P. Railway Company being prepared to let on hire at once to the E. I. Railway Company 300 goods wagons in good working order, the rate of hire to be Rs. 2 per day for each

wagon, the E. I. Railway Company paying haulage to Jubbulpore for the wagons, if sent empty, at the rate of 2 annas per mile each.

It is also proposed that the Working Agreement between the two Companies be so far modified during the continuance of the present pressure of traffic, that only about 100 loaded wagons per diem shall be passed from the E. I. Railway to the G. I. P. Railway at Jubbulpore.

At the time of confirmation of this Meeting on 3rd May 1877, the following correspondence was read:—

*Letter No. G102, dated Calcutta, 30th April, 1877, from the Agent E. I. R. Co., to the Agent G. I. P. Ry. Co., Bombay.*

#### FACILITIES FOR THROUGH TRAFFIC.

"In continuation of this office letter No. G127 of the 28th instant, I am desired to acknowledge the receipt yesterday of your telegram as follows:—

"We consider 50 rupees a day far too high a rate for the engine. Can you not quote a lower freight. Other terms agreed to except number of wagon days (*wagons daily*) to be increased to 120 or 125. We propose to send you 300 open wagons—

And to advise you that the following telegram in reply has been sent to you this day:—

"We cannot reduce terms or conditions for engines or but will consent to an average of about one hundred and ten loaded wagons through Jubbulpore from this side daily. I you now agree on all points, advise me, and the

engines will be got ready and despatched as quickly as possible."

*Telegram dated Bombay, 2nd May, 1877, from the Agent, G. I. P. Ry. Co., to the Agent, E. I. Ry., Calcutta.*

"Conditions agreed to. Send Drivers with Engines if possible; Our wagons to be returned in same good order as delivered; When will Engines be at Jubbulpore?"

618. RESOLVED, that this agreement be recorded.

*From Govt. of India to Chamber of Commerce.*

*Simla, 1st May 1877.*

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your two letters dated the 4th and 12th April 1877, advocating the acquisition by the East Indian Railway Company of additional goods wagons and locomotive engines to meet the very heavy traffic on the line.

2. In reply I am to state for the information of the Chamber that at the very earliest moment consistent with a verification of the representation of the Railway Company called for by the magnitude of the indents submitted by the Agent, indicating as they did a marked expected development of traffic, the Government of India satisfied with the enquiries made, have sanctioned the acquisition of 1,000 goods wagons and 50 locomotive engines.

**AMENDMENT OF THE RAILWAY LAW.**

The Railway Conference which was to determine the points of amendment required has been postponed; and meanwhile the Committee will be glad of any suggestions Members may be desirous to make with the view of their being placed before the Conference whenever it meets.

*From Govt. of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce.*

*Calcutta, 18th October 1876.*

I am directed to forward, herewith, copy of a letter No. 612, dated 21st September 1876, from the Government of India, Legislative Department, regarding the amendment of the Railway law, and to request that the Chamber will favour the Lieutenant-Governor with any remarks they may have to offer on the proposed amendment of the law.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of Bengal.*

*Calcutta, 30th November 1876.*

In reply to your letter No. 2755 of the 18th ultimo the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to say that they believe a Conference on the bill to amend the Railway Act will be held in January next, and that the passing of the bill has therefore been postponed.

If the Government will oblige the Chamber with the result of that Conference the Committee will be glad to

take the matter into consideration, and any present expression of opinion would be premature and of no practical utility.

*From Govt. of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce.*

*Calcutta, 6th December 1876.*

With reference to your letter of the 30th November 1876, I am directed to inform you that a copy of the results of the Conference on the bill to amend the Railway Act will be forwarded to the Chamber as soon as they are received by this Government.

*From Railway Conference to Chamber of Commerce.*

*Calcutta, 6th December 1876.*

It may have been brought to the notice of the Chamber of Commerce that a General Railway Conference has been directed to meet in Calcutta in the beginning of February next for the discussion of matters connected with Railway business, including such general subjects as the simplification and reduction of fares and of the tariff of goods.

2. I have the honor, by desire of the President, to enquire whether there are any Railway matters which the Chamber would wish to bring to the notice of the Conference, and of which the discussion would, in the opinion of the Chamber, be beneficial.

SIMPLIFICATION AND REDUCTION OF  
GOODS TARIFF.

When Indian Railways were first opened, the arrangements made for the carriage of goods were based on those in force in England, which were the outcome of many years' experience. The earliest Railway Act of Parliament was the one for a tramway between Wandsworth and Croydon. This was passed in 1801, and contained a rough division of goods—26 articles being enumerated—into four classes, for each of which a maximum charge per ton-mile was prescribed. When in after years railways began to multiply, a similar practice was followed, but each railway, in its special Act, obtained sanction to a classification of goods which differed more or less from those adopted on other lines.

The confusion that would have resulted from through traffic being carried under such conditions was obviated by the voluntary action of the Railway Companies in 1847, when a uniform classification of goods was adopted by all Companies which were members of the Clearing House. Under this system goods were divided into five ordinary classes, a mineral class, and a special class.

On the French Railways the English practice was adopted. In 1846 a law was passed under which goods were divided into three classes, 60 groups of commodities being specified, and a maximum rate laid down for each. In 1861 the number of classes was increased to four, and a general classification in which 1463 articles were named was adopted.

But this was not considered by the French Railway Companies to be sufficient, and goods were therefore rearranged by each Company into five or six "series," with, in some cases, an additional special series, just as in England the Clearing House classification re-distributed the goods which had been already arranged in classes in the special Acts.

In Belgium there was originally three classes of goods. In 1864 the number was increased to four, but so arranged as to embrace a low class for special goods. There still remained, however, what may practically be considered as two additional classes to which special rates were applied, one for coal and coke, the other for various kinds of iron manufactures.

In all the foregoing instances classification of goods seems to have been adopted either to fix in a definite way the maximum rate allowed to be charged for any article, or else to facilitate the adjustment of accounts between different railways. No indication can be traced of an intention to fix any rates absolutely without possibility of reduction, and the English Royal Commission on Railways, when recommending in 1867 that the Clearing House classification should be formally applied to all railways by Act of Parliament, expressly guarded itself from any misconception on this point. It reported—

99. The carrying trade brings the Railway Companies into competition with carriers on roads, canals and rivers, as well as with the whole coasting trade. The Companies, therefore, without regard to the rates which they charged elsewhere, have found it necessary to reduce their rates

below those charged for the existing means of conveyance, whatever its cost might be, in order to draw traffic on to their own lines. However much the owners of the existing modes of conveyance may have been prejudiced, the general public have derived an unqualified advantage from the great increase of facilities for the conveyance of merchandise, which we have no doubt has largely contributed to the development of the industry and resources of the country.

Inequality of charge in respect of distance, besides being a necessary consequence of this competition, is an essential in the carrying trade, that is to say, the principle which governs a Railway Company in fixing the rate is that of creating a traffic by charging such a sum for conveyance as will induce the produce of one district to compete with that of another in a common market.

Hence, even if the Railway Company be assumed to have a complete monopoly of the railway communication of the district it occupies, it must, in its own interest, regulate its accommodation so as to produce as large an amount of remunerative traffic as possible.

The power of granting special rates thus permits a development of trade which would not otherwise exist, and it is abundantly evident that a large portion of the trade of the country at the present time has been created by, and is continued on the faith of, special rates.

100. The conditions under which such rates are granted are so numerous that no special law could be framed to regulate them. It has indeed been suggested that it

should be left to a Government Board or other tribunal to arbitrate in cases where the traders asked for reduced rates, and the Railway Companies refused them; but it must be recollectcd that the Companies are entitled to derive a benefit from the rates assured to them by Parliament, and the course suggested would be tantamount to transferring this benefit from the Companies themselves to individual traders, in order to add to the profits of their business, established with a full knowledge of the system of railway rates.

101. There is no doubt that this system confers great powers on the Railway Managers and Directors in regard to the markets for those articles in whose cost the carriage forms an important element.

It is however the interest of every Railway Company to develop the trade of its district.

\* \* \* \* \*

103. It has further been alleged against the system which permits of unequal rates, that, in cases of traffic of the same nature carried on from two districts to a common market, the rates have been so favorable to one district as to shut out the other.

Without entering into the question whether a uniform rate over the whole country would not operate effectively to shut out all the traffic now carried to distant markets, it is evident that there can be no mean course between allowing the Railway Companies to charge what rates they think expedient within a maximum limit, and requiring that a rate proportioned to distance, or at least an equal rate for equal distances, shall be adopted.

Many important districts have access to each other by navigable rivers and by the sea as well as by railways, and hence if a uniform rate were made compulsory it would prevent those districts which possess a water route as well as a railway from getting the benefit of the low rate they now obtain from the competition between the railway and the sea or river, and thus raise the price of the article to the consumer; or else, it would act as a prohibition to the Railway Companies whose lines are in competition with the coasting trade from carrying certain classes of traffic, and in either case would check trade. Moreover, the competition which now exists between the produce of different places in a common market would be seriously prejudiced by uniformity of rate.

In India, the division of classes adopted in England has been followed until lately with little variation. Each railway divided general goods into five regular classes, with the addition of one or more classes for particular kinds of goods; special rates were quoted for the carriage of any articles when this seemed to the Company concerned to be required.

Under this system, however, there has not been complete uniformity of classification. The classified list of the East Indian Railway Company for September 1876 enumerated 830 articles, of which 207 were differently classified either on the Great Indian Peninsula, the Sindh, Punjab and Delhi, the Madras, or the Bombay Baroda and Central India Railway.

On the Oudh and Rohilkund Railway all goods are divided into four classes—special, low, middle, and high—to each of which a fixed rate is applied.

On the State Railways all goods are divided into three classes, and charges are made by the unit of station-distance instead of a fixed measure of length, but a special rate may be quoted on each railway for any one of the articles so classified to which the ordinary rate seems inapplicable.

It may be found convenient first to consider the extent to which uniformity of classification is desirable and practicable, and then to discuss the character and number of classes which should be adopted if uniformity is advocated.

If the uniformity is to be real, and not merely nominal, it is evident that the classification must be wide enough to prevent a wholesale transfer of articles into a special class, for on most lines is only a collection of the articles to which varying special rates are applied.

There appears to be a general feeling in favor of uniformity, and most Railway Officers naturally consider their own particular classification the best. But it is recognized that compromises must be made. For instance, Mr. Conder, the General Traffic Manager of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, while advocating the retention of five classes, writes—

"We have gone as far as any of the Railways to bring that (uniformity) about. We have said that, with the exception of a few of the staple commodities of the country, such as cotton, salt, grain, piece-goods, &c., &c., which are carried at specially quoted rates by all Railways, we will put all other goods into the same classification as is

adopted by the other lines; and in carrying out that principle instances in which the majority of the through booking Companies quoted a given class for any particular article, we have followed that majority, even although it involved an alteration of what we had been previously charging; and further, whenever an even number of Railways adopted different classifications for any particular class of goods, we have followed the lowest, and so made the lowest class to be in the majority."

The Great Indian Peninsula Railway Company seem however to have in some cases retained in local traffic classifications which for the sake of uniformity they have abandoned in through traffic, and certain articles are thus rated in two classes according as they are booked locally or through.

The Agent and Traffic Manager of the East Indian Railway consider that the existing classification suits their large traffic better than any arrangement of goods into a smaller number of classes while the Agent of the Eastern Bengal Railway would be willing to abolish the two highest classes as including but few articles which contribute to the earnings of that line.

It will not however be forgotten that this question has another side. The charge for moving goods has to be calculated not only by the carrier, but by the owner. There seems to be a general opinion, either tacitly acknowledged or expressed in words, that consignors, as a rule, have no concern with the classification or the system on which charges are based, and look only to the result of all this calculation. The Conference will how-

ever doubtless be glad to hear whether this view is accepted by consignors, and the Chambers of Commerce will be consulted on the point. In any case, every step towards uniformity of classification will make goods tariffs more simple.

Next, accepting the fact that the cost of carriage on different railways varies, and is likely to continue variable, the opinions of the members of the Conference are invited as to the extent to which uniformity of rate can, or should, follow upon uniformity of classification. The more uniform that rates can be made, the more nearly will connected railways be worked as if they formed one joint concern; and from a public point of view, this is much to be desired. It is for consideration how far through rates for traffic passing over more than one railway can be quoted at one uniform standard. Also how rates can be simplified by abolishing all extra charges for terminals, handling, &c., as has been done on some lines, and by waiving any claim for excess payment on consignments that have been undercharged at the booking station:—a point suggested by the Agent of the Oudh and Rohilkund Railway, who urges that native traders look with suspicion on any alteration of this kind in freight charges.

The question of adopting one unit of weight for the promulgation of rates is also suggested for discussion. At present some rates are quoted by the maund, others by the 100 maunds, others by the ton.

And this is not all. On the Eastern Bengal Railway 80lbs. are reckoned as a maund. Some railways also in Southern India do not adopt the standard weights of the

country, but apply the term "maund" to a weight of 82lbs. One-fourtieth of this is called a "seer," and 27 of these "maunds" are called one "ton." This evidently makes the approximate arithmetical conversion of "maunds" into "tons" simple, but uniformity of weights and measures is so important a matter that the attention of the Conference is invited to the subject.

In connection with the question of rate, the liability of railways for loss or damage to goods has to be considered. In the Railway Act certain articles are specified as entailing no liability on the carrying railways unless a special insurance is paid for them. These articles are practically identical with those scheduled in the English Carriers' Act for a similar purpose, regarding which the Royal Commission, before mentioned, reported that the list required revision, because it was unsuitable to the present condition of industry and trade. Evidence had been afforded to the Commission that the Carriers' Act had originally been passed in the days of stage coaches when losses in transit were not infrequent, and that the exemption of railways from liability for the loss of such articles as silk and cheap lace bore hardly on trade, while, on the other hand, the Railway Companies had, in order to protect their interests, practically increased the list by refusing to carry certain fragile or damageable goods except at the owner's risk, and by quoting two rates for other articles according as the owner accepted the risk or not.

In India the section of the Railway Act regarding limitation of liability for other articles than those specially exempted runs thus—

"The liability of such Railway Company for loss or injury to any article or goods to be carried by them other than those specially provided for by this Act shall not be deemed or construed to be limited or in any wise affected by any public notice given or any private contract made by them; but such Railway Company shall be answerable for such loss or injury when it shall have been caused by gross negligence or misconduct on the part of their Agents or servants."

Some Railway Companies have not considered themselves debarred by this clause from quoting rates, at owner's risk, for other goods than those specially exempted.

In the published "Indian Railway Bill, 1870," the clause above quoted is retained with verbal alterations, but to the list of articles entailing no liability on the carrying railway are added—

- Cloths and tissue, of which gold and silver forms part.
- Telegraph stamps.
- Lithographs.
- Photographs.
- Carving.
- Sculpture.
- Opium.
- Ivory.
- Ebony.
- Sandalwood.
- Musical instruments.

The question of carriage at owner's risk, affecting, as

it does, both traders and carriers, is suggested to the Conference for discussion as an important element in classification and assessment of rates.

Another matter which has to be considered is the system of charging for light and bulky goods at a minimum weight per wagon. This question presents special difficulties in the case of through goods, which are transferred from one wagon to another. On some lines a minimum of 3 tons per wagon is the basis of charge per wagon : on the metre gauge State lines 50 maunds has been taken as the minimum. Under the English Clearing House rules some very light or fragile articles, such as band-boxes and furniture, are charged on actual weight at 20 per cent. more than 5th class rates, and it has been suggested for discussion that a charge on actual weight at a high rate might be more convenient than a charge on a minimum weight per wagon at a lower rate, especially in the case of through goods booked over railways of different gauge.

And finally an expression of opinion is invited upon the desirability of reducing any particular rates now in force, which appear to bear hardly upon special trades or industries, or from the lowering of which material advantage may be expected.

Of late years great reductions in rates have been made on some lines, and have resulted in large benefit to the Railways as well as to the public. The recent expansion of the export trade on wheat for consumption in Europe could never have taken place had grain not been carried at exceedingly low rates. But members of the Conference

and the representatives of commercial interests may be able to suggest other reductions by which trade in produce or in manufactures may be increased. The following extracts from Mr. Julian Danvers' last report state the arguments in favor of a policy of low rates, which he found to be generally endorsed by the various Railway authorities in India.

30. Management.—I need hardly remark that the Railways command an enormous power over the interests of the districts through which they pass. It is a power which should be used in a very judicious, enlightened, and I would add enterprising, spirit, not calculating only on the existing condition of things, but taking into account the capabilities of the country, the prospects of future development, and the growing wants and improving habits of the people. To obtain the highest return from the transport of a limited amount of goods should not be so much the object of Railway Managers as the conveyance of a large quantity with a comparatively small profit upon each unit. In some of the fertile valleys through which we passed, the surface of the ground, unbroken by hedge, wall, or fence of any kind, presented as far as the eye could reach, from the Railway embankments, one large sea of rice or corn. In other parts the Railway traverses tracts of country where the cultivable area might be increased, and where an external trade might be established, if only a market were accessible for the produce of the land. Opportunities, therefore, in one shape or another, are not wanting of obtaining traffic; but to make Railways as serviceable and as profitable as they should be, they must be brought within reach of the people, who, though poor, tenacious, and prejudiced, soon become

alive to their value, and are quite ready to use them in every possible way, whether for carrying themselves or their goods. The passenger rates have, on some lines, been already reduced, for the lowest class, as far as can be expected. The charges are from a farthing to a third of a penny per mile. The value attached by natives to cheap travelling may be gathered from the fact that they prefer giving up their caste to parting with their pence. The high caste will travel with his lower caste brother rather than pay a higher fare. As regards goods, the natives who engage in trade are keen observers and accurate calculators in matters of business, and command, by some means or other, very accurate information as to prices which prevail in the various markets of the world. The trade up-country would soon at present be in the hands of a few. One effect of administering the Railways in a broad and liberal spirit would probably be to introduce a wider competition, and to encourage a more general employment of capital. The policy, therefore, to be followed, both in the interests of Railway proprietors and of the public, is low rates and simplicity of management; avoiding as much as possible special charges and exceptional arrangements (which only confuse and disconcert the uninitiated and the small dealer), and showing a readiness to consider the means, the wants, and usages of the people. It is hardly necessary to add that economy is at the bottom of all reforms and improvements in the direction above indicated. For the rates paid by the customer must always in some degree correspond with the cost of transportation. The more saving there is in managing the traffic, the greater margin will there be for reduction of charges, and thus will a greater stimulus be given to business, and a greater chance of increased profits.

31. Rates and fares.—It may be said that high and low rates are simply comparative terms which convey no definite meaning. As applied to the circumstances of India, I would describe rates as "high" when they fail to secure the conveyance of the produce of the districts through which they pass or of the goods imported into those districts; when they prohibit or unduly check traffic, and thus restrict trade; when they discourage extended production; and when they raise the cost of conveyance by diminishing the use of the carrying stock. This has been too much the case hitherto; and therefore Railways have not yet conferred upon the country the full benefits, nor yielded the profits, which they might have done. The smallest addition to the cost of an article will very often turn the scale as to whether it shall find a favorable market or not. The expense of carriage has necessarily a very important influence on the price at which it can be delivered. The lower the cost of production, the greater is the effect of that influence. This applies especially to corn, and other grain, salt, coal, cotton, and almost all the staple commodities of the country. It is very desirable, therefore, to be able to charge such moderate rates as will conduce to the conveyance of large quantities with a small profit on each unit, and thus promote the movement of goods from one part of the country to the other as well as their exportation to foreign lands. As an illustration, I would mention that, at the present moment, in consequence of the low price of wheat in the Provinces of Oudh and Rohilkund, and the facilities which the Railway gives for conveying it to the Port of Calcutta, a larger quantity is being sent to this country and other parts of Europe than has, I believe, ever before been known. In round numbers its cost, including ex-

penses of conveyance, both by land and sea, would on arrival in London be from 38 to 40 shillings per quarter. The price here is about 43 shillings or 44 shillings. Another advantage arising from low rates is worth advertising to at the present moment. By helping to increase the export of Indian products, they would proportionately promote the demand for silver in India, and assist to raise the rate of exchange.

Summing up the foregoing remarks, it is suggested that the branches of this important subject should be discussed in the following order :—

- 1.—Practicability and desirability of uniformity in classification.
- 2.—Number and character of classes to be adopted.
- 3.—Extent to which uniformity and simplification of rate is practicable and desirable.
- 4.—Unit of weight for quotation of rates.
- 5.—Limitation of liability of railways as carriers.
- 6.—System of charge for light and bulky goods.
- 7.—Reduction of rates.

#### **HOOGHLY BRIDGE TOLL ON COAL.**

The Committee, as will be seen from the annexed correspondence, have continued to press on Government the total removal of this objectionable tax on one of the most important industries of the country. In previous correspondence they pointed out to Government that, independently of this terminal charge, the receipts from the traffic over the bridge were sufficient to meet all the charges of its maintenance, and its continuance was therefore not only against the spirit of Lord Northbrook's promise, but was also impolitic in itself. In the correspondence now presented to members the injurious effect, even on the proposed reduced scale, is more particularly dwelt on. The matter is still under consideration of the Government, whose reply is anxiously looked for. If the Committee's argument that the tax is both unnecessary and injurious be sound its continuance for a single day, even on a modified scale, is a grievous injustice.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of Bengal,  
Public Works Department,*

*Calcutta, 6th March 1877.*

THE Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to renew the representation already submitted for the

consideration of Government regarding the Railway terminal charge on coal.

To the Committee's reference of 24th October last you were good enough to state in your letter No. 3153 of 2nd December that a report had been received from the Bridge Commissioners conveying an expression of their views on the question of exempting coal from the toll now levied, but that the Lieutenant-Governor had been obliged to call for a further expression of the Commissioners' opinion on certain matters relating thereto.

Three months have passed since your reply reached the Committee, and during that interval they have been patiently waiting for a decision on a point which they hoped would meet with early solution; but as no further orders appear to have been passed on the subject, the Committee venture to place the matter once more before the Lieutenant-Governor.

The Committee have in previous letters entered so fully into the question that they refrain from recapitulating the arguments advanced against the injustice of a measure detrimental to the coal trade of Bengal, or repeating the facts and figures which have so clearly demonstrated the absolute absence of any ground whatever for maintaining the charge imposed by the Act. They are unchanged in the opinion already pronounced that the railway terminal fee on coal, arbitrarily levied to meet expenditure on account of a bridge which it does not use nor needs to use under any circumstances, should never have been authorised, and that it should be forthwith removed.

Entertaining these views, the Committee have heard with much concern that it is in contemplation to continue the tax on a reduced scale; and opposed to any half measures applicable to an article of local industry which demands special protection at the hands of Government, the Committee trust His Honor will in no wise countenance any partial reduction of the charge, but that he will, on the contrary, declare the coal trade to be justly entitled to exemption, and release it from a burden designedly thrown upon it, by an authority that could not be resisted though strongly protested against, in order to compass a financial expedient based on no principle of equity or right regard to private interests.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Private Secretary, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.*

*Calcutta, 7th March 1877.*

As the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce are anxious that the subject of a letter addressed this day to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal should be submitted to the Honorable the Lieutenant-Governor with all avoidable delay, they direct me to place in your hands a copy of that communication with the request that you will do them the favor of bringing it to His Honor's notice at the earliest and most convenient time.

And with the view to place the Lieutenant-Governor in possession of previous correspondence on the subject, the Committee desire me to attach to the present reference printed copy of a representation to the late Viceroy and of a subsequent appeal to the Hon'ble Sir Richard Temple.

I have personally explained to General Nicolls the reason why the Committee have adopted the unusual course of placing the matter before His Honor through his Private Secretary.

*From the Private Secretary to the Lieut.-Governor to Chamber of Commerce.*

*Belvedere, Alipore, 9th March 1877.*

In reply to your forwarding letter of the 7th March the Lieutenant-Governor desires me to say that the whole question of the maintenance of the bridge is now under his consideration.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of Bengal.*

*Calcutta, 12th April 1877.*

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to submit the following remarks in continuation of their representation of the 6th ultimo, with the request that His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor may be in early possession of replies which have been recently communicated to them, illustrative of the effects of the Hooghly Bridge terminal charge on coal.

The Committee are of opinion that any further argument on their part is wholly unnecessary; and they content themselves by simply placing before the Lieutenant-Governor these pregnant instances of the disastrous results of the tax.

**FROM THE BENGAL COAL COMPANY.**

"I find that the average payments of this Company cannot be less than Rs. 15,000 yearly, for a bridge which it never uses: this sum is equal to  $\frac{3}{4}$  per cent per annum on the Company's capital of Rs. 22,00,000 while its shareholders get little or no dividends on their money.

**FROM THE RANEGUNGE COAL ASSOCIATION.**

"The tax is simply paralysing to the coal owners, and amounts to a penalty equivalent to confiscation, in the magnitude of the sums exacted without the remotest benefit in return.

"During the last year the tax has absorbed most if not all the small earnings of some of the coal owners and has been a source of heavy loss to others.

"Very little of the coal taxed (so far from using the bridge) is brought into Calcutta at all, but goes up the river again.

"The bulk of the coal is only brought down to Howrah for want of accommodation at the river side stations between Bally and Chander Nagore; what little coal is used in Calcutta is chiefly brought over by boats, and is TAXED AGAIN by the Port Commissioners when landed at the ghats, and by Government at the toll bars of the Canals.

**FROM THE EQUITABLE COAL COMPANY.**

"I now send you herewith a memo. shewing the amounts we have paid for Bridge Toll from January 1875 to the present time. It just comes a little short of 2 per cent. per annum on the capital of the Coal Company.

THE NEW BEERDHOM COAL COMPANY declare that the terminal charge varies from Rs. 16,000 to 18,000 annually, and their report for the half year from 1st May to 31st October 1876 states that the Profit and Loss Account shows a debit balance of nearly 4,000 Rs.

In conclusion, the Committee desire me to state that already some companies own or occupy land for the special purpose of having sidings in connection with the railway, by which they are enabled to bring their coal to the river bank there instead of to Howrah, and avoid the bridge toll; and others are only awaiting the decision of Government as to the continuance or removal of the terminal charge to incur the first cost of constructing similar means of transport to the river, and thus to exempt their traffic once for all from the heavy annual charge imposed by the Bridge Act.

No. 3153, C.

*From Govt. of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce.*

*Dated Fort William, 2nd December 1876.*

In acknowledging receipt of your letter dated the 24th ultimo, I am directed to state for the information of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce that a report has been received from the Bridge Commissioners conveying an expression of their views on the question of exempting coal from the terminal charge which the East Indian Railway Company levy under Section 4 of Act IX of 1871, but the Lieutenant-Governor has been obliged with much regret to ask for a further expression of the Commissioners' opinion on certain matters relating thereto.

No. 207 C.

*From Govt. of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce.*

*Dated Fort William, 21st April 1877.*

Public Works Department,  
Commissioners.

In acknowledging receipt of your letter dated the 12th instant, submitting a further representation illustrative of the effects of the terminal charge on coal leviable under Section IV of the Hooghly Bridge Act IX of 1871, (B. L. C.) I am directed to state that the Lieutenant-Governor was obliged to make a reference to the Government of India regarding this question, and that a copy of your present letter has also been submitted to that Government.

#### JETTY CHARGES.

The reduction of these charges has been again pressed on the attention of the Port Commissioners during the past half year. From their reply it will be seen that they contemplate the expenditure of over Rs. 72,000 out of cash balances, i. e. out of surplus revenue, in enlarging and completing existing works, and that they are not able therefore to make any reduction. This diversion of revenue to capital is not only wrong in principle, but as it tends to postpone for an indefinite period the relief in the high rates charged, the Committee have protested strongly

ly against it. No reply to this communication has been yet received.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Port Comms.*

*Calcutta, 5th March 1877.*

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to request the favor of your informing them—with reference to your letter of 31st August last—if the Commissioners have arrived at any conclusion regarding the proposed reduction of charges for landing and shipping goods at their Jetties.

*From Port Comms. to Chamber of Commerce.*

*Calcutta, 6th March 1877.*

With reference to your letter of the 16th August last proposing reduction of rates charged for landing and shipping goods at the Jetties, and in continuation of this office letter No. 1293 dated 31st August 1876, intimating that the question would be referred for consideration and report to the Budget Sub-Committee, I am directed to forward herewith, for the information of the Chamber, an extract from the report of the above Committee, which was submitted to, and adopted by, the Commissioners at their last meeting.

Extract from the report of the Sub-Committee appointed at the 209th meeting to consider the Budget estimates for the year 1877-78 and other matters referred to them for consideration and report.

\* \* \* \* \*

With reference to the question of a revision of the

Schedule of Jetty rates, proposed by the Chamber of Commerce in their letter of 16th August 1876, which has been referred to the Sub-Committee for consideration in conjunction with the Budget Estimates of income and expenditure of 1877-78, we submit the following recommendations to the Commissioners.

It appears from the statement of Jetty receipts and charges that the receipts for the ensuing year 1877-78 have been estimated at Rs. 5,95,836, and the expenditure at Rs. 5,82,466, leaving with the balance, carried forward from the current year, an estimated working balance on the 31st March 1878, of Rs. 29,010.

This, in our opinion, is not more than a sufficiently safe balance to work to during the year; and if the items of expenditure provided for in the budget statement, above referred to, be retained, it is not advisable to make any reduction in the Jetty rates.

It will be observed that the expenditure includes, with one exception, nothing but charges which are properly due to the Jetties, viz., proportion of salaries, working expenses, renewal of block, municipal taxes and reserve fund charge.

The exception, above mentioned, is a charge of Rs. 72,890 for the extension of the Jetty heads and increase of accommodation for export cargo. This work has been undertaken to facilitate the working of the Jetties; and as it will not give any direct and immediate return for the money expended thereon, the Commissioners decided at the 205th meeting that it is a work the cost of which is

justly chargeable to revenue. It will be noted that the expenditure proposed to be incurred for an additional Jetty (No. 8) is to be met out of capital, that is, by a loan from Government; only the interest and sinking fund on the loan being chargeable to revenue of the Jetties.

We have examined the schedules of rates in force in the Ports of London, Liverpool and Glasgow, and compared some of the items with the amount charged in the present Jetty Schedule of charges for similar advantages afforded by the Jetties in Calcutta. This examination shows that the charges generally at the Calcutta Jetties are lower than similar charges in London or Liverpool, and that this is the case is due to the fact that nothing has been paid for the land occupied by the Jetties and warehouses in Calcutta, while in London and Liverpool the cost of the sites has been a large item in the expenditure. If the value of the land made over by Government had been debited to the Trust, the charge for interest could not have been met by the rates now levied.

It is also to be borne in mind that although the rates now levied for the use of the Jetties and of the appliances connected therewith, are about the same as those made for the use of boats previous to the construction of the Jetties, vessels now get far greater despatch, and there is greater protection from loss or damage to goods.

We are therefore of opinion that no change is at present expedient or rendered feasible in the rates paid for the landing or shipping of goods at the Jetties, and that any reduction therein should be deferred until such further Jetties as may be required shall have been constructed out of capital by loan obtained from Government, the

interest and sinking fund on which shall be chargeable to the receipts under the head of Jetties, and until the whole accounts of the Port and Port approaches show a balance of receipts over expenditure.

*From the Chamber to the Port Commissioners.*

*Calcutta, 2nd April 1877.*

Under instructions from the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 3494 of the 6th ultimo giving cover to extract from the report of a Sub-Committee of the Port Commissioners appointed to consider the Budget Estimates for the years 1877-78 and other matters in connection therewith; and I am to express the Committee's disappointment at the result of their reference relative to the reduction of charges levied by the Commissioners on goods landed at and shipped from their Jetties.

勞工在不利的條件下工作，沒有機會檢驗委員會的估計，因為委員會在形成他們的計算和結論後就解散了。委員會無法審查這些數字或將其與影響委員會聲明的事實和情況進行比較。因此，委員會聲明說，不應採取任何減少碼頭費率的措施：他們必須因此而放棄委員會所達成的結果。

While the Committee concede that the sum of 29,000 rupees is not more than a sufficiently safe balance to work to during the year, they are of opinion that the Commissioners would have held a surplus greatly exceeding any

adequate margin if the estimated expenditure had not been enlarged by items which in the Committee's opinion can scarcely be held as legitimate charges to revenue; for they notice that in addition to a sum set aside as *reserve* provision is made for *renewal of block*, an item of expenditure which may at any time be of such extraordinary dimensions as to absorb all or a very large proportion of the Commissioners' income.

To that item—whether it be large or small—the Committee hold the same objection, on principle, as they do to the charge of upwards of 72,000 rupees appropriated to the extension of jetty heads and increase of accommodation for export cargo—works which strike the Committee as being of exactly the same character as the erection of an additional jetty, the cost of which is to be covered by an addition to capital account. The Committee fail to see the slightest distinction between these works, and if the additional jetty is to be so provided for so ought the extension of an existing jetty and extra accommodation for cargo to be provided for, and not debited to revenue account.

With reference to the Sub-Committee's remarks as to the rates in force in London and Liverpool being higher than those levied here, the Committee are not in a position to question the accuracy of the comparison, but it is quite clear that if the Government of India had originally purposed to burden the Port Trust of Calcutta with the value of the land to be occupied by its operations, the Chamber of Commerce would never have advocated so costly a means for promoting the conveniences of the shipping and trade of this port.

But the Sub-Committee's comparison does not apply, for the Committee submit that the rates levied elsewhere are no argument for or justification of a high scale of charges in Calcutta; nor do their remarks hold good as to the rates now levied being no higher than the charges incurred before the jetties were constructed, for the chief object which merchants anticipated from the establishment of the Port Commission was a material reduction in those charges, and that object has all the appearance of being indefinitely postponed if the revenue of the Commission is to be continuously debited with expenditure of the nature to which the Committee take exception.

#### HIRE OF CARGO BOATS.

This subject came before the Committee informally, and as it is one that seriously affects the export trade, they put themselves in communication with the Port Commissioners as the proper body to suggest and apply a remedy. From their answer it will be seen the Port Commissioners under the existing law have no power of interference. As the law at present stands the only control over cargo boat owners is the act of simple registration of boats by the Collector of Customs, but there is neither tariff of rates nor code of regulations prescribed in the Customs Act. The Port Commissioners are willing, the committee understand, to take up the question as soon as the law is altered, and in fact there

has been a lengthy correspondence for some time past between them and the Government on the subject ; but the whole question must apparently wait for the passing of the new Customs Bill at some future and indefinite time : meanwhile the export trade of the port is left at the mercy of boat owners.

*From Chamber to the Port Commissioners.*

*Calcutta, 28th April 1877.*

I am directed by the Chamber of Commerce to hand you copies of two letters received by them on the subject of the extortion of boat proprietors.

During the pressure caused by the famine requirements these boat proprietors were justified in raising their rates of hire : but now that this demand is over, there has been an evident combination among them to continue these exceptionally high rates, preferring to let their boats remain idle to letting them out at a reduction on the former rates. The exporters are either forced to yield to this extortion or allow their goods to remain in the Railway station or their own godowns at ruinous loss to them in the shape of rent and interest.

This is a matter that seriously affects the shipping interests of the Port and one, the Committee think, quite within the province of the Port Commissioners to remedy if in their power.

I shall be glad if you will lay this matter before the Port Commissioners at their next meeting, and favor me with their decision for the information of the Committee and members of the Chamber.

*From the Port Commissioners of Calcutta to  
Chamber of Commerce.*

*Calcutta, 11th May 1877.*

I am directed to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 28th April 1877, with enclosures, representing the exorbitant rates charged for the hire of cargo boats in the Port, and requesting that if in their power the Commissioners would interfere in the matter and take steps to check the practice.

2. In reply I beg to inform you that the letter was submitted for the consideration of the Commissioners at a meeting held on the 1st instant, and in terms of a resolution passed thereupon I beg to state that the Commissioners came to the conclusion that they have no power under the law to warrant their interference between the shippers and cargo boat owners, and that in order to meet the increased wants of the Port, the Commissioners are extending the Jetty accommodation south of No. 7 Jetty.

**RIVER SURVEY.**

This oft-mooted question has again engaged the attention of the Committee. The urgent need of steamers in the survey of the river has been again pressed on the attention of Government, but no action has been taken, though the matter, the Committee believe, has been strongly urged by the Port Commissioners as well as by the Chamber.

*From Govt. of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce.*

*Calcutta, 23rd November 1876.*

Referring to your letter dated the 11th August 1876, on the subject of the use of the telegraph for facilitating communications to officers of the Pilot Service of changes in the channels of the Hooghly, I am directed to state, for the information of the Chamber of Commerce, that the telegraph is in daily use for the purpose in question.

2. Telegraphic reports are daily received from Mysore, Nyan, James and Mary's, and back of Hooghly. These reports show the depth of water in the navigable tracks, as well as the time of high and low water, with rise and fall of tide at these places.

3. When changes are occurring at Fullah and Royapore, daily reports are telegraphed of their progress; otherwise the depth of water at these places is reported by post.

4. Every change of importance is telegraphed by the River Surveyor to the Master Attendant's office; and, when the change has occurred above Diamond Harbour, information is telegraphed to that station for the information of pilots of inward-bound vessels. When changes occur below Diamond Harbour, means are taken by the River Surveyor to give intimation both to inward and outward-bound vessels by using the telegraph if practicable, and also by placing a vessel or boat near the danger to warn pilots of approaching vessels.

5. In the event of sudden changes at the James and Mary's, a board is placed on Fulrah Point showing the depth of water in the tracks, for the information of pilots who may have left town before notice of such changes was issued.

6. Copies of the River Surveyor's reports are sent by the first outward vessel to the senior officer at the Sandheads for the information of the officers at the station.

7. The Lieutenant-Governor is aware that it is very difficult to secure accuracy in the delivery of messages when the telegraph is not practicable, and when these messages have to be transmitted by flag signals; but I am to point out that a scheme for the employment of a steam flotilla for the Hooghly river survey has been recommended to the Government of India for sanction, and is now under the consideration of that Government. This will in a great measure remove the difficulties which exist when telegraphic communication is impracticable.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. Bengal,  
General Department.*

28th December 1876.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 3048 of 23rd of last month, and to thank you for the information it conveys regarding the use of the telegraph for communicating to officers of the Pilot Service any changes that may take place in the navigable channels of the river from Calcutta to the Sandheads.

The Committee are glad to accept your assurance that the telegraph has at length been put into daily use with the view to keep pilots well and promptly advised as to the state of the river, because they attach the greatest importance to the necessity of supplying those officers by the most rapid means of communication with the earliest and most trustworthy information for their guidance. When they addressed the Government in their letter of 11th August it appeared that the facilities afforded by telegraph had not been available of, as they should have been, by the River Surveyor and the stranding of the ship "*Mohabbatshewar*" tended to confirm that impression: they are glad to learn this defect has been remedied.

You are probably aware that the tonnage of vessels visiting this port has largely increased of late years, and it needs all the skill and ability of the most experienced pilots to take heavily draughted vessels safely and up down the river: but sudden and unexpected changes

in the channels, unless warned against in due time, may render that skill and ability helpless and of no avail; in this dangerous river a stranded vessel may almost be regarded as a wreck: and at the best if she escapes destruction very heavy expenses may be incurred either by owners or underwriters of ship and cargo.

The difficulties which at present attend the pilotage of the river will no doubt be materially lessened by the employment of a steam flotilla for the survey service; and while the Committee express their conviction that the Lieutenant-Governor is justly sensible of those difficulties and of the improvements which may be introduced in order to remove them they trust His Honor will pardon the opportunity with which they repeat their application for a speedy realisation of the means best adapted to that end, and that the Government of India may be moved to an early decision on the question submitted for their consideration nearly two years ago.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of Bengal.*

Calcutta, 24th October 1876.

The attention of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce has been drawn to a communication in the "Statesman" newspaper of yesterday regarding the state of the river where the steamer *Cawdor Castle* was lost on the 7th instant.

Although that communication is anonymous and unauthenticated it nevertheless publicly declares that the river surveyor knew nothing of the state of the channel

and either implicitly charges that officer with gross neglect of duty or else affords, if the statement be true, another instance of the utter uselessness of the present system of survey. The Committee therefore consider it imperative that they should bring the matter officially to the notice of Government in order that the surveyor should have the earliest opportunity of vindicating his conduct and of satisfying the Government that his survey of the channel in question has been made with every degree of accuracy which it was his duty to determine, and that for the loss of life and property recently sustained he is no way responsible.

This lamentable occurrence is a superadded illustration to the numerous casualties in the river of the paramount necessity for placing the survey service on the most efficient footing and introducing such amendments of the present system as may be called for by the exigencies of the increasing commerce of the Port, and—to use the words of the survey Committee in their late Report to Government—"to meet the pressing demand for instantaneous action" and the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce trust that this present renewal of their oft repeated representations for four years regarding the river and the most effectual means of maintaining its channels in a securely navigable condition will engage the attention of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor.

*From Govt. of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce.*

*Calcutta, 18th November 1876.*

In reply to your letter of the 24th October 1876 I am

directed to say that from enquiries made it seems that the letter of the anonymous correspondent of the "Statesman" newspaper was based on a misapprehension of the real condition of the main channel. At the time of the wreck of the *Cawdor Castle*, with a rise of 7 feet above low water level, the depth of water between the lines of buoys forming the boundaries of the channel was 28 to 32 feet on the western and 24 to 26 on the eastern side. It would seem that the alleged experiments of the writer were probably made in the "Auckland Channel" which is not far distant from the scene of the wreck, but which is closed against the general shipping and is only navigable at high water by small vessels.

2. I am to add that the survey of the channel in which the wreck occurred was published after careful enquiry in February last, and that repeated examinations which have since been held have failed to show any change in the depth of the channel or in the position of the sand.

3. A scheme for the complete reorganization of the River Survey service has recently as the Chamber of Commerce is aware, been submitted for the consideration of the Supreme Government and is now awaiting the orders of His Excellency in Council.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of Bengal.*

*Calcutta, 4th December 1876.*

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 2990 of the 18th ultimo, from which they are glad to learn that

the statement of an anonymous correspondent of the "Statesman" newspaper, reflecting on the conduct of the River Surveyor was based on a misapprehension of the real condition of the channel where the Sir. *Cawdor Castle* was lately wrecked.

The Committee are of opinion that the explanation contained in your letter appears to entirely exonerate the surveyor from charges which they considered it to be their duty to bring to the notice of Government, and they accept with satisfaction the result of the prompt investigation which has attended their reference.

#### STAMPS ON SHARE TRANSFER DEEDS.

This question came up in consequence of a notification from the Board of Revenue on the alleged evasion of the stamp duty by the almost universal practice of using blank transfer deeds in the purchase and sale of joint stock shares. The Committee deprecate any action on the part of Government that would in any way curtail the ready passing of shares from hand to hand. The suggestions they have made will, in their opinion, preserve this absolute freedom of transfer, and still secure to the Government a large increase to their revenue.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Board of Revenue.*

*Calcutta, 10th August 1876.*

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce having

learned that strong objections have been raised to the Board's Notification of 20th June last relative to Share Transfer Deeds, the subject has been taken by them into consideration, and I am directed to communicate the following expression of opinion for submission to the Member in charge.

The Committee observe that the General Stamp Act—18 of 1869—provides, under section 5 (*b*), that stamps on all instruments chargeable under the Act, other than those previously enumerated, shall be impressed or otherwise denoted by the Collector or Superintendent of Stamps in accordance with such rules as the Governor General in Council may from time to time prescribe; but they fail to discover any authority under which the Board assumes the power put forward in the Notification; and in the absence of any rule prescribed by the Governor General in Council sanctioning the Board's procedure, the Committee apprehend that the Notification has been issued without warrant, and they therefore pronounce it void and of no legal force.

If, however, the Committee have taken an erroneous view of the Board's action they will be glad to receive the necessary correction and to acknowledge that their objection on the ground of illegality cannot be sustained.

But even admitting the possibility of such an issue the Committee consider the Notification open to objection on the ground of the impolicy of its provisions.

In the first place the Board's order would have the mischievous effects of lowering the value of all joint stock

property, the shares in which are transferable by deed and not by simple endorsement, by restricting the freedom with which such stock should be negotiable; and in the second place, as a necessary result, it would defeat the object of increasing the Stamp Revenue.

The Board cannot be unaware of the fact that the various industries which have been gradually developed and have materially increased the commerce of Calcutta—the trade in Indian tea and jute and cotton manufactures, for example, which is assuming proportions of considerable magnitude—are largely dependent on the local Banks for funds to conduct their operations: but the Banks are barred, on a well understood principle, from acquiring a proprietary interest or partnership in such industries; they cannot consequently assume the position involved in the Board's order: and the advances on property of this description are secured by blank transfer deeds which they negotiate when necessary.

But if the Board's order is made compulsorily applicable, the Banks would abandon a business they could no longer undertake, and the withdrawal of the facilities they have hitherto afforded would create an amount of inconvenience and embarrassment which would be attended with disastrous results.

The Committee are aware of the existence of what they may call "gambling" transactions in shares, and that the Board's order would effectually stop these: it would, however, seriously check all legitimate transactions, lower the value of all stocks, and prevent further development to a large extent.

#### NOTIFICATION.

No. 701B.

The following order is published for general information:—

Whenever a share transfer deed is taken to the office of the Collector of Stamp Revenue, Calcutta, to be stamped by the process called "denoting" under the provisions of Section 5 (i) of the General Stamp Act XVIII of 1869, it shall be the duty of the Collector to require the following particulars to be shown in the deed before affixing the proper stamp thereto, viz. the date of the transfer, the names of the parties, i. e., the transferor and transferee, the amount of the consideration money, the number of the shares conveyed, and a description of them. The instrument, however, should not be executed or signed by the transferor or transferee till after the stamp has been affixed.

*From Board of Revenue to Chamber of Commerce.*

*Dated, Fort William, 24th August 1876.*

With reference to your letter dated 10th instant, commenting on the Board's Notification of 20th June last relating to share transfer deeds, I am directed to state that the rules prescribed by the Governor General in Council for the denoting of stamps define, (1) what officers may denote, (2) what class of instruments may be denoted, and (3) in what manner the denoting is to be effected.

2. The Act provided that the stamp is to be denoted on an "Instrument chargeable with duty" and the rules of the Governor General in Council provides that, among other instruments chargeable with duty, stamps may be denoted on "Transfer of Shares in a Company or Association." A mere blank deed of transfer is not an instrument within the meaning of the Act, and it becomes such an instrument when the blanks are filled up in the manner directed in the Notification to which objection is offered.

3. With regard to the Chamber's objection on the score of the impolicy of the provision of the Notification, I am to point out that the object of the Notification is to check the practice of using blank transfer deeds whereby the revenue is defrauded. The Law, I am to observe, contemplates every transfer of shares being attended with payment of stamp duty. The Board will be much obliged if the Chamber will indicate any plan less objectionable to the commercial community, by which the same object can be effected as is sought to be attained by the late Notification.

*From Board of Revenue, L. P., to Chamber of Commerce.*

*Fort William, 13th December 1876.*

I am directed to invite your attention to my letter No. 1035B, dated 24th August last, and previous correspondence, on the subject of share transfer deeds, and to request that the Member in charge may be informed whether the Chamber of Commerce have given the matter

any further consideration. The stamp law being now under revision by the Legislative Council this is an opportune occasion for bringing the question to the notice of the Government of India, and if the Chamber can suggest any feasible plan, which will provide for every share transfer deed being duly stamped, the Member in charge will have much pleasure in considering their proposal, in view to an amendment of the present procedure. An early answer is requested.

*From Board of Revenue, L. P., to Chamber of Commerce.*

*Fort William, 12th January 1877.*

I am directed to invite your attention to my letter No. 1523B, dated 13th December 1876, regarding the stamping of share transfer deeds, and to state that Member in charge will be much obliged by a reply thereto at an early date.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Board of Revenue.*

*Calcutta, 22nd February 1877.*

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce direct me to resume the subject of their reference of 10th August last relative to the imposition of stamps on Share Transfer Deeds, as required by the Board's Notification of 20th June 1876.

To that representation the Board were good enough to reply on the 24th, and concluded their letter with

the request that the Chamber would indicate some plan less objectionable to the commercial community by which the same object could be effected as was sought to be attained by the Notification, to the provisions of which the Chamber had taken exception.

The Board again addressed the Chamber on the 13th December, and finally on the 12th ultimo they reinvited the Committee's attention to the subject under review.

While the Committee desire to acknowledge the Board's courtesy in this respect and to thank them for the opportunity of expressing their views, they instruct me to apologise for the delay which various circumstances have occasioned in submitting this further communication for the Board's consideration.

When the Notification of 20th June was published, its provisions were very generally objected to, for the reasons assigned in the Chamber's remonstrance of 10th August, but the Board, in reply thereto, declared, that the purpose of their Notification was to check the practice of using blank transfer deeds, whereby the revenue was defrauded, since the law contemplated every absolute transfer of shares being attended with payment of stamp duty.

The General Stamp Act of 1869 does undoubtedly impose that obligation, and the Committee of the Chamber concur in the Board's interpretation of that provision; but they are at the same time of opinion that the language of the Notification covers more than is necessary to protect the revenue, and that it would be exceed-

ingly mischievous if its practical adaptation were extended to all the transactions which the Board consider should be amenable to the Law of Stamps.

On the impolicy of the measure the Committee have already expressed their views, and the following reasons for amending the law are submitted for the Board's consideration.

*1st.—The ad valorem duty on transfer of Joint Stock shares is excessive.*

*2nd.—The delay in getting stamps impressed is a most troublesome obstacle in the way of prompt and speedy transfers, which can only be removed by—*

*3rd.—The use of adhesive stamps.*

On the 1st point it is represented that the *ad valorem* duty chargeable on each separate transfer is too high and operates as a considerable inducement to evade the law and thereby defeat the Board's object: and expedients are resorted to which would not be even imagined if transfers were legalised by the imposition of a tax sufficiently light which no one would think of resisting.

The Committee therefore propose that all transfers of shares subsequent to the first conveyance by deed—which shall be subject, as at present, to the *ad valorem* rate—shall be legalised by the payment of a fee of 8 annas on each transfer to be recorded on the original deed.

The collateral advantages of such an amendment of

the law would be that the difficulty of Banks purchasing as agents for third parties would be got over; that the hands through which the shares have passed would be readily traced; and that all intermediary holders would be legally protected from any proprietary responsibility which would rest of course with the last transferee.

On the 2nd point it is represented that the delay in getting stamps impressed is one of the greatest inconveniences which attend the transaction of business in those securities which, under the Board's Notification, are required to be taken to the Collector's office to be stamped by the denoting process.

The Committee do not hesitate to declare their concurrence in the strong objections raised to that procedure, which they regard as probably a greater evil than the duty itself; shares change hands frequently during the day, and to subject each transfer to the necessity of attending the Collector's office and undergoing the denoting operation is tantamount to a prohibitory arrest of business. It appears to the Committee that this compulsory intervention of the law is a most injudicious dealing with commercial interests; they submit that to encourage the utmost freedom of negotiation of shares in public companies should be the Board's object rather than their restriction by harrassing restraints; and that there is as much reason to treat them with some measure of consideration as there is to extend the most absolute exemption to Government loans or public funds.

The Board would have no difficulty in comprehending and appreciating the position if every transfer of Govern-

ment Paper was required to undergo the process enforced by law on Joint Stock Property: the value of Public Funds would be injuriously influenced by such process, and the facility of transfer by blank or special endorsement which now obtains, and which in a degree sustains the value of those Securities, would be superseded by a system adverse to their instant negotiation, and consequently to the interests of both the State and its creditors.

The Committee are aware that this inequality cannot be remedied or removed, and that the law must be observed; but the law may be so framed and administered as to make its provisions as little inconvenient as possible to those who have to bear the burden of taxation.

This naturally leads to the 3rd question—whether transfers of shares cannot be legalised by the substitution of adhesive for impressed stamps. The Committee are of opinion they can and should be; and that the authorised application of the former on such instruments would be of incalculable advantage in transacting business of this kind which would be greatly facilitated if the present compulsory provision of the law were amended as proposed.

The suggestions now submitted for the Board's consideration necessarily involve an alteration in Act X of 1866.

**TELEGRAPH RULES AND TELEGRAPH  
SERVICE.**

The last report contained the representations of the Madras and Calcutta Chambers as to charges of repetition of messages mutilated in transit, and as to the compulsory addition of 50 per cent on figure cipher messages from India, while they are allowed to come to India at ordinary rates. The annexed letter from the Government of India will show that our very reasonable request has been rejected by the parties to the Convention, and that, till another Conference meets, there will be no opportunity of having the anomaly rectified.

*From Govt. of India to Chamber of Commerce.*

*Fort William, 5th March 1877.*

In continuation of this office letter No. 256 T. of the 4th August 1876 and No. 307 T. of 3rd October last, I am directed to inform you that the proposal of the Indian Telegraph Department to relax the existing rule respecting cipher messages, and the proposition of the British Postal Telegraph Department to modify the regulations affecting free repetition of doubtful passages in telegrams, have both been rejected by the parties to the Convention. The existing rules must therefore remain in force, until the assembly of another conference affords an opportunity for endeavouring to amend them.

**STANDARD WEIGHTS.**

This matter has been several times urged on the Government. As far back as January 1875 the Government of Bengal were apparently only waiting the receipt of a sufficient number of standard steel weights from England to substitute them, under the provisions of Act 31 of 1871, for the variety of weights now in use. This question arose originally in 1863; it was declared by the Government as far back as 1868 to be one urgently requiring immediate reform; an act to remedy the evil has been in existence since 1871; and it is more than 2 years since the Secretary of State was asked to make arrangements for supplying the requisite standard weights. But with all this show of interest, the evil remains unabated.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of India  
Dept. of Revenue, Agriculture and Commerce.*

*Calcutta, 26th February 1877.*

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce beg the earnest attention of Government to the subject of weights, and to state that in a communication dated 25th January 1875 the Government of Bengal replied to a representation relative to the great inconveniences arising from the defective weights in ordinary use throughout British India; and while the Lieutenant-Governor expressed his concern for the mischievous consequences of a radically imperfect system His Honor pointed to the

probable early receipt from England of standard sea weights, as prescribed by Act 31 of 1871, under the provisions of which the standard adopted by Government would authoritatively displace the numerous varieties of weights current throughout the country.

After so long an interval of patient expectation and continued exposure to a system emphatically condemned by Government, the Committee of the Chamber venture to express their disappointment that the legislative enactment of 1871 should have remained totally inoperative.

That measure was passed after long discussion of the question originally raised in 1863; it was declared by Government in 1868 that an immediate reform was urgently required; that the diversity of weights throughout the country was a most serious evil; and that reform was needed not only to facilitate and simplify commercial operations, but also as an essential preliminary towards suppressing the fraudulent practices so common among retail dealers.

Notwithstanding these admissions, and the enactment of a special measure to accomplish the object of Government there has been no practical realisation of its purpose, and the evils which it was intended to remove remain undisturbed and unredressed to the present moment.

The Committee therefore respectfully ask for the enforcement of Act 31 of 1871 at the earliest date possible, and that measures may be at once taken with the view to its application in the manner contemplated by Government.

#### AUSTRALIAN MAIIS:

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

*Calcutta, 5th March 1877.*

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to represent that it will be a convenience to the commercial public if the arrival at Bombay of mail steamers from Australia is reported in the *Telegraph Gazette* similarly to the announcement from Galle; and if the Chamber's application be complied with the Australian mails would be reported uniformly with those from China. The Committee trust you will oblige by moving the Government of India to a compliance with this request.

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

*Calcutta, 9th March 1877.*

With reference to your letter of the 5th instant, I find that the Australian mail usually arrives in Bombay by the China mail steamer, and that when this is not the case, the Light house signal station does not report to this department the arrival of the steamer from Australia.

2. In view to meeting the wishes of the Chamber, measures will be taken for procuring regular reports of the arrival of the Australian mails at Bombay.

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

*Calcutta, 13th March 1877.*

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 3245 of the 9th instant, and to express their thanks for your obliging compliance with their application regarding the Australian mails.

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**Election of Mr. J. A. Crawford, Collector of Customs,  
as Honorary Member.**

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The uniformly impartial conduct displayed by Mr. Crawford during his long tenure of the office of Collector of Customs seemed to the Committee to call for some recognition at their hands on his retirement, and they have accordingly elected him an Honorary Member of the Chamber, subject to usual confirmation.

*From Chamber of Commerce to J.A. Crawford, Esq.,  
Collector of Customs.*

*Calcutta, 2nd March 1877.*

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to communicate to you the resolution hereto annexed, and in placing it in your hands I beg to assure you of the very sincere pleasure I feel in being the medium of conveying the acknowledgment it contains.

Proposed by the President,  
Seconded by the Vice-President,

As Mr. J. A. Crawford, Collector of Customs, is about to retire from the service, it is resolved that, in acknowledgement of the general appreciation of his uniformly fair and impartial conduct both towards the Government and the merchants in the discharge of the very difficult duties of the position he has held for so many years, he be elected, subject to the usual confirmation, an Honorary Member of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

*From Mr. Crawford to Chamber of Commerce.*

*Calcutta, 2nd March 1877.*

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this day, enclosing copy of a resolution of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce by which I have been elected an Honorary Member of the Chamber.

I request you will do me the favor of communicating to the Committee of your Chamber my deep sense of the honor they have conferred on me. I have always felt that to have deserved well of his fellow men is the highest honor that any man can desire. It is therefore peculiarly gratifying to me to find at the close of my career that my conduct of my official duties has earned the approval of those with whom I have been so long officially connected.

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APPENDIX.

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FUNDS OF THE CHAMBER.

Statement of the Funds of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce  
from 1st November 1876 to 30th April 1877.

	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
To Rent	900 0 0	By Balance—
" Establishment	0 0 0	Cash
" Chamber General	4,549 2 2	Reserve in Government
" Cash of Rs. 2,000, 4 per cent.	0 0 0	Paper
Government Paper	2,046 14 2	10,000 0 0
		12,000 10 6
" Balance—	15,857 0 4	
Cash in Bank of Bengal	20 5 0	Subscriptions ...
" in hand	1,204 15 8	Price Current and other
Reserve in Government	12,000 0 0	Publications
Paper	13,225 4 8	Sundries ...
	Rupees 26,082 5 0	Intests ...
		Government Paper added to
		Reserve ...
		2,000 0 0
		14,072 10 6
		Rupees 26,082 5 0

CALCUTTA,  
30th April 1877.

E. E.

H. W. I. WOOD,  
Secretary.

iii

TONNAGE SCHEDULE

for the Port of Calcutta, adopted at  
a Special General Meeting of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce,  
held on the 12th February 1872, with effect from 1st September  
1872, except as regards the measurement of Cotton, Hemp, Jute,  
Jute Cuttings, Jute, Safflower, and other articles similarly  
packed, which under the Chamber's Resolution of 14th June  
1872, had effect from 1st July 1872.

ARTICLES.	Cost, per Ton Net. per Ton.	Chicke foot Ton Net.
Alees, in bags and boxes	20	.....
Alum, in dito	20	.....
A lime, in bags	8	.....
A mace, in bags	50	.....
A mace, in boxes	50	.....
A resin, in bags or cases	50	.....
A safflower, in bags and boxes	50	.....
A senna, in boxes	50	.....
A tamarind, in bags	8	.....
Bark, in bags	20 gross	.....
Benthi-punt	20	.....
Books	50	.....
Bone	50	.....
Brown	11	.....
Bullock	20	.....
Cake-hut, in bags	16	.....
Camphor, in cases	50	.....
Cannabum, in boxes	8	.....
Cassia, in boxes	50	.....
Castor Seed, in bags	12	.....
Castor Seed, in boxes	15	.....
Chili Pepper, in bags	8	.....
Chili Pepper, in boxes	10	.....
Chittore	50	.....
Church	14	.....
Cloves, in boxes	8	.....
Cloves, in bags	10	.....
Cocculus, in bags	20	.....
Cocculus, in boxes	30	.....
"	16	.....

ARTICLES.	Cwt. per Ton Nett.	Cubic feet per Ton.
Coral, rough	20	.....
Coir, loose and unscrewed	12	.....
Coco, or Cocanlut Kernel	14	.....
Coriander Seed	12	.....
Cotton	12	.....
Cowries	.....	50
Cummin Seed	20	.....
Cutch, " bags	8	.....
Dates, wet	18	.....
Doll, " dry	20	.....
Doll	16	.....
Elephant's Teeth in bulk	22	.....
Fenugro	20	.....
Garlic and Onion	.....	50
Ginger	12	.....
Gram	16	.....
Gums, in cases	20	.....
Gumy Bags and Gummy Cloth	.....	50
Gumy	50	.....
Hemp	50	.....
Hides, Buffalo, or Cow, cured	14	.....
Hoofs, Horn Shavings and Tips	20	.....
Horns, Cow, Buffalo, or Deer	20	.....
India Rubber, in bags	20	.....
India Rubber, " in cases	16	.....
Indigo "	.....	50
Iron	20	50
Jute	20	.....
Jute Cuttings	.....	50
Lac Dye	.....	50
Lard	.....	50
Linsseed	.....	29 gross.
Meat	20	.....
Machinery	.....	50
Metal	20	.....
Mastio Seed	20	.....
Mirabolane	18	.....
Molasses	16	.....
Mother o' Pearl, in bags	20	.....
Munjeet "	20	2 puncheons or 4 hds.
Mustard or Rape Seed	20	50
Niger Seed	20	.....
Nutmegs, in cases or casks	20	.....
	.....	50

ARTICLES.	Cwt. per Ton Nett.	Cubic feet per Ton.
Nux Vomica	16	.....
Oil, in cases	16	50
" casks	.....	4 hds. per chest
Opium	16	.....
Paddy	16	.....
Palmfrime, in bags	20	.....
Peas	12	.....
Pepper, Long	14	.....
" Black	.....	50
Planks and Deals	20	.....
Poppie Seed	10	.....
Potash	.....	50
Rags	10	.....
Raw Silk, in bales	20	.....
Rattans for damage	20	.....
Red Wood, ditto	20	.....
Rhub	.....	50
Rico	20	.....
Rope, in coils	16	.....
Rope, " Lines and Twines, in bundles	2	puncheons or 4 hds.
Rum, " in cases	.....	50
Safflower	.....	50
Sago, in cases	20	.....
Sal-anoniac, in bags	.....	2 gross.
" boxes	20	.....
Sal-petre	20	.....
Salt	20	.....
Sapan Wood for damage	20	.....
Scaling Wax, in cases	.....	50
Seed-lac, in cases	16	.....
" bags	.....	50
Seuna "	20	.....
Shells, rough, in bags	.....	50
Shell-lac, in cases	10	.....
" bags	.....	50
Silk Chrysanthemum	.....	50
" Waso	.....	50
Silk Piece Goods	14	.....
Skins	15	.....
Soap, country, in cases	20	.....
" bags	.....	50
" bar	20	.....
Stick Lac, in cases	.....	50
" bags	16	.....

ARTICLES.	Crt. per Ton Nett.	Cubic feet per Ton.
Sugar	20	.....
Tallow, in cases or casks	20	.....
Talc	20	.....
Tamarinds, in cases or casks	20	.....
Tapioca	20	.....
Tan	.....	50
Teel Seed	.....	50
Timber, round	20	.....
Timber squared	.....	40
Tin	.....	50
Tobacco, in hales	20	.....
Tortoise Shells, in chests	16	.....
Turneric	.....	50
Wheat	16	.....
Wool	20	.....

1. Goods in Casks or Cases to be calculated gross weight when moving freight by weight; and where freight is made payable on measurement, the measurement to be taken on the Custom House wharf, or other shipping wharf within a radius of 5 miles from the Custom House, except in the case of Cotton, the measurement of which shall be taken at the Screen-house.

2. Measurement to be taken at largest part of the bale,—inside the lashing on one side and outside on the other.

3. Jute, Jute-cuttings, Hemp, Cotton, Safflower, and other articles similarly packed, are screwed in bales varying from 300 to 400 lbs.

4. The term "dead weight" shall be understood to mean the following articles:—Sugar, Saltpetre, Rice, Wheat, Gram, Dholl, Peas, Linseed, Rapeseed and all Metals.

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

### SCHEDULE OF COMMISSION CHARGES,

Revised and adopted by a Special General Meeting of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce held on the 18th June 1861,—with effect from 1st January 1862.

1. On the sale, purchase, or shipment of Bullion, Gold Dust or Coin ... ... 1 per cent.
2. On the purchase (when in funds) or sale of Indigo, Raw Silk, Silk Piece Goods, Opium, Pearls, Precious Stones, or Jewellery ... ...  $\frac{1}{4}$  "
3. On purchasing ditto when funds are provided by the Agent ... ... 5 "
4. On the sale or purchase of all other goods—the commission in all cases to be charged upon the gross amount of sales, and in regard to purchases upon both cost and charges ... 5 "
5. On returns for Consignments if made in produce ...  $\frac{1}{2}$  "
6. On returns of Consignments if in Bills, Bullion, or Treasure ... ... 1 "
7. On accepting Bills against Consignments ... 1 "
8. On the sale or purchase of Ships, Factories, Houses, Lands, and all property of a like description ...  $\frac{1}{2}$  "
9. On goods and treasure consigned, and all other property of any description referred to Agency for sale, whether advanced upon or otherwise, which shall afterwards be withdrawn; and on goods consigned for conditional delivery to others and so delivered, on invoice amount at 2*s*. per rupee. half com.
10. On making advances or procuring loans of money for commercial purposes, when the aggregate commission does not exceed 5 per cent ...  $\frac{1}{4}$  per cent.
11. On ordering, or receiving and delivering goods, or superintending the fulfilment of contracts, or on the shipment of goods, where no other Commission is derived ... ...  $\frac{1}{2}$  "

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 percent.
13. On <i>del credere</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 con- stituents for vessels to proceed to outports for loading	... 2½ "
16. On advertising as the Agents for Owners or Com- manders 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 con- cerned 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 "

22. On effecting Insurances, whether on lives or pro- perty	... ½ per cent.
23. On settling Insurance claims, losses, and averages of all classes, and on procuring returns of pre- mium	... 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 Bottomry 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	... 5 "
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	... 5 "

Brokerage when paid is to be separately charged.

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

MEMBERS OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Aikman, J., Esq., Acting Agent, Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China.  
 Argelast, A. and Co.  
 Apear and Co.  
 Ashburner and Co.  
 Ashton, Wight and Co.  
 Ballou, J., *Offs. Agent*, Oriental Bank Corporation.  
 Barlow and Co.  
 Barratt and Co.  
 Borrerville, Schiller and Co.  
 Buskin, E. G.  
 Burn and Co.  
 Burtt, Sephens and Co.  
 Garrit & Co.  
 Cochran, S., Manager, Agra Bank, Limited.  
 Chatterjee and Co.  
 Crooks, Romeo and Co.  
 Cox, Henry S.  
 D'Ascanio, Thos. and Co.  
 Duncan Brothers and Co.  
 Dwarkanath Dutt and Co.  
 Edge and Holden.  
 Edwards and Oesterley.  
 Ewing and Co.  
 Elliott, John and Co.  
 Elton, E. D. and Co.  
 Farnell, J. H. and Co.  
 Fishby, Muir and Co.  
 Gibbons and Co.  
 Gost, Bros and Co.  
 Great Britain.  
 Graham and Son.  
 Grindlay and Co.  
 Grindlay, Elliot S.  
 Headcorn George and Co.  
 Helgers, P. W. and Co.  
 Herbert, C. H., Esq., Agent, Chartered Middlesex Bank of India, London and China.  
 Horne, Miller and Co.  
 Ivory, Griffiths & Cole.  
 Hyatt and Co.  
 Jardine, Shipton and Co.  
 Kettlewell, Bullen and Co.  
 Kelly and Co.  
 Kor, Dodt and Co.

Honorary Member.  
 J. A. Crawford, c. a., late Collector of Customs.

RULES AND REGULATIONS  
OF THE

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

*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 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 mosfussil 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 not less than five nor more than seven Members, including the President and Vice-President, 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. Three 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. All vacancies created by the absence of the President, or Vice-President, 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. All vacancies created as above by the absence, departure, or death of any of the Members of the Committee shall be forthwith filled up by selection by the Committee subject to approval at first ordinary general meeting thereafter.

 *It is specially requested that before a Member is returned to serve on the Committee his nominator shall have ascertained his willingness to accept office in the event of his election by voting cards.*

*Ninth...* That parties holding powers of prosecution 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 Com-

mittee 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 pro-  
curation 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.

