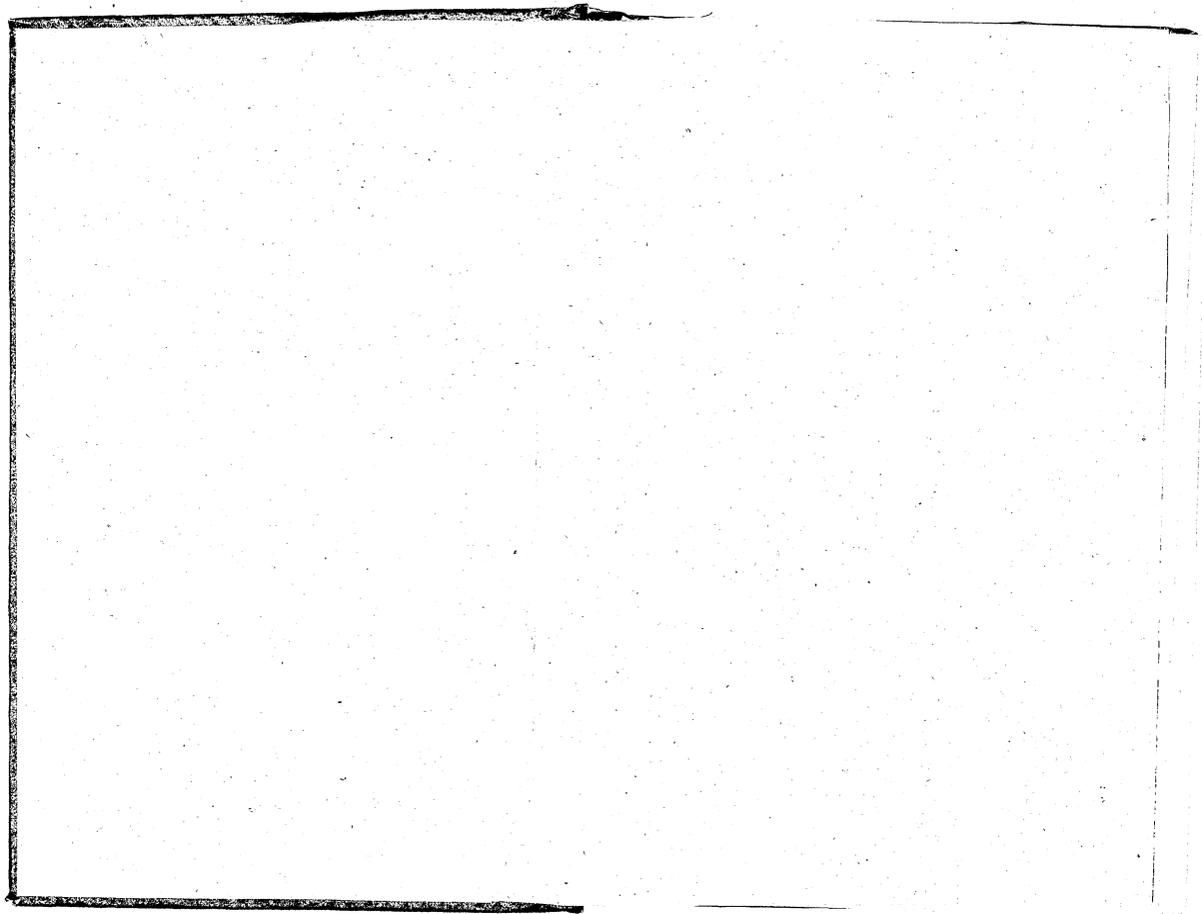
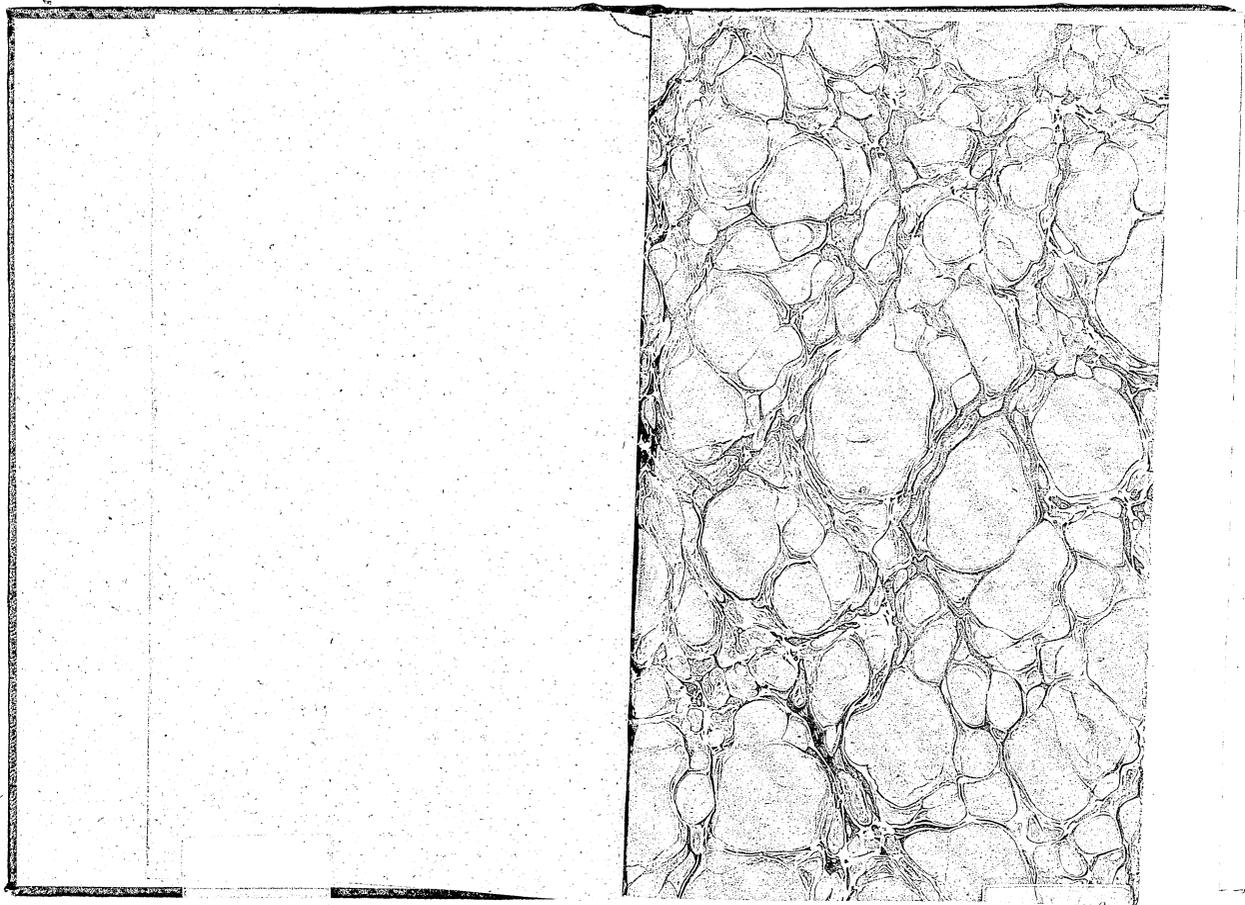


REPORT
OF
THE COMMITTEE
OF THE
BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

FOR THE YEAR - 1877
1ST. MAY 1877 TO 31ST. OCT. 1877





REPORT

OF

THE COMMITTEE

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BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

From 1st May to 31st October 1877.

Calcutta:

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

1877.

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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

HALF-YEARLY GENERAL MEETING

OF THE

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,

held on Monday the 18th February 1878.

DUNCAN MACKINNON, Esq., *President, in the Chair.*

The Chairman, in opening the proceedings, said: Gentlemen,—The Report which I have the honor to lay before you is said to be one concluding the half-year ending 31st October, but in reality it is a report ending 31st January. Every one was busy towards the end of last year, and calling a General Meeting then was considered somewhat impracticable.

With reference to the subject which the late President left as a legacy to the Committee, we were unfortunately unable to take it up promptly, because the Committee at first was not properly constituted, and when it was, the opportunity for bringing the matter forward, or pressing it, was gone. The subject I allude to was the *financial operations of Government with reference to Loans and Council Bills*. It had been submitted to Government by the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, and the answer they

received was sufficient for the purpose. So far therefore as that matter goes it is settled for the time being, but it is my opinion that when any change is made in the drawing of Council Bills on India it should be signified in London simultaneously with the announcement in the Presidency Towns of this country. I do not think it was right, as happened last December, that we should receive intelligence of the resumption of the drawing of Council Bills through *Reuter* before we received it from Government.

With regard to the *Hooghly Bridge toll on Coal*, it is a great satisfaction to the Committee to be able to record the successful issue of their representations on this subject.

On the subject of the *coolie strike*, the Committee were quite at issue with the Chairman of the Municipality as to what was meant by the term *coolie supplier* employed in the Municipal Act. I believe that in a certain sense a coolie sirdar may be said to supply a stevedore with coolies, but it is the stevedore who supplies the ships. The sirdar gets a salary, but he obtains no emoluments whatever in connection with supplying coolies, and the coolie receives from the sirdar the full amount of his hire without any deductions whatever.

With regard to the *Port Commissioners' jetty*

charges and appropriation of surplus revenue, that matter is yet in abeyance, as His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor does not consider that the time has yet come for a reduction of jetty charges.

It is the opinion of, and it has been proposed by, several members of the Chamber that *cargo boats* should be placed under legislation. The Committee, finding a diversity of opinion on this subject, sent all the communications they received regarding it to the Government of Bengal, but up to this time nothing has been done. So far as I am concerned, my own opinion is that the mercantile community should endeavour to do away with the existing custom of fixing the *ghdt* rate, and that they ought to know, before engaging a boat, what they have to pay. I know natives in the rice trade are able to fix the hire of boats beforehand; I myself got boats for Rs. 30 per day, and two days afterwards the *ghdt* rate for that day was declared to be something like Rs. 90. I cannot be positive as to the figures, but the difference was glaring.

The Pilot Service is the next subject mentioned, and this has taken up a good deal of our attention. We believe the position of this service is practically the same as it was before. The most important proposal was that applications for indi-

ridual pilots should be discontinued and appointments made by the Marine Authorities. The Committee invited the views of members of the Chamber, and they are glad to be able to report that His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor has conceded the points asked for, and that with certain limitations, which can hardly be objected to, appointments of pilots are made on applications as before.

The Consolidated Customs' Bill was the next matter which took up the attention of the Committee, assisted by several other members of the Chamber, for a considerable time, and various alterations were suggested. The most essential of these related to the loading and free-boating of export cargo without a pass. The Committee expressed a strong opinion that all boating should be allowed without passes; and this was really not calculated to cause any evasion of the Customs Act so long as ships attended to their duties, and the heavy penalties contemplated in the Act if imposed should be sufficient to secure this.

With regard to the question of the *duty on salt in private and Government golahs*, the Committee have also expressed a strong opinion. I certainly consider it hard that in a case where an importer cannot get a Government golah, and

has to put his salt into a private one, which he cannot do without the permission of Government; yet, if there should be a wastage of more than the ordinary allowance of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., he has to pay duty on the excess deficiency. This order is based I presume on the assumption that the cargo may have been tampered with, but the customs authorities will not take charge of the keys. There has been no case yet brought forward in which it has been suggested that the cargo has ever been tampered with, but because a merchant cannot get a Government golah—I am sure no one would refuse to take it if he could get it—he is charged in a most arbitrary manner. It is to be hoped that a reply from the Government will soon come and set this matter right.

I do not think there is anything more in the Report which calls for any special remark from me, and *I have now to move that the Report be adopted.*

The motion was seconded by Mr. J. C. Murray, and carried.

The President said: I have now to place before you the *Committee's election of Mr. T. F. Hamilton as a member of the Committee*, and to move that it be confirmed.

The motion was seconded by Mr. S. Cochrane, and carried.

The Chairman then said.—I omitted to mention that I was glad to see the subject of the means of transport of the East Indian Railway Company had been receiving the Company's attention at last. A part of the materials for the 1,000 wagons which were sanctioned last year is out here at last, and the remaining portion is expected before long. It is true they will arrive about a year too late, but they will, in all probability, be utilised on other occasions.

I have now to place before you the matter of the *Overland Mail Contract*. The Director General of the Post Office said he would like to receive an expression of opinion from this Chamber on the subject. The Bombay Chamber of Commerce took up the matter some time ago, as did also the Chamber of Commerce at Madras; and I see from to-day's papers that notice of the termination of the contract has been given. The letter from the Bombay Chamber has been submitted to our own members, and a considerable number of replies, varying in their terms, have been received. After due consideration, your Committee were unanimous in their opinion that the Bombay Chamber were probably asking too much; that Bombay

was not a port where cargo was shipped and passengers embarked all the year round, and that if a high rate of speed was insisted upon a large subsidy would be necessary. At the same time we agreed that tenders should be called for, and that practically the service between Brindisi and Bombay should be a special one. We do not want to sever from the contract the Australian and China mails, so long as the mail from Bombay to Brindisi and that from Brindisi to Bombay are not detained. There is another point which has engaged our attention, and that is whether the Southampton route should be retained. For mercantile purposes, we are of opinion that this is not necessary; but there are other interests which make the Southampton route still a desirable thing. I have to propose for your acceptance that we reply to the Director General of the Post Office in the following terms—not necessarily in the exact words, but in the substance of them; first, we say that,—“in the opinion of the Chamber the maintenance of the Southampton route is no longer required so far as mercantile interests are concerned, provided postal packets now coming *via* Southampton can be conveyed *via* Brindisi at not greatly enhanced rates.” Secondly, we say,—and this resolution is one which practically makes the route from Brindisi to Bombay a special one—“As Indian mails from Brindisi have on occasions been de-

layed in Egypt waiting arrival of mails from Southampton, and as mails for Brindisi have also been, or may be, similarly delayed waiting arrival of mails from China or Australia—that the new contract, if it should include the conveyance of the Southampton, China or Australian mails, should expressly stipulate that no such delay shall be allowed, but that when these do not arrive in Egypt before, or at the same time, as the Indian and Brindisi mails, the latter shall be forwarded without delay and without reference to the others, which the contractors should be bound to send on by other Steamers.”

The next question which comes under our consideration in this matter is that of *speed*. Under the present contract the speed is 9½ knots from Suez to Bombay, but the speed which the Bombay Chamber requires is 13 knots. Now, this does not mean that the steamer must have power to go at the rate of 13 knots, because there must be a reserve power as well. We are not quite of the opinion of the Bombay Chamber in this respect, and what we have to propose to you is that “The speeds stipulated for in the present contract are admittedly under those which present times warrant and demand. The Chamber, however, is not prepared to name any speeds which should be stipulated for, but would recommend, as a test of what can be had, that

tenders should be called for, and that tender selected which gave the highest speed combined with a subsidy which would not make enhanced postage a necessity, and which also could give the fullest assurance of ability to carry out the contract in its integrity.”

The *duration of the contract* is the next point which has engaged our attention. The Bombay Chamber are of opinion that the contract should be for five years only, but your Committee are of opinion that it is impossible to provide for a high rate of speed unless the contract is for a longer term, more particularly if the vessels are not to be cargo vessels; because the contractors, at the end of the five years, would, if the contract was annulled, find themselves burdened with a class of vessels for which they had no further use. On this subject, therefore, the Committee propose that “Duration of contract should similarly be made matter of tender, as contractors would doubtless accept a long contract on more favorable terms to the public than a short one.”

The fifth proposition is one in which I hope, and in fact I have no doubt, you will all concur: it is as follows:—

“In considering the tenders which may be

submitted, the Chamber would urge that the fullest consideration, consistent with public interests, should be given to that which will doubtless be made by the present contractors, who have so long, and certainly not unsatisfactorily, carried out the mail service between India and Europe.

"In submitting this the Chamber would take the opportunity of suggesting that when arrangements are being made for the more speedy receipt of European mails in India, their more speedy transit through India is a subject well deserving of attention. The mails last received in Bombay from Europe lay there for the greater part of a day before being despatched to Calcutta and other parts of India connected with the line of Railway leading to Calcutta."

For my own part, all I have to say is that I hope we shall see the P. and O. Company carrying mails as before, for I am of opinion they can do the work as well as any Company can. Bombay of course is moving hard to get her mails as quickly as possible, but the Calcutta mails are sometimes detained as long as eighteen hours in Bombay, and seeing that this is merely a question of money—an engine and a few carriages being made a special train—I do not see why the difficulty should not be obviated.

Mr. Murray suggested that as there was a

prospect of European complications, it would be as well if the Chamber distinctly laid down their opinion as to the advisability of maintaining a direct route between England and India, and he would, therefore, suggest that the following paragraph be substituted for the first paragraph in the memorandum submitted by the President, namely, that "in the opinion of the Chamber, although the maintenance of the Southampton route may no longer be required so far as purely mercantile interests are concerned, still they are of opinion it should be maintained between India and some point in England."

The amendment being unanimously agreed to, the resolution was passed.

The Chairman said that the Committee had also had their attention engaged with the *Negotiable Instruments Bill* and the *Stamp Act Amendment Bill*. The *License Bill* had been partially lost sight of, but the tax contemplated by it was not a very burdensome one.

In connection with the subject of the *Government taking over the East Indian Railway*, the Chamber had been addressed by the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, and the following reply had been sent:—

I have my Committee's instructions to state in

reply to your reference regarding the State taking over the East Indian Railway on expiry of the Company's contract, that they are not in favor of recommending to Government any particular course of action as long as they are not called upon by them to express their views, unless it comes to their knowledge that the Government are about to adopt a course prejudicial to commercial interests.

Mr. A. B. Inglis said, with reference to what had just been remarked with regard to the License Bill, he wished to draw the attention of the Meeting to the fact that it was unfair to exempt the professional and official classes from the provisions of the Bill. It was true, as had been stated by the President, that the tax was not a burdensome one, but he thought it should have been equitably distributed.

Mr. Cochrane said that under the Act professional persons were liable to pay the same amount for the provincial tax as they paid for the municipal tax.

Mr. Ewing said that in Bombay the maximum rate of taxation was Rs. 200, while here it was Rs. 500. He could not say whether the law there contemplated payment by one partner as sufficient payment by the firm.

After some desultory conversation on the same subject,—

It was moved by Mr. J. C. Murray, seconded by Mr. J. A. Anderson and carried, that a vote of thanks be offered to the President, Vice-President, and Committee, for their labours during the half-year.

The proceedings terminated with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

H. W. I. WOOD,

Secretary.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Report of the Committee for the half-year
ended 31st October 1877.

The Committee submit their Report on the principal subjects which have had their attention during the past half-year.

Financial operations of Government :— Loans and Council Bills.

This subject was referred to by the late President of the Chamber in his Address at the General Meeting held on the 30th May last.

The representation made by the Bombay Chamber on the 2nd of that month to the Government of India, relative to the indefinite and uncertain character of the announcement made in the Financial Statement of 15th March last with respect to Government loan operations and the Secretary of State's Bills on India during the year, had the unqualified approval of your Committee's predecessors in office, as communicated in their reply of 11th May : but their promised co-operation was rendered impracticable

by unforeseen circumstances, and unfortunately the opportunity of submitting their views on this important subject was lost, for before your Committee was fully constituted the purposes of Government had been made public, and the occasion for communicating their opinions and endorsing the views so admirably expounded by the Bombay Chamber had passed away.

Those views were submitted by the Government of India to Her Majesty's Secretary of State, whose reply, as might have been anticipated, formally confirmed the Finance Minister's declaration that the Government could not commit itself to any definite course of action either as to borrowing in England or in India or in both countries, or as to the amount which the Secretary of State would require to raise for the service of the year by the issue of Council Bills on the Treasuries in India.

From Bombay Chamber to Bengal Chamber.

Bombay, 5th May 1877.

The Committee of this Chamber desire me to send to you printed copies of a letter which they have addressed to the Government of India on the subject of the uncertain character of the announcement made in the Financial Statement, with respect to the operations for the year in loans and bills, and the injury done thereby to mercantile interests.

The Committee, believing that you attach as much importance to this subject as they do, will be glad of your co-operation in urging upon the Government of India the adoption of a more definite policy; and they are hopeful that the representations of all the Chambers will have the desired effect.

From Bengal Chamber to Bombay Chamber.

Calcutta, 11th May 1877.

I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of the 5th instant, enclosing printed copy of your letter to the Government of India, regarding the injurious effect on the trade of the country of their uncertain policy both as relates to the sale of their bills on India as well as to the loans to be raised.

My Committee fully endorse every argument brought forward by you, and they think this uncertainty, openly acknowledged, is the great defect in an otherwise able exposition of general views and proposed measures.

The question of the spasmodic way in which these bills have been offered or withdrawn, as suited the immediate views or momentary requirements of the Secretary of State, without apparent thought of the effect of his action on the trade of the country, has already formed the subject of frequent comment in our Chamber and the Government has been appealed to more than once on the point.

Our half-yearly meeting will take place in a few days, and the matter will be again brought forward before Members; in the meantime I am instructed to follow up the representation of your Chamber by a somewhat

similar appeal from ourselves. My Committee fully recognize the uncertainty under which the Government has been labouring hitherto, and they have been unwilling to add to the existing embarrassment by too early or premature action on their part. As the Bombay Chamber has, however, taken action in the matter, the Calcutta Chamber will gladly render them all the support in their power.

For the representations and remonstrances made by this Chamber against the financial proceedings of the Secretary of State last year, I am to request your reference to Report for the half-year ended 30th April 1876, as well as to the succeeding Report for the Marquis of Salisbury's elaborate justification of the measures adopted by him on that occasion.

From Bombay Chamber to the Govt. of India,

Bombay, 2nd May 1877.

I am directed by the Bombay Chamber of Commerce respectfully to address you on the subject of the indefinite and uncertain character of the announcement made in the Financial Statement of the 15th March, with respect to the loan operations, and to the Secretary of State's bills on the Government of India which will be sold in London during the year.

The estimates of these are, it is true, given in the Financial Statement, but their effect is completely nullified by the note on the face of the Statements Nos. IV, V and VI, which runs as follows:—"The estimates are the best that can now be made; but they are subject to modification as the year goes on; the Government must not be understood to pledge itself that the Secretary of

State in Council will raise by bills the exact amount stated; or that the exact amount stated will be borrowed during the year; or that it will be borrowed in India or in England as the case may be." Again, it is stated in the Financial Statement under the head of "Loss by Exchange" that, either by bills or by borrowing, the Secretary of State must get £16,000,000 for the Home Treasury in 1877-78; and that it cannot be said with certainty how much he will raise by bills and how much by borrowing. It is also observed with reference to the raising of the loan in India or in England, that the Governor General in Council will not, so far as the decision rests with him, submit to any unreasonable terms; and if the conditions acceptable to the money market in India should appear too unfavourable, he will not hesitate to recommend to the Secretary of State to endeavour to obtain power to borrow in England as much more than 3½ millions sterling as is found to be really wanted.

The Finance Minister justifies this policy on two grounds—(1) that the assent of Parliament must be had before any money could be borrowed in England on behalf of India; and (2) that even if this difficulty did not exist, it would be hardly possible, under present circumstances, to pledge the Secretary of State to sell any specified quantity of bills at specified times, for fluctuations in the price of silver might be so serious, and might occur so rapidly, that it might be in the highest degree inconvenient to carry out the pledges which had been given.

While acknowledging the natural anxiety of His Excellency the Governor General in Council to diminish expenditure wherever it might appear to be practicable, the Chamber desires with great deference to submit that the

policy of not deciding upon and adhering to a fixed amount to be borrowed in India or in England, and a fixed amount of Council bills to be drawn weekly during the year, will be injurious to Government itself and to the country. The trade of the country is so mixed up with the financial arrangements of Government that it is in the highest degree desirable that Government in making these arrangements should adopt a frank, un-deviating, policy, to be adhered to under all circumstances, for if any saving of expenditure were possible under the system now pursued, it would be of little moment when compared with the injury done thereby to the banking and mercantile interests affected by its operations. The Chamber can only think of two cases in which it might be desirable in the interests of the State, or of the trade of the country, to deviate from a fixed line of action, and these are—first, a threatened combination on the part of the buyers of Council bills; and, second, a financial panic which it might be the very legitimate desire of Government to allay.

The uncertainty which prevails with respect to the amount of Council bills to be offered for sale in London, during the year, is the greater evil, for while Government can gain nothing by its uncertain policy, not only are the entire banking and trading interests of the country, but all those having any relations with Europe, affected by the manner in which these bills are issued. These bills amount to about one-fourth of the whole export trade of British India, and the sales of them made regularly throughout the year, in accordance with the announcement of Government, would not be liable to be affected by any combinations of persons. It is, moreover, of ex-

trême importance to the numerous interests engaged in banking and commerce that the calculations upon which their transactions are based should not be subject to be at any time upset by a change, or suspension, of the amount to be offered for sale, which not only produces embarrassment, but has an immediate temporary effect on exchange. The violent fluctuations in the rate of exchange during the last year, and the crisis which took place in July, were aggravated by the frequent changes made in the Council drawings. During February and March no allotments were made at all: afterwards, when bankers and others had been driven to other modes of remitting to India supplies of Council bills were freely placed on the market, and sold at the market price down to 1s. 6½d. After the reaction began in July—in addition to the periodical drawings—Government offered to give large sums at a fixed rate on application at any time; and in this way, and also by offering bills for tender at unusual intervals without previous notice, they shewed such an anxiety to sell their bills that the reaction which had set in, and which would no doubt have been continuous, was checked, and a heavy fall in exchange brought about. It was only when Government reverted to regular periodical drawings that the natural tendency of exchange to advance was allowed free scope. The whole trade was mystified, and such of it as depended on the future of exchange paralysed by the unusual policy, and by the feeling of danger and uncertainty which it gave rise to. The price of bar silver in London fell in July to 47d., and the rate of exchange to 1s. 6½d., but after the panic had passed off, and when the regular and certain issues of Council bills came to be made, the price of silver and the rate of exchange gradually rose until, in

the end of January last, they stood at 58d., and at 1s. 10½d., respectively. A feeling of confidence was gaining ground, and it was beginning to be assumed that the Council bills would be drawn regularly and without restriction, when suddenly on 31st January, and again on 7th February, a limit was fixed, owing to which a great part of the bills was withheld—and this for no other apparent reason than that of giving an artificial support to the rate of exchange. This return to the policy of last year was viewed with doubt and alarm by all those interested, but it was still hoped that the Budget Statement, the issue of which was shortly expected, would contain some definite announcement as to the future, and thus set at rest the uneasiness which existed. Such hopes, however, were disappointed, and the Chamber thinks it its duty to call the serious attention of the Government to the feeling of doubt and perplexity, which now prevail, to the unhealthy element of excitement and speculation which have been introduced, and to the grave harm which is thereby being done to trade on which the interests of the country so much depend.

Exchange, it is needless to observe, depends in the long run upon silver, which is affected by the supply and demand, and any changes brought about by silver in itself are gradual and slow. But Council bills depend not on any natural laws, but are merely the result of the exercise of the arbitrary authority of Government. These bills have during the last seven years increased from five to fourteen millions; and it is obvious that every increase in the amount must bring about sooner or later a corresponding reduction in the imports or an increase in the exports of ordinary merchandise. By this means an ad-

justment is in due time effected, but it is unreasonable to suppose that the amount of the Council bills can be increased, and that exchange can at the same time, until the adjustment has taken place, be supported. Nor should the important fact ever for a moment be overlooked that an artificial support to exchange is no real benefit to the Government or to the country;—exchange is improved and kept up for the time, but the result of this is to give an unnatural stimulus to the import trade, and when the artificial support is withdrawn, the fall which follows is all the more certain and severe.

The Chamber observes that the Government of India considered it necessary that the requisite statutory powers should be obtained before any fixed and certain policy could be adopted with respect to the operations for the year in loans and bills. As Parliament is now sitting, and has been since February, and the adoption of this policy is of enormous importance to the country, the Chamber desires respectfully to express the hope that the borrowing powers will be applied for without any delay, and that, as soon as these are obtained, His Excellency the Governor General in Council will announce the amount of the loan which he intends raising in India and the amount in England, and with regard to Council bills that he will fix the amount to be drawn weekly during the year and will adhere to it rigidly without allowing it to be affected by any fluctuations in rates.

The Chamber would respectfully urge that it would tend in a very material degree to facilitate the interests of the trade of the country, and therefore be of benefit to the State could the loan policy be definitely announced in each Budget. The greatest uneasiness and uncertainty

were created last year by the announcement of the Secretary of State on the 12th of April that a loan of four millions sterling would be raised in England only a few days after a totally different intention was announced in this country, and again this year the same feelings have been raised in an even greater degree by the uncertainty which overhangs the future—an uncertainty which the Chamber submits, and it does so most respectfully, might be done away with were consideration given to the matter beforehand and a decision arrived at, subject only to the confirmation of Parliament and the obtaining of such statutory powers as might be necessary.

No. 686.

From Govt. of India to Bombay Chamber.

Simla, 17th May 1877.

I am directed by His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor General in Council to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 2nd May, in which you complain of the uncertainty of the announcements made in the Financial Statement concerning the loan and remittance operations of the current year, and criticise the proceedings of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India in Council in the sale of his bills upon India.

2. In reply, I am to say that your representations will be forwarded for the consideration of the Most Hon'ble the Secretary of State.

No. 136.

From Govt. of India to the Secretary of State.

Simla, 17th May 1877.

We have the honor to forward, for the consideration of Her Majesty's Government, copy of a letter from the Secretary to the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, representing the inconvenience which must result to those engaged in commerce from the uncertainty of the announcements made in the Hon'ble Sir John Strachey's Financial Statement concerning our loan operations in 1877-78, and the arrangements for the supply of funds to our Home Treasury.

2. We add copy of the reply which we have caused to be addressed to the Chamber.

No. 230. (Finl.)

From the Secretary of State to the Govt. of India.

India Office, London, 5th July 1877.

Para. 1. I have considered in Council your Financial letter, dated the 17th May 1877, No. 136, forwarding copy of a letter from the Secretary to the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, relative to the indefinite and uncertain character of the announcement made in the Financial Statement of the 15th March last, with respect to the loan operations, and to the Secretary of State's bills on the Government of India which will be sold in London during the year.

The Chamber of Commerce represent the "extreme

importance to the numerous interests engaged in banking and commerce that the calculations upon which their transactions are based should not be subject to be at any time upset by a change, or suspension, of the amount" of Council bills on India "to be offered for sale," and they therefore express a hope that an application will be made to Parliament, without delay, for the requisite borrowing powers; that as soon as these are obtained, the amount of the loan to be raised in England and India respectively, and the amount of Council bills to be drawn weekly during the year, will be announced, and that the amount so announced will be adhered to "rigidly," and not be allowed "to be affected by any fluctuations in rates."

3. At the commencement of each official year, the estimate of the financial requirements for that year is based on the information then in the possession of the Government, and we have had recent experience that any notification as to the intentions of the Government is liable to be regarded by the mercantile community as, to some extent, an engagement to which Government is expected to adhere.

4. It would therefore be most inexpedient to make any definite statement of the intentions of the Government, and in that respect the announcement in the recent Budget is fully as explicit as could, with propriety, be made. It must be apparent that circumstances may arise at any moment to modify the expectations entertained, and too much care cannot be taken to reserve to Government complete freedom of action on all points.

5. Whilst, therefore, I am at all times desirous of

affording the mercantile community as much information respecting the amount of Council bills to be drawn during the year, and as regards other financial arrangements, as may be possible without detriment to the public interests, I cannot commit myself to any definite engagement in that respect, and you will be good enough to inform the Bombay Chamber of Commerce accordingly.

HOOGHLY BRIDGE TOLL ON COAL.

It is a great satisfaction to the Committee to be able to record the successful issue of their representations to Government regarding the levy of a bridge toll on coal brought down by the East Indian Railway to its terminus at Howrah; and the discontinuance of the charge, except on the quantity actually passing over the Floating Bridge, removes a burden from the coal trade which the Committee have long endeavoured to persuade the Government was injuriously affecting the interests of that branch of commercial industry.

From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of Bengal.

Calcutta, 28th August 1877.

In continuation of the letter addressed to you on the 22nd instant, I am desired by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to state that the terminal charge levied by the East Indian Railway Company on coal on account of the Hooghly Bridge is the second question upon which they would respectfully claim the Lieutenant-Governor's attention.

They have already addressed His Honor in letters dated the 6th March and 12th April,—in continuation of correspondence with the Government of Bengal : and upon the grounds set forth in those several communications they are content to rest their case for a total abolition of a charge, which, they submit, should never have been imposed on the coal trade of these Provinces.

The Committee therefore will not reiterate the objections so repeatedly urged against a burden which that industry has been compelled to bear, nor repeat the arguments for its removal; but they consider it their duty to enter their protest against the arrangement detailed in the 133rd paragraph of the Port Commissioners' Report.

Notwithstanding the recorded opinions of the Commissioners that the terminal charge on coal can be abolished without injuriously affecting the adequacy of the revenue to meet the necessary charges for interest on the capital borrowed, for a sinking fund for annual reduction of such capital, and for the efficient maintenance of the bridge, a further provision has been lately considered necessary for the protection of the interests of Government; and to supply that provision the creation of a special reserve has been suggested—over and above what the Commissioners consider a sufficiently safe surplus for ordinary contingencies—which in the course of 30 years should amount to 20 lacs of rupees, nearly equal to the original cost of the bridge.

To meet the annual instalment required for that special purpose the Commissioners are of opinion that half of the toll now levied on coal—to which they re-

commend the tax should be reduced—will be enough; but they at the same time declare that the reserve fund can be provided from that terminal charge only, until the general traffic has so far improved and increased as to justify the reduction of that half rate or its total abolition.

While the Committee fully appreciate the Commissioners' recommendations as originally made and subsequently amended—under pressure of the reference by Government—para 130 of Report—they are of opinion that the establishment of a Special Reserve Fund for accumulating an amount equal to the cost of constructing another bridge to replace the present structure, after it has answered its purpose during the 30 years assigned for its serviceable condition, is not covered by any provision contained in Act IX of 1871.

The declared *purpose* of the Act are to construct and maintain a bridge across the river Hooghly as well as the necessary ways and approaches thereto; and the *obligations* are to repay, by 30 annual instalments, the funds advanced by the State, to pay the interest accruing on the half-yearly balances of the principal sum so advanced, to maintain the bridge and approaches, out of the income derived from the tolls, fees, and charges authorised to be levied and made for the purposes of the Act, and to apply the surplus income, or so much thereof as the Commissioners may think fit, towards the formation of a Reserve Fund.

Now the Commissioners have stated that the income derived from the tolls, &c, not only more than covers the aggregate expenditure on all these heads, but leaves a

considerable surplus to meet contingencies, or, in other words, to form a reserve for possible casualties; and have, on these grounds, recommended the abolition of the toll as an unnecessary source of income.

But as soon as the bridge is found to be self-supporting without that aid, and the incidence of the tax proved beyond question to be a charge which may, with justice, be removed, the prospect of early release of the coal trade from that burden is clouded by the interposition of the Government of India; and the expression of their concern in the permanent safety of the bridge and of the funds with which it was built, has led to a proposal which may perpetuate the grievous oppression with which the coal trade has been encumbered.

The practical result would be that present promoters of traffic and those carrying it on in the intervening period will have to pay not only the entire cost of the bridge and its maintenance for 30 years, but also to contribute to a fund equal to the first cost of the bridge for the benefit of a future generation.

The 119th para: of the Port Commissioners' Report gives an interesting analysis of the incidence of the bridge tolls recovered on a variety of produce, and coal stands at the head of the list of contributors, but the analysis would have been more complete if the approximate values of the enumerated and unenumerated commodities had been given in addition to the weight on which the tolls were levied, as that would have shown how unfairly the low priced and high priced articles had paid an indiscriminately applied tax, and how immeasurably out of proportion to their values were the contributions recovered from each respectively.

With these remarks and the renewed expression of their hope that the Lieut-Governor will exercise his prerogative by abolishing a tax so uncompromisingly condemned by the Coal Trade of Bengal, the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce leave the matter in His Honor's hands.

From Govt. of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce.

12th November 1877.

With reference to your letter dated the 28th August last, to the address of the Officer-
* With memo. No. 2637 dated 19th September 1877. ing Secretary to the Government of Bengal, which has been transferred* by the General Department of this Government to this office for disposal, I am directed to state that the levy of fees on coal which does not cross the Hooghly Bridge has been discontinued from the 1st instant, as intimated in the communications from this office Nos. 662C and 701C dated respectively the 30th ultimo and the 9th current.

No. 661C.

From Govt. of Bengal to Bridge Commissioners.

30th October 1877.

In continuation of paragraph 2 of the letter No. 642C dated the 24th instant from this office, and in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 4 thereof, I am directed to request that the Commissioners will commence levying fees at their toll bar at the Howrah end of the bridge on all coal which may pass the toll-bar from the 1st proximo.

No. 662C.

Copy of this letter and extract paragraph 2 from the letter quoted therein forwarded to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce for information, with reference to the correspondence ending with the letter from this office No. 207C. dated the 21st April last.

Extract from a letter from G. A. D. Anley, C. R., Assistant Secretary to the Government of Bengal in the Public Works Department, to the Chairman, Bridge Commissioners,—(No. 642C., dated the 24th October 1877.)

PARA. 2.—Under the authority conveyed to him in Sections 4 and 5 of Act IX of 1871 (B. L. G.) and in accordance with Notification of this Department No. 28 dated 26th January 1875, the Lieutenant-Governor requests that the Commissioners will levy at their toll bar at the Howrah end of the bridge on all coal which may pass the toll bar, the fee of 1 rupee per 100 maunds leviable under Section 4 of the above Act, and paragraph 3 of the Notification of this Department No. 467 of the 28th December 1874.

From Govt. of Bengal to Bridge Commissioners.

9th November 1877.

In reply to the Vice-Chairman's letter No. 2884 dated the 31st ultimo, I am directed to request that the words which occur in para : 2 of the letter from this office No. 642C., dated the 24th idem, "may pass the toll bar" may be altered to the words "may pass over the bridge,"

and also that a similar correction may be made in the letter No. 661C., dated the 30th of the same month from this office.

No. 701C.

Copy of the above forwarded to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce for information and guidance, with reference to the communication from this office No. 662C., dated the 30th ultimo.

From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of Bengal.

Calcutta, 28th November 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 712 of the 12th instant, intimating that the levy of fees on coal which does not pass over the Hooghly Bridge has been discontinued from the 1st instant.

The Committee receive this announcement with great satisfaction, and are glad to learn that the coal traffic—except such portion of it as passes over the bridge—has at length been released from the payment of a tax which the Chamber has strenuously opposed, and the removal of which it has been their frequent duty to press upon the consideration of Government.

Their object having been obtained, the Committee desire to express their appreciation of the result of that consideration and of the relief which has been given to the coal trade of Bengal.

COOLIE STRIKE: MUNICIPAL TAXATION.

It will be in the recollection of members that the shipping business of the port was seriously inconvenienced last April by a strike among the coolies employed in loading and discharging vessels, occasioned by the Municipality insisting on what are called *cooly sirdars* taking out licenses as *cooly suppliers* and paying a tax of 12 rupees per annum.

The Chairman of the Corporation addressed the Chamber on the subject, which resulted in the lengthened correspondence here recorded.

The Committee lost no time in bringing the matter to the notice of members, and from the replies to their reference they were in a position to inform the Corporation that there was a unanimous opinion expressed in direct conflict with the interpretation which the Chairman placed on the term *cooly suppliers*, viz. that *stevedores* and not *cooly sirdars* were the persons who should be required to take out licenses as suppliers of cooly labor, they alone being the parties who engaged such labor; and the Committee, therefore, strongly deprecated the compulsory licensing of *sirdars*, who merely supervised the work on which the coolies supplied by the *stevedores* were engaged.

As the Municipal Act contained no definition

of the term *cooly supplier*, and as the Corporation and the Chamber were at issue on the point, the Committee took the opinion of Counsel on a case submitted by their solicitors, which they regarded as confirming their own view of the matter: and they subsequently submitted the whole correspondence to the Government of Bengal for an authoritative definition of the term, in connection with the License Bill now under consideration by the Council of the Lieut-Governor.

Municipal Corporation to Chamber of Commerce.

Calcutta, 2nd May 1877.

I am desired by the Chairman of the Municipal Corporation of Calcutta to call the attention of the Chamber of Commerce to the strike among the coolies, who are employed in the lading and unloading of ships in the Port of Calcutta, which occurred on the 30th ultimo, and to the circumstances which led to this combination on the part of the workmen.

2. Under schedule 3 class 4 of the Municipal Act, cooly suppliers are required by law to take out a license of twelve rupees per annum. The Act came into force in July 1876. In November last the Municipality applied for summonses against several of the principal cooly Sirdars: the case from time to time was remanded. On Friday last the Magistrate, Baboo Omesh Chunder Dutt, decided that the Sirdar coolies were, under the Act, required to be licensed. A nominal fine of one rupee was inflicted, and the convicted parties required to take out a license for six months.

3. Since the first case was instituted in November, various and adverse opinions have been expressed as to how far the stevedores are practically the suppliers of coolies. On the one part it is contended that the stevedore is the person whom the Shipping Agents employ for the unloading and lading of their ships, and therefore that, as they supply the labor, they are virtually the class intended to be licensed. On the other hand it is argued (this is the contention of the License Department of the Municipality) that the stevedore is simply the executive of the Shipping Agent, who, as soon as he receives orders to clear or load a ship, goes down into the cooly market and hires gangs each under its own recognised Sirdar, and that without the production by the Sirdar of the coolies labor would not be available. The argument that the Sirdars are really the cooly suppliers appears to have been strengthened by what occurred.

4. The Chamber are aware of the result of the combination amongst these Sirdars, and of their threats to leave the Port should the provisions of the Law be enforced against them.

5. The matter is one of so much importance that the Chamber will doubtless take such steps in this matter as to prevent another suspension of labor and the inconvenience and loss arising from such a strike.

6. The Municipality are desirous to enforce their legitimate demands in such a manner as to inflict the least inconvenience on the commerce of this Port and City.

7. I am desired to make the following suggestions for the consideration of the Chamber.

(a.)—That the stevedores, by an arrangement amongst themselves, should recognize and employ only a certain number of Sirdars whose names should be formally registered in this office; that the number must not be a fictitious number, but strictly in accordance with the requirements of the shipping.

(b.)—That the stevedores should pay for the licenses for these men, making their own arrangements either with the Sirdars or with the shipping in the Port. Omitting the Sirdar coolies working outside the Port, the fees claimed by the Municipality would probably fall below Rs. 5,000, an insignificant sum when compared with the loss sustained by a strike.

8. If the stevedores will appoint one of their number as agent or representative, the Municipality will take whatever legal action is necessary through such agent or representative.

Chamber of Commerce to Corporation of Calcutta.

Calcutta, 21st June 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce direct me to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 2nd May and 7th instant, and to state in reply that immediately your first communication reached them they had it printed and circulated among members of the Chamber for their opinions on the general subject of the strike among the ghat coolies, as well as on the suggestions submitted by the Chairman of the Corporation.

Arrangements had also been made for a conference at this office with the stevedores and coolie sirdars, but as

the coolies had gone back to their work no meeting took place.

There has been unavoidable delay in answering your letter, and the Committee regret it has not been in their power to send an earlier reply.

Upon the question whether sirdar coolies should be held to be suppliers of labor, in the sense of the Chairman's reading, the opinions that have reached the Committee are unanimous in considering that the term "coolie suppliers," employed in Schedule 3 class 4 of the Municipal Act, does not apply, and was never intended to apply, to coolie sirdars; that such men are not, properly speaking, coolie suppliers; that the coolies engaged in the shipping business are—as a rule—in the employment and pay of the stevedores, who alone should be required to take out licenses.

These stevedores, as the Committee have been informed, have large gangs of men in their employ, but their sirdars only superintend the work of those gangs, and a given sirdar does not always superintend the same gang but is sent to whichever gang his employer chooses; and if the amount of labor to be performed requires additional hands, the stevedores hire men, always to be found at the various ghats for employment, either themselves directly or through the sirdars—not through the sirdars of the new men employed.

If this be so, and the sirdar coolies are merely the servants of stevedores, it is obvious that they are not "coolie suppliers," and consequently not liable to the Municipal license tax.

If, however, there exists any class of men who undertake sub-contracts from stevedores, or who may, independently of the stevedores, have labor gangs under them, and out of whom they make a profit, of course they would rightly come under the application of the Municipal Act, and the Municipal officers would, it is presumed, have no difficulty in finding them out and dealing with them, for business of that kind cannot be carried on secretly and unknown to the authorities.

The Committee are of opinion that in the case of stevedores and others who are practically suppliers of coolie labor for the shipping there can be no question that the tax is rightly levied; but they strongly deprecate the compulsory licensing of sirdars as labor suppliers, since, in reality, they are only overlookers or supervisors of the work on which the hired gangs of coolies are engaged.

The Committee are of opinion that the Municipality has been mis-informed as to the mode in which coolie labor is hired, as expressed in the 3rd paragraph of your letter, and that men can be engaged in any number, without the intervention of any recognised sirdar, on ordinary daily hire and payment of wages at the rate of the day.

I am further to remark that the argument used in the same paragraph by the License Department of the Municipality that the stevedore is simply the executive of the shipping agent is unsound; for a simple contract for work to be done and labor supplied—the connexion ceasing when the contract is performed—does not seem sufficient to constitute a contractor the executive of the agent, in the sense used by the License Department.

The suggestions submitted in the 7th para. of your letter do not commend themselves to the judgment of the Chamber, inasmuch as they would encourage stevedores and others to establish a sort of Trade Union, which could easily be used to inaugurate strikes, compared with which the convenience lately experienced would be trivial; and it would be infinitely wiser that the Municipality should abandon a tax yielding so inconsiderably to their revenue than that its exaction should lead to the formation of combinations which could be readily turned against public convenience.

Municipal Corporation to Chamber of Commerce.

Calcutta, 20th August 1877.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st ultimo, and am directed to express the disappointment which the Commissioners of the Corporation feel that, in a matter of so much importance to the commerce of this city, the Chamber have not seen their way to assist the Municipality in the realization of the license tax.

2. I am desired to recapitulate the circumstances which led to the strike among the coolies and to this correspondence, because in the event of a second strike, the Corporation may employ the argument that, in a matter of vital importance to the trade of this city, it appealed to the Chamber to employ its influence to secure the practical solution of the difficulty under which the Corporation at present lies, without any material assistance having been given.

3. The Municipal Act of 1876 requires that all trades

and professions should take out licenses; under the schedule of the Act, a coolie supplier is required to be licensed. Now although this Act came into force in July 1876, it was only in November last that proceedings were taken to have it legally determined what class of persons fell under that schedule. From November till April, the several cases, some twenty in number, were pending disposal, having several times been remanded for further evidence. When, however, the decision was given, it was immediately found to affect the commerce of the whole Port.

4. On the representations of the President of the Chamber, and of the several firms whose interests were affected, the License Department was instructed to take no further steps in realizing the tax, till the Chamber of Commerce had an opportunity of considering the subject. The realization of these licenses has been suspended, now for some weeks, in the expectation that the Chamber should either take legal steps to have the definition of coolie supplier, as laid down by the Magistrate, tested by the highest Court, and legally reversed, or that the Chamber should be pleased to exercise and use its great influence so that the coolie suppliers should take out the license in accordance with the law without any further danger to the interests of the Port.

5. In the 4th para. of your letter under reply, the question is however again re-opened, whether stevedores or sirdar coolie suppliers are the persons liable to take out the license, and a distinction has been drawn between the stevedore as the coolie supplier, and the coolie sirdar as the supervisor. As this matter has been decided by a competent Court, the Municipality have no alternative

but to accept that decision, and be guided by it. In the last para. of your letter a suggestion is made, that the tax should be abandoned by the Municipality, inasmuch as its realization would lead to the formation of combinations which could be readily turned against public convenience. The same argument might, with equal force, be applied to every other form of license. The class of persons whom this tax is intended to reach are, as a rule, residents beyond Municipal limits, and avoid all Municipal taxation, although they enjoy all the advantages for which the rate-payers have been heavily taxed. Both therefore as a matter of principle and as a matter of justice they are the class least entitled to exemption.

6. No stronger refutation of the assumption that stevedores are the real suppliers of labor can be offered, than the broad and patent fact that the stevedores were helpless to supply a single coolie till the sirdar coolies assented.

7. The Chamber have based their argument on the ground that the stevedores supply the shipping with coolies. But the Act has not this limited sense, and applies generally to whoever *de facto* is a supplier of labor; if the practice of the Port is that coolies working on board the shipping, work only under recognised sirdars, these men would appear to fall under the legal definition.

Chamber of Commerce to Municipal Corporation.

Calcutta, 19th September 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 2615 of the 20th of last month in reply to theirs of 21st June—

not *July*, as therein stated—and to inform you that they are unable to modify the views already expressed by them on the subject of the Municipal license tax applicable to suppliers of coolie labor for the shipping of the Port.

The Committee have carefully considered the arguments of the Municipality and are of opinion that the Chamber is not open to the reproach conveyed in your letter under reply.

Acting however on the suggestion that the Chamber should take steps with the view to have the definition of "coolie suppliers" legally tested, the Committee placed themselves in communication with their solicitors who were directed to prepare a case—on the correspondence between the Municipality and the Chamber—for counsel's opinion; and I am desired to place the result before you in the accompanying case submitted by Messrs. Sanderson & Co. and the opinion of one of the most able members of the Calcutta Bar.

The Committee notice that in the 2nd paragraph of his letter No. 2560 of 14th ultimo the Chairman refers to a number of Native Firms engaged in shipping and unloading cargo, and again, in the 3rd paragraph, to the shipping agencies as a rule dealing only with the coolie sirdars; and they desire me to add that if the expression "shipping agencies" was intended to apply to consignees of vessels the Chairman has not rightly apprehended their position, because they employ stevedores only for their work and have no cognizance whatever of any subordinate agency by which that work may be performed.

Case and Opinion of Mr. G. H. P. Evans.

CASE.

There is sent herewith a letter dated 2nd May 1877 addressed by the Secretary to the Corporation of Calcutta to the Secretary to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce with reference to the person who is liable under Section 75 of Act IV of 1876 B. C. 3rd Schedule Class IV to pay the License tax of Rs. 12 as a cooly supplier. It appears that Baboo Omeschundur Dutt the Magistrate, before whom a cooly sirdar was charged with carrying on his business without a license, held that the cooly sirdar was the person who should be licensed. On the other hand the Chamber of Commerce, to whom the Chairman of the Municipality referred for assistance in preventing another strike amongst the coolies, consider that the stevedore is the person who hires the coolies and that the cooly sirdars are merely the servants of the stevedores.

The Chairman of the Municipality in his Secretary's letter to the Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce of the 20th August 1877 states—"The realization of these Licences has been suspended now for some weeks in the expectation that the Chamber should either take legal steps to have the definition of cooly supplier as laid down by the Magistrate tested by the highest Court and legally reversed, or that the Chamber should be pleased to exercise and use its great influence so that the cooly suppliers should take out the license in accordance with the law without any further danger to the interests of the Port."

The Chamber of Commerce are not an executive body and have no means of taking steps to prevent any further strikes, but they are desirous of being advised as to who

are and who are not the proper persons to take out a license as "cooly supplier" within the meaning of the Act.

Having regard to the views expressed by the Chamber in their letter of the 21st June last:

Counsel is requested to advise—

Whether cooly sirdars or stevedores come under the definition of cooly suppliers and who should take out the License and pay the tax.

OPINION.

This is purely a question of fact. No definition is given of a "cooly supplier."

If the Chamber of Commerce are right in their facts there can be no doubt they are right in their law.

A gang of coolies may have a headman to negotiate for them without his being a cooly supplier in any proper sense of the word.

On the statement made by the Chamber of Commerce the stevedore is clearly in ordinary cases the cooly supplier. The suggestion of Mr. Metcalfe that the stevedores should take out licenses for the number of sirdars they employ practically admits that the stevedores are the real suppliers.

G. H. P. EVANS.

Municipal Corporation to Chamber of Commerce.

Calcutta, 14th August 1877.

I have made careful enquiry into the different causes

which are inducing the Harbour coolies in Calcutta to demand very high rates for labor, and to strike work if their demands are not complied with.

2. The subject is one of great importance to the trade of the Port, and one worthy of careful investigation. I find that there are about 60 Native Firms engaged in shipping and unloading cargo; the managers call themselves Sirdar coolies, and they employ mate coolies who act as gang-overseers, keep the daily accounts of work done, arrange for carts, receive directions, and supervise the actual working of the coolie. I understand that of this latter class there are about 300 men.

3. The shipping agencies as a rule deal only with the Sirdars, a list of some of whom is appended, and a list of the remainder will follow. These men receive the shipping orders and carry on, so they allege, a running account with the firms for whom they work on the one hand, and on the other with the coolies and carts that they employ. They arrange the sub-contracts for loading the carts at the godowns and conveying goods to the cargo boats or Jetties, and a second sub-contract for conveying the goods to the ship; also they hold themselves responsible for loss of and damage to cargo.

4. I have conferred with some of the leading Sirdars, and learn from their statements that they have, as a rule, acted as Mahajans to the labouring coolies, keeping a running account with them; and that as the price of grain has risen very high within the year, the coolies have not been able to clear off their accounts readily; that consequently the Sirdars have been disinclined to advance money, believing that they will not be repaid; that the coolies on this have refused to work, unless

the rates were raised sufficiently high to enable them to afford the same amount of food they have been accustomed to and to balance their accounts with their Sirdars.

5. Similarly the carters have gradually increased their demands to double the previous rates. Several of the Sirdars allege that they have lost large sums of money, and others have closed business altogether. The causes then alleged for the present strike are:

(a). That the shipping houses have not settled the question of rates with the Sirdars, and therefore the Sirdars are declining business.

(b). That the carters demand double rates, and the Police prohibit them from lading more than 20 maunds on a cart, rendering double trips necessary.

(c). That the coolies are paid for loading carts and boats per 100 bags, but that the increased weight of bags necessitates the labor of two men, that in a day's work the gang carry less, and therefore receive less.

(d). That in consequence of the failure of some of the Sirdar coolie gangs have become disorganised. Luteef Sirdar of Sealdah assures me that he has lost this year 7,000 rupees, being money paid to coolies which he does not expect to recover from Agents.

6. There is a difference of opinion as to whether with a fall in the price of grain there will be a simultaneous fall in the price of labor. In the Famine Districts of Behar, the prices of labor after the famine was not materially affected by the high rates prevailing in 1874, but in Calcutta, I believe, it will be otherwise.

There is undoubtedly a combination among the coolies, and more especially among the carters, to establish a permanent rise. The price of labor has already risen 37½ per cent. in Calcutta in the course of a few months. I understand that one of the causes of the increased rate for carts is due to the illegal action of Messrs. Bird and Co.'s coolies at Howrah, who, I am assured, refuse to load a cart unless they receive 10 pice per cart from the carters. I believe that the present combination among the coolies will be partly broken by the importation of fresh men and carts, but it is doubtful whether the cost of the experiment would render it worth while to do so, if only as a temporary arrangement.

7. My experience of the character of the labouring classes in India is, that having once taken up a position they will not recede from it unless urged to do so by their own leaders. Now in the present instance, the Sirdars have no inducement to keep down rates; they are in fact powerless, whereas the coolies and carters can dictate their own terms.

8. The remedy seems to me to be, that the Port Commissioners should undertake the duty of conveying cargo from the shore to the ships, should have a monopoly in cargo boats, and of the lifting and carrying, exactly as they have in the construction of jetties. In the Port of London cargo is shipped by private Docking Companies direct from the wharves, but at other large commercial ports where there is a Port Trust the Port Authorities have a monopoly of the business of lading and unlading ships; and there seems no reason why the Port Commissioners of Calcutta should not undertake this duty as they do of shipping goods from their jetties. When public conveyances gene-

rally are limited as to their charges, there is no reason why cargo boats should be excluded from such a rule.

9. I see no difficulty in the importation of coolies into Calcutta, but I fail to see the practical good that will follow unless there is a regular organization. It would be necessary to rent a suitable site for lines, which might be erected near Cossipore where land is cheap, to erect sheds, to depute agents to the recruiting Districts, to make advances and despatch the men to Calcutta. It would be necessary also to have a central office and a staff of Supervisors. It seems to me that it would be difficult to get the Calcutta firms to consent to employ only the recruited coolies unless a system was thoroughly organized for the whole Port. The Port Commissioners are the body who could, and should, organize the system, and they have a parallel case in the practice at commercial Ports at home in favor of controlling cargo boats and coolies in the Port of Calcutta.

List of Coolie Sirdars.

Name of Sirdar Coolie.	Residence.	Where chiefly employed.
1. Khyro Sirdar ...	Diggiparrah	{ Petrocochino Brothers & Co., Apolante & Co., and Tulinin & Co.
2. Aseem Sirdar ...	Diggiparrah	{ Hoare, Miller and Co., Schroder Smidt & Co.
3. Warris Sirdar ...	Diggiparrah	{ Ralli Mavrojaní & Co., and Eds & Hobson.
4. Taseerooddin Sirdar	Diggiparrah	{ Lyall, Rennie & Co., Andrew Yule & Co.
5. Jessooruddi Sirdar ...	Diggiparrah	{ Anderson, Wright & Co., Got, Bru & Co.
6. Shamsooddin Khan Sirdar ...	Nareoklangah	—
7. Torab Sirdar ...	Shahob Bagan	—
8. Ibrahim Sirdar ...	Leechoo Bagan	{ Gladstone, Wylie & Co., Borsdale, Schiller & Co.
9. Matab Sirdar ...	Sealdah	—
10. Namuth Sirdar ...	Rajah Bagan	—
11. Matab Chowdhury Sirdar ...	Radhee Mullik's Bagan	—
12. Sonoollah Sirdar ...	Nulpookur Gully	Nicol, Fleming & Co.
13. Nursooollah Sirdar	Sootee Bagan	Tamrace & Co.
14. Jumeer Sirdar ...	Maschoo Bazar	Ralli Brothers.
15. Khodabux Sirdar ...	Diggiparrah	Reinhold & Co.
16. Lutef Sirdar ...	Sealdah.	{ Jute contractors for Ralli Brothers,—since left them and working with Whitney Brothers, Wills Edmunds, Begg Dunlop & Co., A. Louisa & Co., and E. L. Jones & Co.
" Afshoodin ...		
" Molaboodin ...		

Chamber of Commerce to Corporation of Calcutta.

Calcutta, 20th August 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th instant, and to request your acceptance of their cordial thanks for the interest you have taken in the matters therein discussed.

By their orders your letter has been printed and copies of it circulated to all the members of the Chamber, who will no doubt gladly consider your views on the important questions to which you have been so good as to give your attention.

Corporation of Calcutta to Chamber of Commerce.

26th September 1877.

Yesterday the 25th whilst on the jetties I was informed that the Sirdars and coolies employed on board a ship had formed another combination and in order to enforce their demands had refused to work, alleging that their sirdars had been called upon to take out licenses.—I find as a matter of fact that 69 Sirdars have already taken out their licenses, and that there are some 150 Sirdars who have hitherto refused to do so. I find also that at least one stevedore who has constant employment in the Port offered to pay the license fees for his Sirdars, but the men rejected the offer on the grounds that they had never previously taken out a license, and would not do so—in other words they had hitherto not been subject to taxation and would not submit to a tax in any shape. Later on the day I held a conference both with stevedores and Sirdars—the result was that whilst the steve-

dores attributed the strike to the licenses, the Sirdars attributed it partly to the demand for increased wages, and partly to the circumstance that they were required to take out the license for the whole year whereas they worked perhaps only for 6 months. With a view to modify any hardship in the latter case a printed circular was issued yesterday to explain to all Sirdars that they would be allowed to pay in the amount in instalments if it would be convenient to them to do so. This morning I have conversed with a great number of the coolies. I find the Sirdars absent and the coolies quite willing to work provided they secured a higher rate of wages. I would take this opportunity of urging upon the Chamber the advisability of impressing upon the Sirdars the necessity of employing a certain number of recognised Sirdars. Another suggestion I have to make is that the sevedoros should pay the Sirdars at a monthly rate a fixed sum per diem so long as the men are employed by them. This has been done by the Port Commissioners with the happiest results. The carters a few days ago similarly expressed their intention to strike, and if on every action of this kind a license fee be suspended or foregone it will result in a considerable loss of revenue to the Municipality.

I beg you will kindly read this letter to the Chamber at their meeting, and urge upon them, as the lading of ships is the work of men who are experts and have had considerable experience and cannot ordinarily be performed by ordinary coolie labor, that there should be a definite system under which the work shall be carried out under recognised Sirdars and not be left to the hazardous chance of men deserting their work whenever they

allege that they have a grievance. If the coolie gangs were governed by men recognised and registered there would be a channel for expressing the grievances of the coolies, if they should have any, whereas in the present state of things at a given signal by unknown persons the workmen leave their work to the great inconvenience and loss of the shipping. I desire it to be distinctly understood that in calling upon Sirdars to take out licenses we make a distinction between the mere head of a gang of coolies hired in the streets and a Sirdar coolie who controls a number of men who work under his orders.

From Chamber of Commerce to Chairman of the Corporation of Calcutta.

Calcutta, 27th September 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday's date regarding another combination among the ghat coolies to strike work, on the ground that their sirdars had been called upon to take out licenses under the Municipal Act.

The Committee are duly sensible of the interest you have taken in this important matter; they fully appreciate your personal exertions to avert any inconvenient consequences to the trade and shipping of the Port, and desire me to express their obligations to you in that respect.

If they rightly apprehend the tenor of your letter the Committee are urged to press upon ship agents the expediency of making sirdars take out licenses as *coolie suppliers*: but it has already been represented that ship

agents have nothing to do with the sirdars, and that the supplier of labor, so far as the ship is concerned, is the stevedore; the ship, as employer, having no cognizance of the stevedore's arrangements with sirdars or coolies.

The Committee understand that the stevedores get their coolies through sirdars and pay them through the sirdars, but that this is merely a matter of convenience; and that the sirdars, receiving their own pay from the stevedores, pay the coolies the full amount paid for them by the stevedores, without any deduction, their own wages being also that to which they are entitled for seeing the coolies work done—in fact for acting as overseers.

The Act under which the license-tax is proposed to be levied is not clear as to who the supplier of coolies may be, or indeed that it applies at all to men who supply labor to ships; but the Committee would urge that if it does apply to the latter it can apply only to the stevedore, the party entrusted by the ship with the work to be done by laborers hired by him for that purpose.

The Committee are unable to abandon the position they have already taken up in this question, for they believe it to be the right one, and are not prepared to modify the opinion which has been already made known to you: they may be wrong in their view of the matter, but as there is a direct conflict of opinion on the point the Committee submit that, before any further action is taken by you that may lead to renewed strikes among the coolies, a reference may be made to the Government of Bengal, in order that an authoritative declaration be obtained as to the meaning of the term *coolie suppliers* employed in the Act.

The circumstance that apparently stevedores, as such—men who only supply coolies, and not dunnage or other stores to ships—as well as their sirdars have hitherto been exempt from payment of the tax now proposed to be levied from the latter, would indicate that the Act *was never intended to apply to either class*, but had reference only to suppliers of coolies for Tea Gardens, and of emigrants to Mauritius, the West Indies, &c.

The Act is not quite a new one, neither is the system of stevedoring and sirdaring of recent date. The Act no doubt was carefully noted by the Municipal authorities, who must at the time have known, if indeed they may not have partly suggested, its provisions; and as, when the Act came into force, stevedores and their sirdars were apparently deemed not to come within its scope, it seems strange they should now be called on to pay the tax. The intention of the Act would be better understood when it was passed than it can be now; and the tax having been so long in abeyance—the Act having been finally passed nearly 18 months ago—constitutes good ground for ascertaining from Government what is the right and true definition of the term *coolie suppliers*.

A labor strike is injurious at any time, but will be particularly so at this juncture when every resource of the Port is strained to the utmost, and when to get through the work involved by the famine it is essential that every possible assistance should be given to facilitate its despatch.

The Committee contend that the present is not the time to attempt to levy a hitherto unapplied tax; and even the probability that sheer pressure of work may

compel sirdars to pay it—they recovering it from stevedores and stevedores from their employers, directly or indirectly—does not justify an action on the part of the Municipality which, for a declared revenue of about Rs. 5,000 per annum, would assuredly entail a loss to the shipping which can hardly be estimated.

As already said the tax has remained so long in abeyance that, even if it were rightly leviable, it should be allowed to continue suspended until the consideration of its application can be taken up under less unfavorable circumstances than now exist, unattended by the very grave consequences which will certainly result from its enforced observance at the present time.

Port Commissioners' Jetty charges and appropriation of surplus revenue.

The Committee have endeavoured to obtain a reduction of the present scale of jetty charges levied by the Port Commissioners, but it will be seen that the Lieutenant-Governor is of opinion that the time has not yet come for such reduction.

The Committee pointed out that there was no necessity for maintaining so high a tariff of landing and shipping rates, and based their representation on the fact that, from the commencement of their operations, the Port Commissioners had annually appropriated a considerable portion of their net revenue to the extension of per-

manent works; that upwards of 18 lacs of rupees had been absorbed in that manner since the establishment of the Port Trust; and that to provide for permanent works of construction out of revenue was erroneous in principle, and practically burdened the trade of the port with an unnecessarily heavy addition to the charges incurred in conducting business.

The Committee adhere to the opinion already expressed that the cost of constructing jetty accommodation and all works in connection therewith should be met by *capital* and not *revenue*, and that the schedule of charges is far too high and capable of large reduction, which they hope to see introduced ere long.

From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of Bengal.

Calcutta, 22nd August 1877.

In the Administration Report of the Port Commissioners for 1876-77 copies of which, and of the Lieutenant-Governor's Resolution thereon, you have been good enough to place at the Chamber's disposal, two subjects of special interest to the commercial public are referred to, and I am desired to submit the following representation regarding them.

The 1st subject—paragraphs 50 to 52—is the proposed reduction of the Commissioners' charges for landing and shipping goods at their jetties; the 2nd—paras. 128 to 131—is the railway terminal toll on coal.

In introducing the first subject the Committee of the Chamber are inclined to the belief that the Lieutenant-Governor would have hesitated to signify his concurrence in the opinion expressed by the Commissioners if their Report had embodied the Chamber's letter of 2nd April, which, though of subsequent date to that to which their Report extends, was received by them before it was compiled, and should have fairly been included so as to have placed the matter in its entirety before His Honor. They venture to assert that their reply fully combated the conclusion arrived at by the Commissioners, based on a report of their Sub-Committee; and as that material portion of the correspondence, or the substance of it at all events, was not given in the Report, I am instructed to reproduce it; as an annexure to this letter, for His Honor's information.

By a reference to that communication it will be observed that the Port Commissioners and the Committee of the Chamber are at variance on a point of considerable importance; the former having adopted a practice of charging to *revenue account* large portions of their receipts in order to provide, *pro tanto*, for cost of permanent works of construction; while the Committee contend that expenditure of that nature should be charged exclusively to *capital account*; and that if the Commissioners have been, and are, in a position to divert such considerable sums to the extension of their operations, it is quite clear that that tariff of charges has been and is very much higher than it should be, and capable of an appreciable amendment.

By their own admission—para 3 of Report—the Commissioners have spent *upwards of eighteen lacs of NET*

REVENUE on *new works* since the establishment of the *Port Trust*; or in other words the traffic over the jetties and wharves during the last 7 years has been overcharged to that extent, and importers and exporters of merchandise have been mulcted in an amount which, during that period, has enhanced the cost of their operations.

The necessity for the imposition of so high a tariff of rates does not exist: on the contrary, the Committee submit that the reasonable expectation of merchants that one of the primary objects of the Trust—*viz.*, reduction of charges at the jetties—has not only not been realised, but large sums of net revenue have been devoted to purposes to which *capital account alone* should have contributed the necessary funds, and the trade of the Port has suffered a loss to that extent, less the interest that would have been paid on the borrowed capital.

The plea advanced for maintaining the present scale of jetty charges is in the Committee's judgment essentially faulty and cannot be sustained; and the Committee are constrained to express their surprise at the Commissioners' proposal that their jetty service should be kept up at an unnecessarily high cost to merchants in order to cover any deficit, or provide against any disappointment, in connection with other sections of their works. They hold to the opinion that the cost of any contemplated improvement of the Port should be calculated on its own capacity to remunerate the capital expended on it, and not made dependent on the revenue derived from any other subdivision of the Trust, which, by a high scale of charges, may leave a margin to be appropriated to such new works as the Commissioners may desire to introduce.

If no reduction is to be made "until the whole accounts of the port and port approaches show a balance of receipts over expenditure," and surplus revenue is continuously spent on new works, then the prospect of relief is as distant as can well be imagined: and the Committee submit that the perpetuation of an unnecessarily high scale of charges is opposed to the original purpose for which the Port Commission was constituted.

The view which the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce take of the incidence of expenditure on capital or revenue is fully supported by the authoritative declaration of Her Majesty's Secretary of State to the Government of India in connection with the principle that should be strictly adhered to in railway administration: and if the interests of railway proprietors are so jealously guarded that 10,000 rupees per annum is the maximum sum that can be charged to revenue for *minor works of construction, or in connection with repairs or additions to permanent works, or alterations, or temporary diversion in connection with repairs*, it appears to the Committee that the contributors to the revenue of the Port Trust should be protected in their interests, which are obviously affected by a schedule of charges which enable the Port Commissioners to devote to works of construction very large sums which are strictly chargeable to capital account only.

The Committee are prepared for the rejoinder that the mutual obligations of the Government and the Guaranteed Railway Companies are exceptional in their character and present no precedent for the course advocated by the Chamber; but they contend that there is an appropriate analogy between reduced contributions by merchants—

in the shape of charges—towards the maintenance of the Port Commission, and increased returns to railway proprietors obtained by reduced expenditure; and that in principle the position is identical and should be regarded in precisely the same light.

If the Commissioners have had so considerable a surplus at their disposal as to enable them therewith to expand the remunerating accommodation of their jetties, wharves, &c. instead of supplying from capital their requirements for those objects, the schedule of charges is manifestly far too high, and should be revised with the view to as large a reduction being made as the circumstances under notice may justify.

The Committee respectfully submit this subject for the consideration of the Lieutenant-Governor.

As it may be more convenient that their representation regarding the tax on coal should be sent in a separate communication, the Committee will address you shortly in that form instead of lengthening this letter.

From the Chamber to the Port Commissioners.

Calcutta, 2nd April 1877.

Under instruction from the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 3491 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 year 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.

Laboring under the disadvantage of not having before them the Commissioners' estimates upon which the Sub-Committee formed their calculations and conclusions, the Committee are unable to scrutinise the figures or compare the facts and circumstances which influenced the Sub-Committee's declaration that it is not advisable to make any reduction in the jetty rates: they must therefore perforce accept the results arrived at by the Sub-Committee and adopted by the Commissioners.

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.

From Govt. of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce.

Calcutta, 24th October 1877.

Your letter dated the 22nd August 1877 having been

laid before the Lieutenant-Governor; I am directed to inform you that, while His Honor fully recognizes the necessity of maintaining a due distinction between those works which may properly be charged to revenue, and those of which the cost should be debited to capital account, he is inclined to think that the alleged variance of opinion between the Port Commissioners and the Committee of the Chamber does not so much affect the principles upon which this distinction should be maintained, as the application of those principles to particular items charged in the accounts. Mr. Eden agrees with the Chamber in thinking that a plea founded on the rates in force in London or Liverpool would not afford any justification of the maintenance of a needlessly high scale of charges in Calcutta; but the question whether the charges are needlessly high is the very point in issue, and it is not disposed of merely by showing that some part of the cost of permanent works of construction has been defrayed from revenue. It must be remembered that much of the work of the improvement of the port, which it is the duty of the Commissioners to carry out, is of a kind which cannot be directly remunerative; and the Lieutenant-Governor thinks that it would be undesirable, on the one hand, to fetter the action of the Commissioners in executing works of general utility to the trade of the port, though such works may not bring in an immediate money return; and, on the other hand, it appears reasonable that such works should be paid for from revenue, and not from capital. On the whole, the Lieutenant-Governor is of opinion that the time has not yet come for any general reduction of the present scale of jetty charges.

Insufficiency of Jetty Accommodation and Cargo-boats.

Certain remarks in the Chamber's Price Current of 10th May last as to the insufficient supply of cargo boats for the business requirements of the port, and as to the incomplete and inadequate arrangements of the Port Commissioners, having attracted the attention of Government, the Committee were called upon to substantiate a statement the accuracy of which was impugned by the Commissioners.

The Committee replied that the remarks referred to were justified by the official admission of the Commissioners themselves that, in order to meet the increasing wants of the port, they were enlarging their jetty accommodation, which was generally acknowledged to be insufficient for the requirements of the shipping; and as to the supply of cargo boats the Committee were of opinion that it was obviously inadequate, from the fact that the demand for them could not be met, while at the same time the rates for contract service and daily hire were enormously in excess of fair and reasonable charges.

From Port Commissioners to Chamber.

Calcutta, 21st June 1877.

I am directed to forward the accompanying copy of a

letter, No. 1648 of the 31st ultimo, received by the Commissioners from the Government of Bengal, with enclosures, on the subject of an alleged insufficiency of boats for the present shipping business of the Port. With reference to the extract from the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce Price Current dated 10th May 1877, I have to request the favor of your informing the Commissioners whether the extract was issued with the authority of the Committee of the Chamber, and, if so, that you will be good enough to favor the Commissioners with the grounds for making the statements underlined in the extract.

From Govt. of Bengal to Port Commissioners.

Calcutta, 31st May 1877.

I am directed to forward herewith copy of a letter No. 192 dated the 21st May 1877, and of its enclosure, from the Government of India, regarding an alleged insufficiency of boats for the present shipping business of the Port, and to request that the Lieutenant-Governor may be favored with any observations the Port Commissioners may wish to offer on the subject.

No. 192.

From Govt. of India to Government of Bengal.

Simla, 21st May 1877.

I am directed to forward herewith an extract from the Price Current of the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce of the 10th May 1877, regarding an alleged insufficiency of boats for the shipping business of the Port, and to enquire whether His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor can suggest any remedy for the evil complained of.

*Extract from the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce
Price Current, dated 10th May 1877.*

But even with receipt of their produce, exporters' troubles do not cease, for owing to the building of jetties by the Port Authorities, boat owners have contented themselves with merely keeping in repair such boats as they have, and have ceased building new ones to replace those worn out or lost, and as a result the present number of boats available is far below the requirements of the present shipping business of the Port, while the Port Commissioners' arrangements are both incomplete and inadequate. Shippers are being made to pay Rs. 50 or 60 a day for boat hire, and even at these figures are unable to secure sufficient for their requirements.

From Chamber to the Port Commissioners.

Calcutta, 13th July 1877.

Your letter No. 1069 of the 21st ultimo was submitted for final consideration of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce at their usual weekly meeting held yesterday, and I was directed to reply as follows.

Reversing the order of the points of your reference I am to state—

1st—that the remarks in the Chamber's Price Current of 10th May last regarding the incompleteness and inadequacy of the Port Commissioners' arrangements were based on the generally admitted fact that the available jetty accommodation was insufficient for the requirements of the shipping of Calcutta, and that the reply of the

Commissioners of 11th May to the Chamber's letter of 28th April—"in order to meet the increased wants of the Port the Commissioners are extending the jetty accommodation south of No. 7 jetty"—is of itself undeniable confirmation of the statement in the circular.

The purpose of the Commissioners to increase the required accommodation fully justifies the declared inadequacy of their arrangements to meet the wants of the Port, and it necessarily follows that their arrangements were, to that extent, incomplete.

2nd.—The insufficient supply of cargo boats, the exorbitant rates of hire for those that were available, and the helplessness of shippers to put any check upon the demands of boat proprietors, to which they were, by force of circumstances, compelled to submit, were matters of complaint to the Committee of the Chamber by whom they were submitted to the Commissioners in their letter of 28th April.

The diminution in the fleet of boats, the unwillingness of owners to increase their stock which had become much reduced, and the special causes to which they were attributed, were also brought to the Commissioners' notice; and when the article in the Price Current of 10th May was written there was no visible improvement.

The Committee are of opinion that the statement in the Chamber's circular was made on sufficiently reasonable grounds, and that the present contract rates—nearly double what they were last year—and rates of daily hire, which are enormously in excess of what they have been and should be, conclusively confirm its accuracy.

3rd.—With these remarks in reply to the chief points raised in your letter, it is hardly necessary to state that the Committee entirely approve of the article in the Price Current; and that they are glad to find the attention of Government has thereby been drawn to the insufficient supply of boats for the present water-borne traffic of the Port, which however has no doubt been unexpectedly and rapidly increased by the requirements of the famine in Madras.

CARGO BOATS.

In a Circular dated 26th July last the Committee brought to the notice of members the exorbitant demands for boat hire, cartage, and cooly labor, with the view to measures being taken to control and regulate those charges; and to that end they purposed representing these matters to Government as soon as they were in possession of members' views on the subject.

But before these could be ascertained the subject was brought informally to the Lieutenant-Governor's notice; the Committee's intended action was arrested in consequence, and they contented themselves by forwarding for His Honor's information copies of such remarks as had been submitted by members, and which are here recorded for reference.

From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of Bengal.

Calcutta, 24th August 1877.

With reference to your letter of the 20th instant to the Board of Revenue, under instructions from the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor, in consequence of a representation made to His Honor on the subject of the rates of hire demanded by owners of cargo boats, the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to forward a printed copy of a circular to members of the Chamber—issued on the 26th of last month, and re-issued on the 16th instant—and of their minutes on the subjects submitted for their opinions, as far as they have been recorded.

It was the Committee's purpose to take action in the matter as soon as they were in possession of the views entertained by the Chamber generally, to obtain which is always necessarily attended with much delay, and as the recent occasion has been no exception to the rule in this respect the Committee were obliged to suspend their intended representation to Government.

As however His Honor has had the opportunity of considering and of passing orders on the subject, the Committee apprehend that any further reference to it, beyond the submission of the papers herewith forwarded, is not now called for.

The Committee at the same time desire me to invite your attention to their last half-yearly Report, which, at pages 75 to 77, contains correspondence between them and the Port Commissioners relative to the subject which has recently had His Honor's special attention.

Circular.

Calcutta, 26th July 1877.

The Committee desire me to submit for your consideration a matter which demands your earnest attention, and they will be glad to be favored with any suggestions to enable them to arrive at some conclusion which may represent the views of the Chamber generally.

You are aware that the shipping business of the Port has of late been seriously embarrassed, and charged with most exorbitant demands for boat hire, cartage, and coolie labour; and in order that measures be taken with the view to proper control and regulations in these respects being authoritatively exercised and observed, the Committee will be glad to learn what course should, in your judgment, be adopted.

Minutes by Members.

16th August 1877.

We are surprised that our trade has been able to develop itself as it has done without those regulations which exist in every other civilized port of the world, and we consider that it is high time for taking energetic steps to put our shipping arrangements in order. That such has not been done long ago is a matter of surprise and regret. Large sums of money have been expended upon jetties, sheds, &c., with the view of cheapening port charges and the cost of shipping cargo, but the most important item—the cost of putting cargo on board the vessels—has been left unregulated, and now and then the commercial

community has been assailed by strikes amongst the labourers or by exactions on the part of a number of petty boat owners who think that they have the privilege of levying annually a "black mail" upon the trade of the country.

It is perhaps not generally known that, from time immemorial, we have been paying unwittingly a tax to the priesthood of the country.

Even in former years, when boat hire used to rule Rs. 5 to 6—highest 8 Rs.—per day, rates invariably rose before the Poojah holidays to Rs 20 and sometimes 25 without any ostensible reason, beyond alleged pressure of work; in reality, however, the boat owners levied a contribution upon us for their "*Poojah expenses*," and our money went into the pockets of those who in the name of religion are fleecing the native community. At the highest ordinary former charge of Rs. 8 per boat per day, the cost of putting cargo on board ship was about 1 rupee 4 annas per ton, the Poojah tax made it Rs. 4 per ton and generally lasted for 3 or 4 weeks; but boat hire having lately been raised to Rs. 70 per day, the cost of shipping one ton of cargo now amounts to a little over 10 rupees, while homeward-bound ships are glad to get Rs. 30 per ton.

The anomaly and absurdity of this state of things is so great that it needs no comment. To aggravate matters further the coolies have lately taken it into their heads that their services are not sufficiently remunerated. Up to a recent period, and for many years, we used to pay Rs. 4 per 100 bags for loading and carting, of which amount (according to distance) 1-4 to 2-8 went into the pocket of the carter, leaving 1-8 to 2-2 to the coolies, and

this meant a very handsome profit to the *coolie sirdars*, who probably did not pay more than Rs. 10 or 12 per month to the coolies. These people have now, by means of their recent strike, obtained an increase, and will in future, *till further notice*, charge Rs. 8 per 100 bags, of which 2-8 to 3-2 goes to the carters, leaving 4-14 to 5-8 per 100 bags to the coolies. This represents wages of 120 to 140 per month per head were the money evenly distributed, but the bulk goes into the pockets of a comparatively small number of *sirdars*. To show how we arrive at our calculation, we will mention that we have tested a gang of Oorya coolies (12 in number) whom we pay at the high rate of Re. 1 per day. These men handle daily about a thousand bags, which brings the cost of a hundred bags to about Re. 1-3; 5 Rs. per 100 therefore means over Rs. 4 per day wages; but as we said before the greater portion of this money no doubt goes into the pockets of a few ringleaders, who have moreover succeeded in *coercing* shippers to alter the weight of wheat bags from 2½ maunds to 2 maunds, although saltpetre and sugar bags weigh sometimes even more and have always been carried by these men without objection. Admitting that every labourer is worthy of his hire, and that fair rates are due to labourers of this class, it seems preposterous that a trade of more than 3 million tons should be made the subject of extortion on the part of a few dozen of greedy boat proprietors and an equal number of half-naked, uneducated, savages, and we think the majority, at all events, of the commercial community will agree with us that the time has come when this impudent robbery should be stopped. We feel sure that the merchants have but to lift up their voice to obtain redress and to put an end to these exac-

tions alike injurious to the interests of the *ship-owner*, the *shipper*, *producer* and the *country generally*, inasmuch as the competing power of India is diminished thereby as compared with other countries much nearer Europe, where all these charges are well regulated and reduced to a minimum by means of the most economical appliances.

The remedy we propose is as simple as it will prove efficacious:—'Boat hire, carting and coolie labour must be placed under Rules and Regulations, with a fixed tariff,' granting fair and equitable maximum charges to those who choose to perform the service of the trade of the Port. This is done in every other civilized part of the world, and if it has been found necessary to bring vehicles plying for hire on shore under certain rules and restrictions, the necessity of doing the same with our conveyances on the river is quite as imperative.

Our shipping wharves should be divided into sections, and let to different contractors who undertake to put the merchandise passing through their section or sections on board of the lighters at a fixed tariff, and the cargo boat owners should also be placed under a maximum tariff.

In order to do this the Supreme Government will have to extend the powers of the Port Commissioners by legislative enactment, and the latter can then fix upon a fair tariff in consultation with the commercial community, and thereby all future strikes and extortions will be set at rest.

We feel sure that it only requires unison and determination on the part of merchants to get arrangements put in force, which should have been carried out long ago,

and we cannot help wondering at our own indolence which has suffered us to drift into the present intolerable state, when it is impossible to tell from day to day what the cost may be of shipping cargo on the next day.

BORRADAILE, SCHILLER & Co.

The plan proposed by Messrs. Borradaile, Schiller & Co., is, we believe, the only feasible one. We see no reason why boats, vehicles, and coolies plying for hire for the conveyance of goods should not be under the control of a tariff just as much as hackney carriages. Until this is the case boat owners and others concerned will not fail to take advantage of the power they have in their hands.

NICOL, FLEMING & Co.

We think it would be most desirable to have a fixed tariff for the better regulation of boat hire, carting, and coolie hire, and we should be very glad to see the control placed in the hands of the Port Commissioners. But as, even with unanimity in this respect amongst the Members of the Chamber, some time must elapse before the sanction of Government could be obtained and the requisite enactments passed, we would suggest that the Commissioner of Police, meanwhile, be invited to co-operate with shippers and assist them in resisting the present extortionate demands made by coolies, by importing labour from the Mofussil. We are informed that it would be an easy matter to import an abundance of labour from the Patna district, and the temporary employment of Mofussil coolies to the exclusion of the town men would, we think, soon bring the latter to their senses.

ASHBURNER & Co.

27th July 1877.

We approve of Messrs Borradaile, Schiller and Co.'s proposals, but fear delay in getting Government to take any steps in the matter. As an alternative measure we think the Members of the Chamber should associate together in order to undertake their own loading and shipping. An association owning boats and carts, and employing coolies without the intervention of the present coolie sindars, could pay a good salary to a superintendent, thereby securing proper management, pay interest at a reasonable rate on the capital required, and yet carry produce from godown to ship at rates much under what could ever be done under the present system.

ANDERSON, WRIGHT & Co.

27th July 1877.

Ticca gharries, palki bearers, and dinghi wallahs have all fixed tariffs. You are not obliged to use either gharries or palkies, for you can walk; nor need you with the bridge, use a dinghi. Still these have all been put under regulation. Our produce cannot walk, and yet the coolie and cart force of the Port are allowed to work their own will without any reference to the well being of the trading community. If one class above all others requires to be put under strong and coercive measures, it is that on which the commerce of our Port depends on its carriage to and from the shipping. It will be necessary to be provided with a reserve force, as suggested by Messrs. Ashburner and Co., in the event of a strike.

KETTLEWELL, BULLEN & Co.

We approve of the proposals and views of Messrs. Borradaile, Schiller and Co., and Messrs. Ashburner and Co.

28th July 1877.

p. p. RALLI & MAVROJANI.

G. G. RISO.

EWING & Co.

p. p. RALLI BROTHERS.

A. P. RALLI.

J. H. FERGUSSON & Co.

JOHN ELLIOTT & Co.

FINLAY MUIR & Co.

Rules and Regulations are very necessary.

JARDINE, SKINNER & Co.

We think that the remedy proposed by Messrs. Borradaile, Schiller and Co., for a crying evil must commend itself to all shippers; but, as action requiring the sanction of Government must necessarily be delayed, we think the plan suggested by Messrs. Ashburner and Co., with regard to coolies (and if possible carts also) should receive immediate attention.

GRAHAM & Co.

In order that action in this matter may not be impeded through want of unanimity amongst the merchants of Calcutta, we declare ourselves in favor of the proposals made by Messrs. Borradaile, Schiller and Co., and Messrs. Ashburner and Co. though we doubt their practicability, because, even assuming that rates of boat hire can be controlled by legal enactment, it would be extremely difficult in times of pressure to enforce strict adherence to fixed rates, and, moreover, such an interference with

private enterprise, and the natural laws of supply and demand, might result in the withdrawal of cargo boats from the market altogether, when we should find our remedy far worse than our disease.

If a tariff was fixed now, it would, we imagine, be framed on a basis which we should find much too high two or three months hence, when the famine requirements are at an end; and as it is always a matter of time and difficulty to get a "fixed tariff" reduced, we should probably in the long run find ourselves more out of pocket by legislation than the temporary pressure makes us at present. For these reasons we entertain the idea that it would be better to let matters right themselves; this must come before very long, probably before any legislation could be put in force, as the improved prospects for next season make us hope that Government will soon have the famine well in hand; and if the existing cargo boats contrive somehow to carry through the large regular trade of the Port as well as the famine exports, we ought surely to have an excess of boats by and by, when the latter come to an end, which excess should then enable us to revel in low rates of hire. Meantime while we must all acknowledge the admirable work hitherto done, and in progress, by the Port Commissioners, we might take the opportunity of again urging upon them the stringent necessity of expediting their landing and shipping arrangements as much as possible, so as to guard the mercantile community from a recurrence of the losses and difficulties under discussion.

Coolie Strikes.—These unfortunate ignorant people follow entirely the orders of their sirdars, who can

afford to look on quietly while the coolies are starving, and if Government could be induced to interfere and regulate the payment for their labour on an equitable basis, much good would result. Messrs. Borrardale, Schiller & Co.'s proposal that the Port Commissioners should divide the port into sections, fix rates for carrying 2 and 2½ maund bags and sell by public auction the right of providing coolie labour for each section to responsible parties, with a penalty attached for infringement or non-performance of their undertakings, recommends itself as a remedy against these strikes in future.

Weight to be carried by Hackeries.—The coolies strike was no doubt initiated by the limitation of weight to be loaded on hackeries through Municipal authority. We advocate that the Chamber should once more move in this matter, and ask the Municipality to rescind their order, and leave this question in the hands of the Police and the "Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals." There are strong bullocks as well as weak ones, the former could drag 30 maunds with ease, while 20 maunds would be too much for the latter, so that a general limitation does not deal properly with the case, and indeed the *balance* of the load has more to do with over-taxing the bullocks than the actual weight. Unless legislation can be thoroughly effective, we think it is better left alone, and in this instance it inflicts serious losses and annoyance on the trading community.

F. W. HEILGERS & Co.

We concur entirely in the opinion expressed by Messrs. F. W. Heilgers and Co.

If action is to be taken at all, such a time must be

selected, and such arrangements made, as will admit of its being taken effectually as well as promptly.

Messrs. Ashburner's suggestion implies delay. It would be no easy matter to bring a few thousand coolies from the Mofussil, provide them with food and lodging, and, ennumerated as they are with caste and country prejudices, train them to take efficiently the place of the men they are intended to supplant.

We do not think that in a time like the present, when every executive resource of the Port is taxed to the uttermost to enable it to grapple with its enormously and exceptionally increased business, it would be at all prudent to endeavour to effect a radical change in the present system, except in so far as it *can be enforced*. We believe that their own necessities would compel merchants to virtually subvert the most apparently salutary enactments the Chamber of Commerce might procure. The whole question seems to be governed by the law of supply and demand, and we fear that any legislative enactment passed would prove of little benefit at the moment. Even with European supervision it would be impossible to avoid the use of head men for the various gangs of coolies; *that granted*, we fear that, in times of pressure, it would be found that, while apparently working on fixed tariff rates, various indefinable collateral charges would expand uncomfortably. We are not in England but in India, and it seems perfectly impracticable for us to ignore what seems to be some of the most religiously cherished traditions of an essentially trading people, who claim the right, by whatever means, to obtain the most they can for their commodity, be it goods or labor. The above remarks apply largely to the

question of cargo boats. Any tariff fixed would be merely nominal and governed by the exigencies of the time, unless indeed it were seen fit to exclude natives from the privilege of boat proprietorship. Indeed we question the right to deprive boat proprietors of the common merchant right to make as much out of their investments as the market will admit of, a right of which the owners of the ships trading to England referred to by Messrs. Borradaile, Schiller and Co., would not, we are persuaded, hesitate to avail themselves. As Messrs. F. W. Heigers and Co., suggest, we would strongly counsel the Chamber to leave the difficulty to be solved by natural laws. We may mention that the process *is going on* most unmistakably, there being no fewer than 200 new cargo boats building at the present moment, and nearly all owned by natives.

SHAW, FINLAYSON & Co.

We think that cargo boats should be put under the control of the Port Commissioners, and that it should be left to them to frame regulations, tariff, &c.; for this purpose we think an immediate representation should be made to His Honor the Lieutenant Governor to propose a short Act of the Bengal Council. The question of coolie labour is one in which we do not think legislative interference desirable.

COLVIN, COWIE & Co.

We are strongly of opinion that the present high rate of boat hire is a mere temporary inconvenience.

The doubt as to what arrangements the Port authorities, under their almost unlimited powers, contemplated for the export business of the Port checked at one time

the ordinary building of boats, but this doubt has now been neutralised by the current rates of hire, rates which, if maintained for even a few months, will yield very satisfactory remuneration to boat owners, and consequently a very large fleet of boats is now in course of building, and we have no doubt that, even before the famine demand is over, boat hire will recede to very reasonable figures.

In addition to the effects of the Port Trustees' actions and powers, we are at the moment suffering from a very sudden expansion to our trade. In ordinary course the extra accommodation afforded by the Jetties, accommodation which we understand is being already increased, and will be further extended, would have no doubt been sufficient for our ordinary wants, but the pressure caused by the famine demand has been an unexpected strain upon our resources, and we should extremely regret to see a call for legislation follow this unusual strain, and especially at a time when so much excitement exists.

For our own part we are not believers in legislative restriction. We consider that already we are over-legislated for; indeed the strike of the coolies was, we think, directly caused by what was in our opinion a most unwarranted notification by the Commissioner of Police regarding the loading of bullock hackeries, and we should very much regret any further restriction to the freedom of the trade of the Port.

If boat owners can by legitimate means earn Rs. 60 or Rs. 70 per day for the hire of their boats, we see no reason why they should not do so; as well might Government be asked to order that a holder of rice should

not obtain more than Rs. 2 per maund for his rice, which shippers are more than willing to purchase for Rs. 3-8.

An easy remedy, we take it, is for shippers who have a regular business to purchase or contract for such a number of boats as will meet their ordinary requirements, and so render themselves independent of fluctuations of the market.

The coolie strike appears to us a more difficult question; as there, a different evil has to be dealt with, the evil namely pointed out by Messrs. F. W. Heilgers & Co., that the coolies are under the orders of a Sirdar—a man who apparently is not so readily amenable to the influence of the ordinary laws of supply and demand, but even here those laws would most certainly operate if the Sirdar carried his extortion beyond reasonable limits.

We cannot, looking at the almost famine price of rice, consider the late coolie strike as at all extraordinary, especially when it was led up to by the Police regulation referred to.

TURNER, MORRISON & Co.

7th August 1877.

Our views are briefly those expressed by Messrs. Colvin, Cowie & Co.

We think it extremely undesirable that the Port Commissioners should have the monopoly of the right to load and land cargo, but the cargo boats should be under their control only.

WHITNEY BROTHERS & Co.

17th August 1877.

We approve of Messrs. Borradaile, Schiller & Co.'s and Ashburner & Co.'s proposals.

GOT BRU & Co.
18th August 1877.

We do not consider that it is feasible to legislate upon the question of the rates to be paid for boat hire any more than for the rates of freight to be paid to steamers and sailing vessels, or the price to be paid for rice or other articles of produce and daily consumption. The whole thing simply resolves upon the ordinary question of supply and demand, and will no doubt right itself in due course. In exceptional times we must expect to pay exceptional rates, and it seems to us perfectly useless to think of fixing a definite rate for boat hire, unless merchants could obtain a guarantee that a sufficient quantity of boats would be supplied for all emergencies, and that each merchant's goods would be taken delivery of and shipped just when required, which guarantee we do not suppose the Government or the Port Commissioners would care to give. As regards the shipping business generally we have no doubt it would be very convenient to have the rates, as well as the facilities of shipment, arranged by some one else, but we really do not see how it can be done. Some large export houses have been in the habit for some years past of contracting for their yearly requirements of boats at an average rate and these provident houses have of course no cause of complaint now. As this course was open to every one it appears to us quite reasonable that those merchants who did not foresee the difficulty, and did not make timely arrangements, should now pay the price of the day. The present difficulty appears to us to be occa-

sioned chiefly by the extra requirements for the famine, and as we understand that a large fleet of boats is being built, is quite likely that after the famine is over, the rates for boat hire may be lower than ever, and should a definite rate be fixed now, it is quite likely that merchants might be made to pay more than necessary.

As regards the question of coolie labor there is certainly great difficulty, as coolies follow so much the lead of their sirdars, and are not open to reason or argument themselves. In every country where trade and labor are free, strikes are more or less occasionally inevitable, and we do not think that they can be prevented by legal enactment. No doubt this difficulty will also right itself in due course, and in the meantime, while the cost of all articles of food are at such high rates, it is only natural that coolies should try in any way they can to get increased pay.

ROBERT & CHARRIOL,
18th August 1877.

We look upon the whole question as being one of supply and demand.

It would be obviously absurd to expect any shipowner to accept a low rate of freight when a dearth of shipping was in port with a large accumulation of products waiting. This view presents the right of the cargo boat owner to adapt his charges to the existing requirements, equally with the possession of the larger carrying vessel.

We consider the coolies, also, justified in seeking higher rates, as well from the present rush of business coming in their way as from the increased price they are compelled to pay for food. Some firms admit making hand-

some profits in meeting the famine wants. Why should the poor coolie be denied a share, where his services are so necessary?

In introducing restrictions to the earning powers of those who have, for the time being, the advantage of the situation, we are acting unfairly and against the common rules of Commerce.

HOWE, GOODWIN & COLE.

22nd August 1877.

In reply to your Circular regarding cargo boats we have to state we do not consider this question calls in any way for Legislative interference; any disadvantage under which shippers and consignees labor at present can and should be remedied by themselves, or will be remedied by the ordinary course of trade, and we believe matters are fast righting themselves.

The demand for boats is a very fluctuating one, and when the demand is beyond the supply, it is only reasonable the boat owners should receive a higher return, just as owners of ships do when tonnage is scarce and cargo abundant, or owners of any commodity when the demand is brisk and supply small. During the past year rates have been exceptionally high, but the rates of one year, and more particularly of an exceptional year, do not form a basis for altogether changing the principle on which the boating of the harbour is done. Taking the returns of the Calcutta Landing and Shipping Company which over the past twelve years have averaged we believe 10½ per cent. per annum, we do not look on that as at all a high return from property that is not insurable and which is

so much exposed to risk of destruction; we are told also the property of the Company is intrinsically no more valuable now than it was twelve years ago.

That boat hire should have ruled high during the past year is not to be wondered at. The fleet of boats, more than equal to the ordinary working of the port, was unequal to the large accession of work caused by extreme pressure for shipping, brought about by the Madras famine; but when the pressure caused by the famine is over and trade returns to its normal state, we are sure boat hire will revert to rates even lower than those that ordinarily ruled before the famine began and to which, we believe, neither shippers nor consignees could object, although boat owners might complain. We say "lower," because the high rates ruling for boat hire over the past year has induced the building of many boats, and when the famine is over there will be a largely increased fleet and naturally more competition for boat work than before.

With reference to the proposal to fix a cargo boat tariff, we would ask, had a boat tariff been fixed in June 1876, when boat hire was low, would that tariff have been maintained in force during the past year during the pressure of the famine? We are quite sure it would not, but that, either by common consent or in unrecognized forms, the owners of boats would have received for their boats much more than the hire that would have been allowed under any tariff, indeed as much probably as they have been getting.

We know of no quarter in which cargo boat hire is fixed by tariff except on the Coromandel Coast and at Madras; as soon as the demand for cargo boats exceeded the supply of boats, the tariff rates ceased to be in any way regarded.

We would look on the fixing of a tariff for cargo boat hire as a decidedly retrograde movement, and one which, if strictly adhered to, would prove adverse to the interests of shippers and consignees, as we believe boat hire will be lower when trade returns to its ordinary level than under a tariff fixed by law.

The only feature in connection with boat hiring at present to which we object, is the fixing of the rates of hire bi-weekly, and that on each occasion for the three previous days, so that sometimes merchants are charged rates for boat hire which they would not have shipped under had they known what they would have to pay. Shippers should know what they will have to pay for a boat when they engage it, but surely the mercantile community of Calcutta can secure that without having recourse to the Legislature. We hold strongly for free trade in boat hiring, and hope no legislative action will be taken, but we hope at the same time the present arbitrary system of fixing the ghat rate will soon be a thing of the past.

In the foregoing remarks we do not take up the boat owners' case at all, deeming that superfluous.

MACKINNON, MACKENZIE & Co.,
Managing Agents, British India
Steam Navigation Company.

Calcutta, 27th August 1877.

Calcutta, 25th August 1877.

The rates of hire both for cargo boats and for coolies seem to be regulated in great measure by the laws of demand and supply, and these laws almost invariably right

themselves with time; we should, however, gladly welcome any measures by which in the meantime the present extravagant rates could be reduced: but we doubt the expediency of a fixed tariff for cargo boats, as in times of pressure, like the present, when the tariff would be most necessary, there would be found ways of evading it, and the shipper who was determined to enforce the tariff would be the sufferer; moreover one result of such interference with the natural laws of demand and supply would be to check the building of the 200 to 300 boats that are now reported to be in course of construction. The inconvenience that these high and fluctuating rates cause to shippers is of course very great, but we doubt if any class has really *suffered* from them during the current year, unless it be that the starving inhabitants of Southern India have had to pay a few annas per bag more for their imported rice, and, in the same way, the cost of the famine to Government has perhaps been greater; the producer has certainly got unusually high prices whether for grain or seeds; the shipper has done a larger business than usual, presumably with a good profit; and if the supply of tonnage had not been so enormous, no doubt the high rates of freight that were ruling during the early part of the season would have continued throughout, and the shipowner too would have benefited from the increased business of the port; as it is, the owners of steamers have no cause for complaint.

With reference to the importation of coolies into Calcutta we should be glad if it could be carried into effect, but we doubt if it would be so easy a matter as some appear to think; coolies are not found willing to emigrate to the Colonies, it is daily becoming more

difficult to recruit them for the Tea Gardens, and it might even be difficult to import them into Calcutta, especially as the new coolers would have to encounter intimidation from the old coolies. During one of the recent strikes the Oorya coolies, though willing to work, were prevented from doing so by the intimidation of the Mussulman coolies; and although coolies cannot be called skilled labourers yet a certain training is required to make them expert in their several branches of labor.

None of the proposed remedies appear to meet the need, and as business will probably resume its ordinary course early next year, we should not now advocate any interference either with boat owners or coolies.

EDE & HOBSON.

PILOT SERVICE.

The Committee were favored by the accompanying letter from the Government of Bengal regarding certain proposed alterations in the system of appointing pilots to outward bound vessels. The most important proposal was that applications for individual pilots should be discontinued and appointments made by the Marine authorities. The Committee invited the views of Members of the Chamber, and they are glad to be able to report that His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor has conceded the points asked for, and that with certain limitations, which can hardly be objected to, appointments are made on applications as before.

From Govt. of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce.

Calcutta, 28th August 1877.

I am directed to forward the enclosed copy of a resolution* on the subject of applications for pilots. By this system, as it has existed hitherto, commanders of vessels of all sizes can apply for any particular pilot to pilot their vessels down the river.

2. The Lieutenant-Governor has given the matter his full consideration, and, as he believes the system to be much abused, he has ordered the modifications noted in paragraph 5 of the resolution to be made in the rules which govern it.

3. Besides these restrictions, Mr. Eden is disposed to order the discontinuance of the privilege now allowed to pilots of returning from the Sandheads to take up ships, and to permit applications to be made only for men actually in the town of Calcutta, and not more than four days before the departure of the vessel. But before doing so he would wish to be favoured with an expression of the Chamber's opinion as to whether this limitation could reasonably be introduced.

RESOLUTION.

READ—

Paragraph 15 of the Resolution by the Government of Bengal in the General (Marine) Department, dated the 18th June 1868.

Paragraph 16 of the Resolution by the Government of Bengal in the General (Marine) Department, dated the 5th February 1873.

Paragraph 5 of the Resolution by the Government of Bengal in the General (Marine) Department, dated the 12th January 1874.

Paragraph 29 of the Resolution by the Government of Bengal in the General (Marine) Department, dated the 24th January 1876, regarding the system of applications for pilots.

Read also—

Letter from the Officiating Deputy Master Attendant in charge, No. 3476 of the 26th July 1877, on the same subject.

The system of applications by which commanders or agents of ships of all sizes enjoy the privilege of applying for any particular pilot to pilot their vessels has been considered by Government at different times.

2. In 1848 it was proposed, in consequence of the misbehaviour of some of the members of the service, to abolish the right of application, and to substitute for it a system of turns, except in the case of Branch Pilots and of applications made by commanders of ships for the pilots who had brought their vessels in. This restriction, however, was confined to vessels of less than 18 feet draught, and was withdrawn after a short trial, in consequence of the numerous complaints that were made by commanders and agents, as well as by pilots themselves.

3. The matter was again brought forward in each of the years 1867, 1873, and 1874, and, on the recommendations of the Committee appointed in 1867 to consider and report on the position and prospects of the Pilot Service, various modifications were introduced.

4. The rules which now govern the system are as follow:—

- (1) Applications are only allowed to hold good for a limited number of days—seven for a Branch Pilot, and three for all other pilots; and any pilot for whom an application has been filed is not liable to be ordered off on station or other duty if there is a sufficient number of pilots on the list without applications who are available for duty.
- (2) A pilot in town for whom an application has been filed is bound to wait till that ship is ready to start, and is not allowed to take away another vessel in the meantime and return to town for the first ship.
- (3) A pilot is not allowed to return from the Sandheads as he pleases to take up an application which he knows will be made for him; but he is allowed so to return if there is the minimum number of pilots (which has been fixed at 15) outside, and if he actually has the application with him to show.
- (4) If a pilot returns from the Sandheads on an application and finds that the vessel will not leave for some time, he is not allowed to take another ship down, but must either wait for that vessel or return to the Sandheads at his own expense. Again, if the vessel applying for him has sailed in his absence, he cannot take another down but must return to the Sandheads before he can put in another application.

(6) Applications are not allowed to be filed for any pilot within seven days of his filing a medical certificate or application for leave.

5. This matter was brought to the notice of the present Lieutenant-Governor in January 1877, but for want of time he was unable then to give it his full consideration.

From all Mr. Eden has heard, however, he has since come to the conclusion that the system of application involves many great abuses. It demoralizes the Pilot Service; it leads to a great deal of pressure being placed on the masters of vessels, and to every kind of irregularity; and it is also the indirect cause of the complaints, which are so common, of an insufficient supply of pilots at the Sandheads. But, while believing that the continuance of the system of applications is incompatible with the proper working of the service as now constituted, he considers that, as it has been allowed to go on for so long a time, it can hardly be abolished summarily without causing great discontent. His Honor can see no reason why pilots should be appointed to outward any more than to inward-bound vessels, and he anticipates that at some future time the privilege of assignment of pilots on application will have to be abolished absolutely. At present, however, he has decided to make the following modifications in the present system:—

(1) Mate pilots will in future be restricted to vessels of their own tonnage, but may be allowed (with the permission of the Master Attendant) to pilot down the river, on application, vessels above their own tonnage which they had piloted up satisfactorily.

(2) Junior master pilots will be restricted to vessels of their own tonnage until they have been a year in the grade of junior master, except in the case of vessels they may have piloted up, when applications will be allowed with the permission of the Master Attendant.

(3) Applications should not in future be signed by masters of vessels and filed by the pilots themselves, but should be sent direct to the Master Attendant by the agents, who, it is understood, will be able to state accurately the date of the departure of the vessel from the port.

(4) Branch pilots may be permitted to move vessels over 22 feet draught without the permission of the Master Attendant.

6. The Lieutenant-Governor has also had under his consideration the question of special pilots, which is connected with that of applications, and he sees no objection to the continuance of the present system, under which the so-called special pilots are really pilots allotted to special duty.

ORDER.—Ordered that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Officiating Deputy Master Attendant for information.

By order of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal,
H. H. RISLEY,
Offg. Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

Copy forwarded to the Officiating Deputy Master
Attendant in charge for information.

By order of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal,
H. H. RISLEY,
Offg. Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

From Chamber to Govt. of Bengal.

Calcutta, 31st October 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 2522 of 28th August with Resolution of same date regarding the system under which the services of pilots are applied for by agents and masters of vessels; and to state in reply that the general opinion among those who have for many years enjoyed the privilege of selecting their own pilots is that it is inexpedient to introduce any modification of a long established and well understood practice of the Port, which has been found, on the whole, to work to the satisfaction of commanders of vessels, of their agents, and of the pilots themselves.

This confirms the view expressed in the Chamber's letter of 29th October 1873, in reply to a reference made by the Government of Bengal, when they said:—"The Committee deprecate any alteration of the rule as to applications for pilots, for they consider that the representatives of owners of vessels should have a perfectly unfettered liberty of selecting the pilot in whom they have the greatest confidence; and the Committee concur in the views expressed on the point by His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor."

The opinion of Sir George Campbell was recorded in

the 16th paragraph of Resolution dated 5th February 1873, and for convenience of reference is here introduced:—

"The fourth point is the alteration of the rules about applications. Paragraph 15 of Bengal Government's Resolution, dated 18th July 1868, contains the orders of this Government, on the suggestions made by the Committee of 1867 regarding 'applications' for pilots. One of the enclosures to the paper received from the Financial Department mentions that pilots bribe the masters of vessels to apply for them out of their turn; and the same paper appears to consider it would be better for the pilot service generally, if applications were abolished and every pilot took his turn on the class of vessels to which he was entitled. In this the Lieutenant-Governor can by no means concur. It must be remembered that the pilots and the pilot service exist for the good of the shipping and the river trade. Owners and agents would probably prefer the present system, under which they can apply for the services of those pilots in whom they have most confidence. The system, moreover, is a direct encouragement to pilots to do their work well, and to serve the shipping loyally and honestly. It is, moreover, a discouragement to idleness and irregularities of all kinds, for no master of a large vessel will apply for a pilot who has a character for carelessness or irregularity. The restrictions described in the Resolution of July 1868 prevent the application system from disorganising or impeding the work of the river. Therefore, the Lieutenant-Governor would not propose to alter the application system, though he will be ready to consider any representations which the Chamber of Commerce or the Master-Attendant may see fit to make upon the subject."

The conclusion arrived at by Sir George Campbell,

after a careful consideration of all the circumstances of the case, appears to the Committee to have been based on what the Lieutenant-Governor emphatically declared *the good of the shipping and the river trade*, and his reasons for adhering to the application system appeared to the Committee all-sufficient for the continuance of its freedom from any restrictions.

The Committee do not fail to observe the wide difference of opinion on this material question between the Lieutenant-Governor and his predecessor; and, although His Honor may attach less importance than Sir George Campbell may have done to the peculiar conditions which influence the choice of pilots, they are inclined to regard the admitted advantages of the system as over-riding any minor inconveniences and objections that may be raised against it.

With reference to His Honor's remark that there can be no more reason why pilots should not be appointed to outward than to inward bound vessels, the Committee would state they believe the larger number of ship owners, whose vessels trade regularly with the port, would prefer their Captains should be allowed to select a pilot at the Sandheads did the circumstances of the position admit of such a system being introduced, but it is felt it would be impossible to organise a system of selection at sea. In connection with applications at Calcutta and the Sandheads, however, it may be remarked that there is a strong reason why applications should be allowed at Calcutta,—although not therefore at the Sandheads also, apart from the non-feasibility of admitting applications at the latter place. Many vessels arrive in Calcutta only partially loaded and with cargoes of compa-

ratively little value, such as coal and salt, but it is a rare exception and a clear indication of bad trade when a vessel leaves Calcutta without a full and valuable cargo, and without being loaded to the maximum limits now allowed by British Law. The fact of vessels arriving light in draft, with comparatively valueless cargoes and small freight lists, and leaving deep drafted, with rich cargoes and good freight lists, would in itself furnish an argument, *if value is to be considered*, in favor of owners or their Agents being allowed to select the pilots considered by them best qualified to conduct their vessels to sea in safety.

Whatever irregularities the system of application may involve—and the Committee are not aware of any existing, of serious moment at all events, since the reduction of the number of running pilots—the doing away with the system, it is believed, would bring back with full force the system of bonuses to pilots, which, in former years, was felt heavily by ships and which now fortunately exists but to a very trifling extent. The Committee believe this would result because the pilot, knowing he would get employment in his regular turn and in that only, would have no occasion to hurry either up or down the river, and as no inducement to use diligence could be held out in the shape of future employment, it doubtless would be in the shape of a bonus, as neither steamers nor ships can afford to loiter in the river, and that in the case of the latter more particularly when, as now, they have to pay daily hire for tugs towing them down.

The Committee believe the recent scarcity of pilots at the Sandheads, as well as the scarcity at Calcutta,

has arisen entirely from the pressure of work involved by the famine, and that, now that pressure is removed, if the number of running pilots is maintained on the last fixed scale—a scale they do not recommend should be exceeded—the recent complaints of want of pilots at both ends will not often, if at all, be renewed. The Committee are not aware whether the full minimum number of pilots have lately been running but they do not think it can have been exceeded: if the minimum number have not been running this would also help to explain the seeming scarcity of pilots.

Finally, as part of the application system, the Committee would advocate that the concession of pilots, who have been applied for, being allowed to return from the Sandheads should be continued. This concession they believe will not cause inconvenience at the Sandheads, so long as the rule, allowing such pilots to leave the brigs, *only when there is on board, besides them, the minimum number fixed by regulation*, is enforced. Indeed, the Committee believe if this concession is not allowed, it will not unfrequently happen that, to meet the requirements of outward bound vessels, Government will have to send a steamer to the Sandheads to bring up pilots.

A system that worked well before the famine pressure began should not, the Committee consider, be upset because it was unequal to cope with the very unusual and seldom to be looked for pressure of the late famine work, which work indeed upset all the ordinary arrangements and overtaxed all the powers of the port.

From Govt. of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce.

Calcutta, 19th November 1877.

In reply to your letter of the 31st October 1877, I am directed to inform you that, in deference to the representation of the Chamber of Commerce, the Lieutenant-Governor will not press the adoption of the restriction referred to in the third paragraph of Mr. Risley's letter No. 2522 of the 28th August, until the effect of the orders promulgated by the Government resolution of that date has been tested by some experience of their working.

2. I am to add, however, that Mr. Eden does not share the apprehension expressed by the Chamber, that a restriction of applications would tend to bring back the evils of the old system of paying bonuses of pilots. So long as pilots are working on the free list, their own interest will lead them to use all the diligence they can, whether they are applied for or not. The practice of giving bonuses appears to have arisen, not so much out of the principle of employing pilots in a fixed turn, as out of the practice of employing salaried pilots, who were paid the same, whether they did much or little work.

3. I am also to explain that the Committee of the Chamber are under a misapprehension in thinking that the discussion of this question has arisen out of the great recent demand for pilots consequent upon the pressure of the famine work. The question has been under consideration ever since the beginning of the year 1875, when various abuses, alleged to have arisen out of the working of the application system, were

brought to the notice of Government ; and the intention of Sir Richard Temple to introduce such reforms as were required was communicated to the Government of India in January 1876.

THE CONSOLIDATED CUSTOMS BILL.

This important matter has had the careful attention of your Committee, and with the assistance of members who were invited to act with them in revising the new bill they drew up a report which has been submitted to the Government of India in the following letter :—

*To the Secretary to the Government of India,
Legislative Department.*

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to submit for the consideration of the Select Committee of the Legislative Council of His Excellency the Governor General the following observations on the Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to the levy of Sea Customs duties.

In the interpretation Section 3, clause *h*, the term "Master" includes "a ship's agent appointed in writing by the Master to be responsible on his behalf when such appointment is approved by the Customs Collector."

The Committee of the Chamber are of opinion that under this interpretation the liability and responsibility of a ship's agent may be held to cover much more than an agent would be inclined to incur, and that they should be limited to the proper performance of his duties in that capacity: they therefore propose that the section be amended thus:—*also a ship's*

agent, approved by the Customs Collector, in so far as his services are required for the transaction of a ship's business at the Custom House.

This amendment is proposed with the double view of meeting numerous cases in which business may have to be done with the Custom House before it would be possible to obtain the appointment of agent from the master or owner in writing, as well as to prevent the question being raised as to the personal liability of the agent for the penalties which the master may incur by offence against the Act in which the agent may in no way be implicated.

Section 6.—It is proposed that the word *shall* be substituted for *may* in the 4th line: and that the provision of the section shall be compulsory and not permissive only.

Section 7.—It is expedient that all rules made by the Chief Customs Authority for the purposes referred to shall be published for general information; and the Committee therefore propose that the words "and publish" be introduced after the word "make" in the 4th line.

It is also expedient that the term "officers of Customs" be defined.

Section 9 contains no provision for the refund of deposit made in case of dispute as to the proper amount of duty leviable: it is therefore proposed that the following be added as the third paragraph of that section, *viz* :—

"Upon settlement of the matter on appeal such deposit or returnable portion thereof shall be repaid to such owner within 3 days.

Section 13.—The bill contains no definition of the term "Warehousing Port," and the Committee submit that a definition is necessary and should be given.

Section 15.—It is proposed that this be amended so as to provide for cancelling a license on the holder thereof being convicted, *before a Magistrate*, of any offence covered by the Act.

Section 17.—It is proposed that clause *d.* be struck out, as its provision is likely to lend to complication, and as being unnecessary—trade marks being protected by separate legislation.

Section 32.—The rules made by the Local Government for regulating transhipment and exercising the powers referred to *should be published after due notice*; and it is proposed that the section be so amended.

Section 38.—It is proposed to omit “policy of insurance” in the second paragraph, because such instrument is no sufficient indication of value, since in some cases it covers a margin for profit and in others an amount representing only a partial value of the goods insured.

Section 39.—This requires considerable alteration throughout. In the first place, the time within which the Customs examination shall take place after presentation of the bill of entry and samples should be clearly defined, and it should also be ordered that no samples shall leave the Custom House for any purpose whatever until after the valuation is determined. The Committee are informed, that appraisers, when uncertain as to the value of fancy goods inspected by them, have sent samples to hazy dealers for report, and even to a rival firm. Not only does the importer lose much time and incur expense in the shape of wharf rent, &c., by this mode of proceeding, but the sale of his goods is greatly prejudiced by their being exhibited before he has an opportunity of showing them himself through the medium of his own brokers, and, without his express sanction, no dealers should be permitted to examine

his goods. Appraisers are supposed to have a thorough knowledge of the goods they have to value, and any doubts should be cleared up by private and general enquiries which would not be detrimental to the interests of importers. It is, therefore, recommended that the first clause of this Section should run as follows:—

“Goods chargeable with duty upon the value thereof but for which a specific value is not fixed by law for the purpose of levying duties thereon, shall be examined and appraised by an officer of Customs immediately on presentation of the samples, but without removal of the same from the Custom House; and if it appears to the appraising officer that such goods are properly chargeable with a higher rate,” &c.

The second clause provides that the Collector shall “*within two clear working days* after such detention, determine either to deliver or retain,” &c. This is an avoidable delay unsuited to present times. Wharf rent has to be paid to the Port Commissioners on all goods not removed from the jetty sheds within 48 hours from landing, and by a delay of two days in passing a bill of entry, the importer, through no fault of his own, is forced to incur expense for such rent. The Committee therefore think that *one clear working day* should be substituted for *two clear days*.

The latter part of the third clause they consider should be amended as follows:—

“And shall then cause them to be sold by public auction in *wholesale lots for cash on delivery within one week of such detention after due notice*,” &c.

It has happened that the auctioneers have retail goods sold by order of the Collector, selling portions of original packages, which is scarcely in the spirit of the Act, as merchants are not licensed to sell *retail*. Again, merchants are required by the

Act to state the *wholesale cash price*, while the auctioneers give credit to approved customers, and the time within which the sale must take place should be specified, because in one instance of detention a sale was advertised, and commenced in the Custom House, but probably in consequence of the bids not reaching the Collector's expectations, the sale was stopped, and the remainder of the goods were sold a week later at the premises of Messrs. Mackenzie, Lyall and Company. To enforce this rule equitably, the Collector should be empowered to sell only on the same wholesale cash terms as the importer is required to enter in the shipping-bill.

The fourth clause of this same section the Committee consider highly obnoxious, unless counterbalanced by a fine being inflicted on the detaining appraiser, when *his* valuation is proved by public sale to be excessive, which alone can protect importers against abuse of power. A trifling difference of opinion sometimes causes a good deal of loss to the revenue, besides much unnecessary annoyance to importers, and excessive zeal on the part of officials, stimulated by a possible reward without any checking penalty, is not calculated to improve the relations between the Custom House and the public at large.

The last clause of this section authorises the Collector under special circumstances to permit the importer to "amend his" entry on payment of such increased rate of duties, or on such "other terms, as he may determine."

The practice generally adopted of late has been to levy double the ordinary amount of duty chargeable on goods, the valuation of which has been increased with the consent of the merchant. The difference (that is the difference in valuation) in question is often of a very trifling nature, and when this is the case, importers preferentially submit to an increased valuation of the goods (which in most cases are not their own property, but merely consigned by sale) than permit them to be detained and

sold by public auction. It is, therefore, recommended that the fine inflicted should be *proportionate* to the difference in valuation, and that when the Collector has reason to believe such under-valuation to be merely a clerical error or accident the fine inflicted should be a nominal one.

Section 42.—The Committee consider that the *net* and not *gross* amount realised by the sale of damaged goods should be the amount on which duty should be levied; and that the deterioration of goods should be fixed at *one-tenth*, and not *one-fifth*, of their value.

Section 45.—The Committee are of opinion that this section with its illustrations should be struck out: the introduction of any reference to mercantile contracts in a purely Customs Act appears to be not only irrelevant but calculated to lead to complication and litigation. The results of changes in tariffs are commercial risks to which merchants are liable in the course of business; and legislation in the form presented in the Customs Bill seems unnecessary for the protection of interests which may be fairly presumed to be carefully guarded by merchants themselves.

Section 50.—The Committee are of opinion that the time for re-export should be extended to *three* years, as the term of *two* years provided by the bill appears to be too short for claiming draw-back on re-exportation.

Section 63—requires that every manifest shall contain a true specification of goods on board a vessel: but it is submitted that for a master to give detailed particulars of his cargo is quite impracticable, and that consequently the Bill should be qualified by adding after "specification" the words "to the best of his knowledge."

The Committee are also of opinion that the Customs Collector should *always* permit amendment of errors in manifest, and

that there should be no discretionary powers in this respect. It is therefore proposed that the word *shall* be substituted for the word *may* in the first line of the second clause of this section, which should conclude as follows—“*on which he may levy a fee—not exceeding five rupees for each amendment—as the chief Customs Authority may from time to time direct.*”

The third clause being thereby rendered unnecessary should be removed from the bill.

Section 64.—The Committee propose the omission of the words *appointed and and as defined in Section 3, clause h of this Act*; and the insertion after the word *approved* “by the Customs Collector.”

Section 70.—In this also as in Section 63 the Committee suggest that after the word *specification* should be added “to the best of his knowledge.”

And in the last clause of the section the Committee propose the alteration of *three to ten* days for delivering manifests and certificates: because manifests are frequently sent up by pilots from the Sandheads and it would be impossible to deliver them within the 3 days prescribed by the bill.

Section 75.—The Committee consider that the minimum period of 30 working days allowed under the present Act for discharge and shipment of cargo should be adhered to, as in most cases it is not more than is actually required: the interests of a vessel generally demand as prompt despatch as is possible, and no more time than is actually necessary is taken in discharging and loading.

Section 76.—The Committee would strongly urge the withdrawal, so far as the port of Calcutta is concerned, of all restrictions as to the boating of export cargo. The restriction by which boats may not be loaded unless the cargo is covered

by a Customs pass is, the Committee believe, antiquated and productive of inconvenience and loss without being needful in any way for the prevention of smuggling. Many vessels, steamers especially, now arrive in Calcutta ready to take in cargo, which under present restrictions cannot be put afloat until a pass has been obtained for it; a pass however cannot be had until the vessel is entered, and as boats when loaded take, with the tides, about a day to reach the ship, a vessel which could have taken cargo on board on arrival may have to wait 48 hours before cargo can be put along side. This, in the days of steam, is a serious detention. Another reason is that produce arriving by railway must be taken delivery of within 24 hours: the bulk of such produce is for shipment, but the shippers may not at the moment be in a position to boat it with a pass, and yet *not* to boat it will involve heavy expenses in removal and warehousing, which could be avoided if the cargo were allowed to be boated while the further shipping arrangements were being made.

The Committee do not think the permission to load boats with export cargo would be at all likely to lead to the revenue being defrauded, since ships are prohibited from receiving such cargo unless accompanied by a covering pass.

Section 77.—The signing of boat notes in Calcutta by an officer of Customs would be a considerable obstruction to the business of the port and would require a large increase to the Customs staff. This clause of the Section though appearing in the present Act has been inoperative in Calcutta, and the Committee recommend that it be expunged—at any rate as far as Calcutta is concerned.

Section 79.—The Committee consider that exceptional circumstances may render it a matter of imperative necessity to tranship goods promptly in order to their safety: emergent cases of collision, leak, and accidents to which boats are liable

would in the judgment of the Committee, justify immediate transhipment without permission of an officer of Customs, pending a reference to whom the property may be totally lost: and it is therefore proposed that the 2nd clause of the Section be modified so as to embrace the not improbable casualties referred to.

Section 83.—The Committee refer to their remarks on Section 39.

Section 87.—The Committee are of opinion that the maximum fee of 10 rupees is excessive, and that 5 rupees should be the *extreme* and one rupee the *ordinary* charge payable for any of the documents referred to.

The 2nd clause provides that the Customs Collector *may* authorise any amendment of documents entered and recorded, but the Committee consider that applications to amend should *always* be receivable, and that the Collector should be *required* to admit them on payment of the proposed minimum fee of one rupee.

Section 94.—The maximum period of 15 working days allowed for landing goods at the Custom House by the master of a vessel in the event of owner, agent, or consignee failing to remove them earlier is too long, and the Committee think the time should not exceed *four working days*, which they consider ample to enable owners or agents to land their consignments from vessels discharging at their own moorings.

Section 99.—The Committee consider that the time for clearing goods should be *four months* from date of landing: a sale within the time stated in the Bill may involve inconvenience and loss to parties at a distance who may have to be communicated with, and there appears to be no good reason for hurriedly selling off unclaimed goods.

Section 107.—The Committee suggest a verbal amendment

in the last clause, by omitting the word *their* and adding after "subsequent removal" the words *of the said goods*.

Section 109.—The last clause provides for the rectification of errors before the warehousing of goods is completed: but the Committee are of opinion that such rectification should be permitted *at any time before the removal of goods from warehouse*.

Section 120.—Provides for the owner of goods being compensated for loss or injury in cases of proved wilful neglect on the part of public warehouse keeper or of an officer of Customs; but the Committee submit that proved *want of ordinary care* on the part of such keeper or officer should entitle owner of goods to compensation for consequential loss or injury.

Section 137.—The Committee's remarks on Section 77 apply equally to this portion of the Bill as regards goods water-borne to be shipped for exportation, the restrictive provision seriously impeding the business operations of the Port.

Section 139.—The additional charge of 2 per cent upon market value of goods passed for shipment after port clearance has been granted is considered excessive and would fall heavily on high priced articles of exportation: and the Committee are of opinion that a *fee not exceeding ten rupees* would sufficiently meet cases of simply late shipment.

Section 140.—It is proposed that the time allowed for notice of short shipment or re-landing be enlarged to *six clear working days* instead of *three* as prescribed by the Bill.

Section 141.—may stand, but the Committee consider it almost inoperative; an owner of goods could rarely act in the manner described, as no master of a vessel would, unless under most exceptional circumstances, part with any portion of the cargo for which he had signed bills of lading.

Section 142.—The Committee propose that this be amended by omitting the words or *any owner of goods therein*, and concluding the first clause with the words *and reship and tranship the same*.

Section 153.—In the last clause the Committee propose that the word *final* be omitted, and in lieu thereof the words be added *subject to appeal to the Chief Customs Authority*.

CHAPTER XIV. OFFENCES AND PENALTIES.

The re-arrangement of this part of the Bill, although convenient in respect of concentration and juxtaposition of offences and of penalties applicable thereto, is open to the objection that the consequences of infringement of any of the provisions of the Act may be overlooked, if not disregarded, if the penal liabilities are not conspicuously described after each provision of the Act the violation of which is declared to be a punishable offence. If, however, the new arrangement is to stand, the Committee are of opinion that in every section of the Bill, to the breach of which penalty attaches, marginal or other reference should be made to the penalty leviable under this Chapter.

Section 164.— } The Committee submit that after the word
No. 16. } *specification* should be added in so far as
such particulars are known to him.

No. 17.—The Committee consider that the penalty for this offence committed by any pilot or officer of Customs, whose absolute duty it is to comply with the requirements of the Act, should be double the penalty inflicted on ordinary or casual offenders.

No. 19.—The Committee object generally to the provisions of this clause: the penalties apply to circumstances beyond the control of a master of a vessel; and the custom of trade as now carried on would render a master liable under such

provisions to heavy penalties on every voyage he makes; and for the establishment of any offence there should be a conviction before a *Magistrate*, as provided in No. 22 for pilots.

No. 26.—Should conclude with the additional words *except ballast in case of need for ship's safety*.

No. 28.—Appears faulty in the construction of the penal provision, because if the goods seized and liable to confiscation are *free goods* the penalty not exceeding twice the amount of duty leviable on the said goods cannot possibly be applicable.

No. 30.—The above marks also apply to the penal provision herein defined. There is a verbal inaccuracy in the 2nd line: for *importation* the words should be *exportation*.

No. 34.—This Section should, the Committee suggest, be applicable to *dutiable* goods only; and they express this opinion as they are informed that the Custom House have been known to *assume* a duty and to levy a penalty on free goods which had been short landed. The object of penal clauses in a Customs Act is, the Committee believe, the prevention of smuggling dutiable goods, and it appears to them that the master's declaration that certain goods are on board his ship should be taken as evidence of *bona fides* on his part rather than of any intention to endeavour to defraud the revenue.

The penalty even in the case of dutiable goods appears to the Committee to have been prescribed without due consideration of the master's position towards the owner of the goods: if they have been shipped the master is obviously bound to account for them to the owner, and in the event of their having been lost he has to satisfy the owner's claim, which would include (supposing them liable to duty) the duty paid at time of passing the goods at the Customs House. If, therefore the owner pays the duty in the first instance and recovers it subsequently, together with the cost of the missing goods from the master, it is

excessively hard to make the latter pay double the amount which the Customs have already received. If the Government demand has been satisfied any penalty in addition to duty already paid seems to the Committee an unjustifiable punishment.

No. 37.—The Committee propose the penal clause shall conclude with the words *unless the error be satisfactorily explained*.

No. 39.—In the second clause the words *intentionally* should be introduced and the reading would be *that the contents thereof have been intentionally described wrongly, &c.*

No. 40.—The Committee propose the insertion of *wilful* before *omission*.

No. 56.—After the words *if any goods* the Committee propose the insertion of *except ballast*.

No. 62.—The Committee are of opinion that the following proviso should conclude the penalty clause—shall be liable to confiscation *on proof of collusion on the part of the owner of such boat, cart, or animal*.

No. 67.—Under this provision the heavy penalty of confiscation falls on the owners of the goods, whereas, it is quite possible that the misdescription or omission may be the result of clerical error on the part of the master or keeper of the cargo book, for which the owner of the goods could in no way be responsible.

No. 68.—The Committee are of opinion that the penalty for any act of carelessness on the part of the master is excessive and should be of a more moderate amount and more proportioned to the offence.

Section 168.—The penalty which attaches to the offence indicated in No. 74 of Section 164 should also apply to any

improper or unreasonable detention and search under this Section.

The Committee close their remarks on this Chapter of the Bill by observing that they have been struck by the heavy penalties which attach to offences which may be merely clerical errors and omissions, the result of press of business or of inadvertence.

In forwarding this Report on the Customs Bill I have the Committee's instructions to express their regret at the unavoidable delay which has attended its consideration and the submission of the various amendments which, in their judgment, should be admitted in framing the Act, and to which they respectfully invite the attention of the Select Committee of the Council.

CUSTOMS.

WATER-BORNE CARGO DUTY-FREE LIABLE TO SEIZURE IF UNCOVERED BY CUSTOM HOUSE PASS.

Considerable inconvenience to the export branch of business having been occasioned by the enforcement of certain Sections of the Customs Act which render even *free* goods liable to detention and seizure on their way in boats to receiving vessels if not covered by passes, the circumstance was brought to the Collector's notice, and the obstructive character of the Customs Act was illustrated by instances which showed how business was hampered by its provisions. The Collector's duty and authority being strictly defined by law, he was powerless to re-

move the restrictions complained of: but the Committee believe that this material question will be satisfactorily solved when the Customs Bill is amended by the Select Committee of the Legislative Council of India, who have it now under consideration.

Chamber of Commerce to Collector of Customs.

Calcutta, 21st June 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to bring to your special notice the following matter in connection with the department under your control, and to invite your attention to the inconvenience to which shippers are put by the enforcement of Section 118 of the Customs Act, which does not permit goods to be shipped or water-borne until a pass be first obtained. This Section must *surely refer to dutiable goods and not free goods.*

For various reasons it is impracticable always to have goods cleared for shipment prior to loading in boats. For instance—a merchant gets a shipping order on the 10th for 100 tons of seed to be shipped *at once* or on the 11th; it may be too late for passing out the stuff on the 10th, and it has to be done on the 11th; he has in the meantime to load his boats up at Nimtollah and have them down near where the ship is lying awaiting Custom pass to go alongside; the boats have to watch the tides, and such like; and by the enforcement of the Section referred to, the Patrol Officers on the river seize the boats on their way, because there is no pass.

The Committee fail to see the necessity of seizing *free* goods, and the enforcement of the Section in that respect is most unjust and injurious to mercantile interests.

The Committee would cite a few further instances where boats had been seized under varying circumstances.

1. A boat load of 125 bales jute (part of 500 bales duly cleared for shipment) were shut out from a vessel and were to have been transhipped to another, but before an application could be made for their transhipment to the latter vessel, they were seized, as there was no pass in the possession of the manjee.

2. Three boats laden with wheat for a vessel were seized for not having a pass. The shipper had applied for the clearance of the wheat prior to its being shipped into boats, but owing to some reason the Agents of the ship failed in entering her for loading, and the shipper was in consequence refused the clearance of the wheat, and the loaded boats in the meantime were seized and the shipper fined Rs. 5 on each boat for having shipped the wheat before having a pass for it. The shipper did not anticipate any difficulty in getting the wheat cleared for shipment, and accordingly exported so as to place it alongside the ship in terms of shipping order.

3. A boat load of poppyseed—being one of 4 boats covered by a pass—went alongside a steamer off the Union Dock; the steamer discharged 3 boats, but before she could discharge the 4th she had to pass the Hooghly bridge and proceed down to her moorings at Garden Reach; the boat was ordered off from alongside, and directed to go down to Garden Reach; she was seized on the way and the shipper fined one rupee as the manjee had not a boat-note.

It must be remembered that the usual practice is for the manjee to deliver up the boat-notes to the Officer of a vessel immediately the boats go alongside, and in the last mentioned instance the manjee was not aware that it was necessary for him to get back the boat-note as he left the ship's side only temporarily.

The foregoing instances only show that the enforcement of Section 118 leads to serious inconvenience and loss of time and money to merchants, and where the goods are *duty-free* it is absurd to carry out the Act so rigidly.

From Collector of Customs to Chamber.

Calcutta, 29th June 1877.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of the letter of Chamber of Commerce dated 21st instant and to reply as follows:—

2. In Para: 1, the Chamber express their belief that Section 118 Act VI 1863 must "sorely refer to dutiable goods and not to free goods." I regret that I am not able to accept this interpretation of the Section in question, the wording of the Section runs thus:—"Except with the written permission &c., *no goods*—shall be shipped or water-borne to be shipped &c., *nor*—shall *any* goods be so shipped or water-borne &c.," and the Section proceeds to provide for penalties in case *any* goods are shipped or water-borne in contravention of the terms of this Section. Moreover, a comparison of Section 123 where it is specified that *no* goods shall be shipped or water-borne to be shipped until an export shipping bill is delivered at the Custom House, and also of Section

125 which specifies that when *any* goods are sent to be shipped a boat note shall accompany them, appear to me conclusively to establish the fact that the provisions of Section 118 as well as those of Sections 123 and 125, are intended to apply to *all* goods without distinction as to their liability or non-liability to duty. It would not be within my competence to assign the interpretation which your Chamber suggest without the orders of Government.

3. Para: 2 of your letter gives an instance of the inconvenience which arises from a shipper not being able to load his boats before obtaining the necessary shipping bill. On this subject I would point out to the Committee that there are other shipping places than Nimtollah, for instance Tolly's Nullah and the Railway Depot, &c. If shippers were to be allowed to ship free goods at any one of these places before they had obtained an export shipping bill as provided in Section 125, the supervision of Government over the export trade would be practically abolished. In the instance quoted in your letter the merchant would apparently be entering into a transaction with the full knowledge that it is very unlikely that it will be possible for him to complete it in the ordinary course of business.

Moreover the Committee are doubtless aware that one of the more prominent reasons for the supervision over the free goods for exportation is that in the interests alike of Government and the mercantile community statistics are published daily of all the transactions of the previous day. It is notorious that native shippers are very lax in their preparations of export shipping bills, and that much inconvenience arises therefrom to the mer-

mercantile community as well as to the Statistical Department. This evil, however, would be greatly intensified if any person were permitted to load a boat with free export cargo to proceed to a vessel before obtaining a shipping bill. In an instance within my information lately a ship was chartered and the charterers gave shipping orders for her without reference to her capabilities for freight, or tonnage. The Committee will appreciate the inconvenience that arises in such a case as this.

4. Your Committee are aware that the Revision of the Customs Laws is under the consideration of the Imperial Government. I am not aware of what action the Chamber of Commerce may have taken in respect of the matter, but I would suggest that it would perhaps be convenient to the Chamber of Commerce to address the Government. As far as my enquiries go I have been informed that it would be difficult to make any alterations that would not cause greater inconvenience than exists at present, but I shall be glad to consider any suggestions that the Chamber may make which would in their opinion relieve the existing pressure. A copy of the Chamber's letter and this reply will be forwarded to the Board of Revenue.

5. In conclusion and with reference to the 3 cases of seizure referred to, I beg to inform the Chamber of Commerce that previous to the receipt of their letter orders had been issued for the protection of cargo shut out from a vessel, or for which passes have been taken, and that shipping firms were furnished with information on the subject; so that it is to be hoped no further inconvenience on that head will occur.

6. With respect to the second and third instances it

will be apparent to the Committee that these are both most exceptional cases and such as are likely to happen most rarely. The seizures were perfectly legal, and it is not possible always to guard against exceptional instances where inconvenience may occur.

Chamber of Commerce to Collector of Customs.

Dated 19th July 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to acknowledge the receipt on the 4th instant of your letter No. 1444 of 29th of last month.

With reference to the 3rd paragraph the Committee direct me to say it would appear that the enforcement of the provisions of the Customs Act in regard to free goods is prominently for the reason of having a careful supervision over the exportation in order that correct statistics may be published in the interests, alike, of Government and the mercantile community. They duly appreciate the object which you thus endeavour to secure, but as the Committee's reference with regard to the seizure of boats appears to have been somewhat misapprehended they direct me to say that what they urge is not that merchants may be allowed to *ship* their goods without a shipping bill, but that they may be permitted to boat and *place the cargo alongside a vessel* without a pass, and as a Preventive Officer is on board of every ship precaution can be taken by him to prevent such unprotected cargo being placed on board before the production of the shipping bill. This would afford merchants all the facility they require, and as the shipping bill would be indispensable to them for the purposes of their business, the Cus-

tons would thus be furnished with all necessary details, as at present; and thus while the object of the Act would be fully attained the requirements of the Statistical Department would be also duly provided.

The Committee receive with satisfaction the announcement contained on the 5th paragraph of your reply, and they trust that the orders issued by you will prevent a recurrence of the inconvenience brought to your notice.

Collector of Customs to Chamber of Commerce.

Calcutta, 25th July 1877.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th instant, and to reply as follows:—

2. The Chamber of Commerce will see from the Sections of Act VI of 1863, which I have already quoted in my letter of the 29th ultimo No. 1444, that the law does not permit goods to be *water-borne* for exportation as the Chamber would desire, before a shipping bill shall have been delivered as provided in Section 123—Act VI, 1863. The Chamber desire that the goods should be loaded and placed alongside the ship without a pass; but as this would be distinctly in contravention of the provisions of Act VI 1863, the Chamber will see that it is not in my power to accede to their request.

3. The Chamber of Commerce are in error in supposing that Preventive Officers are on board every ship. They are not sent on board ships going to only British Indian ports, and consequently there would be no certainty that cargo unprotected by a shipping bill would not be received on board.

Duty on Salt in Private and Government Golahs.

From the following letter to the Government of Bengal it will be observed that the Committee have taken up a case of some interest to bonders of salt. It is difficult to understand the existence of a system under which a partial and preferential protection is extended to importers who are fortunate enough to secure Government accommodation, and a manifest injustice done to those who are compelled to resort to private warehouses. The circumstances of the two classes are identical in all respects except liability to pay duty on deficiency ascertained on final delivery: the former is exempt from the fact of occupying Government Golahs, while the latter is made to bear any loss that may arise from occupying less desirable premises.

The Committee have not yet received any answer to their letter, but they hope the reply that may be given will remove the cause of a well founded grievance and place all bonders on an equal and impartial basis.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 23rd July 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have recently received a representation relative to the payment of duty on bonded salt in excess of the amount which,

under the circumstances of the case, they think the Board of Revenue might have fairly regarded as satisfying the claim of Government, and they desire me to submit it for the favorable consideration of the Honorable the Lieutenant-Governor.

This reference to the question of duty on salt in bond will probably recall to His Honor's recollection the discussion which took place some years ago—closing in April 1865—as to the fair and equitable allowance which Government should concede to bonders of an article from the importation of which the State derives so large a share of its revenue; but the Committee do not now purpose to re-open that question; they merely place before His Honor a case which, in their judgment, is not altogether devoid of interest sufficient to enlist their advocacy, and the merits of which they hope will be regarded by the Lieut.-Governor as justifying its submission for his final orders.

The case is as follows:—The appellants, Messrs. Nicol, Fleming & Co., imported in March 1876 a cargo, originally of 49,000 maunds, of Liverpool Pungah Salt, a portion of which, 8,590 maunds, was retained ex-ship, and the rest 38,074 mds., placed in bond, showing a loss of 2,396 mds. on the voyage.

There being no Government golah available, the appellants were obliged to store their salt in a private golah, at some distance from the river Bank, which was examined and approved by the Customs authorities, but when the rains set in the roof leaked and the superintendent of golahs brought the matter to the notice of the Collector.

The salt was delivered in September and October following in small lots at a time; and on adjustment of the weights received and delivered there was a deficiency of 1,400 odd maunds, or $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent on the quantity bonded.

That deficiency having been reduced by the usual allowance of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent for wastage, there remained a surplus deficiency of 461 mds. 26 srs. on which the appellants were called upon to pay a duty of Rs. 1,500-6-0.

The appellants explained the circumstances under which they considered they should be exempt from that charge, but the Collector's stereotyped and unalterable answer was that he had no power, under the Act, to make any concession beyond the authorised $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent for wastage: whereupon the appellants paid the duty demanded and petitioned the Board of Revenue for refund, but their application was unsuccessful—the Board upholding the Collector's order.

As already said, the Committee do not purpose reopening the question of the allowance for wastage; they content themselves by begging the Lieutenant-Governor's attention to the result of a one-sided application of the Customs' Act, exemplified as follows.

A. secures a Government golah for his salt, which remains in Government custody until its release from the lien held for duty, which is levied on the quantity actually delivered, so that A. is exempt from duty on any deficiency in excess of the authorized $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent; he of course loses the market value of such deficiency but he pays no duty on it.

B. on the other hand, applies for a Government golah

but fails to secure one, and in consequence of the insufficiency of Government accommodation is driven to the alternative of renting a private golah; he has no choice in the matter, and is compelled to be the custodian of his own property and to run the risks which may expose him to the money penalty prescribed by the Act.

B's salt is eventually sold and cleared; but as the 2½ per cent wastage allowance does not cover the deficiency on final delivery he not only loses—as A. does—the market value of such deficiency, but is held liable—as A. is not—for duty on the quantity unaccounted for.

Now the Committee's contention is that the provision of the Act for *identically the same purpose*, viz. the protection of the revenue, varies in its application and operates preferentially and prejudicially—as illustrated above; and this they submit is not an equitable procedure. The position of the occupier of a Government golah is better than that of the occupier of a private golah, because the former leaves his property in the custody of the Customs and is thereby preferentially exempt from a penalty which his neighbour, who has had his property involuntarily placed in his own custody, is made to incur.

If by the operation of the *same* causes—natural wastage, accidental damage by rain or other circumstances—the two bonders suffer alike from such causes, surely the exemption from duty extended to the occupier of the Government accommodation should be extended as well to the occupier of private accommodation.

Even in the extreme case of loss by surreptitious removal the former is protected against further loss in the shape of duty, whereas the latter is made to bear the

penalty of an act against which he has employed all reasonable precaution—the nature of occupancy creating the difference in the status of the bonders as regards liability for duty.

The Committee do not for a moment question the right of Government to secure their revenue by regulations however strict and stringent, or to insist on the fulfilment of bonders' obligations; but occasions arise where relaxation of rigid rules and liberal interpretation of circumstances may be not only abundantly justified, but the exercise of official power to lessen losses inadvertently incurred by merchants cannot fail to improve the relations that should exist between them and the Government.

The Committee respectfully submit the appellants' case for the Lieutenant-Governor's consideration, and it will be a pleasure to them to find that this representation has met with His Honor's concurrence.

MOFUSSIL INSOLVENCY LAW.

This subject was submitted for consideration by the Madras Chamber, who were of opinion that the Insolvency Law was incomplete, inasmuch as it did not extend beyond the limits of the Presidency, and it was necessary that its provisions should extend to Mofussil districts, where the want of insolvent jurisdiction was felt to be a great obstacle to persons in embarrassed circumstances obtaining relief and to the proper disposition of available property among creditors.

Concurring in these views your Committee addressed the Government of India in favor of the new Code of Civil Procedure being amended, so as to provide for mofussil insolvency being brought under its operation, and a more comprehensive jurisdiction established: but it will be seen from the reply to their reference that the Government, while admitting that the new Code did not place the Mofussil insolvency law in a wholly satisfactory condition, were at present unable to make the amendment applied for; they will however watch the operation of the new law, and further legislative action may hereafter be taken in the direction desired by the Madras Chamber.

From Madras Chamber to Bengal Chamber.

Madras, 12th June 1877.

I have the honor to request you to be so good as to inform me whether there is a bankruptcy law or insolvent jurisdiction in the Mofussil districts of your Presidency, and, if there is not, whether the want of such law or jurisdiction has been so seriously felt as to dispose your Chamber to co-operate with this Chamber in urging the Government to take remedial action in the matter.

In this Presidency I may mention there is no insolvent Act in force outside the Presidency Town: but it is open to Europeans domiciled in the Mofussil who seek the benefit of the existing Act to come up to Madras, to petition for protection and to surrender their property

to the official Assignee. This privilege is however denied to Native insolvents similarly domiciled, and the practice obtains in the Mofussil with reference to the property of European insolvents who do not resort to Madras and to that of Native insolvents of "first come first served." The creditors at the place where the insolvent resides who are the first to discover or to be apprised of impending insolvency are permitted to file suits in the local Civil Court, to get attachments of all available property, and thus to get paid in full, possibly before creditors at a distance are aware that the debtor is in difficulties. The system necessarily offers great inducement to "fraudulent preference," and is unjust to the whole body of creditors. This Chamber are therefore of opinion that the Government should be moved to concede powers of insolvent jurisdiction to Civil and Sessions Courts in the Mofussil, in such manner as to ensure protection being afforded alike to the insolvents and to the creditors both local and at a distance.

From Bengal Chamber to Madras Chamber.

Calcutta, 22nd June 1877.

Your letter of the 12th instant having been submitted to the Chamber's solicitors for the information desired by you regarding bankruptcy law or insolvent jurisdiction beyond the Presidency of Calcutta, I am desired to furnish you with a copy of Messrs. Sanderson and Co.'s letter, which will inform you that insolvency jurisdiction will be extended to the Mofussil Courts of all Presidencies from the 1st October next.

From Messrs. Sanderson & Co. to Chamber.

Calcutta, 19th June 1877.

With reference to the letter from the Secretary of the Madras Chamber of Commerce of the 12th current, left with us by you and which we return enclosed, we beg to inform you that there is not at present any insolvency jurisdiction in the Mofussil districts of this Presidency.

Such a jurisdiction is provided however by Chapter XX of the Code of Civil Procedure (Act X of 1877) which comes into force on the 1st October next and which will apply to the Mofussil Courts of all three Presidencies.

The application to Government in which the Madras Chamber solicits the concurrence of your Chamber will be unnecessary as the provisions we have indicated will be amply sufficient to meet the evil which the Madras Chamber points out.

From Madras Chamber to Bengal Chamber.

Madras, 5th July 1877.

I am directed to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 22nd ultimo, enclosing a copy of a letter from your Chamber's solicitors on the subject of insolvency jurisdiction.

The provision of insolvency jurisdiction in the Mofussil by Chapter XX of the new Civil Procedure Code is a step in the right direction and to a great extent meets the wishes of this Chamber; but you will observe that the benefits of the Act are limited to "any person arrested or imprisoned in consequence of a decree for money." Con-

sequently should a man in the Mofussil find himself in pecuniary difficulties and desire to be declared an insolvent, he will be unable to apply to the District Court until a creditor has proceeded to the extremity of arresting or imprisoning him in execution of a Court's decree. So the relief contemplated by the Act can only be afforded at the discretion of the creditors. It seems to this Chamber however that the debtor should be entitled to make and the Court be empowered to entertain, a declaration of insolvency as soon as he finds his embarrassments are not otherwise surmountable. They will therefore be glad to hear that this view is shared by your Chamber. It is probably not too late to obtain a verbal alteration of Sections 314 and 360 of the Act in the direction indicated before it comes into force.

From Messrs. Sanderson & Co. to Chamber.

Calcutta, 9th August 1877.

We have considered the letter of the 5th ultimo from the Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce Madras, which we return.

No doubt the benefits under Chapter XX of the new Civil Procedure Code are limited to "any person arrested or imprisoned in consequence of a decree for money," but we should imagine that a person in pecuniary difficulties would not be allowed to go on trading or carrying on business in a state of indebtedness, without some of his creditors, either hostilely or otherwise, obtaining a decree against him and arresting him. If the debtor is desirous of paying his debts without seeking the protection of the Court under the clauses of the new Procedure Code, he could no doubt make an arrangement with his creditors.

If he did not intend honestly to do the best he could for his creditors one or more of his creditors would try to get an advantage over the others, and proceed to a decree and arrest the debtor and the object would be obtained.

It would, as remarked in the letter under acknowledgment, be a great advantage that the debtor should be entitled to make and the Court be empowered to entertain a declaration of insolvency, as soon as he finds his embarrassments are not otherwise surmountable, but the difficulty on this head is that the Mofussil Courts have not the establishment or officers capable of performing the duties of an official assignee, who should necessarily be a trained lawyer; and the Judge of a Court could scarcely have time to add to his already onerous duties those of such an officer, and we fear this would be the answer given by Government to any requisition for an amendment of the law on this head.

It seems to us that there are only two courses open to a debtor who is unable to pay his creditors, *viz.*, either to come to an arrangement with them by assigning his property to Trustees for the benefit of all his creditors, or to allow a suit to be brought against him and, if arrested, to apply under Section 344 of Act X. of 1877 to be declared an insolvent.

From Chamber to Government of India.

Calcutta, 24th August 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to request you will oblige them by submitting this letter for the consideration of the Government of India in the Legislative Department.

The Madras Chamber of Commerce having represented that there was no Insolvent Act in force outside the Presidency Town, and that the practice in the Mofussil offered great inducement to "fraudulent preference" being given to local creditors of an insolvent and consequently resulted in injustice to the whole body of creditors, the matter was referred to this Chamber's solicitors, who were of opinion that the provisions of Chapter XX of the Code of Civil Procedure (Act X of 1877) which comes into force on the 1st October next, would be sufficient to meet the evil complained of, and that opinion was communicated to the Madras Chamber.

They reply however that while the Act meets their wishes to a great extent, the Mofussil Insolvent can obtain no relief from his embarrassments unless and until he is arrested or imprisoned in consequence of a decree for money.

This they contend is a great hardship and severe alternative, and that the debtor should be entitled to make, and the district Court be empowered to entertain, a declaration of insolvency as soon as he finds the difficulties of his position are not otherwise surmountable.

And I am instructed to say that this view of the matter is shared by this Chamber, and to submit this application for such amendment of the sections of the Act bearing on this special point as may remove the objections urged against their present provisions.

From Govt. of India to Chamber of Commerce.

Simla, 11th October, 1877.

I am directed to acknowledge your letter dated the 24th August last on the subject of insolvency in the Mofussil.

2. It appears that the Madras Chamber of Commerce complain of the absence of a complete insolvency law for places outside the Presidency Town, and urge that although the provisions of Chapter XX of the new Civil Procedure Code (which has come into force on the 1st instant) will to a great extent meet the want, yet they will not enable a Mofussil insolvent to obtain relief from his embarrassments unless and until he is arrested or imprisoned in consequence of a decree for money. This the Madras Chamber consider a great hardship. They are of opinion that a Mofussil debtor should be entitled to make, and the District Judge be empowered to entertain, a declaration of insolvency as soon as the former finds the difficulties of his position to be otherwise insurmountable. The Bengal Chamber of Commerce concur in these views, and recommend an amendment of the provisions of Chapter XX of the new Civil Procedure Code in order to remove the objections urged.

3. I am to bring to your notice that when moving the reconstitution of the Select Committee on the Civil Procedure Bill, the Hon'ble Mr. A. Hobhouse particularly referred to those sections of the Bill which related to insolvency in the Mofussil. He remarked that the late Civil Procedure Code contained the germ of an insolvency law, and he explained that the judicial machinery in the Mofussil could hardly be adapted without large and costly additions to the working of any general and complete law of insolvency, and that at all events such a law should be treated as a separate measure and not embodied in the Civil Procedure Code. Mr. Hobhouse further expressed an opinion that it would be better, and be likely to pave the way to some more complete measure in future, if the

existing law were made a little less rudimentary and the existing provisions were supplemented where they seemed to have broken off in their natural course. He then explained the contents of the insolvency sections introduced into the Bill.

4. Again in presenting the report of the Select Committee Mr. Hobhouse reverted to the sections of the Bill on insolvency, remarking that the object was to provide a law which would be less rudimentary than the present one, but which would still fall short of a complete and full insolvency law for the Mofussil, which the judicial machinery was not at present strong enough to work.

5. The Government of India are quite aware that the new Code of Civil Procedure, while improving the Mofussil insolvency law, will not place it in a wholly satisfactory condition; but for the reasons above stated it was not found possible at once to treat the question of Mofussil insolvency in a more complete manner. The Government of India will however watch the operation of the new law, and will be glad of the assistance of the Bengal and Madras Chambers of Commerce when the time arrives for taking further legislative action.

From Bengal Chamber to Madras Chamber.

Calcutta, 16th October 1877.

From the accompanying copy of letter from the Government of India you will observe that the representation submitted by your Chamber regarding the Mofussil insolvency law has had the attention of the Government of India, and although at the moment no amendment can be made there is ground for hope that relief in the direction suggested by your Chamber will hereafter be obtained.

Supply Bills on Govt. Treasuries in Assam.

The sudden suspension of Government bills on treasuries in Assam occasioned considerable inconvenience to those who had been in the habit of supplying funds to their Tea Estates in that Province by means of such remittances, and induced the Committee to bring the matter to the notice of the Comptroller General, who, while sensible of the difficulty which was thereby created, gave sufficiently grave reasons for the temporary withdrawal of the accommodation, which was however shortly afterwards resumed.

From Chamber of Commerce to Comptroller General.

Calcutta, 19th July 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to represent the extreme inconvenience which has attended the sudden and unexpected suspension of drafts on Public Treasuries in Assam; that the withdrawal of facilities hitherto afforded for supplying funds to Tea Planters in that Province involves seriously embarrassing consequences; and the absence of the ordinary provision to meet heavy monthly cash payments to the garden coolies, &c. will place managers and others in a position of considerable difficulty until funds are set up from Calcutta by the slow process of transmitting specie.

That difficulty would however have been got over if sufficiently early notice had been given of the intention of Government to stop supplying their Treasuries

with funds; and the uncertainty as to the resumption of the issue of drafts occasions so much inconvenience that the Committee will be glad if the purpose of Government in this respect can be communicated to the commercial public at as early a date as possible to enable them to make suitable arrangements for the protection of their interests.

From Comptroller General to Chamber of Commerce.

Calcutta, 20th July 1877.

I have the honor to acknowledge your letter of yesterday's date.

I beg that you will assure the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce that the inconvenience which an inability to obtain supply bills must cause to Tea Planters has not been overlooked by the Financial officers of Government, who would gladly have remedied it had any measure of relief appeared within their power.

The Accountant General, Bengal, has already sent a supply of silver to Cachar and expects to hear of its arrival by the end of this month. He will begin from tomorrow to grant bills against it in anticipation. But I fear that I cannot promise an immediate supply to the Assam Treasuries, though 85,000 Rs. are on their way to Sibsagar and 50,000 to Lakhimpur.

I do not think, however, that the Assam Planters have had less than their usual accommodation this year. No silver has been moved from the North-East Treasuries of Bengal, except in the direction of Assam, since the month of February, at which time Assam was well supplied with silver, and there was no prospect of a dearth of the

metal. This arises from the greater demand for bills this season. Already $2\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs have been granted in excess of the first half of 1876, and, while the planters' needs have increased, Government, owing to a combination of unfortunate circumstances, were unable to extend the accommodation.

You are, of course, aware from the Financial Statements and the necessity of Government to apply for a loan that the cash balances have been unusually low this year. Most of the disposable reserve too was in Madras and Bombay to meet the requirements of the famine. In Bengal it was a matter of great anxiety how to meet the Secretary of State's drawings and I could not possibly lock-up any of my balances for the time it would take to send the silver from Calcutta to Assam and draw it thence by supply bills.

Even now that the balances are easier I find myself as helpless as before, for the stock of silver is still too low for me to risk sending it away from Calcutta. The public are taking very little share in the transport of silver and throw almost the entire burden upon Government. The importers of bullion send their supplies to Bombay: the tenderers for the loan, the purchasers of opium, make their payments in Madras and Bombay notes: while the dealers in country produce withdraw more than two lakhs a day from the Currency Office.

I have been compelled to replenish the silver balances of Calcutta by transport from Madras and Bombay, but I do not think that it can be expected of Government to carry silver from those Presidencies the whole way to Assam in order, as I remind you, to increase the accommodation given to the planters of that province.

I must confess that the temporary cessation of the issue of bills on Cachar is probably due to my having removed silver to Calcutta from the East in April: but no one who is aware of the alarming point to which the stock of silver was reduced in that month will doubt that I chose the least of two evils.

To conclude then, it appears to me that the accommodation given to the Assam planters has not been diminished, but their wants have increased: and Government, owing to the assistance which the currency system has given to the bullion importers, bankers, opium purchasers, and merchants of country produce, has, much to my regret, not been able to increase its supplies of silver accordingly.

JUTE WAREHOUSE ACT.

The subjoined correspondence, begun as far back as August 1876, has at last resulted in some progress being made, but not in so far as levying the taxes for the support of the Fire Brigade in a more legitimate manner than has hitherto been the case. The Committee hope in course of time to be able to convince the local Government that some others are interested in preserving the town from fire besides the Jute Warehouse owners and the few who insure their property.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of Bengal.
Calcutta, 18th August 1876.*

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire:

to bring to the notice of his Honor the Lieut-Governor the oppressive manner in which Act II of 1872 is administered by the Municipalities of Calcutta and Howrah.

The Act was passed when the streets of Calcutta were full of jute warehouses and screw-houses not at all adapted for storing and working such a combustible article. At that time also the trade in jute and jute goods was in a flourishing state, and the very heavy taxation which the Act allowed was paid cheerfully by the owners. Now the jute is stored in well-built solid brick buildings, and the screw-houses that were in the town have, almost without exception, been moved to the suburbs.

The undue strictness of the Act was relaxed some time ago upon the representation of the Chamber, and the inspection of warehouses and licensing of them has become little more than a matter of form. The state of the jute trade, and particularly of jute pressing, has for some time back been far from satisfactory. Several large Joint Stock Companies for pressing jute have had to close, and the remainder have either been losing money or just been able to cover their expenses. Under these circumstances the rates of taxation to which they are subjected have not failed to come prominently before Directors and Agents, who naturally think, when Section 7 says that the fees levied shall be assessed "having regard to the probable income derived from such jute warehouses," that the greatly altered state of their incomes from such property should be considered. This however the Municipalities refuse in any way to acknowledge, and they continue to levy the same fees as they did when jute screwing was leaving 30 per cent. to 50

per cent. of profit. As an instance of how these fees are levied we may cite the "Riverside Pressing Co., Ltd." a Company quoted regularly in all the papers, so that its profits are perfectly well known. In the past two years it has given no dividend, and notwithstanding this it has to pay a fee of Rs. 1,000 for the press house and Rs. 500 for a godown, the latter being considered as a separate depôt because a cart road runs between the two.

Although the Act specially raises a fund by taxing all policies of insurance for the support of a fire brigade, the Howrah Municipality pays the whole of their brigade expenses out of the warehouse licenses. The result of this exaction of excessive license fees is shown at once by the fact that out of 50 jute warehouses only 26 took out a license last year, and these 26 warehouses had to support the fire brigade for a town two miles long by one broad.

Not content with this the Commissioners are now wishing to bring the article "Sesaul" under the Act, on the plea that it is cotton. There are some dissenting voices amongst the Commissioners, the Chamber understand, but the question is seriously considered and summonses have been issued against those storing the article. The result will be that twenty or thirty petty dealers will either have to abandon their trade of retailing this article or pay Rs. 150 of license tax. This of course means that they will all be ruined excepting one or two who will monopolize the business.

The Committee beg that his Honor will give such instructions as will cause the Act to be worked according to the spirit of it; that the fees levied be not greater

than is required to cover fully the expenses of inspection; and that the Act shall not be used solely as a means of extorting the largest sum of money that the wording will admit of.

From Govt. of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce.

Calcutta, 8th February 1877.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 18th August 1876, in which the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce represent that some of the provisions of Act II (B.C.) of 1872 (for the registration of jute warehouses and the establishment of a fire-brigade) are administered in an oppressive manner by the Municipal Commissioners of Calcutta and Howrah. In particular, the Committee state (1) that, having regard to the depressed condition of the jute trade, the rates of taxation at present imposed on jute warehouses are unduly heavy; (2) that although the Act specially raises a fund by taxing all policies of insurance for the support of a fire-brigade, the Howrah Municipality pay the whole of their brigade expenses out of the warehouse licenses, and (3) that the article *scamul* has been improperly brought under the operation of the Act in Howrah, on the plea that *scamul* is cotton. The Committee request that the Lieutenant-Governor will issue such instructions as will cause the Act to be worked in accordance with its spirit, and that the fees levied should not be greater than is required to cover fully the expenses of inspection.

2. In reply, I am to say that although the Government cannot exercise any direct control over the pro-

ceedings of the Municipal Commissioners under the Act, except in regard to the application of surplus funds as provided in section 25, Act II (B.C.) of 1872, and section 7, Act II (B.C.) of 1875, a report on the representations made by the Committee was called for from the Municipal Commissioners of Calcutta and Howrah, and of the Suburbs of Calcutta.

3. The reports received show that the Municipal Commissioners are quite willing to revise existing assessments in accordance with the powers given them under the law, and to take into consideration any circumstances which may be urged by individual license-holders for a reduction of their assessment on account of the altered condition of the jute trade. All, therefore, that seems necessary is that the Committee should advise any persons, who are of opinion that their buildings are over-assessed, to apply to the Municipal Commissioners. The Lieutenant-Governor is informed by the Chairman of the Howrah Municipality that whenever applications of this nature have been made, they have been fully and carefully considered, while in Calcutta it appears that no such applications have been hitherto received.

4. As regards the special reference which has been made to the proceedings of the Commissioners of the Howrah Municipality, I am to say that it appears to the Lieutenant-Governor that it is immaterial whether the whole expenses of the fire-brigade are defrayed from the proceeds of warehouse license fees or not, provided that the assessments made in each case are fair and equitable, and this the Lieutenant-Governor is assured by the Chairman of the Commissioners has been the

case. The Chamber are apparently under a misapprehension as to a share of the proceeds of the rate levied on insurances in Calcutta being assigned to the Municipal Commissioners of Howrah. The law gives them no interest in these rates, neither does it admit of a rate on insurances being imposed at Howrah, and, as a matter of fact, it is reported that it has been found necessary to meet a part of the cost of maintaining the fire-brigade from the general funds of the Municipality, as the proceeds of the warehouse license fees alone have been insufficient for the purpose.

5. In requesting that instructions should be issued by the Government to the Municipal Commissioners that the fees levied under the Act should not be greater than is required to cover fully the expenses connected with the inspection of warehouses, the Committee appear to have overlooked the fact that any such directions would be opposed to the object and intention of the law, which, as shewn in the preamble of the Act, was passed, not only for securing the supervision and control of warehouses stored with inflammable substances, but also for the purpose of providing for the organization and maintenance of a fire-brigade. In Howrah, as already stated, the surplus collections, after payment of all charges under the Act, have been hitherto insufficient to defray the cost of the fire-brigade. In Calcutta and the Suburbs a large balance has accumulated, and in view of this, the Lieutenant-Governor is of opinion that there the assessments might well be revised. This consideration will be brought to the notice of the Municipal Commissioners.

6. With reference to the intention of the Municipal

Commissioners of Howrah to treat *semul* as falling within the operations of the law, I am to say that it has been intimated to the Chairman of that Municipality that, in the opinion of the Lieutenant-Governor, it was never intended by the Act to include this article under the head of cotton, and that consequently its classification with jute or cotton, without the previous sanction of the Government under section 30 of the Act, is not legal. The Commissioners have been accordingly requested to change their practice, and to treat *semul* as it is treated in Calcutta and the Suburbs.

From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of Bengal.

Calcutta, 22nd February 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 622 of the 8th instant.

They observe with satisfaction that the Lieutenant-Governor is of opinion that the assessments under the Jute Warehouse Act in Calcutta and the suburbs may well be revised, and that a reduction of rates may be anticipated on application to the Commissioners.

The Committee have to thank His Honor for putting a stop to the illegal practice adopted by the Howrah Municipality of classifying the article *semul* as cotton.

In reply to para. 3 of your letter and as disproving the statement that applications for a reduction of assessment have been carefully and fully considered by the Chairman of the Howrah Municipality, I am instructed to submit the annexed copies of an application made by the West's

Patent Press Company for a reduction. When the assessment was fixed, the pressing rate was Rs. 2-8 per bale, and Press Companies were making a profit of 30 to 50 per cent. per annum. Now, and for two years back the average of pressing rates has been Re. 1 per bale, and such establishments have either been running into debt or barely paying their way: but the application for a reduction meets with a refusal notwithstanding.

With regard to para. 4, the Committee admit that they were under a misapprehension that a share of the proceeds of the rate levied on insurances in Calcutta was assigned to the Howrah Municipality and beg to apologise for the error; but, if their reading of the Act is correct, the Howrah Municipality appear to have exceeded its powers by appropriating the surplus fees (after paying the inspection establishment) to the expense of a Fire Brigade, such being, according to section 25, only authorized for Calcutta and the suburbs, whilst Howrah is only legally entitled to apply the funds derived from fees and penalties in payment of all expenses incurred in or about the inspection and superintendence of Jute Warehouses and the granting of licenses in respect thereof. Section 10 provides that only in respect of part II it is intended that the Act applies unless the Howrah Municipal Commissioners are especially referred to. It is not therefore necessary to levy there more fees than are required for the purpose authorized by the Act, and a refund of the amount thus illegally obtained from contributors should, the Committee submit, be made by order of Government.

His Honor will at once see the justice of the distinction which the Act made between Calcutta with its su-

burbs and Howrah. In the former all insurance policies pay towards the Fire Brigade, and the cost thus falls on a very large amount of property; but this provision does not extend to Howrah, and so it happens that, as worked at present, the whole expense of the Fire Brigade falls on about twenty establishments of small extent, whilst considerable properties of an equally dangerous nature escape. That being so the Committee can hardly think that these assessments are in "each case fair and equitable."

As regards their statement that the Howrah Municipality pays the whole of the Brigade expenses out of Warehouse licenses, the Committee would crave reference to the *Calcutta Gazette* of 19th July last, which they believe fully justified the statement, the different items debited to expenditure account being quite outside the legitimate current expenses—the purchase of land for Rs. 1,500, for example.

It is manifestly unjust that the cost of the Fire Brigade should fall on any one class of property, such as the *Jute Screw Houses*, when other equally or more dangerous trades entirely escape. For instance, this tax is not levied upon *Jute and Cotton Mills* (though Jute and Cotton are being used up there in a loose state and in constant danger of fire from the friction of the machinery) nor upon *Oil Mills*, or other risks which the Insurance Companies will not take except at higher rates than charged to Jute Screw houses and Warehouses.

As probably some modification of the Act may be contemplated, the Committee would venture to point out that not only is the principle of making one class of

trade pay for the expenses of the Fire Brigade unjust, but likewise that those that insure should be taxed for the benefit of those who do not. The cost of a Fire Brigade is fairly contributable to by all the inhabitants and would with more propriety be borne by general funds.

The Committee do not wish to suggest that the inspection of Jute Ware-houses should be done away with, and it is right that such inspection should bear the cost of the same; but in their judgment it is unfair that ware-houses should be called upon to pay more than their just share of the taxation for a Fire Brigade.

Calcutta, 7th July 1876.

R. A. DONNITHORNE, Esq.,

Secretary, Howrah Municipality.

DEAR SIR,—Please grant us a license for the West's Patent Press Company "Limited," Sulkea, for Jute. Please note that we have only two Presses now which we are informed reduces the premium for the License by half.

Yours faithfully,

(Sd.) ANDERSON, WRIGHT & Co.,
Agents, West's Patent Press Co., "Ld."

OFFICE OF THE HOWRAH MUNICIPALITY.

No. 473.

Howrah, 8th July 1876.

From R. A. DONNITHORNE, Esq.,

Secretary.

To MESSRS. ANDERSON, WRIGHT & CO.,
GENTLEMEN,—In reply to your letter of date, I beg to

inform you that the license fee for your premises will be Rs. 500 per annum. Although you have at present only 2 Presses the reduction in the valuation of one, being Rs. 960, yet falls within Class III.

Yours faithfully,

(Sd.) R. A. DONNITHORNE,

Secretary.

Calcutta, 20th July 1876.

R. A. DONNITHORNE, Esq.,

Secretary, Howrah Municipality.

In continuation of ours of 7th instant, regarding reduction in the License fee for the West's Patent Press Company, Limited, we would again point out that we have already taken down one of the Presses, and are arranging removal of 40 feet of the Press house. As these changes reduce the value of the assessed property by about Rs. 30,000 and reduce the size and capabilities of the premises we are entitled to a proportionate reduction in the license fees charged us. Section 6 says that the fee is to be fixed having reference to the probable incomes derived from it, at the time that it is assessed. As Screw Houses are now without exception either losing money or barely covering expenses, the very utmost that the Act will allow you to charge is Rs. 250. We are quite ready to prove to you that this is the present state of matters, and that it has been the same for nearly 18 months now, and that there is no immediate prospect of improvement.

Yours faithfully,

(Sd.) ANDERSON, WRIGHT & CO.,
Agents, West's Patent Press Co., "Ld."

OFFICE OF THE HOWRAH MUNICIPALITY.

No. 649.

Howrah, 15th August 1876.

FROM R. A. DONNITHORNE, Esq.,
Secretary.

TO MESSRS. ANDERSON, WRIGHT & CO.,
Agents, West's Patent Press Company, Limited.

GENTLEMEN,—With reference to your letter of the 28th July, I beg to inform you that your application for a reduction of the fee for a license will be laid before the next meeting of the Commissioners for consideration. In the meanwhile, however, I must call upon you to pay the amount of the fee (Rs. 500 per annum), which was fixed by the Commissioners for a license for your Jute Warehouse. If the Commissioners grant a reduction of the fee, the proportional amount will be refunded to you.

Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) R. A. DONNITHORNE,
Secretary.

OFFICE OF THE HOWRAH MUNICIPALITY,
Howrah, 9th September 1876.

FROM THE SECRETARY,
TO MESSRS. ANDERSON, WRIGHT & CO.,
Agents, West's Patent Press Co., "Ld."
Memo. No. 762.

Begs to inform them that their application for a reduction of the fee for a license under the Jute Act was submitted to the Commissioners at a special meeting held on the 7th instant, when it was resolved that

Messrs. Anderson, Wright & Co., should be informed that their application will be considered when a portion of their Press House is removed.

(Sd.) R. A. DONNITHORNE,
Secretary.

Calcutta, 19th October 1876.

R. A. DONNITHORNE, Esq.,
Howrah Municipality.

DEAR SIR,—We have commenced taking down the portion of our Press House which we advised you sometime ago we intended sending away; we, therefore, beg to resubmit our claim for a reduction in the license rates.

Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) ANDERSON, WRIGHT & CO.

OFFICE OF THE HOWRAH MUNICIPALITY.
No. 1004.

Howrah, 15th November 1876.
FROM R. A. DONNITHORNE, Esq.,
Secretary.

TO MESSRS. ANDERSON, WRIGHT & Co.

GENTLEMEN,—In reply to your letter of the 10th ultimo, I beg to inform you that consequent on the removal of a portion of the Press House and one of your Hydraulic Presses the following will be the valuation of your premises:—

Buildings with Pressing House	...	Rs. 4,320
2 Presses	... ..	... .. 1,920
		<hr/> Rs. 6,240

The fee for a license on this amount is Rs. 500 per annum.

Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) R. A. DONNITHORNE,
Secretary.

From Govt. of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce.

Calcutta, 13th March 1877.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your further letter of the 22nd ultimo, on the subject of the administration of the Jute Warehouse Acts, and with reference to paragraph 4 of your letter, in which an instance is cited in which the Committee are of opinion that an application for the reduction of an assessment has not been carefully and fully considered by the Municipal Commissioners of Howrah, I am to state that the Chairman of that Municipality has been called upon to submit a report on the case in question.

2. In regard to the opinion expressed by the Committee, to the effect that the Municipal Commissioners of Howrah have exceeded their powers in having levied fees over and above the amount required for the inspection and superintendence of Jute warehouses, and that the surplus sums thus illegally obtained from contributions and expended on the maintenance of a fire-brigade should be refunded, I am to point out that the Committee have apparently overlooked the fact that section 25 of Act II of 1872 has been amended by section 7 of Act II of 1875, and that the following addition has been made to the section first quoted, "in the case of the municipality of Howrah, the balance of such monies,

after payment of the said expenses (*viz.* those referred to in section 25 of Act II of 1872), shall be paid to the credit of the Municipal Commissioners of Howrah, and shall be applied by them for the purposes of a fire-brigade, or for such other purposes for the benefit of the municipality of Howrah as the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal may direct." I am also to point out that section 10, Act II of 1872, has been repealed by section 1 of Act II of 1875, and has been replaced by section 6 of the latter Act.

3. It is by no means clear why, when Act II of 1872 was amended as above noticed, the provisions of sections 26, 27, and 28, which empower the Municipal Commissioners of Calcutta and the suburbs to levy contributions towards the expenses of a fire-brigade from all public Companies who insure property from fire, were not extended to Howrah. I am to say, however, that the question of extending these provisions of the law to Howrah, as well as the remarks made by the Committee that it would be more equitable that a general rate should be levied for the maintenance of a fire-brigade, than that contributions should be alone demanded from any particular class of property, will be taken into consideration in the Legislative Department.

4. In respect to paragraph 7 of your letter, I am to observe that the sum of Rs. 1,500, referred to therein, was expended for the construction of an engine shed, as well as for the purchase of land on which this shed was erected. It may be a question whether the cost of the land ought not to have been debited to the general revenues of the Municipality, but had the Committee examined the accounts to which they refer more closely,

they would have seen that the inclusion of this sum as a debit against the Fire Brigade Fund does not affect the correctness of the remarks made in paragraph 4 of the letter from this office, No. 622, dated 8th February 1877, as the receipt levied under the Act fell short of the expenditure by Rs. 1,834.

5. It is not apparent why, as mentioned in paragraph 8 of your letter, Cotton and Jute mills have not been brought under the provisions of the law. If they are used for the "storing," "keeping," and "depositing" of cotton and jute, it seems to the Lieutenant-Governor that they ought to be brought under the operations of the Act. The Municipal Commissioners of Calcutta, the Suburbs, and Howrah have been requested to report why these buildings have not been brought under the operations of the Act, if such is the case; and, if they cannot be so brought with reference to sections 2 and 4 of Act II of 1872, whether they consider that an amendment of the law is desirable.

6. With regard to the statement made in paragraphs 6 and 8 of your letter that properties of an equally or more dangerous nature, such as oil-mills, are not required to contribute towards the cost of the fire-brigade, I am to draw the attention of the Committee to the provisions of section 30 of the Act, in accordance with which it is open to the Government, on the recommendation of the Municipal Commissioners, to declare that any other fibre or commodity which is stored or deposited in warehouse, besides jute and cotton, shall be warehoused and kept subject to the provisions of the Act, and I am to suggest that the Committee should represent the matter for the consideration of the Municipal Commissioners.

7. In paragraph 9 of your letter you observe that it is unjust that those that insure should be taxed for the benefit of those who do not, but I am to point out that under the law it is not those who insure, but the Insurance Companies, who are taxed; that these of all persons are chiefly benefited by the maintenance of an efficient fire-brigade, and that there is no reason to believe that the very insignificant amount of tax which they pay for the protection of their own interests, and of which they have never complained, is really shifted in any part on to those who are insured. I am also to add that the principle of taxing Insurance Companies in this manner is not a new one, but was taken from the London Fire Brigade Act of 1865.

From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of Bengal.

Calcutta, 11th June 1877.

With reference to the correspondence that has already passed between the Government of Bengal and the Chamber of Commerce relative to the Jute Warehouse Act, and to your letter No. 1198 of the 13th March, the Committee direct me to inquire if it is convenient to furnish them with a copy of any Report the Chairman of the Howrah Municipality may have submitted on the case cited by them and referred to in the 1st paragraph of that letter.

The Committee are glad to receive your assurance that the present mode of raising funds for the maintenance of a fire-brigade is having the attention of Government and that the question will be taken into consideration on the Legislative Department.

The Committee think it necessary to point out in reply to the closing paragraph of your letter that Insurance Companies have invariably in all cases insisted upon the insurers paying the fire-brigade tax, which they make a separate special charge on their policies in addition to the insurance premium : so that while the Companies satisfy the requirements of the law in the first instance the burden of the tax falls upon the insurers on whom it is in reality shifted in its entirety : practically therefore the insurers and not the Companies are they who pay the tax.

Though this mode of raising money by taxing Insurance Offices may very well suit in London where almost every one insures, it is very different in India where such precautions are only taken by Europeans—as a rule. The amount on which the rate falls is thus very restricted, and further it is the property least likely to cause fire or to endanger other property if fire did take place that is made to pay.

From Govt. of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce.

Calcutta, 28th January 1878.

In continuation of this office No. 622 dated the 8th February 1877. I am directed to forward for the information of the Committee of the Chamber, the accompany-

* No. 90 M. M. dated 10th December 1877. ing copy of a communication* from the Commissioner of the Presidency Division giving cover to a letter No. 33 T. B., dated the 5th December last, from the Chairman of the Suburban Municipality, from which it will be seen that such reductions as were in the

opinion of the Commissioners called for have been made in the assessments of Jute Warehouses situated in the Suburbs.

From Magistrate 2A-Pergunnahs and Chairman of the Municipal Commissioners of the Suburbs of Calcutta to the Commissioner, Presidency Division.

Dated Alipore, the 5th December 1877.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your endorsement No. 52 M. M., dated 16th February 1877, giving cover to Officiating Secretary's letter No. 621 of the 8th February last with enclosure, and in reply beg to inform you that in accordance with the suggestions contained in paragraph 2 of the Government letter, I laid the matter before the Commissioners at a meeting. They agreeing with these suggestions for the reductions of assessment of the Jute Warehouses, have made such reductions where they considered them called for.

FORT COMMISSIONERS BYE-LAWS.

The proposed new bye-laws of the Port Commissioners were submitted by the Government of Bengal for the opinion of the Committee, who suggested various amendments; but the regulations were nevertheless confirmed by the Government, who were of opinion that they should stand as framed by the Commissioners.

From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of Bengal.

Calcutta, 21st June 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to return, as requested, the original papers received with your memorandum No. 1439 of 22nd ultimo, and to submit the following remarks and amendments of the bye-laws of the Port Commissioners.

No. 1. The allotment of jetties shall be *in order of arrival of vessels within the limits of the Port*, as a general rule; but the Commissioners shall, under special circumstances, have power to order otherwise. Vessels discharging or loading at the jetties shall move from one jetty to another when ordered, *free of charge to such vessels.*

No. 4. Government stores often come to Calcutta with a stipulation in bills of lading that goods are not to be landed on the jetties but into cargo boats. Owners and masters cannot tell where they are to be eventually landed; and this clause as it stands might cause great

expense to a ship, if both Government and the Commissioners stood upon their rights.

It is therefore proposed that the Rule be altered as follows:—

Vessels lying at the jetties shall not, without special permission, discharge cargo into boats, if such cargo is to be subsequently landed on the Calcutta bank of the river between Chitpore Canal and Tolly's Nullah—*Government Stores excepted.*

No. 6. Single packages over 3 tons shall not be hoisted until the *approximate* weight shall have been ascertained *from the Master of the vessel*; and when packages weighing more than 3 tons are being hoisted the Superintendent of the Cranes shall invariably be present.

No. 7. Master of vessel shall furnish special notice to the shed officers before landing packages *known to the said master to contain* articles liable to ignition or explosion or which are otherwise dangerous.

No. 12. The Committee are of opinion that the coopers employed by the Commissioners *should be guaranteed by them*; and that the Commissioners shall license coopers in the employment of any firm who may wish to have their own work done by their own men.

No. 14. It is quite possible, indeed it is no uncommon occurrence, for bills of lading to be late, if not lost; and if the vessel is content to deliver cargo without those documents the Port Commissioners should likewise consent. The Committee recommend the rule to run thus:—

No. 14. Goods landed at the jetties shall only be delivered on production of bills of lading accompanied by

a delivery order from the master or agent of the vessel, and no delivery order unsupported by bills of lading will be accepted *without a guarantee from the consignees confirmed by the agent of the vessel.*

No. 15. } These are very objectionable clauses.
 16. }

If the jetty authorities will not receive the packages, what is to become of them when the ship is bound to land at jetty? As the jetty authorities actually land the cargo, they can as easily sort such goods from the slings, as a master can afterwards, when the confusion has been increased by remixing goods in the jetty compound. If marks are entirely obliterated, it is impossible to sort *after* landing, but consignments can with ease be separated if care be taken *in* landing.

The Commissioners have a system of refusing to give receipts for goods as they come over the ship's side; they wait until they are in the shed and sometimes no receipt is granted for three or four days after landing. The Committee contend that the Commissioners are also bound to sign for the *number* of packages they receive and to be responsible for that number. If the marks are not clear, or the packages are damaged, the receipt should say so.

If goods are to lie at the jetty without receipt, and the ship is not to have watch-men to protect her (*vide* bye-law 11), there are people at the jetties unscrupulous enough to take advantage of this bye-law.

No. 20. Overtime is the source of much bad work. Men idle just before closing hours on purpose to obtain overtime fees. There should be a night work establishment, and the number might be easily regulated to

escape loss with the experience the Commissioners have now had.

No. 22. The working hours should, in the Committee's opinion, be from 7 A. M. to 5 P. M. from November to February inclusive, and to 6 P. M. for the rest of the year. To cease working at 4 P. M. is to do so at the busiest hour of the afternoon, and far too early for both importers and exporters.

From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of Bengal.

Calcutta, 24th September 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce received with your office memorandum No. 1439 of 22nd May last a copy of the amended bye-laws of the Port Commissioners and other papers in connection therewith, with a request for the Chamber's opinion on the proposed alterations.

That opinion was communicated on the 21st June; but the Committee apprehend that the remarks submitted by them have been overlooked, as they observe that the Gazette of the 19th instant contains a notification under which the bye-laws are published without any alteration of those originally proposed by the Port Commissioners except as to the working hours regulated by No. 22.

The Committee submit that their suggested amendments of bye-laws affecting the interests of all who have to do business at the Commissioners' Jetties were sufficiently reasonable and befitting to admit of their introduction and application to the traffic at the Jetties, and they regret

to find that the original regulations have been confirmed by the official notification referred to.

From Govt. of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce.

Calcutta, 15th October 1877.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 24th September last, in which it is stated that the Committee of the Chamber regret to find that, with the exception of the alteration in the working hours, the amendments suggested by them of the revised set of bye-laws proposed by the Port Commissioners for the landing and delivery of goods at the jetties have not been adopted.

2. In reply, I am to forward, for the information of the Committee of the Chamber, a copy of letter No. 2194 of 5th September last, and of its enclosures, from the Port Commissioners, and to say that it appears to the Lieutenant-Governor that the Port Commissioners show good reasons for maintaining the bye-laws as framed by them, and that it will be observed that in several particulars the wishes of the Committee are practically met by the bye-laws in question.

3. With reference to the Chamber's expression of regret that the original regulations have been confirmed by the official notification which appeared in the Gazette of the 17th September, I am to explain that the notification in question only published the proposed bye-laws for general information, as required by section 83 of Act V (B. C.) of 1870.

No. 2194, dated Calcutta, the 5th September 1877.

From—W. D. BRUCE, Esq., c. e., Vice-Chairman of the Port Commissioners,

To—The Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Department.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 2536 of the 31st August 1877, and in reply to forward herewith a copy of the report of Sub-Committee appointed by the Commissioners to consider the alterations suggested by the Chamber of Commerce in the amendments of the jetty bye-laws submitted for sanction with this office letter No. 575, dated 15th May last, and the remarks of the Jetty Superintendent and of myself on the same.

2. The report of the Sub-Committee was adopted by the Commissioners at the 223rd meeting.

Report of Sub-Committee appointed in terms of Resolution No. 3, passed at the two hundred and twenty-second Meeting to consider the amendments in the Jetty Bye-laws proposed by the Chamber of Commerce.

PRESENT:

H. A. COCKERELL, Esq.	|	R. STEEL, Esq.
T. H. WORDIE, Esq.	|	J. D. MACLEAN, Esq.
W. D. BRUCE, Esq.		

The Sub-Committee met on Friday, the 20th July 1877.

After a careful consideration of the amendments proposed by the Chamber of Commerce and the remarks of the Vice-Chairman and Jetty Superintendent, with

reference thereto, we recommend that Jetty Bye-laws Nos. 1, 4, 6, 7, 12, 14, 15, 16, and 20 should stand as originally framed by the Commissioners.

We are of opinion that bye-law No. 22 should be amended so as to meet the increasing demand for jetty accommodation, and that the working hours, which at present are from 7 A.M. to 4 P.M., should be made from 6 A.M. to 6 P.M. all the year round. To meet the cost of establishment required to work regularly from 6 A.M. to 6 P.M., the amount charged for jetty hire should be increased from Rs. 20 per diem to Rs. 35. The cost of establishment for working before 7 A.M. and after 4 P.M. is now met by overtime fees charged against each vessel, so that the increased jetty hire proposed to be charged will not practically increase the amount now paid by vessels at the jetties.

We also recommend that from this increased jetty hire the Commissioners should undertake to pay all overtime fees for Custom House Officers to enable the Collector to provide sufficient establishment to keep all the jetty gates open from 6 A.M. to 6 P.M. for receipt and delivery of goods without extra charge to the public. It is understood from Mr. Maclean that the cost of such extra establishment will not exceed Rs. 150 per month.

We have not considered the question of extra establishment to be employed for night-work. The Jetty Superintendent has been directed to submit a report on the subject, and the consideration of the question will be taken up when the report is received.

H. A. COCKERELL,
W. D. BRUCE,
T. H. WORDIE.

The fees, as earned at present, do not exceed Rs. 150 per mensem, but of course if the gates are open every day, the cost would be, as I showed in the memorandum of 1875, Rs. 400 per mensem. The meeting understood that the gates would not be open before 8 A.M. I believe.

J. D. MACLEAN.

I think that in view of Mr. Maclean's remarks, we might strike out of this report the sentence "It is understood from Mr. Maclean, &c." The fixed charges for vessels using the jetties will enable us to pay the customs officers' overtime without loss, even if it amounts to Rs. 400 per mensem.

R. STEEL.

Jetty Bye-

As approved by the Commissioners at 216th Meeting held on the 1st May 1877.

No. 1.—The allotment of jetties shall be entirely at the discretion of the Commissioners, but, as a general rule, vessels shall be accommodated in the order of their arrival off the jetties. Vessels discharging or loading at the jetties shall move from one jetty to another when ordered.

No. 4.—Ships lying at the jetties shall not discharge cargo into boats, if such cargo is to be subsequently landed on the Calcutta bank of the river between Chitpore Canal and Tolly's Nullah.

No. 6.—Single packages over three tons shall not be hoisted until the correct weight shall have been ascertained, and when packages weighing more than three tons are being hoisted, the Superintendent of the cranes shall invariably be present.

Remarks and alterations suggested by the Chamber of Commerce on the proposed amendments.

No. 1.—The allotment of jetties shall be in order of arrival of vessels within the limits of the port as a general rule, but the Commissioners shall under special circumstances have power to order otherwise. Vessels discharging or loading at the jetties shall move from one jetty to another when ordered, free of charge to such vessels.

No. 4.—Government stores of ten come to Calcutta, with a stipulation in bills of lading that goods are not to be landed on the jetties but into cargo boats. Owners and masters cannot tell where they are to be eventually landed, and this clause, as it stands, might cause great expense to a ship if both Government and the Commissioners stood upon their rights. It is, therefore, proposed that the rule be altered as follows:—
Vessels lying at the jetties shall not without special permission discharge cargo into boats, if such cargo is to be subsequently landed on the Calcutta bank of the river between Chitpore Canal and Tolly's Nullah, Government stores excepted.

No. 6.—Single packages over three tons shall not be hoisted until the approximate weight shall have been ascertained from the master of the vessel; and when packages more than three tons are being hoisted, the Superintendent of the cranes shall invariably be present.

Laws.

Remarks by the Jetty Superintendent on the alterations suggested by the Chamber of Commerce.

No. 1.—The italicised part of the Chamber's alteration of No. 1 bye-law is, I consider, inadmissible. I have repeatedly seen vessels a week within port limits before they could get up to the jetties. If the Commissioners can compel the jetties and do the work with their own tugs, there would not be so much objection. Vessels are now moved from one jetty to another free of charge.

No. 4.—The Chamber's remarks about Government stores are often applicable to private consignments for Howrah and other places beyond the limits of the port. All Government stores are not loaded the Stationery and Medical Departments seldom land by boat, as their godowns are close at hand. The Collector of Customs has stepped in to enforce No. 4 bye-law, for the preventive officer has instructions not to allow a boat to be loaded with overseas cargo until the permission under bye-law No. 4 is obtained from the Jetty Office. This order of the Collector applies to Government stores as well. I consider the rule as altered would be putting too much power in the hands of a petty official, and strict consignees would not scruple to take advantage of it.

No. 6.—Approximate weights will never do, we must know definitely the weight if the jetty cranes are to do the work. It is not of so much consequence with the 30 ton crane. We can tell the weight by the water gauge. I have known Captains give approximate weight as 4 tons when the weight was actually 6 tons.

Remarks by the Vice-Chairman.

No. 1.—I think the rule should stand. Vessels have often to stop at the entrance of the port to discharge powder and inflammable oils.

No. 4.—This rule has worked very well for the last seven years, and I see no occasion to alter it. Government stores are allowed to be put into boats, if they are for the mint or have to be landed south of Fort Point.

No. 6.—I think this rule might be omitted altogether. It is not now required.

Jetty Dye-

As approved by the Commissioners at 216th Meeting held on the 1st May 1877.	Remarks and alterations suggested by the Chamber of Commerce on the proposed amendments.
No. 7.—Masters of vessels shall furnish special notice to the shed officers before landing packages containing articles liable to ignition or explosion, or which are otherwise dangerous.	No. 7.—Masters of vessel shall furnish special notice to the shed officer before landing packages <i>known to the said master to contain</i> articles liable to ignition or explosion, or which are otherwise dangerous.
No. 12.—No person unless duly permitted by the Commissioners shall take inside the jetty premises carpenter's tools or other instruments used for opening cases, and no cooper shall be allowed to work in the sheds without license from the Commissioners.	No. 12.—The Committee are of opinion that the coopers employed by the Commissioners <i>should be generated by them</i> ; and that the Commissioners shall license coopers in the employment of any firm who may wish to have their own work done by their own men.
No. 14.—Goods landed at the jetties shall only be delivered on production of the bills of lading accompanied by a delivery order from the master or agent of the vessel, and no delivery orders unsupported by the bills of lading will be accepted.	No. 14.—It is quite possible, indeed it is no uncommon occurrence, for bills of lading to be lost; and if the vessel is content to deliver cargo without those documents, the Port Commissioners should likewise consent. The Committee recommend the rule to run thus:—
	No. 14.—Goods landed at the jetties shall only be delivered on production of bills of lading accompanied by a delivery order from the master or agent of the vessel, and no delivery order unsupported by bills of lading will be accepted <i>without a guarantee from the consignee concerned by the agent of the vessel.</i>

Laws.—(continued.)

Remarks by the Jetty Superintendent on the alterations suggested by the Chamber of Commerce.	Remarks by the Vice-Chairman.
No. 7.—Masters of vessels know so little about their import cargos now that they cannot be expected to give any information whatever. I see no reason why the rule should be altered as their home agents should inform them or send the list out here with the manifest, and that list should be filed in the shed, the mate keeping a copy for reference when slinging the goods in the hold.	No. 7.—I think the original rule should stand.
No. 12.—The Commissioners do not employ coopers. They are only permitted to work on their masters' application. There is only one cooper, who got a license through the Custom House Appraisers' Department certifying to the man's long service in the Custom House and his known respectability.	No. 12.—Nil.
No. 14.—The Chamber's recommendation may be adopted by adding the word "stamped." Guarantee up to a limit the Commissioners may fix, but I consider the deposit system at present in force the only safe one for large consignments.	No. 14.—It has always been the practice to deliver the goods on a guarantee. At the 199th meeting this question was considered by the Commissioners, when the following resolution was passed:—Resolved:—That the practice in future shall be to accept simple stamped guarantees from parties applying for delivery for sums under Rs. 2000 at the discretion of the Vice-Chairman, and for sums above that amount only on a guarantee signed by the applicant and accepted by a Bank, or on deposit of the value of the goods.

Jetty Bye-

As approved by the Commissioners at 24th Meeting held on the 1st May 1877.

No. 15.—When discharging iron drainage pipes or other goods, which, from their want of description or want of proper distinguishing marks, there will be difficulty in delivering correctly to consignees, the master of the vessel shall separate, before landing or in course of landing, the various marks and consignments, failing which the Commissioners will refuse to receive the goods.

No. 16.—When iron drainage pipes or other goods from their want of description or want of proper distinguishing marks or from any other cause are landed in a mixed condition, the master or agent of the vessel will be allowed two clear days to sort and make over the goods to the Commissioners, and until the goods have been made over and the usual receipt granted they will remain on the wharf at the risk of the vessel. Such goods, if not made over to the Commissioners within the two clear days, will at the expiration of that time be subject to wharf rent at the schedule rates, the rent incurred being payable by the vessel. After receipt of such goods by the Commissioners, consignees will be allowed two clear days to take delivery before incur-

Remarks and alterations suggested by the Chamber of Commerce on the proposed amendments.

Nos. 15 & 16.—These are very objectionable clauses.

If the jetty authorities will not receive the packages, what is to become of them when the ship is bound to land at jetty? As the jetty authorities actually land the cargo, they can as easily sort such goods from the ship as a master can afterwards, when the confusion has been increased by remixing goods in the jetty compound. If marks are entirely obliterated it is impossible to sort *after* landing, but consignments can with ease be separated if care be taken in handling. The Commissioners have a system of refusing to give receipts for goods as they come over the ship's side; they wait until they are in the shed, and sometimes no receipt is granted for three or four days after landing. The Committee contend that the Commissioners are also bound to sign for the number of packages they receive and to be responsible for that number. If the marks are not clear, or the packages are damaged, the receipt should say so.

If goods are to lie at the jetty without a receipt and the ship is not to have watchmen to protect her (*vide* Bye Law No. 11) there are people at the jetties sufficient enough to take advantage of this Bye-law.

Laws.—(continued.)

Remarks by the Jetty Superintendent on the alterations suggested by the Chamber of Commerce.

Remarks by the Vice-Chairman.

Nos. 15 & 16.—Practically we do not refuse goods; at least, we permit the handling of mixed goods at the vessel's risk and expense under the control of the Custom House authorities, but the Commissioners cannot grant a receipt or take the responsibility of delivering until mixed goods are assorted by the ship's people. The jetty authorities do not actually land the cargo; the landing solely depends on the slinging in the hold by the stevedores under the control of the ship's officers. These men can get or keep a record of the positions in which each lot of iron or similar goods is placed in the vessel at the port of shipment, and make that record most useful here in the landing, but they must watch the stevedore's men in the hold. Some shipmasters, wishing their cargo quickly discharged, deliberately mix the goods in the hold, putting iron of the same class or description, but of different qualities and stored separately in the hold, into the one sling. That I have seen many times; the slings are made up from before and amidst the infelony, and sent up as one lot. Let those who neglect to keep records and deliberately mix goods take the risk and responsibility of assuring for delivery, and let them take care in handling. The jetty authorities deposit the iron lot by lot as the vessel's officers give notice of each lot being completed, and only bundles are kept separate from the bars of that lot, and round, square, and flat bars are counted separately. Would the Chamber say what system is in force in granting receipts for goods going overseas into boats? Do ship's officers get receipts as goods go over the side. They fill the boat and then perhaps get the

Nos. 15 & 16.—These are not new rules. They have been in force for years, and when originally passed were proved by the Chamber. No. 16 passed in July 1874, some time after No. 15 was framed, with the object of allowing consignees longer time for taking delivery and saving them from wharf rent charges. It allows two clear days to the ship to sort and deliver the goods, and makes the master liable for wharf rent after that time till the goods are sorted and made over to the Commissioners. Before this rule was passed we could not get the officers of vessels to give any assistance in sorting iron, &c. See note at page 166 of Volume V.

Jetty Bye-

As approved by the Commissioners at 210th Meeting held on the 1st May 1877.

ring wharf rent charges. This exemption shall not be extended to goods the consignees of which refuse or neglect to forward their invoices within 24 hours after the vessel commences to discharge.

No. 20.—The special sanction of the Commissioners shall be necessary to work the jetties before and after regular hours, and on Sundays and authorized holidays; and no overtime work shall be performed by any of the servants of the Commissioners without permission. In order to facilitate the discharge of vessels they will be allowed to work on holidays so long as accommodation can be conveniently provided for cargo in the jetty sheds, on payment of double jetty hire and the usual overtime fees to the establishment employed.

No. 22.—Working hours shall be from 7 A. M. to 4 P. M. All fees for overtime work and for working on hols-

Remarks and alterations suggested by the Chamber of Commerce on the proposed amendments.

No. 20.—Overtime is the source of much bad work; men idle just before closing hours on purpose to obtain overtime fees. There should be a night work establishment, and the number might be easily regulated to escape loss with the experience the Commissioners have now had.

No. 22.—The working hours should in the Committee's opinion, be from 7 A. M. to 5 P. M. from November to February inclusive, and to 6 P. M. for the rest of the year.

Laws.—(continued.)

Remarks by the Jetty Superintendent on the alterations suggested by the Chamber of Commerce.

receipt. In London the shed is filled, and then *when all cargo is landed* the ship gets a receipt. When unmarked boxes or bales or large packages are landed, a receipt is always given for the number of such packages and the Commissioners are responsible, for they know there cannot be a mistake in the delivery if the goods on appraisement correspond with the applicant's invoice. There is no objection to a watchman being placed over iron or packages lying outside the sheds. The police have notice of it and watch the iron.

No. 20.—The Chamber's remark on overtime seems to be confined to the interests of consignees passing out goods. Now the jetty officials do not get a piece of overtime if the goods on carts can be passed out before 6-15 P. M. The Custom House people may "idle" just before closing time on purpose to obtain fees. In the case of experts our assistants' overtime fees after 6-15 P. M. amount for four men to be 1-5-6 per hour. After working all day they are seldom very anxious to idle in passing in goods for an hour to obtain from 3 to 7 annas each. The difficulty is to get our assistant to stop to work overtime. The Commissioners now get a fixed fee of Rs. 2 a day. I agree with the Chamber to regard to the night work establishment, and will, if required by the Commissioners, submit a scheme by which the day men will be entirely relieved of night work.

No. 22.—The working hours at the discharge of vessels should be from 6 A. M. to 6 P. M. all the year round and the jetty hire should be raised from Rs. 20

Remarks by the Vice-Chairman.

No. 20.—I have asked the Jetty Superintendent to submit the proposed scheme. I think it is desirable to have an Assistant Superintendent specially for night work, but I cannot see how we could manage to keep up a complete establishment for night work, as there is no regularity in the number of vessels that work.

No. 22.—I agree with the Jetty Superintendent at present when several vessels are in the port waiting for jetties.

Jetty Bye-

As approved by the Commissioners at 216th Meeting held on the 1st May 1877.	Remarks and alterations suggested by the Chamber of Commerce on the proposed amendments.
days shall be regulated by the sanctioned pay of each employé. This rule shall be one and half hour's pay for one hour's work, working days being calculated at 26 days in a month; and for holidays or part of a holiday one day's pay. All fees for overtime work shall be paid to the Commissioners.	To cease working at 4 P.M. is to do so at the latest hour of the afternoon, and far too early for both imports and exports.

Lanes. —(concluded.)

Remarks by the Jetty Superintendent on the alterations suggested by the Chamber of Commerce.	Remarks by the Vice-Chairman.
<p>to Rs. 32 a day. It hampers the work very much giving shipmasters the option to work from 7 A. M. to 4 P. M. when it suits them, and entails a loss of the best three hours or, say 2½ hours each day to the Commissioners.</p> <p>Actual working hours for receiving export cargo are from 6-10 A. M. to 6-12 P. M. without fees.—1½ hours a day. Working hours for delivering imports are regulated by the Custom House authorities, viz. 10 A. M. to 5 P. M. The Commissioners' servants are present to do work until 6-15 P. M., if importers and exporters' servants are present to do the work.</p>	<p><i>Golden Plover</i>, at No. 2, is only working from 7 to 4, losing three good hours daily and delaying to this extent the discharge of other vessels.</p>

Port of Gibraltar:—Tobacco Trade with Calcutta.

Since the year 1705 the Port of Gibraltar has been entirely free from the imposition of duties on imported and exported merchandise, and a proposal by Her Majesty's Government to introduce a law for regulating its Customs, Trade, and Navigation created a strong feeling of opposition to a measure which threatened to place restrictions on the freedom hitherto enjoyed by its inhabitants, who at a public meeting held about a year ago passed resolutions condemnatory of the contemplated legislation as injurious to their interests.

The Gibraltar Exchange Committee brought these matters to the notice of the Chamber, as it was apprehended that the tobacco trade between that Port and Calcutta would be materially affected by the new regulations, and in the hope that their efforts to prevent the adoption of the scheme would be seconded by those who were interested in the export of tobacco from this port.

Your Committee were unable however to co-operate as desired, because it appeared to them that the object of the proposed Ordinance was directed rather against illegal traffic in tobacco than as a restriction upon legitimate trade.

*From Gibraltar Exchange Committee to Chamber of Commerce.**Gibraltar, 12th March 1877.*

As representing the Commercial Community of this Port, we beg to bring before the notice of your Chamber, the outline of a scheme proposed by the Colonial Government, which if carried out, will impose very serious restrictions on our trade and the freedom of our Port, a privilege which we have enjoyed for a period of more than 170 years.

The article most affected by these new regulations is Tobacco, of which leaf we have of late years drawn very large supplies from your Port as the following figures will show.—

Shipments of Bengal Tobacco from Calcutta to Gibraltar direct by P. and O.	
Steamer, from October 1873 up to present date,	27,380 bales.
Reshipments of Bengal Tobacco from London, Marseilles &c., to Gibraltar during same period,	9,700 "
Total	37,080 bales.

We have through our representatives in England obtained a promise from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, that ample time will be given, before putting into force this ordinance, to allow of objections being heard from all interested parties, and believing that the subject is one of importance also to your community, we shall be glad if you can aid us in any way in our efforts to dissuade Her Majesty's Government from carrying out their scheme.

Extract from the report of the proceedings of a Public Meeting of the Inhabitants of Gibraltar held in the Exchange on Thursday March 8th, 1877.

The Chairman then referred to an interview held with H. E. the Governor in which the details of the proposed changes were communicated to him and stated that the Exchange Committee had that morning received a letter from the Colonial Secretary, enclosing a memorandum explanatory of the provisions of the proposed Customs Ordinance, in anticipation of the publication of the draft Ordinance in the usual manner, for general information, which he read as follows:—

1. The proposed Ordinance will contain provisions for regulating the Customs, Trade and Navigation of the Port and Waters of Gibraltar, and to enable Her Majesty's Government to obtain an account of all goods imported into or exported from the Port.
2. To secure these objects masters of vessels will on arrival be required to report their ships and cargo, and before shipping cargo will be required to enter the same outwards, and clear their vessels before leaving the Port.
3. These documents will belong to the Crown, and will not be accessible to private individuals, and the Government Officials will be forbidden to furnish the information contained therein to any person whatever.
4. The Ordinance will provide for the importation and the exportation of tobacco, cigars, and snuff only in whole and complete packages of 80 lbs. net weight, and in ships of not less than 100 tons burthen.
5. Upon the exportation of these articles the exporter

or his agent will be required to give a bond, with one surety to produce a certificate of the landing of such articles at the place to which they are exported. Tobacco will be prohibited to be removed from Gibraltar by land except in such small quantities as may be allowed by regulations to be issued by His Excellency the Governor. But special rules will be framed permitting tobacco, &c., to be shipped in less quantities as stores.

6. Hulks intended to receive dutiable and restricted goods must be specially approved for that purpose, and will be under Customs control.

7. Lighters and boats to be used for the conveyance of goods to and from ships must be specially approved for that purpose.

8. The cargoes of ships must be landed within thirty days, except in cases of ships derelict or driven in by stress of weather, but the Governor may relax this regulation when he may see fit.

9. The usual penal sections for non-compliance with the regulations are framed on the English model, and power is given to the Governor to remit or reduce penalties or fines, and release persons committed to gaol.

10. No duties are imposed by this Ordinance and, excepting tobacco, cigars and snuff, no special regulations are required in respect to any goods save their due entry and clearance.

The following resolutions were then proposed and carried unanimously:—

Proposed by J. A. Crooks, Esq., and seconded by Judah

Levy, jun. Esq., "That it is the opinion of this Public Meeting of the inhabitants of Gibraltar that any legislation which has for its object to impose conditions and restrictions on any branch of trade, for the purpose of protecting the Revenue and Monopolies of a foreign Government, is unprecedented, opposed to the principles of free trade, at variance with international law, and with the legislation of Great Britain, in matters of commerce, and as regards this city specially is contrary to the provisions of the Order in Council of her late Majesty Queen Anne, dated the 7th February 1705, which declared Gibraltar to be a free port, and enacted that no duty or imposition should be levied on any merchandize imported into, or exported from Gibraltar, which Order in Council the inhabitants of Gibraltar understand is still in full force."

Proposed by Y. Bergel, Esq., and seconded by Henry Thornton, Esq., "That the inhabitants of Gibraltar firmly believing that the freedom of this Port, and of its trade, as conceded to it by Queen Anne's Order in Council, was, and would continue to be in force, have invested large sums of money in the erection of houses and stores in this city, and a very considerable portion of inhabitants being dependent for their subsistence on the trade which is now carried on here, this Meeting is of opinion that the contemplated enactment would, if put into force, very seriously affect the landed proprietors, and the trading portion of the community, and that the object of such legislation, namely, to foster and uphold the Revenue of a foreign State, is at variance with the enlightened policy of Great Britain, in the regulation of Commercial matters."

Proposed by J. H. Recano, Esq., seconded by Richard Abrines, Esq., "That it is the opinion of this Meeting that the contemplated legislation of Her Majesty's Government relative to the trade of Gibraltar, as far as the particulars of the same have become known to the public, is calculated to interfere with the Freedom of the Port, and to be seriously injurious to the interests of the community. And this Meeting, with a view to dissuade Her Majesty's Government from carrying into effect the proposed legislation, gives full power and authority to the Exchange Committee to act on behalf of the public in the matter, and to incur any necessary expenses to this end from funds to be raised for the purpose by public subscription."

*From Chamber to the Exchange Committee,
Gibraltar.*

Calcutta, 19th July 1877.

The Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce desire me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 12th March, and to apologise for the delay unavoidably occasioned in replying to it.

2. You bring to their notice the provisions of a proposed Ordinance of Her Majesty's Government for regulating the Customs, Trade, and Navigation of the Port and Waters of Gibraltar, and for obtaining trustworthy statistics of imported and exported merchandise.

3. You also draw attention to certain Resolutions adopted at a Public Meeting of the inhabitants of Gibraltar, by whom the proposed legislation is held to be at variance with the commercial freedom which the Port has

enjoyed for upwards of a century and a half, and detrimental to the interests of the trading portion of its community.

4. In connection with those interests you refer specially to the injurious effects which the contemplated regulations will have on one of the principal articles of your local traffic—*viz.*, Bengal Tobacco imported from Calcutta; and in the belief that that item of our export trade may be prejudicially influenced thereby you are good enough to invite this Chamber's co-operation in your efforts to arrest a movement uncompromisingly condemned by the community of Gibraltar.

5. The subject of your reference has been considered with the careful interest naturally attaching to an article of Indian industry, the development of which, as one of the economic products of Bengal, has been receiving the special attention and encouragement of Government; and the foreign demand for a portion of the annual tobacco crop, as a legitimate means of stimulating its increased cultivation, has not been disregarded by the Committee in discussing the question before them.

Although the exports of unmanufactured Bengal Tobacco are not likely to be sensibly affected by the measures to which you object—the quantity shipped to your Port being but a very small percentage of the total export from Calcutta—the Committee of this Chamber have not allowed that fact to have any weight with them in deciding, as they have done, that they cannot move in the direction you suggest. They have been influenced rather by the views expressed in the Colonial Secretary's reply to the Liverpool Chamber's memorial on your behalf. As

it clearly appears from this document that the Ordinance is directed against smuggling and not against legitimate trading, the Committee feel that, with every desire to assist your Chamber in preventing any unnecessary restrictions being placed on the trade of your Port, any hostile movement towards the proposed measures on their part would probably be liable to misconstruction. They regret therefore that they do not see their way to accompany you in your remonstrance against the requirements of the Ordinance.

Official Publication of Weather Reports.

In compliance with the Committee's request His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor was pleased to order the publication in the Government Telegraph Gazette of reports of rain-fall received from the several districts of Bengal.

The issue of these reports commenced last August, and as there can be no doubt of their utility the Committee hope to see them continued for general information.

From Chamber to Supdt. Telegraph Dept.

Calcutta, 15th June 1877.

With reference to your letter of 23rd September last, and my reply thereto of 11th October, regarding the continued publication of weather reports in the *Telegraph Gazette*, I am directed to express the hope of the Chamber

of Commerce that it is the purpose of Government to obtain that information and publish it in the interests alike of the State and of the commercial public.

It will be seen from the accompanying printed copy of an order of the Government of the N. W. Provinces that the rise and fall of the Ganges at Mirzapore and Benares will be telegraphed daily from Benares to Allahabad, and the insertion of that information in the *Telegraph Gazette* will be of much public advantage.

Calcutta, 27th June 1877.

With reference to your letter of the 15th instant, I have the honor to inform you, I am desired to state that in reply to a similar reference made by the Chamber of Commerce in 1869 the Government of India replied that the weather reports were obviously for the benefit of the mercantile community, who might well be expected to bear the cost. The resumption of their free publication during the pressure of the Bengal famine was a temporary measure.

2. With regard to your enquiry about the publication in the *Telegraph Gazette* of telegrams conveying information about the rise and fall of the Ganges, I have the honor to inform you they are paid for in the ordinary course.

Calcutta, 6th July 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have received your reply of 27th ultimo to their reference of the 15th, and they desire me to request you will be so good as to say what amount of information regarding weather

reports, &c., can be published in the *Telegraph Gazette* and what the monthly charge would be.

Calcutta, 16th July 1877.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 6th instant. In reply, I am requested to state that if the Chamber of Commerce will arrange for paid weather messages to be sent by its own Agents from such stations as it considers necessary, and if the Chamber desires and authorizes it, such reports will be published in the *Telegraph Gazette* without charge.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 25th July 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have been in communication with the Superintendent of Telegraphs, Bengal Division, regarding the publication in the *Telegraph Gazette* of official reports of the state of the weather at certain selected stations most convenient for the purpose in view, and of the rise and fall of the Ganges at Benares and Mirzapore; and in reply to a recent reference on the subject the Superintendent informs the Committee that if the Chamber "will arrange for paid weather messages to be sent by its own agents from such stations as it considers necessary, and if the Chamber desires and authorizes it, such reports will be published in the *Telegraph Gazette* without charges."

The Committee unfortunately cannot avail themselves of this offer, because the Chamber has no Agents of its own who can furnish the required information, nor is it in

a position to organise a system by which such information can be supplied.

Although the commercial public may be regarded as chiefly and primarily concerned in these reports—the prospects of trade being more or less influenced by probable outturn of harvests &c.,—the importance of them is not limited to merchants only, and the establishment of its Meteorological and Statistical Department is evidence of the desire of Government to possess trustworthy returns of the character of the weather, state and prospects of crops, condition of the people, public health, and so on; and in these varied respects that Department receives from all parts of Bengal, from Assam, Cuttack, Akyab, Chittagong and other places, both by post and by telegraph, official reports which are published weekly in the *Calcutta Gazette* for general information.

That being so, and the returns asked for by the Chamber being within the competence of Government to furnish them by means of the organised arrangements referred to, the Committee trust His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor will not withhold that which can be so readily given, but is at the same time beyond their own power to obtain.

These weather reports were formerly published, by order, at the Chamber's request, but were for some time discontinued, and resumed, for obvious reasons, during the famine of 1873-74.

The apprehension however of a chronic condition of distress in some part or other of India, from deficiency or destruction of crops, and the consequent dependence on other places for supply of food for the people,—and to provide specially against recurring calamities of the

kind a portion of the ordinary revenue of the State is to be appropriated annually,—renders it a matter of permanent necessity to continue the statements.

The subject is of commanding interest alike to the Imperial and Provincial Governments; and in order that the commercial public be kept constantly advised and prepared to act as occasions may arise the Committee trust His Honor will comply with their application.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.

Calcutta, 31st July 1877.

I am directed to acknowledge receipt of your letter, dated the 25th instant, asking apparently that daily reports of rainfall may be supplied by this Government for publication in the *Telegraph Gazette*. In reply I am to point out that several of the stations from which the Chamber wish to obtain information are not subordinate to this Government. As regards the stations belonging to Bengal, I am to remark that at present reports are received from all districts, for the week ending on Saturday, which are published in the *Calcutta Gazette* of the Wednesday following.

On Thursday telegraphic reports are received from 21 stations giving the rainfall for the week ending on Wednesday. These are published in Saturday's *Gazette* of India. It will thus be seen that in fact bi-weekly reports are already furnished to the public.

2. The Lieutenant-Governor thinks that as the rainfall generally throughout Bengal has been sufficient for the present (except perhaps in Shahabad and parts of Gya

districts where irrigation works are available to protect large tracts), it is not necessary for this Government to obtain any special daily reports in addition to those now published.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 4th August 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 2329 of 31st ultimo in reply to their application of the 25th, and in again bringing the subject of their reference to notice they instruct me to remove the apparent misapprehension under which His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor did not consider it necessary to grant their request.

The Committee did not of course wish to put the Government to the inconvenience of obtaining *special daily reports* in addition to those published weekly in the two *Gazettes*, but that the weather reports might be communicated as soon as received, and the delay involved in publication in the *Gazettes* thereby avoided.

The Committee proposed the *Telegraph Gazette* as the most convenient channel for that purpose as it is probably more generally subscribed to than the *Gazettes of India* and *Calcutta*: but if the returns were given in a tabular form and published in the daily papers the object would be obtained equally well.

The Committee trust His Honor, on reconsideration of the question, will be pleased to sanction the arrangement.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.

Calcutta, 6th August 1877.

With reference to your letter of the 4th instant, I am directed to state for the information of the Chamber that the Lieutenant-Governor has no objection to supplying the *Telegraph Gazette* with the reports of rainfall as daily received from the several districts in Bengal. Printed slips containing these reports will be forwarded from this date for publication in that *Gazette*.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 9th August 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 2473 of the 6th instant, and to request you will be so good as to place before the Honorable the Lieutenant-Governor this recognition of His Honor's compliance with their request for the publication of weather reports in the *Telegraph Gazette*.

The following subjects require no particular remarks to recommend them to the attention of members.

Delivery of Railway Traffic at Howrah.

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

Calcutta, 1st September 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire

me to submit for your consideration that if the working arrangements of the railway have been relieved from the severe service to which they have been subjected by the extraordinary traffic developed during the last few months, and if the pressure is sensibly slackening, the limited time now allowed for taking delivery at Howrah should be extended to the 48 hours previously assigned for that purpose, and your normal arrangements ultimately reverted to.

I am also to represent that all cargo intended for shipment direct from Howrah should, if possible, be brought to the terminus, as delivery at Bally involves great inconvenience and expense to merchants.

The Committee therefore trust you may be in a position to permit the former conditions of traffic to be resumed.

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

Calcutta, 14th September 1877.

I am desired to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 1st instant on the subject of the rules for demurrage and delivery of goods at Howrah.

In reply I am to inform you that the Agent does not feel prepared, so long as the present circumstances last, to return to the old rules. Our present rules have reduced the average time during which goods lie on our ground from 2½ days to one, which is a most important advantage. The rules are not made use of as a source of revenue, but have led to much more carefulness on the part of all concerned, and have enabled us to get through heavy work with ease and order, with few mistakes and much less risk of loss.

In reply to your remark as to the inconvenience and expense to merchants involved in the practice of delivering shipment goods at Bally, I am to observe that no goods intended for Howrah have been sent there since the 31st ultimo.

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

Calcutta, 3rd October 1877.

Your letter No. 12655 of 14th of last month was submitted to the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, and, by their direction, I acknowledged it in a personal interview with Mr. Leslie a few days ago, when I represented the Committee's views on the subject of time allowed for removal of goods from the Howrah Station.

But Mr. Leslie was unable to entertain the proposal for reverting to arrangements in force before the Company's Notice of 29th June, and his decision was duly communicated to the Committee.

I am desired by them to resubmit the matter for the Agent's consideration, as it appears to the Committee that the time has arrived when what they ask for may be readily conceded without any apprehension of delay in the removal of consignments.

The following suggestion is offered in the belief that its adoption will facilitate delivery of goods—the object so much desired by the Agent.

The way-bills simultaneously transmitted by post to the Company and consignees in Calcutta no doubt specify the number of each wagon, and if the numbers of wagons were telegraphed from Raneegunge, or some other

more distant station convenient for the purpose, to Howrah, and each number posted on a public Notice board as soon as received, consignees or their representatives would have so much earlier notice and arrange to take delivery without loss of time.

From the East Indian Railway Co. to Chamber.

Calcutta, 14th December 1877.

Reply to your letter of the 3rd October last on the subject of the rates and regulations for demurrage on goods at Howrah has been delayed in consequence of the intervention of the holidays and the wish of the Agent to discuss the question personally with the Officiating Traffic Manager.

Mr. Leslie has now had an opportunity for such discussion, and desires me to say that, in the present state of affairs at Howrah consequent on the re-arrangements of the goods premises and lines and the enlargement of the sheds now in progress, he does not see his way to any relaxation of demurrage charges. We have not at present proper warehouses, and all delay on our ground is liable to give rise to risk and confusion.

**Increased size & weight of bags of grain & seeds
impeding delivery by railway.**

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

Calcutta, 8th August 1877.

The Agent has received serious complaints from the Traffic Department and from the Company's labor contractors as to the increasing size of the bags used for packing grain and seeds.

With a view to check this tendency it has been proposed to decline to allow the benefit of the present low rates for carriage in respect of any produce in bags where the bags with their contents weigh more than 2 maunds 3 seers each.

It is believed that the merchants in Calcutta themselves feel the inconvenience of the increased weight of each bag, which is at present more than an average coolie can carry and not sufficient to fully utilize the powers of two men, and would be willing to revert to 2 maund bags if concerted action could be taken.

The Agent would be glad to know whether the Chamber think it will be well if the Railway Company take the initiative in the matter as proposed.

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

Calcutta, 9th August 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have had under consideration your letter of yesterday's date, and

they direct me to state, in reply, that the question which the Agent has been good enough to submit to them is one which, in their opinion, should be disposed of according to his own judgment; and the only proviso they suggest is that notice of 2 to 3 months should be given to enable shippers of produce to fulfil their contracts and prepare themselves for the proposed withdrawal of the beneficial terms on which their produce is now carried by railway to Calcutta.

**Stocks and Consumption of food grains in
Madras Famine Districts.**

From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of India.

Calcutta, 29th June 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have observed in to-day's papers, with considerable concern and interest, the essential portions of a reported correspondence between the Supreme Government and the Government of Madras relative to the famine districts of that Presidency, the prices of food grains, and supplies necessary to maintain adequate stocks for the requirements of the people dependent on Government aid.

But there are some points which do not appear to have been touched upon, and the Committee bring them to notice in the hope that Government will furnish such information as may place private trade in a position to judge how far it may proceed in helping the State in its measures of relief: and with the view that merchants may have full confidence in operating to that purpose it

is submitted that the details of stock and of consumption at the various inland markets in the Famine Districts should be given with all possible publicity both in Calcutta and Madras.

Another material point in the judgment of the Committee is that a careful inquiry regarding the probable outturn of growing crops of food grains will enable the Government to arrive at an approximate estimate of the extent to which existing stocks should be supplemented by importations, from Bengal, Burmah &c; and it would be expedient to fix, if possible, after such inquiry a date at which it may be reasonably assumed that such importations might cease.

It appears to the Committee of the Chamber that unless some authoritative declaration in these respects be promptly made, the course of trade may be arrested by merchants discontinuing their shipments, and that the existing scarcity will be aggravated by the diminished supplies from this and other rice ports.

From Govt. of India—Telegram—to Chamber.

Calcutta, 6th July 1877.

Governor General in Council thanks Chamber for valuable letter of 29th ultimo, and will gladly afford all information procurable, but it must be remembered that ascertainment of existing stocks and estimate of outturn of growing crops on vast areas is most difficult. Government of Madras have been requested to ascertain and publish in Madras Government Gazette as regards each distressed district *first*, anything known about quantity of local stocks, *secondly*, the imports and exports of grain,

thirdly, the estimated daily consumption of food grain by the population dependent on each principal market, *fourthly*, the condition of the growing crops of food grains. Madras Government have also been told that similar information should be published fortnightly in future, and as crops reach maturity their probable outturn should be given as far as it can be roughly estimated. Chief Commissioner Mysore has been similarly requested. Government of India consider that importations on a large scale into the Madras Presidency may be expected to last until the reaping of the new harvest, that is September and October, and that if the harvest be good they will then probably return by December to their normal average.

From Govt. of India to Chamber of Commerce.

Simla, 7th July 1877.

In reply to your letter of the 29th ultimo I have the honour to enclose post copy of a telegram addressed to you yesterday, which His Excellency the Governor-General in Council trusts will meet the wishes and suggestions of the Chamber of Commerce. I am directed to add that His Excellency in Council feels considerable doubts whether district officers generally have as good means of ascertaining the extent of stocks and of estimating probable outturn of crops as are possessed by the up-country agents of mercantile firms, deeply interested in the issue and having access to many private sources of communication. In the case of district officers in the distressed districts of Madras, the difficulty will be enhanced by the multifarious and onerous duties now falling upon them.

From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of India.

Calcutta, 14th July 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to convey their respectful acknowledgment of the reply which His Excellency the Governor General in Council was pleased to transmit by telegraph on the 6th instant to their representation of 29th of last month, and to state that the full information therein communicated will serve in a very great measure to guide the operations of merchants who may be interested in supplying the wants of the famine districts of Madras.

The Committee also desire me to thank you for your letter No. 585 of 7th instant. They are quite sensible of the difficulties in the way of officers in those districts and would not desire to burden them with superadded laborious service; and probably the enterprise and industry of merchants will enable them to ascertain for themselves the information which the district officers would no doubt have cheerfully obtained had their present duties been less pressing.

The Committee further desire me to say that with the view to the largest publicity being given to the reply with which they have been honored they have requested the daily papers to publish the correspondence.

Importation and Storage of Inflammable Oils.

From Commr. of Police to Chamber of Commerce.

Calcutta, 15th August 1877.

I have the honor to forward for the information of the

This office No. 1470 of
27th June 1877.

From Government Soli-
citor No. 609 of 6th July
(with Advocate General's
opinion).

From Solicitor to Port
Commissioners, dated 17th
July 1877.

From Solicitor to Port
Commissioners, dated 17th
July 1877.

Chamber of Commerce, copies of
the correspondence noted on the
margin, regarding the importation
and storage of inflammable oils
within the Town and Port of Cal-
cutta, together with a copy of the
Rules passed by the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor
of Bengal under clause 3, Section 8 of Act III B. C. of
1865, and to state that owing to the restricted meaning
hitherto attached to the word "inflammable" the rules
have remained inoperative.

2. I request therefore that you will have the goodness
to place the correspondence before the Chamber of Com-
merce, and favor me with an expression of their opinion
whether they consider it necessary that more stringent
measures should be adopted to regulate the storage of
inflammable oils.

From Commr. of Police to Solicitor to Govt.

Calcutta, 27th June 1877.

I have the honor to request that you will favor me by
taking the opinion of the Advocate General with regard
to the definition of "inflammable oil" in connection with
Act III of 1865.

2. It has hitherto been the practice to regard as inflam-
mable only those oils or products of oils which "flash" at
a temperature of less than 100 degrees Fahrenheit, and the
Act above quoted has consequently remained practically a
dead letter.

3. It occurs to me, however, that the definition in-
tended to include Petroleum, Benzole and Kerosine, under
all circumstances, as inflammable oils, adding to the cate-
gory other oils which might flash at less than 100 degrees
Fahrenheit.

4. If my reading of the definition be correct the police
would be enabled to exercise an effective control, whereas
at present enormous quantities of Kerosine and Petroleum
are stored within the town and suburbs of Calcutta with-
out let or hindrance.

5. As the matter is important I trust that I may be
favored with an early reply.

From Solicitor to Govt. to Commr. of Police.

Calcutta, 6th July 1877.

With reference to your letter No. 1470 of the 27th
ultimo, I have the honor to forward you herewith a copy
of the opinion of the officiating Advocate General upon
the question therein referred to.

OPINION.

I am of opinion that the construction put on the defini-
tion of inflammable oil in Act III of 1865 B. C. by Mr.
Charles, Deputy Commissioner of Police, is correct. That
definition is as follows:—

Inflammable oil includes *Petroleum, Benzole, Kerosine* and any other oil or product of oil that gives off an inflammable vapour at a temperature of less than 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

Now in the first place it is to be observed that the meaning to be attributed to inflammable is not an exhaustive definition; it merely states what it includes, and as such it is doubtless of value in determining any question which might arise as to whether a particular oil is inflammable within the meaning of Act III of 1865. In the next place the meaning expressly includes Petroleum, Benzole and Kerosine; and the question which has arisen is whether the words which follow Petroleum, Benzole and Kerosine qualify the inflammability of Benzole, Petroleum, and Kerosine as limiting the characteristic of inflammability of such oils at a temperature of less than 100 degrees Fahrenheit, or whether, as the Deputy Commissioner would read these words, namely as adding to Petroleum, Benzole and Kerosine, other oils which might flash at less than 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

I have already observed that the latter is the proper construction. I gather that owing to the existing practice of limiting inflammability to oils which flash under 100 degrees Fahrenheit, Petroleum, Benzole and Kerosine have been taken out of the operation of the Act presumably on the ground that these oils flash at a degree greater than 100 degrees. This very circumstance shows that the reading of the definition according to the first of the two constructions above alluded to is inaccurate. It was never intended that the Act should be a dead letter with regard to Petroleum, Benzole and Kerosine from its very inception. The object of the Act was the prevention of in-

jury from fire likely to be caused by inflammable oil—*i. e.* by oil which under certain conditions of heat, and without being actually ignited by a substance brought into contact with it, inflames or goes off by what is properly called spontaneous combustion; and I have scarcely any doubt but that the Legislature considered Petroleum, Benzole and Kerosine oils of this description; and with reference to them it did not intend to denote that such oils should be out of the operation of the Act, if they did not flash under 100 degrees. The question as to the reason why the definition puts a limitation on some oils with regard to 100 degrees is one with which in constructing the plain words of an Act such as Petroleum, Benzole and Kerosine we are scarcely concerned.

From Solicitor to the Port Commissioners.

Calcutta, 17th July 1877.

The Vice-Chairman of the Port Commissioners has handed me your Memo No. 1588 dated 10th instant with copy of your letter to the Solicitor to Government and the officiating Advocate General's opinion on the points raised in your letter and he has directed me to call attention to No. 10 of the Rules of the Port of Calcutta passed under Section 7 of Act XXII of 1855 and which Rules are published in the "Calcutta Gazette" of 30th October 1872 Part 1 page 351, under which the Commissioners are virtually prohibited from detaining a vessel at the entrance of the Port if the Master delivers to the Pilot or Harbour Master or the Agent delivers to the Commissioners a certificate duly attested at the Port of shipment stating that the oil is not inflammable. The words inflammable oil have hitherto been treated as

applying to any oils which give off an inflammable vapour at a temperature of less than 100 degrees Fahrenheit and therefore if Petroleum, Benzole and Kerosine are certified as not flashing at a temperature of less 100 degrees Fahrenheit the vessels having such on board have been allowed to come into the Port. This rule is still in force and the Commissioners do not see how if the necessary certificate is furnished they can prevent the vessel having such oils on board coming into Port.

I am not aware what rules have been passed under Section 37 of Act XII of 1875 unless the "rules for the guidance of the River Police in the execution of their duties under the various Acts and bye-laws relating to the Port of Calcutta" on the rules. Rule 9 of these rules provides "that inflammable oil shall only be landed between sunrise and sunset in a covered cargo boat, and at Neemuch Mehul Ghat."

This rule would seem to allow vessels, having inflammable oils on board to come into the Port to be discharged.

Rules passed by the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, under Clause 3, Section VIII, of Act III, B. C. of 1865, entitled "An Act to make better provision for the prevention of injury from fire in Ports, and to provide for the safe keeping of inflammable Oils in Ports and places, within the Provinces under the control of Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal," dated the 14th August 1865.

Rules for application for License of any building or locality for storing inflammable Oils.*

The Commissioner of Police of Calcutta, has been appointed by Government to be the Officer for licensing buildings, &c., under Section 9, Act III, B. C. 1863, within the Town of Calcutta.

Every application for the License of any building, for the purpose of storing therein inflammable Oils, shall specify the locality in which the building is situated, and the description of the building.

The Licensing Officer shall cause the locality to be visited, and the building to be inspected by a competent person, and, if satisfied with the report of such person, shall grant a License, subject to the following conditions:—

Inflammable Oils, in quantities exceeding forty gallons, shall not be located within the Town of Calcutta, or in any place, not approved by the Licensing Officer.

Every such building shall be constructed of masonry, with arched or terraced roofs, and with tiled, or paved, or earthen floors.

Every such building shall be separated by a clear space of 20 feet on every side from any other building.

Every building for the storage of inflammable Oils must either have all doorways and openings built up to a height of not less than 2 feet above the level of the

* I. E. Petroleum, Benzole, and Kerosine; as well as any oil or product of oil which flashes under 100° Fahrenheit's thermometer.

road or street, or else the floor must be at least 2 feet below the surface of the road or street, in order to prevent the Oils flowing out of the building in cases of fire.

No merchandise or goods or any combustible materials shall be stored in any such building.

No cask or other receptacle, containing inflammable Oils, shall be opened, or the Oil drawn off, within such building.

No lighted candle, lamp or fire in any form, shall be permitted at any time within such building.

The Licensing Officer, or any Officer appointed by him, shall be allowed to enter all such buildings for the purpose of inspection, between the hours of 8 A. M. and 4 P. M.

The License may be cancelled if within one week of the receipt of a notice from the Licensing Officer, calling on the holder to repair such building, he shall fail to do so.

A fee of Rupees 16 shall be paid for every license granted under Section VIII. of Act III, B. C. of 1865, for the storage of inflammable Oils.

Rules for the grant of License for the removal of inflammable Oils from one place to another.

Application for Licenses for removal of inflammable Oils, in quantities exceeding 20 gallons, shall specify the description and quantity of Oil to be removed, and the

places from and to which, and the route by which the Oil is to be removed, and shall describe the receptacle in which the Oil is contained.

The License shall state the description and quantity of Oil to be removed, the place to and from which, and the route by which, and the receptacle in which it is to be removed, and the time for which it is granted.

All Oils thus removed, shall be conveyed in covered carts between the hours of 6 A. M. and 6 P. M.

A fee of one Rupee will be charged for the grant of each License.

From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of Bengal.

Calcutta, 22nd September 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce received on the 23rd ultimo your letter No. 1968 of the 15th idem, with papers referred to, regarding the importation and storage of inflammable oils within the town and port of Calcutta.

After considering the matter at their usual meeting the Committee directed the submission of the correspondence to the principal importers of the articles which form the subject of your reference, and they now desire me to place before you in original the replies they have received as the best means of answering your inquiry.

IMPROVEMENT OF INDIAN WHEAT.

No. 53.

*From Govt. of India, to Chamber of Commerce.**Calcutta, the 14th March 1877.*

In forwarding, for the information of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, a copy of the papers noted in the margin, on the subject of the suggested improvements in the quality of Indian wheat, I am directed to draw attention to that part of the letter from a London merchant, inclosed in the Secretary of State's despatch No. 130, dated the 21st December 1876, in which he refers to the expediency of using blowing, winnowing and screening machines, and to the observation thereon contained in paragraph 3 of the Resolution of the 14th instant. I am to suggest that merchants would perhaps find it to their advantage to employ some such means for cleaning their consignments of grain before shipping them.

No.

Extract from the Proceedings of the Government of India in the Department of Revenue, Agriculture and Commerce, dated Calcutta, the — March 1876.

[AGRICULTURE AND HORTICULTURE.]

Read the following despatches from the Secretary of State:—

No. 130 (Statistics and Commerce), dated the 21st

December 1876, forwarding an extract from a letter from a merchant in London, on the subject of the qualities of Indian wheat which are most appreciated in the English market, and of the means by which the prices given for them might be raised, and drawing attention to the importance of the adoption of measures with a view to encourage the improved cultivation of this grain and to facilitate its transport to England in good condition.

No. 14 (Statistics and Commerce), dated the 18th January 1877, requesting that a compilation be prepared, showing the main features of the cultivation of wheat its consumption and export, the selling prices, the probable cost of transport; and that samples of the chief local varieties of the grain carefully named and described may be made and sent to England.

Read also the following papers showing the action taken by the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, with a view to improving the quality of the wheat in those Provinces and preventing its admixture with other grains.

Circular No. 11, dated the 5th May 1876.

Extract, paragraph 3, from a circular, No. 23, dated the 4th August 1876.

Circular letter No. 3433-162, dated the 9th September 1876, and enclosures.

RESOLUTION.

OBSERVATIONS.—The development of the export trade in Indian wheat has long occupied the attention of the Government of India. In January 1873, on the representation of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, who urged that the weight of the export duty and the length of the sea voyage practically disabled Indian wheat from successfully competing with any country in the English market, except perhaps California and Australia, the Government of India freed Indian wheat from all duty on export.

2. Since then, aided by various other circumstances, particularly the shortened transit through the Suez Canal, and recently the state of exchange, and perhaps to some extent the political condition of eastern Europe, the increase in the trade has been very great, as will be seen from the figures appended showing the quantity and value of the wheat exported to foreign countries:—

	Cwt.	Rs.
1871-72	637,089	23,56,445
1872-73	394,010	16,76,900
1873-74	1,755,954	82,76,064
1874-75	1,069,076	49,04,352
1875-76	2,498,285	90,10,255
1876-77 (first ten months)	4,839,290	1,67,34,001

Seeing that the quality of Indian wheat has commended itself to English millers, it may be hoped that with the advantages she now possesses, India will be able to maintain this important trade at a high level. But it must not be forgotten that this country has active and eager competitors in the United States, Southern Russia, Austro-Hungary, and Egypt, and that some of these

countries are naturally possessed of great advantages in the shipment of wheat to England. It is necessary, therefore, that the greatest care should be taken by every body interested in the trade, from the cultivator to the shipper, to prevent any cause for complaint regarding the quality of the grain exported.

3. It appears from the despatch No. 130, received from Her Majesty's Secretary of State, that complaints are now made of the dirty condition of Indian wheat received in England, as well as of its admixture with inferior grains. The Governor-General in Council desires that these papers may be circulated amongst district officers and published for general information. To some extent the complaints regarding the dirty condition of our wheat will diminish with the extended employment of the railways in its carriage to the port of shipment, in supersession of boats, and with the increased facilities of despatch from the port. A great deal may also be done by the trade in undertaking the cleansing and sorting of the grain before it is shipped. It would appear from a letter from the firm of Messrs. Scott, Finlay & Co. of Bombay to the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, that in the present state of the market it would hardly be profitable to incur much expense in such cleansing and sorting. But probably with an increased demand for cleaned and sorted wheat, it will prove remunerative to set up winnowing and sorting machines of the kind referred to in the communication from Her Majesty's Secretary of State at the great centres of shipment, *viz.*, Bombay, Kurrachee, and Calcutta. In view of the poverty and ignorance of the agricultural community of India, the Govern-

General in Council does not consider that it would be expedient to suggest the employment in the rural districts of machines, the purchase of which would require capital which is probably not forthcoming, and the repair of which, when broken, could not be effected except at the Presidency towns. His Excellency in Council considers however that much may be done in the way of advice and instruction by district officers to impress upon the agriculturist the necessity of so treating his crop, after it has been reaped, as to keep it reasonably clean, and that such advice will be welcomed and acted upon by the cultivator in his own interest as soon as it is made clear to him that clean wheat will command a readier and better market than dirty grain.

4. The question of admixture of wheat with inferior grains, such as barley and gram, is a separate matter. It is not probable that the adulteration is altogether fraudulent. The truth is that the cultivating classes, who do not largely consume wheat themselves but the inferior grains, have hitherto been in the habit of sowing these inferior grains with their wheat in the same field, the object being to have some resource to fall back upon in the event either of failure in the wheat crop or of difficulty in selling it at a remunerative price. As long as circumstances operated against the development of a steady and sure trade in wheat, this practice of the cultivator could perhaps only be regarded as dictated by prudence. But circumstances have changed, and a practice which formerly was reasonable, has now no reason for continuance, and indeed its continuance will have an injurious effect on the cultivator. There seems little reason to doubt that the agricultural community will be ready to

modify this habit on becoming acquainted with the facts of the case, and that they may easily be persuaded either to cease to cultivate inferior grains in the same field with wheat, or to be careful in reaping to keep them apart. The local officers in each district should cause them to be properly instructed in this matter, and they should specially impress upon the cultivators the need for careful selection of their seed. Much good may result from judicious action in this direction, and the Governor-General in Council commends the matter to the particular attention of the local authorities. His Excellency in Council has noticed with much satisfaction the steps which have already been taken toward the attainment of the object desired by the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces.

5. The Secretary of State for India desires that a paper may be prepared, bringing together all the facts procurable regarding wheat cultivation in India. To assist in the preparation of such a paper, the Governor-General in Council requests that in each province a memorandum may be drawn up showing, as far as the information may be available,

- (1) the names of the districts in which wheat is grown ;
- (2) the area (in acres) under wheat in each of the last five years to the end of 1876-77 ;
- (3) the average outturn in pounds per acre ;
- (4) a brief account of the cultivation, in which should be stated the kind of land preferred, the quantity of seed sown per acre, the crop which wheat follows, the season of cultivation, and other useful particulars ;
- (5) the average wholesale price of wheat ;

- (6) average consumption per head of the population of the district ;
- (7) total consumption within the district ;
- (8) annual imports into the district for five years, and places whence imported ;
- (9) annual exports for the same period, places whither exported, and proportion carried by road, rail or river ;
- (10) estimated average cost of cartage to the railway station nearest the district ;
- (11) cost of transit to port of shipment (Calcutta, Bombay, or Kurrachee), by rail, by road and by river ;
- (12) local names for the varieties of wheat cultivated, and their description in English ; and
- (13) a general summary for the province, shewing the total area under wheat, the average outturn per acre, the total outturn, and the details of the import and export trade.

6. It is also requested that no time may be lost in obtaining the samples of wheat required by the Secretary of State. It is desirable that these should be put up in bags containing two pounds each, properly labelled with the name of the district in which the wheat was grown and its distinctive name. These samples should be forwarded to this office as soon as possible, without waiting for the completion of the information asked for.

ORDER.—Ordered, that a copy of this Resolution with a copy of the papers read in the preamble be forwarded to the

with a request that the necessary measures may be taken without delay to carry into effect the suggestions and instructions contained in this Resolution. The Governor-General in Council will be glad to receive any suggestions which local Governments and Administrations may desire to make with a view to the further development and improvement of the trade.

No. 130 (Statistics and Commerce), dated India Office, London, 21st December 1876.

*From—Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India,
To—The Government of India.*

I transmit, for the information of Your Excellency, an extract of a letter from a merchant in London, on the subject of the qualities of Indian wheat which are most appreciated in the English market, and of the means by which the price given for them might be raised. Besides the points therein mentioned, it is desirable that attention should be drawn to the loss resulting from the mixture of barley or gram with the wheat, and from the want of cleanliness in the granaries in which it is stored and in the boats in which it is carried to the port of shipment. Any means by which the importance of remedying these defects can be impressed on the people may have a very salutary effect on the trade.

2. I have applied for further information on the subject of a system of inspection said to be adopted in the United States and Canada, as described in the accompanying extract from a statement relating to the trade of Canada.

ENCLOSURES.

No. 1.

*Extract of a letter from a London Merchant, dated
December 1876.*

With reference to the interview I had with you last month as to the growth and production of wheat in the Empire of India, I now beg to lay before you a short statement of the present position of the trade, to which I have paid close attention the last three or four years.

Calcutta.—The wheats that come from this port are fine, mellow, soft, white,—from Cawnpore, Meerut and Delhi districts,—which bring the highest price in the market (except the finest Bombay, which, however, so far, has not formed an article of import owing to inadequate prices obtained in London and Liverpool), and are very clean on the whole; they could, however, be improved by proper blowing and exhaust machines, and sifting machines, and I should recommend this to be done so as to get rid of grain, tares and barley as much as possible; if this cleaning process is enforced by the district officials, I have no doubt these fine wheats could be made worth 2s. to 4s. per quart more money in the United Kingdom. As far as I can make out from merchants who have been in the North West, the name these fine wheats go by is "Pogoo" or "Pogoo." In our market, it goes by the name of "No. 1 Club".

I next come to a wheat, inferior to the above, which I understand goes generally by the name of "Doodiah" or "Doodeah," being called in our market "No. 2 Club." This is the quality we see most of and it is very well liked as in preparing for use it absorbs a great weight of water,

which of course, is very profitable for the miller in this country. The great drawback to it, however, is its foulness, caused by admixture with grain, tares, and barley. There is no reason, however, why, in two or three seasons, this fault should not be almost entirely remedied by your officers attending to properly cleaned seed being put into the ground.

I next come to a white-grey hard wheat, which appears to me to come from low ground, as it is almost as hard and flinty as rice; on the whole, it is a clear wheat, still it could be improved by the seed wheat being better attended to.

I next come to a soft red wheat, which appears to me to come from the same districts as the "No. 2 Club," as, except in colour, it seems to be the same style of grain; it is quite as foul as the "No. 2 Club," and, by properly cleaning it for seed, I have no doubt its value as an article of trade could be raised also 2s. to 4s. per quarter.

Another class of wheat we see largely from Calcutta is a rather large-berried wheat, classed between the No. 1 and No. 2, which we call in Mark Lane "Mountain Club," parties who have seen it grow telling me it comes from pretty high ground. This is a clean wheat, but can also be improved by the seed being more carefully attended to.

The last wheat I would name as coming from Calcutta is from the Central Provinces, and is called "Jubbulpore"; the district where it is produced lies about halfway between Bombay and Calcutta by rail, and most of it goes to the west coast for shipment, and I therefore treat this under the head of—

Bombay.—The wheats from this port seem to be all

produced in Central India; at least all I have seen, whether soft or hard, show a long, bold grain just like the "Jubbulpore".

No. 1, "White Bombay," is the finest wheat I have ever seen from India, and it does not seem possible to improve upon it, when I state that it sells at close to the same price as Australian (the finest wheat imported).

No. 2, "Bombay White," is also a superior article, but its great drawback is the coarse large-grained brown wheat, and some pains ought to be taken to have this grain extracted. The same cleaning machines named elsewhere in this paper might be tried to get it out, but I doubt the success of this process, and suspect the only way to bring the No. 2 wheat up to the No. 1 is to hand-pick out the coarse brown grain and sow the wheats separate. In three or four seasons, by this mode, I feel sure the quantity of No. 1, "Bombay White," might be much increased, and No. 2 decreased in proportion.

The next wheat to be noticed as exported from Bombay is the long-berried coarse brown wheat, a good article, but not much known on this side, and does not bring within 5s. per quarter of No. 2 White.

From Bombay also is exported a very fine long-berried hard wheat, of which large quantities have gone the last two seasons to Marseilles and other Mediterranean ports, but it is not liked here, being too much of rice nature. So far as the Bombay wheat trade is concerned, the production of the fine wheats should be as much encouraged as possible for the United Kingdom consumption, and as regards cleaning, where necessary, the machines mentioned elsewhere are the best.

Madras.—So far as I know, no wheat has reached the United Kingdom from that presidency, but I have this season seen a sample of red wheat thence which would do well for use in our markets, being of a sound, strong red type.

Kurrachee.—The export of wheat from the Indus country through this port has been at times considerable, and there seems to me no reason why it should not rapidly increase; the quality of the wheat, white and red, is soft and mellow, but its great drawback is the large admixture of barley it contains, which ought to be got out. I have no hesitation in saying that, in four or five years, Kurrachee-shipped wheat would be improved 8s. to 5s. per quarter if due attention were paid to the cleaning of the seed wheat. The machines I allude to elsewhere are the very things for the purpose, and I have great confidence in the future of the Indus country as growing wheat, since the grain itself is mellow and easy for the miller to handle.

Machines.—I have taken a good deal of trouble in this matter, consulting Dell and Son of Mark Lane, who are clever, intelligent machine inventors and makers, and most respectable people. I send

* Prospectus annexed. you several copies of their last list, and Mr. Dell, Junior, has kindly noted a few remarks against the machine* he specially points to for seed wheat cleaning purposes; he is supplying D. Sassoon & Co. with machines for cleaning the wheat shipped now so freely at Bussorah on the Persian Gulf, and from experiments on fowl wheats from India, Persia, and Syria, that I have seen, there is no doubt Messrs. Dell and Son understand their business in recommending the machines they do.

Of course, I need hardly tell you that the cause of the sudden increase in the wheat trade with India is the opening up of the Suez Canal, thus enabling wheat to arrive in London and Liverpool in 42 to 48 days from Calcutta, from dates of bill of lading, in 35 to 38 days from Bombay, in 40 to 45 days from Kurrachee, by which means the ravages of the weevil are much checked; and altogether the trade is rapidly settling down to a regular one, the quality of wheat from India generally competing well with Russian, British, and American sorts. It appears to me that the grand thing to point to is to get the wheat as cheaply as possible to the ports, either by cheapening railway carriage, or improving the rivers, or increasing and extending canals,—probably you will say, by doing all.

Before ending these remarks, which I fear you may find wearisome, I should not like you to suppose that shipments are made by the Suez Canal alone, though they are so entirely from Kurrachee, and very much so from Bombay; from Calcutta, however, large quantities of wheat are shipped yearly by sailing vessels, and it is found the grain stands the voyage well by being stowed at the bottoms of the ships in bags, where no light or air can get to it, thus keeping the destructive weevil quiet and in a dormant state.

If you want any more information, I shall be glad to give it you, or obtain it for you, if it is not within my personal knowledge.

As far as I can find out, the Calcutta people call the different wheats as follows:—

Soft red,	"Jamejulle."	} Gunga and Junna— wheats of the Doab.
Hard	"Gungajalle."	
Soft white,	"Doodeah."	
Soft	"(fine, North-West), "Pegu," or "Pegoo."	

Prospectus referred to in preceding letter.

BLOWING, WINNOWING, & SCREENING MACHINES.

The universal approval and many prices accorded to this machine have given rise to many imitation. Every part of these machines is made to a standard gauge, thus ensuring an accuracy of fit, and facility of repair, unequalled in any other machine of this class. The care and attention which has been bestowed upon the production of these improved machines, together with the sound principles upon which they are constructed,—ensuring durability and efficiency to a high degree, have—already brought them into extensive use. They are made of the very best materials, are light, simple, pleasing in appearance, such as can only be obtained by first-class design and workmanship.

For separating and cleaning all kinds of grain and seeds for market, this machine has no equal. For export they are not to be surpassed, being durable and simple. They are capable of cleaning grain as fast as one man can fill the machine, being a complete blowing and dressing machine at one time, but can be used as a blower separately, if required. Having an eccentric motion, it can be thrown in and out of gear, making two complete implements in one. Large stock always on hand.

Prices.

No. 1.—Machine complete with blowing apparatus, riddles 22 by 18 inches, £10.

If of hard wood for hot climate £1 extra.

This machine with special sieves, will do 8 to 10 quarters per hour of the sample tried. If put through twice, a great improvement would be made on the first sample.

No. 2.—Same as No. 1, without blowing apparatus, £9.

No. 3.—Small size without blowing apparatus riddles, 18 by 18 inches, £8.

Blowing apparatus to No. 3, 15s. extra.
Seed riddles, 10s. extra.

No. 4.—New size for small occupations, riddles, 16 by 16 inches, £6 10s.

For shipment, machines can be made in sections so that six machines will occupy the measurement of one when erected.

No. 2.

Extract from "Report on the Home and Foreign Trade of Canada, for 1875."

Facilities for Transferring grain, &c.,

With all the facilities referred to at his command, the grain merchant in Montreal stands in a most important relation to the markets of Europe on the one hand, and the vast cornfields of the western world on the other. In response to orders by cable, he either forthwith buys Canada wheat on the spot or near at hand, or he directs the purchase of grain in Chicago or Milwaukee. Subjected, as it is, at these great centres, to the most perfect system of inspection in existence, it arrives at Kingston and is there transferred to barges of similar capacity to

the vessels from which it is delivered, and passing through the cool waters of the river St. Lawrence, the cargo of wheat, corn, rye, or other grain, is placed alongside the ocean-going ship for transport across the Atlantic. All this is accomplished, as must be evident, without the possibility of the grain being changed, or mixed with an inferior quality, by the way (a result which cannot be relied upon by any other route), thus giving additional value to the inspection certificate which was issued for the cargo at the original port of shipment. Not the least important consideration is, that the northerly latitude of the Canadian transportation route relieves the grain from all danger as to *condition*, even in the summer months, when the risk by other channels is comparatively great.

Circular No. 11, dated Nagpur, 5th May 1876.

From—The Offg. Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces,

To—All Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners, Central Provinces.

It has been represented to the Chief Commissioner that the value of the wheat which is exported from these provinces to England—and of late years a considerable quantity of wheat has found its way to England—is materially affected by its admixture with *lah, masur*, and similar pulses.

2. The Chief Commissioner is aware that it is a common practice in these provinces to sow these pulses with the wheat, but the practice is one which it is very desirable to discourage. It is said that, by machinery, stones, dirt and sand can be easily separated from the wheat, but

not so this admixture of pulse, which, on the wheat being ground, gives the flour a bad colour and materially reduces its market value.

3. The Chief Commissioner desires that Deputy Commissioners will explain to malguzars and cultivators how injurious the present practice is, and will try to induce them to keep their wheat free from admixture. The price of agricultural produce has fallen so much of late years, that farmers cannot afford to lose the excellent market for their wheat which England appears to be likely to become, and if they will only endeavour to suit the English market, it seems probable that Indian wheat will become an important export and may rival the other wheat producing countries which supply England.

Extract, paragraph 3, from a Circular, No. 25, dated 4th August 1876 from the Officiating Assistant Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, to all Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners in the Central Provinces.

Para. 3. In a late Circular, the Chief Commissioner commented upon the fact that the value of the wheat grown in these provinces and exported to England was materially affected by its admixture with the various pulses, and prizes for wheat free from such admixture would be practical, and direct encouragement to the people to keep their wheat free from admixture.

If a beginning is now made, and an annual show of some kind or other held in each district, it will be possible before long to arrange for an annual show in each tahsil, and so bring home to the bulk of the people that the Government encouragement is in furtherance of the people's own interests.

Circular No. 3433-162, dated Nagpur, 9th September 1876.

From—The Offg. Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces,

To—The Deputy Commissioner of Jabalpur,
 " " " *of Saugor,*
 " " " *of Narsinghpur,*
 " " " *of Hoshangabad,*
 " " " *of Raipur,*
 " " " *of Bilspur,*
 " " " *of Seoni,*
 " " " *of Danish,*
 " " " *of Nagpur,*
 " " " *of Wardha.*

I am directed to send you copies of the marginally noted letters that have passed between this office and Messrs. Finlay, Scott and Company of Bombay. You will also receive, in a separate packet, separate samples of the various kinds and qualities of wheat, as described and classified by Messrs. Finlay, Scott and Company. A portion of each sample should be given to each of your Tahsildars, and the Chief Commissioner wishes that these samples should be shown to as many of the leading agriculturists, malguzars, and ryots as possible, and that the respective places which these kinds of wheat occupy in the market should be explained.

The cultivators should be exhorted to pay attention to

the cultivation of a wheat which is sure to fetch a good price ; to bear in mind the importance of keeping the wheat in their fields free from any admixture of pulses ; remember the necessity of having all the wheat they sell in bulk of the same kind and quality ; and to try the effect of selecting the seed they put down in their fields. The result of sowing selected seed would very soon become visible.

These are all matters that can easily be made comprehensible to the native farmer, and the Chief Commissioner hopes that you and your Tashildars will again and again impress on them the advantage of acting up to the advice given them.

This Office Circular, No. 25 of the 4th August, has suggested a way to strengthen your hands in the matter and to interest the cultivators themselves ; and you will perceive from a notice in the *Gazette*, that the Nagpur District Fund Committee have made a beginning in the matter of improving of agricultural produce, by offering prizes for the best of large samples of grain exhibited at the Ramtek fair.

Dated Bombay, 11th July 1876.

From—Messrs. Finlay, Scott and Co.,

To—The Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces.

By the mail to hand last week, we received from our Mr. R. V. Reid some very interesting information regarding the favour in which wheats grown in the districts of your Commission were now held in the Home market. The millers there are learning rapidly to appreciate the great advantage to be derived from mixing these grains with

those grown in England, especially after a wet harvest with them, the reason being that the extreme dryness of the Indian grain serves to absorb much of the excess of moisture from the Home grain, and reduces the average of what is thus mixed to a proper condition of moisture.

2. Mr. Reid then remarks upon the injury done to the market of this wheat at Home by the large admixture of foreign grains. As this is a question in which we know you have particularly interested yourself, and as it is one of great importance to us, being, as we are, the largest exporters of the article from Bombay, we gladly lay before you our knowledge on the subject, and will be happy to provide you with any further information you may require with regard to it.

3. The quantity of pure wheat exported from Bombay is very small compared with that of the lower and adulterated qualities ; but under present circumstances it does not pay as well to ship the former as the latter, the scarcity of the best wheat here making the margin of price between it and the lower kinds greater on this side than in the Home market. On an average, the cost of good wheat is 1 shilling per 100 lbs dearer to ship than the other, and fetches only 6 pence to 9 pence more in Liverpool. We send you herewith two samples of best quality shipped by one of our neighbours, which obtained top prices on account of purity.

4. This pure wheat, called by the natives "Ek dana pissie," comes mostly to the Seonce and Etarsi stations from the Bhopal State, and is found in Doleeria market ; and its present value in England is from 10 shillings to 10 shillings 3 pence per cental (100 lbs.)

5. The wheat that comes from Nagpur is pretty free from admixture of foreign grains, but contains a large percentage of hard red wheat which prevents its getting as good a price as the pure white Pissie.

6. The largest export from Bombay is of the Mundio Pissi, which comes from the neighbourhood of Jubbulpore—from Sohara Road, Chhindwara, and adjacent stations; this in itself is a very pretty grain, but much depreciated owing to heavy mixtures of foreign seeds. Mr. Reid writes in this connection:—

“ Fearful are the complaints of *dhall* and gram in it, principally the *wild dhall*, which *discolours the flour*.

7. There can be no doubt that this injurious result is brought about by carelessness and want of method in sowing, and we think that a great improvement would very soon be forthcoming if by any means the ryot could be persuaded to be more careful in sowing an unmixed grain.

8. The wheat trade with India is now becoming more important every day, and it is, of course, for the interests of all concerned that the character of the article should suffer as little as possible from the primitive and ignorant way in which the ryot is content to farm. Notwithstanding the advanced period of the season, we propose to send you at our first leisure samples showing the various descriptions of grain as they come to this market in their order of merit.

No. 2744-125, dated 15th July 1876.

From.—The Offg. Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces.

To.—Messrs. Finlay, Scott & Co., Bombay.

I am directed by the Chief Commissioner to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th instant, and am to say that the subject of improving the quality of the wheat produced in these provinces and preventing its admixture with inferior grains has already been under the Chief Commissioner's consideration. I enclose copy of a circular addressed to district officers, and also copy of a letter to the Chamber of Commerce, asking to be supplied with samples of the best kinds of wheat. If you would, either yourselves or in concert with the Chamber of Commerce, supply samples showing the best kinds of grain, and the order in which they come, the Chief Commissioner will be much obliged, and will do what lies in his power to impress on the ryots the advantage of clean sowing, and of preserving their wheat from admixture with inferior grains. No doubt, improvement will be gradual; but the Chief Commissioner is confident that, in time, the ryots will desist from sowing various kinds of grain in the same field when they find that by doing so they spoil their market, and the better kinds of wheat will be cultivated if it is known that they fetch a higher price.

There are some ten districts in these provinces whence wheat is procured, and these are divided each into three or four sub-divisions; and it is desirable that every sub-divisional officer should have small samples of the wheats in their order of merit, so that the Chief Commissioner hopes you will be able to send samples large enough to

supply a small sample to each, say not less than two lbs. of each kind of wheat.

The Chief Commissioner will, at all times, be glad to receive hints or information from you which may enable him to enlarge the market for any of the staples of these provinces.

Dated Bombay, 28th August 1876.

From—Messrs. Finlay, Scott & Co.,

To—The Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces.

Referring to our letter of 11th July on the subject of the sowing of wheat, we now beg to enclose railway receipt for two bags sent to your address, containing standard samples of the descriptions of grain grown in the districts of your Commission, and known in the Home markets.

These we have divided into five small bags containing one half-hundredweight each.

- No. 1.—White (Ek Danna,) despatched to this market from Soonee and Etarsi stations.
- „ 2.—White Pissie from districts near Nagpur.
- „ 3.—Mundie Pissie from districts near Jubbulpore.
(These three descriptions we described in our letter of 11th July.)
- „ 4.—Red Pissie from districts near Simree.
- „ 5.—Akola Pissie.

These descriptions of red wheat are daily coming into greater favour in the French market, a good business having taken place with Marseilles at favourable prices. The Simree has only a small percentage of hard grains,

this admixture being on a larger scale in the lower quality from Akola; in the latter description, the hard Kuthia grain is found as much as ten per cent., and its presence serves considerably to diminish the value of the bulk.

We may mention that the cause of our being unable to send you these samples earlier is due to the great difficulty that always exists, at the close of the season, in procuring reliable samples to represent the fair quality of the crop.

No. 14 (Statistics and Commerce), dated India Office, London, 18th January 1877.

From—Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India,

To—The Government of India.

In my despatch of the 21st ultimo, No. 130, I drew Your Excellency's attention to the importance of measures adapted to encourage the improved cultivation of wheat, and to facilitate its transport to this country in good condition.

2. It seems very desirable that a compilation should be prepared, as has already been done with various Indian products, shewing the main features of its cultivation, consumption and export, the local selling prices for a series of years, and the probable cost of transport from the chief markets to the place of export. An attempt to prepare such a paper has been made in the Department of the Reporter on Products; but it was found that the information in this country was not sufficient for the purpose.

3. A selection should also be made of the chief local varieties of the grain, and samples should be sent to England carefully named and described, so that their place of production could be certainly distinguished, in

order that the opinion of competent persons in this country may be obtained as to their market-value. This latter suggestion is one which might, in my opinion, be advantageously acted upon with the least practicable delay.

From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of India.

Calcutta, 9th May 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 53 of 14th March on the subject of improving the condition of wheat shipped from this country to England; and to communicate the following remarks in reply.

The experience of exporters from Calcutta proves that all qualities of wheat, from the lowest to the highest, meet with a ready sale at home, notwithstanding the somewhat imperfect state in which they are placed upon the markets there.

The cleaning of the grain is a very simple matter, and if it will pay the merchants to adopt that process, the Government need not apprehend that it will be neglected. Home dealers however do not buy wheat, with guarantees of percentage of admixture as is the case with linseed and other oil seeds, and it is evident that its grain suits them well enough in its present state. Of course if the dealers could get it cleaned for the same money they would not object to any improvement in that respect.

The purchasers and exporters from Calcutta do not find that wheat is much adulterated with other grain; occasionally a trifling exception may be noticed, but usually the refraction is earthy matter which gets accidentally introduced when the wheat is being winnowed.

The great fault of Cawnpore and similar wheat is the admixture of red grain with the white, and to this no doubt exception is taken at home.

If this can be avoided by selection of seed it would be desirable in the interests of native cultivators wheat crops to have this material point pressed upon them as they would thereby be saved the depreciated price they now realise—say 4 to 6 annas per maund or 25 per cent of the price they usually get on the growing districts. On this point however it cannot be stated with certainty that the presence of red grain is attributable to the seed, as the native agriculturists assert that it is caused by rain and cold followed by wind. And this would appear to be borne out by the crop of this season, which abounds with red wheat, much more so than last year, and the season was a very wet one.

A great deal of wheat is now being grown on land not suited for it, but this will probably right itself as the ryot will take time to learn what crop will pay him best,—wheat being a new one to him on its present scale. This results in parcels of inferior stuff, which find ready market however, and if they pay the cultivator better than another crop of course he is quite right to grow it.

The Committee of the Chamber are inclined on the whole to deprecate any active interference by Government, and while they duly appreciate the excellent motive which prompts the various recommendations and suggestions contained in their official Resolution, they are not unmindful of the results of the Cotton Frauds Act in Bombay.

Registration of British Trade Marks.

From Govt. of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce.

Calcutta, 21st May 1877.

I am desired by the Lieutenant-Governor to forward for the information of the Chamber of Commerce, the enclosed copy of a letter* from the Government of India in the Revenue, Agriculture and Commerce Department and its enclosures, relative to the registration of English Trade Marks.

No. 2 dated 30th April,
335
1877.

From Govt. of India to Govt. of Bengal.

Simla, 30th April 1877.

I am directed to forward for the information of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor and such publication as may seem necessary, a copy of the undermentioned papers, viz.—

A pamphlet* entitled "Rules under the Trade Marks Registration Act, 1875, and the Trade Marks Registration Amendment Act, 1876."

Δ "Notice as to registration of Trade Marks for Cotton Goods," dated the 21st November 1876, signed by the Registrar of the Trade Marks Registry Office.

Vide *Gazette of India*, dated the 10th February 1877, Part 1, pages 730 & 88.

Ditto, dated the 3rd March 1877, Part 1, page 115.

Supplement to the *Gazette of India*, dated the 21st March 1877, pages 769 and 770.

These papers have already appeared in the *Gazette of India*.

Copies of the despatches from the Secretary of State noted in the margin, under cover of which the above mentioned papers were received, are also forwarded.

No. 49 (Judicial), dated the 30th November 1876.
No. 1 (Judicial), dated the 11th January 1877,
with enclosure.

No. 49 (Judicial), dated India Office, London, the 30th November 1876.

From—Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India,
To—The Government of India.

I herewith forward for the information of Your Excellency in Council, and for distribution among the Local Governments and Administrations, one hundred copies of the amended rules which have been issued under the "Trade Marks Registration" Acts of 1875 and 1876.

No. 1 (Judicial), dated India Office, London, the 11th January 1877.

From—Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India,
To—The Government of India.

With reference to my despatch of the 30th November, No. 49 of 1876, forwarding, for the information of Your Excellency in Council and for distribution among the Local Governments and Administrations, 100 copies of the amended Rules which have been issued under the Trade Marks Registration Acts of 1875 and 1876, I now transmit copy of a letter dated 30th November from Mr. Reader Lack, the Registrar of the Trade Marks Registry Office, drawing attention to two points in connection with the new Rules.

Dated 30th November 1876.

From—H. Reader Lack, Esq., Registrar of the Trade Marks Registry Office,

To—Sir Louis Mallet, c. b., Under-Secy. of State for India.

I am directed by the Commissioners of Patents to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th instant, and to send herewith, in accordance with the wish of the Marquis of Salisbury, 100 copies of the amended Rules under the Trade Marks Registration Acts and of the notice as to registration of the trade marks for cotton goods.

In transmitting these documents I am directed to draw attention to Rule 5, under which foreigners resident in India are admitted to registration in this country upon the same terms as British subjects. It may also be useful to point out that prior registration in the Presidency, Province, or Native State in which an Indian trade mark owner is resident is not necessary before registration in this country.

NOTICE AS TO REGISTRATION OF TRADE MARKS FOR COTTON GOODS.

As numerous marks used in the cotton trade at the date of the passing of the Trade Marks Registration Acts (38 & 39 Vict. c. 91., and 39 and 40 Vict. c. 33.), are, by reason of their common usage, excluded from the scope of that Act, the following rules have been made for the guidance of persons desirous of registering trade marks for cotton goods:—

“57. For the purpose of facilitating the granting of

trade marks in respect of cotton goods in Classes 23, 24, and 25, there shall be established by the Commissioners of Patents, and subject to their control, an office at Manchester for the exhibition of all devices, marks, headings, labels, tickets, letters, words, or figures, or combinations of letters, words, or figures, used in the cotton trade, and in these rules included under the expression ‘cotton marks.’

“58. Every person who at the date of the passing of the Act (August 13, 1875), used any cotton mark shall, on or before the first day of December one thousand eight hundred and seventy-six, send to the Manchester office three representations of such cotton mark, in such form and with such a description as may be from time to time required by the Commissioners of Patents.

“59. A committee of persons versed in the usages of the cotton trade shall be appointed by the Commissioners of Patents, consisting of such number of persons as may from time to time be determined by them, and it shall be the duty of such committee, on or before a time to be named by the Commissioners of Patents, to divide the cotton marks, representations of which have been so sent in to the Manchester office, into two classes, the first class consisting of such of the said cotton marks as are, in the opinion of the committee, trade marks within the meaning of the Act, and the second class consisting of such of the said cotton marks as are not, in the opinion of

the committee, trade marks within the meaning of the Act.

"60. The said committee shall form a list of the cotton marks sent to the Manchester office in each of the aforesaid classes, and shall transmit such lists to the Commissioners of Patents, accompanied by two representations of each of the marks specified in the second class in such list.

"The third representation of each of the marks in the second class in such list shall be retained for reference in the Manchester office.

"61. The Commissioners of Patents may from time to time add to the aforesaid list any cotton marks as they may think just, and such addition shall be deemed to be part of the original list.

"62. Any proprietor of a cotton mark not specified in the second class in such list may apply to be registered as proprietor of such cotton mark in manner and subject to the conditions in which he may apply to be registered as proprietor of any other trade mark, but it shall not be lawful for the Registrar to register any person as proprietor of any cotton mark in the second class of the aforesaid list except in pursuance of an order of the Court.

"63. A cotton mark shall not be registered except in manner and subject to the conditions prescribed by these rules with respect to the registry of cotton marks."

Committee to form list of marks sent in to Manchester office.

Marks may be added to list.

Any person claiming to be the proprietor of a cotton mark in Class I may apply to be registered.

Cotton mark not to be registered except in manner herein prescribed.

An office, as provided by Rule 57, will be opened at 48, Royal Exchange, Manchester, on the 24th of October 1876.

The following gentlemen have been appointed by the Commissioners of Patents to form the Committee of Exports under Rule 59 :—

Edmund Ashworth, Esq., President of the Chamber of Commerce, Manchester.

John Cheetham, Esq., Vice-President of the Chamber of Commerce, Manchester.

B. Davis, Esq.

S. A. Fulda, Esq.

P. Goldschmidt, Esq.

A. J. Hunter, Esq.

H. J. Leppoe, Esq.

G. Lord, Esq.

E. Crompton Potter, Esq.

E. Reiss, Esq.

H. M. Steintal, Esq.

E. H. Sykes, Esq.

Mr. Joseph Fry has been appointed by the Commissioners of Patents as keeper of the Manchester office.

Each representation required to be furnished by Rule 58 should be attached to a separate half-sheet of foolscap paper, on which should be written,—*a*, the name and address of the applicant; *b*, the number of the class in which registration is desired; and *c*, the length of time the mark has been in use. If it be desired to register a mark in more than one class, three representations in each class must be furnished. No fee will be required, nor will any formal declaration or statement be necessary.

In the case of a combined stamp the applicant should state whether it is desired to protect the whole combination or only a part of it; in which case a line should be drawn round the part which it is desired to protect.

Representations of marks considered by the owners as private should be marked with the letter "P."

When application has been already made to the Principal Registry in London, the Registrar's number must be quoted in the Manchester application.

Owners of marks placed upon the second class specified in Rule 59, although not entitled to registration except by an order of the Court, may obtain from the Registrar a certificate of refusal to register, as provided by section 2 of 39 & 40 Vict. c. 33.

It is intended that all marks for cotton goods made in the piece should be claimed in Class 24.

These regulations do not apply in the case of marks not used prior to the 13th of August 1875. Application to register such marks must be made in the usual way to the Trade Marks Registry in London.

Local purchases of Government Stores.

No. 527 E.

Extract from the Proceedings of the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal in the Public Works Department (General Establishments), under date the 20th March 1877.

Read a memorandum from the Secretary to this Government in the General Department, No. 696 of the 8th current, forwarding copy of a Resolution from the Government of India in the Financial Department relative to the supply of stores from England to the different branches of the Government service.

OBSERVATIONS.—The General Department of this Government forwards a Resolution from the Government of India, Financial Department, requesting an expression of the opinion of this Government in regard to any rules and restrictions which it is expedient to lay down for substituting local purchases of certain kinds of stores, for the agency of the Store Department of the India Office, and requests that a Committee may be convened to report on the subject.

2. The Lieutenant-Governor directs that the Committee be constituted as follows:—

PRESIDENT:

Major-General J. E. P. Nicolls, *n. l.*, Secretary to the Government of Bengal in the Public Works Department.

MEMBERS:

Colonel F. T. Haig, *n. l.*, Joint Secretary to the Government of Bengal in the Public Works Department, Irrigation Branch.

Mr. H. Beverley, Officiating Inspector-General of Jails.

„ A. Mackenzie, Officiating Secretary to the Board of Revenue, Lower Provinces.

„ F. R. Boyce, Examiner of Public Works Accounts, Bengal.

Mr. T. S. Isaac, Officiating Superintending Engineer, on special duty Presidency Circle.

Major R. C. B. Pemberton, R. E., Superintending Engineer, on special duty under the Government of India, Public Works Department.

Surgeon Major J. Browne, M. D., Secretary to Surgeon-General, Indian Medical Department.

3. Mr. A Mackenzie, Officiating Secretary to the Board of Revenue, to be Secretary to the Committee.

4. The importance of substituting stores of indigenous origin for articles obtained from England, where this may be possible, is very great, and the Committee should consider and report on the following points:—

1st.—What articles required by the various public departments under this Government could and should be obtained by local manufacture instead of being procured from Europe?

2nd.—What description of articles to be obtained from Europe should be procured through the Secretary of State, and what by local arrangement?

3rd.—What rules and restrictions should be laid down in regard to obtaining articles from Europe by local arrangements?

5. It is very possible that articles which are not at present obtainable by local manufacture would become so, if it were known that Government is likely to require such articles. The Committee should also report on this subject.

6. The Lieutenant-Governor is also desirous of ascertaining the views and of receiving the suggestions of the public mercantile bodies of Calcutta on this very important question, and a copy of this Resolution will be for-

warded to the Chamber of Commerce, the Trades' Association, and the British Indian Association for any suggestions they may wish to offer.

7. Any suggestions from these or other sources should be sent to the Secretary to the Committee for consideration and report by that body.

8. The views and suggestions of the various Departments of Government on this question are also required more particularly from the Marine and Educational Departments, and the Superintendent of Stationery. These reports should also be sent to the Secretary to the Committee, in the last named case through the Board of Revenue.

From Govt. of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce.

Calcutta, 11th June 1877.

I am now directed by the Committee on the Local Purchase of Stores to forward for the information of the Chamber, the accompanying schedules exhibiting the kinds of stores at present usually purchased in Europe on account of the Departments named on the margin.

The Committee would be glad if you would forward copies of these as soon as possible to the firms and individuals most likely to take them into practical consideration, and if you would inform me as soon as possible of the names of those who would be likely to give useful information to the Committee in regard to the question of their local manufacture or purchase. Schedules for the Marine and Medical Departments will follow.

Public Works Department
Railway Department.
Stationery Department
Secretariat Press.

Resolution by Government of Bengal on Annual Report of Marine Department.

GENERAL DEPARTMENT.

MARINE—No. 1869A.

Calcutta the 3rd July 1877.

RESOLUTION.

Read—

The Annual Report of the Master Attendant's Department for 1876-77.

The Annual Report of the Government Dockyard and Marine for the year 1876-77.

It has hitherto been the practice to include all Marine matters under the control of the Government of Bengal within a single report from the Marine Department. For the past year, however, two reports of the Marine Department have been prepared under recent orders of the Government of India, with reference to the Marine business transacted in the Department of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce, and that transacted in the Marine Department of the Government of India.

2. Lieutenant F. Warden was in charge of the entire department throughout the year as Officiating Deputy Master Attendant. Shortly after the close of the year Captain Harris, Conservator of the Orissa Ports, was drowned on the 8th of May while proceeding to inspect the light-house at False Point. His death has deprived Government of the services of an able and energetic officer, who had a large experience of the Orissa coast and a thorough knowledge of the requirements of the sea-

going trade of that province. Lieutenant Warden observes that the staff of the Master Attendant's Department is weaker by three officers than it was ten years ago, and that the reforms introduced by the Consulting Naval Officer to the Government of India have materially increased the work. A scheme for the reorganization of the Marine Service has, however, been drawn up by the Government of India and will shortly take effect. The Lieutenant-Governor has more than once expressed his opinion that reforms were needed to secure the efficient administration of the Marine affairs in these provinces.

3. In the year under report the Pilot Service numbered 70 members, that being the strength to which it was reduced last year, and which it is intended to maintain in future. Forty-seven pilots belong to the covenanted service, and 23 are licensed pilots. Of the 47 service pilots, 33 were actually running, 3 were in command of pilot vessels, 10 were on leave, and 1 was employed on staff duty. The 23 licensed pilots were all actually running, so that altogether 56 pilots, or two less than last year, were available for service on vessels entering and leaving the Hooghly. This number of 56 running pilots was considered by the Committee of 1872 to be sufficient for the working of 2,000 vessels in the year, allowing an average of four days as the period for taking a ship up or down the river. The actual number of ships piloted during the year, including 28 pilot vessels and light vessels, amounted to 2,310; but as the time now occupied in the pilotage of each vessel is much shorter than was allowed for in the Committee's estimate, there seems no reason to doubt that the number of 56 running pilots is sufficient for the work of the port, provided that proper arrange-

ments are made for sending a sufficient supply of them down to the Sandheads to await the arrival of incoming ships.

4. The scheme proposed by this Government for recruiting the Pilot Service has been accepted by the Secretary of State. Leadsman apprentices will in future be selected from the training ships in England, and no more appointments will be made in this country.

5. The following statement shows the number and tonnage of the vessels visiting the port during the last two years:—

YEAR.	Arrivals.	Tonnage.	Departures.	Tonnage.	Total vessels.	Total tonnage.
1875-76 ...	914	1,274,914	906	1,284,321	1,820	2,559,235
1876-77 ...	1,161	1,698,701	1,121	1,598,250	2,282	3,296,951

6. A considerable increase is apparent both in the number of vessels and in the gross tonnage, which is believed to be due for the most part to the number of short voyages to and from the ports of the Madras coast undertaken by steamers and sailing vessels exporting rice from Bengal. A similar expansion of the traffic of the port was observable in a less degree in 1874, when distress prevailed in Behar, and rice was largely imported from British Burmah. It was noticed in the Resolution on the report for 1875-76 that the decrease in the number of vessels entering and leaving the port was entirely in steamers, the number and tonnage of sailing vessels showing an increase. During the past year the increase

in the number of steamers was 277, and in the number of sailing vessels 185. The average tonnage of steamers is slightly less than in the previous year, but there is a considerable rise in the average tonnage of sailing vessels.

7. The following statement shows the number of sailing vessels and steamers that entered and left the port in the last two years as well as the number of each that passed through the Suez Canal:—

		1875-76.	1876-77.
ARRIVALS ...	Number of steamers ...	406	532
	Ditto of sailing vessels ...	608	609
	Ditto of steamers which came through Suez Canal...	149	161
DEPARTURES ..	Number of steamers ...	405	535
	Ditto of sailing vessels ...	501	585
	Ditto of steamers which went through Suez Canal...	154	147
	Total tonnage, inwards and outwards, of steamers	1,451,261	1,915,577
Average tonnage of steamers ...	1,703	1,788	
Total tonnage, inwards and outwards, of sailing vessels ...	1,307,001	1,343,374	
Average tonnage of sailing vessels ...	1,005	1,130	

8. The report contains a statement showing the number of vessels piloted by the 56 running pilots, and the annual and monthly average piloted by each member of the several grades of the Service. From this statement, which has been prepared in accordance with the instructions conveyed in the Government letter of 10th October 1875, it appears that each Branch Pilot piloted on an average 5.35 ships a month. For Master Pilots the monthly average was 3.60 ships, and for Mate Pilots 2.94 ships a month. It will be remembered that the Pilot Committee of 1872 considered that the strength of the Pilot Service should be fixed at that number which would allow each pilot an average of three ships a month. From the figures now presented, it is clear that the recent reor-

ganization of the Service has operated to raise the average earnings of a pilot considerably above the scale which the Committee held to be adequate; and that the reduction of 15 per cent. from the pilotage fees, which has been made under recent orders, has not afforded any reasonable ground of complaint.

There were 32 cases of grounding during the year, being 13 less than last year, and 36 less than in 1873-74. In 29 cases no damage was done, two vessels were totally lost, and a third was dismantled and obliged to put back into harbour. Marine Courts were held in the two cases of total loss. In one case the pilot in charge was acquitted, while in the other, that of the *Cavalor Castle*, the pilot was found guilty of unskillfulness and was dismissed. There were seven collisions, but considerable damage was done only in one case. Departmental Courts of Enquiry were held in two cases of grounding and one of collision. Special Courts under section 4 of Act IV of 1875 were convened to enquire into the loss of the *Asia* by fire while at anchor in the port, and of the *Prince Waldemar* on the *Roy Mullah* sand. In the former case the Court found that the fire was accidental, and in the latter that the ship was 30 miles out of her reckoning when she struck. The general conduct of the Pilot Service is reported to have been good throughout the year. Considering the increase that has taken place in the number and tonnage of vessels, the crowded state of the port, and the great length and draught of water of the steamers which have lately been built for the Suez Canal trade, it is satisfactory to find so few cases of grounding, and so few collisions of a serious nature.

10. There seem to be no grounds for believing that

the channels of the Hooghly have materially deteriorated of late years. It is known that 40 years ago a draught of 17 feet was considered the maximum that could safely be allowed to proceed up as far as Calcutta; while now vessels drawing over 21 feet pass up and down at all seasons of the year. The general use of steam has no doubt much to say to this; but it is clear at the same time that the river has not fallen off as a navigable channel. The following statement shows the number of steamers drawing over 21 feet that passed up and down in 1876-77:—

Month.	21-23 feet.	23-24 feet.	24-25 feet.	25-25½ feet.	Total.
April 1876 ..	11	3	1	...	15
May " ..	1	4	...	...	5
June " ..	5	3	...	...	8
July " ..	13	1	1	...	15
August " ..	12	1	...	...	13
September " ..	5	2	...	...	7
October " ..	14	4	2	...	20
November " ..	14	3	2	...	19
December " ..	7	4	2	1	14
January 1877 ..	13	12	4	...	29
February " ..	14	6	5	1	26
March " ..	12	5	4	...	21
Total ...	121	48	21	2	192

11. The Committee appointed to enquire into the survey of the Hooghly have submitted their report, and the proposals of this Government have been laid before the

Government of India. In the meantime, the urgent necessity for replacing by steamers the sailing vessels at present employed on the work of the river survey has become very apparent, and proposals are now under consideration for the immediate employment of the steamer *Nemesis* on survey duty in the room of the *Kedgeroe*. The details given in the report show the changes which have taken place in the navigating channels during the year. The buoys from Calcutta to the sea have been put in good order, and the *Dolphin* buoy vessel has also overhauled and refitted the buoys on the Orissa coast.

12. The working of the quarterly examinations for certificates of competency is described in the report. Lieutenant Warden observes that the examinations are held at too long intervals, and that this bears hardly upon young officers whose promotion is delayed thereby. On this point, however, the Government of India have expressed a wish that the examinations should be held half-yearly or quarterly, and it is obvious that, when a large body of examiners has to be assembled, there would be much practical inconvenience in holding examinations at shorter intervals than three months. The Lieutenant-Governor is therefore unable to reconsider the decision which was previously arrived at.

13. The pilot vessels and floating light-vessels are reported to be in good condition. The new light-ship *Canoopus* has recently been sent to relieve the *Planet*, which has been brought into dock for repairs; but as soon as the *Planet* returns to her post, the *Canoopus* will be sent to a new station between the Lower Gaspar and the Outer Light.

14. The *Vulcan* anchor vessel has been employed during the year in recovering lost anchors and chains, and has also rendered assistance to the River Survey Department both in the Hooghly and on the Orissa coast. The cost of the establishment of the vessel amounted to Rs. 5,208, and Rs. 359 was paid to the crew for salvage. The stock in hand of recovered anchors and chains is estimated to be worth Rs. 5,514. Although the vessel was employed during a part of the year on survey duties, and in spite of a serious misunderstanding with the crew, which resulted in the suspension of the commander, the income, excluding the value of the stock in hand, exceeded the expenditure by Rs. 1,828.

15. The houses of refuge were visited several times in the year, and have lately been thoroughly refitted and replenished with stores. Two houses have been entirely rebuilt.

16. The account given in the Marine Report shows the distribution of the Inland Flotilla up to the end of the year. Since then the *Prince Albert*, with the large flats *Ganges* and *Konai*, and No. 10 famine steamer, with two smaller flats, have been placed at the disposal of the Chief Engineer, Northern Bengal State Railway, for the conveyance of railway plant, and the hulk *Chazepore* has been transferred to the Port Fund of False Point. It is understood that steamers and launches employed under the orders of this Government will in future be treated as a charge on the Provincial Revenues. Information is now being collected, showing the actual cost of each of the vessels now employed in Bengal, and a detailed proposal will shortly be submitted to the Government of India.

with regard to the steamers which the Lieutenant-Governor would desire to retain permanently.

17. The silting up of the foreshore of the Dockyard has formed the subject of a separate correspondence with the Marine Department of the Government of India and with the Port Commissioners. Some delay has been occasioned by the reluctance of the Port Commissioners to commence dredging so long as Fort Point remained in its present condition. But it has now been explained to the Commissioners that it is not likely that any works will be undertaken at Fort Point of such a kind as materially to affect the river below the Point; and a hope has been expressed that they will recognise the urgency of the case, and direct the immediate removal, by means of the dredger, of the accumulation of silt complained of by the Marine authorities.

The details given in the report show that an unusually large amount of work was done in the Government Dockyard and Steam Factory during the year.

Ordered that a copy of the Report of the Marine Department, and of this Resolution, be submitted to the Government of India in the Marine Department.

Also that a copy of the Report of the Master Attendant's Department, and of this Resolution, be submitted to the Government of India, Department of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce.

Also that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Officiating Deputy Master Attendant in charge.

Also that a copy of the Report, and of this Resolution, be forwarded to the Chamber of Commerce.

Also that a copy of the Report and the Resolution be forwarded to the Port Commissioners.

Copy of the Report, and of this Resolution, forwarded to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce for information.

Lighting the approaches to the Hooghly.

From Govt. of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce.

Calcutta, 25th May 1877.

I am directed to forward the marginally noted correspondence on the subject of the lighting of the approaches of the river Hooghly, and to request that the Chamber will favor the Lieutenant-Governor with an early expression of its opinion on Commander Taylor's scheme.

Letter No. 102 of the 17th March 1877, from the Government of India, with enclosures.

No. 102, dated Calcutta, the 17th March 1877.

From—C. J. LYALL, Esq., Under-Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce.

To—The Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Department.

Referring to Mr. Macaulay's letter No. 3249, dated the 14th December last, on the subject of the lighting of the approaches to the Hooghly, I am directed to forward, for consideration and the submission of such proposals as may be deemed neces-

Copy of letter from Superintendent of Marine Surveys, No. 725, dated 29th September 1876 (with two charts in original), to be returned.

Copy of letter of Superintendent of Marine Surveys, No. 17, dated the 16th January 1877.

Copy of letter from Superintendent of Marine Surveys, No. 31D B., dated the 29th January 1877.

Copy of letter from Superintendent of Marine Surveys, No. 73D B., dated the 14th February 1877 with enclosures.

Copy of letter from Superintendent of Marine Surveys, No. 92D B., dated the 3rd instant.

sary by His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, the papers noted on the margin, containing the recommendations of Captain Taylor, the Superintendent of Marine Survey, on the matter. Should any proposals involving fresh expenditure be submitted, it should be explained how the expenditure is to be provided for.

No. 759, dated Calcutta, the 29th September 1876.

From—Commander A. Dundas Taylor, late N.I., Superintendent of Marine Surveys to the Government of India.

To—The Secy. to the Govt. of India, Dept. of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce.

In reply to your letter No. 229 (Commerce and Trade), dated 31st May 1876, I have the honor to state that, having well weighed the various opinions as to the best means of lighting the approaches to the Hooghly and the Mutlah, which were submitted to a committee in 1867, just nine years ago; and taking into consideration that since then the Mutlah river has been set aside as being a superfluous port, whilst on the other hand a brisk passenger and goods traffic by steamers has been initiated between Calcutta and False Point, and also with Chandbally, a town up the Dhumrah river, I now submit the following scheme as, in my opinion, affording the greatest improvement to the lighting of this port of Calcutta, both as affects economy and practical efficiency, illustrated by two charts. At the same time it will

confer immense advantages upon the trade of the province of Orissa, rendering that country and Bengal more mutually helpful in times of famine.

1. *Firstly*, comes the question as to the best method of placing the neighbouring lights so as to enable the navigator to make his "landfall." This is demonstrated on chart A.

2. *Secondly*, is the consideration of the best arrangement of the Gasper Channel lights. This is given on chart B.

3. I am confident that some small lights are needed for the western channels below Cowcoolly in the interest of the small coasting vessels; but, without a thorough resurvey of those channels it is impossible to suggest sites for lights.

4. The existing lights for the port of Calcutta are very costly, and at the same time comparatively inefficient. Indeed, were it not for the blue-lights which are burnt at stated intervals, the system of lighting this port would be in bad weather utterly inefficient. The lights are as follows—

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| (1) False Point Light-house. | } (all alike.) |
| (2) Pilot's Ridge Light (for half the year) | |
| (3) Eastern Channel Light-vessel | |
| (4) Mutlah Light-vessel. | |
| (5) Lower Gasper Light-vessel. | |
| (6) Upper Gasper Light-vessel. | |
| (7) Saugor Light-house. | |
| (8) Cowcoolly. | |

There must always be kept at least one spare light-ship; and we may reckon that during the next ten or twelve

years at least three more light-vessels may have to be built here or sent out from England.

5. Substituting five screw-pile light-houses whilst retaining only one light-vessel, we should have far more efficient lights for about two-thirds of the present cost in maintenance. My proposed lights are as follows:—

- (1) False Point Light (first class).
- (2) Pilot's Ridge Light-vessel (as before).
- (3) Palmyras Point Light (revolving).
- (4) Saugor Sand-tail Light (flashing).
- (5) Dulhousie (Mutlah) Light-house (fixed).
- (6) Lower Gaspar Light-house } (fixed, with red sec-
- (7) Long Sand Light-house } tors).

The first cost of erecting those light-houses would be about 7½ lakhs, but that sum might be recouped in ten or twelve years by the diminished cost of maintenance.

6. With regard to the "landfall" we must take the extremes of the seasons of the southerly (we can scarcely call it *here* the south-west) and the north-east monsoons. Firstly, taking the southerly monsoon, which commences before March at the Sandheads, and lasts till August, that is, the season of southerly winds with currents setting north-eastward along the Orissa Coast and eastward along the face of the Soonderbuns. From below False Point to the Santapilly rocks the Coast is as yet an unsurveyed region; therefore let not the navigator talk of making the land *below* False Point unless he can do so in the daytime. Those whose duty it is to give extra provision for the navigation of that Coast by putting up other lights dare not think of doing so till that Coast has been properly surveyed.

7. False Point Light-house is, then, the first "landfall." The present column, 120 feet high, is massive and strong; the platform on the top is about 19 feet diameter and could well carry a first-class fixed light, which I recommend should be put there.

8. Palmyras Point should have a screw-pile light-house placed in the vicinity of Short's tripod beacon. The height may be 80 feet; the light of second order, like that on the Oyster Reef, but revolving, and visible 15 miles from a vessel's deck, or 20 miles from the foreyard. If boring operations should indicate that this light-house might be placed further eastward on the Palmyras shoal in about one or two fathoms water, so much the better. The range would then be three or four miles greater.

9. The Pilots' Ridge Light-vessel from 15th March to 15th September bears a high character for usefulness, not on account of its masthead light, but from its hourly blue-light which is visible 20 miles from aloft (some people say 25 miles, but no proof of this is given.) I therefore strongly recommend the retention of this light as now, between mid-March and mid-September, but about 2 miles eastward of its present position. When the screw-pile light-house on Saugor Sand is erected, and the Eastern channel light-vessel done away with, the Ridge blue-light should be burnt at half-hourly intervals. The blue disk on chart A shows the 20 miles' range of the blue light, the inner circle being merely the narrow range of visibility of the masthead light.

10. The Saugor Sand Screw-pile Light-house is the largest structure which is needed. It should carry a first-class dioptric, fixed, and flashing light, like that of China Baker, but flashing every 15 or 30 seconds; it should be

elevated about 80 feet above high-water level, with a range of 15 miles from a vessel's deck, but of 20 miles from the foreyard. If its range of visibility and that of the Ridge blue-light be taken as only 18 miles, the chart A shows that they will overlap.

11. A great advantage in favour of scow-pile light-houses, and which I do not find hitherto noticed, is this: at low tide these structures stand higher out of the water and are consequently further visible. This is by no means an unimportant matter to vessels approaching the Sandheads.

12. With the strongest convictions that the site at the tail of Saugor Sand, as originally suggested by Colonel A. Fraser, R. E., is the proper one to adopt, as stated by all but two or three witnesses before the Light-house Committee, and for reasons of my own, which I shall give presently, I will here write down what the Secretary of the Trinity House has put on record as the opinions of the Elder Brethren. (See letter dated 18th December 1868, from R. Allen, Esq.)—"Having made False Point, vessels have no need to go to the northward of the Pilot's Ridge, and should not do so. The soundings are a safe guide, and vessels can cross with safety, and assure themselves of a weatherly position by making the light-vessel (Pilots' Ridge); which should be brought, as proposed, to the south-west edge of the Ridge, and the difference is of the greatest value to seamen, being that of a weatherly or seawardly position. From this vessel a course should be shaped to the present floating-light, or a light-house, if practicable on the tail of Saugor Sand, no light being required on the Eastern Reef, as the soundings over its tail answer every purpose for a

guide." And again, a little further on:—"The Elder Brethren see no necessity for the light on the Eastern Sea-Reef in addition to that on Saugor Sand." I think after this we may safely dismiss all thought of a light-house for the Eastern Sea-Reef.

13. But I would also point out that the deepest water of the Eastern Channel is along the west edge of Saugor Sand; thence the water gradually shoals over towards the Eastern Sea-Reef. It will be readily understood that gradually shoaling water will always warn a pilot of the vessel's approach to the Eastern Sea-Reef; but near the Saugor Sand the deepest part of the channel is found. Obviously the lights should be along the deep water sides of the shoals (This remark applies also to the Gaspar Light-houses, about which I shall speak presently).

14. The method of contouring the shoals (known by the generic name of *Sandheads*, but which, as Colonel Fraser says, should, with more propriety, be called the *Sandtails*) at the Hooghly entrance which has hitherto been adopted by successive river surveyors and even copied on the Admiralty charts, is altogether wrong, and gives a fictitious shape to those outlying banks of sand which border the fair channels. In red and blue lines I have drawn on the chart A. these contours as they should be. Without accurately depicting them thus, it is simply impossible to judge where light-houses or light-vessels should be placed. The Pilots' Ridge is in reality very little of a *ridge*; its distinctive character is derived from the deposits that cover its crown, the sand, and black and red specks and shells which are found at the bottom and brought up by the lead. Outside of the ridge is found mud, and inside to the northward of it there is principally mud.

15. THE TAIL OF THE DALHOUSIE FLAT in $3\frac{1}{2}$ or 4 fathoms is the site I propose for the eastern landfall light of the Hooghly, whilst at the same time it is the position where a light would best guide ships in the south-west monsoon out of the Eastern Channel of the Mutlah. In the event of it being ever again necessary to recognise the Mutlah as a port for shipping, an inner light on the elbow of Bulcherry Sand (with a stream of bright light down the fair channel between two red sectors, which should guard the Bulcherry and Roy Mutlah Sands) would perfectly light the Western Channel also for inward-bound vessels. It should be noticed that when the Light-house Committee asked certain questions about lighting the Mutlah, they had not the latest survey of that river before them to found their conclusions upon; at least the proposed light-houses were placed on an antiquated chart. Correct charts are a first essential in any endeavour to arrive at a just conclusion.

16. THE DALHOUSIE TAIL LIGHT will go far to span the lightless gap between Calcutta and Chittagong, and is indeed one of the pre-requisites of the ocean traffic which would give an impetus to the reclamation of the Sunderbuns. This light, with one on the outer shoal bank about 25 miles to the south-south-east of Landfall Point (entrance of Hooringottah, Port of Morrelgunge) and another on the south patches shoal off the Chittagong coast, are all the imperial landfall lights which are required between Calcutta and British Burmah.

17. The feeling of safety that such lights would impart to the mariner would, I venture to think, induce many to seek cargoes at Morrelgunge and the Sundeeep Channel, and prove a valuable incentive to ship-masters

and rice-growers to open out new ports, tapping the trade of the Soonderbun districts, which have rivers and harbours in plenty, equal to Cochin, Cocanada, False Point, Akyah, or Bassein, but at present too dangerous to approach in the absence of any lights.

18. The last two paragraphs are rather a diversion; but still I feel it right always to consider general as well as local exigencies in discussing the question of lights. A proper arrangement of lights with distinctive features can only thus be arrived at.

19. I think chart A. will show that the approach to the Hooghly during the southerly monsoon primarily requires three light-houses to replace the three light-vessels—Eastern Channel, Mutlah, and Lower Gaspar. If thought of too little consequence as a supplementary light, the erection of Palmyras Point Light-house might be deferred; but it will be valuable in the north-east monsoon to ships approaching on a north-west course which are swept by the current to the westward just out of range of Saugor Sand Light (see track S. S. in yellow on chart A), whilst all the year round Palmyras light will benefit Orissa and the coasting trade generally.

20. The annexed tabular statement will show that the annual cost of maintenance of the light-houses, together with interest on the money borrowed to build them, is about half that for light-ships, whilst, under all conditions of weather, the lights of the former can be seen much farther off. Reckoning the half-hourly blue light at the ridge, a continuous line of light more than 100 miles in length will be met by the mariner during the south-west monsoon, as he approaches the Sandheads on an average

N. N. E. course. (See parallel *red* lines on chart A). If he approaches on a N. N. W. or N. W. course—a course for which he has no warrant and can have little reason at that time of year—he might run during the prevalence of thick hazy weather into two small gaps (see the green lines on chart A); but attention to the lead would always forewarn him of his position.

21. THE PILOT BRIGS.—As the indiscriminate burning of blue lights must tend to increase the mariner's perplexities when he arrives off the Sandheads, I propose that the supply pilot brig should always burn a red light, and the taking-out brig pale green light. With the present wonderful success in pyrotechnics, these distinctive lights could be easily furnished. In a gale of wind the two pilot brigs could thus be always recognized. A ship arriving off the Sandheads would thus know which brig to keep in sight of. I need scarcely remark what an inestimable benefit the Saugor Sand Light-house would be to the pilot brigs.

22. Now I propose to look at the above suggested system as it would work in the north-east monsoon. At that season, the Ridge light being removed, a large gap in the line of lights is left. At that time of year this is of little consequence, as the Soonderbuns seaboard is then a weather shore. Palmyras Shoals will be guarded by the new revolving light to be erected there. The soundings midway between Saugor Sand Light and Palmyras Light will be a sure guide. The muddy bottom of the entire Balasore Bay is good holding ground, and if a sailing ship gets in there by bad management and neglect of the lead, she will not be in a dangerous position.

23. The light on the tail of the Dalhousie Sand off

the Mutlah will be of the greatest benefit during the north-east monsoon, not only to sailing ships bound to Calcutta from Europe and Australia, America, and Africa, but to the steam traffic that approaches Calcutta all the year round from Chittagong, Akyab, and Burmah generally. The lead is an excellent guide off the mouths of the Mutlah. Safety is ensured by not coming under depths of eight or nine fathoms at low water, or ten fathoms at high water.

[N. B.—I think no more need be said upon the important subject of the "landfall."]

24. For lighting the Eastern Channel up to Saugor Roads we want two screw-pile light-houses in the room of two light-ships and one light-house. The existing Saugor Light-house is of very negative value. Of course it is better than nothing at all, but it is too far inland to be of real value. The same may be said of Cowcoolly Light-house, but I fancy the native coasting vessels find this light very useful.

25. The Lower Gaspar Light-house should have a *fixed* white light, elevated about 60 feet; it should be about two cables within the western edge of Saugor Sand in latitude $21^{\circ}23' N.$, or about 16 miles S. E. by S. of the present Saugor Light-house. The deepest water of the Eastern Channel runs along the Saugor Sand, a fact which shows that the light will be rightly placed there. (See paragraph 13).

A *red* sector can be made to stream from this light to the southward and guard the edge of the sand. A similar *red* sector to the north-west will guard the tail of the flat off Saugor south point.

26. The Long-sand Light, about four miles south-west of the present Saugor Light-house, is my proposed substitute for the Upper Gaspar Light-vessel and the Inland Saugor light. A screw-pile light-house, about 50 feet high, showing a *fixed*, dioptric, bright light of second or third order, throwing a sector of red light to guard the north end of the middle ground in a south-east direction; and a similar red line to guard the shoal water off the west side of Saugor Island. (See chart B.) The Gaspar Channel will thus be beautifully marked throughout by the bright light at each end. At the moment when either light begins to change to red, the pilot will know he is out of the fair-way track. Any alteration rendered necessary by the growth of the sands on either side of the channel can be speedily effected by slightly moving the sectors of red light.

27. Anchorage to leeward of the Long-sand Light-house in south-west monsoon.—Another advantage gained by placing a light on the Long-sand will be that an incoming or outward bound vessel may choose a good anchorage to leeward of that sand, and thus be better sheltered from the S. by W. monsoon swell at high water. At present she has only the Saugor Light to set as a cross bearing, and that light is on the wrong side of the channel.

28. The Osweolly Light-house is of a very negative value. Yet I do not recommend its removal till a thorough good resurvey has been made of all the channels to the south and the south-west of it.

29. Both at the Long-sand Light-house and the Lower Gaspar there should be good tide gauges, so marking the

amount of rise as to allow it to be read with binoculars at one mile off; or the rise may be indicated by flags which will be visible much further.

P. S.—I wish to add to the above that the question of placing another light-ship during south-west monsoon at the tail of the middle ground, about eight miles to southward of the Lower Gaspar light-vessel, has been seriously entertained at the Bankshead and submitted to the Government of Bengal. This is surely a confession that the existing light-ships are inadequate.

No. 17, dated Calcutta, the 16th January 1877.

From—C. J. LYALL, Esq., Under-Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce,

To—The Superintendent of Marine Surveys to the Government of India.

Referring to your letter No. 759, dated the 29th September last, on the subject of the lighting of the approaches to the Hooghly, I am directed to forward copy of a letter No. 3249, dated the 14th December last, from the Government of Bengal, with its enclosures and the accompanying chart in original (to be returned), in which a proposal is made to place an additional light-vessel between the Lower Gaspar and the Eastern Channel light.

2. The Government of India understand from the post-script, dated the 23rd October last, appended to your letter of the 29th September, that you were aware that this proposal was about to be made, and that if the recommendations offered in your letter are adopted it will be unnecessary to carry it out.

3. But as those recommendations, even if sanctioned, could not be fully carried into effect at once, I am to enquire whether you are in favour of the suggestion made by Lieutenant Warden, and supported by the Government of Bengal, that a light-vessel should be stationed in the position indicated from the 1st April to the 31st October.

4. A very early reply is requested.

No. 34 D. B., dated Calcutta, the 29th January 1877.

From—COMMANDER A. DUNDAS TAYLOR, late I. N., Superintendent of Marine Surveys to the Government of India.

To—The Secy. to the Govt. of India, Dept. of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce.

Referring to letter No. 17 (Commerce and Trade), dated 16th January 1877, which came to hand on 27th, after my return from Chittagong, I have the honor to state that I am in favour of the Master Attendant's suggestion that an intermediate light-ship should be stationed between the Gaspar and Eastern Channel lights from 1st April to 31st October. The position indicated by the Master Attendant and the description of light are, in my opinion, the best available.

2. I shall be glad to receive the earliest information of this additional light-ship being sanctioned, so that she may be noted in our new light list at once.

3. After reading the Master Attendant's comments on the opinions given by members of the Pilot Service, I wish to make a few more remarks on the subject of pro-

perly lighting the Hooghly entrance, but as these remarks do not affect the question of placing the temporary intermediate light, I will postpone them for a short time.

P. S.—The chart sent with your letter under reference is herewith returned.

No. 73 D. B., dated Calcutta, the 14th February 1877.

From—COMMANDER A. DUNDAS TAYLOR, late I. N., Superintendent of Marine Surveys to the Government of India.

To—The Secy. to the Govt. of India, Dept. of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce.

In continuation of this office letter No. 256 D. B., dated the 24th October last, I have the honor to forward herewith the tabular statement showing the annual cost of maintenance of the light-houses proposed to be built in the Hooghly river and its approaches, in comparison with the cost of the existing light-vessels, referred to in paragraph 20 of this office letter No. 759, dated the 29th September 1876.

2. Since the submission of my scheme for lighting the approaches to the Hooghly, it has been proposed to place an additional light-vessel between the Lower Gaspar and the Eastern Channel light. This is a clear acknowledgment that the existing lights are insufficient for the safety of navigation. I have therefore added the cost of the sixth light-ship.

3. It will be seen that the annual up-keep under my proposed arrangement will be only a trifle more than one-half the present expenditure.

No. 92DE, dated Calcutta, the 3rd March 1877.

From—COMMANDER A. DUNDAS TAYLOR, late I. N., Superintendent of Marine Surveys to the Government of India.

To—The Secy. to the Govt. of India, Dept. of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce.

In continuation of this office letter No. 73 D. B., dated the 14th February last, I have the honor to forward a revised statement showing the annual cost of maintenance of the light-houses proposed to be built in the Hooghly river and its approaches, in comparison with the cost of the existing light-vessels, and to request that you will be good enough to substitute it for the former statement. The figures regarding light-vessels in the statement herewith sent have been obtained from the statement showing the cost of establishment, stores, including oil, &c., provisions, contingencies, and repairs of light-vessels forwarded to this office with your endorsement No. 67 (Commerce and Trade), dated the 22nd February, a week after my previous statement had been submitted. The figures in the last statement were furnished by the Examiner of Dock-yard accounts. It will be seen that there is much difference between them and the items in the statement now sent.

I would here request that the Officiating Deputy Master Attendant of Calcutta may be asked to inform me what light-ships have been lost in the Hooghly river during the last thirty years, and what was the original cost of each vessel.

From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of Bengal.

Calcutta, 21st June 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 6 of 25th ultimo on the question of lighting the approaches to the Hooghly, and to state as they have no professional experience of the subject they are not in a position to offer an expression of opinion on Captain Taylor's scheme, but that they will gladly welcome the introduction of any means calculated to improve the lighting of the Sandheads and neighbouring channels of approach from the sea.

Reported abolition of sorting Overland letters at Sea.

Chamber of Commerce to Post Master General.

Calcutta, 5th May 1877.

"The Englishman" newspaper of this morning contains a telegram from Bombay to the effect that sea sorting of letters is to be abolished in July, except for Bombay; and that the change will delay the Calcutta and Madras delivery by 12 hours. With reference to this announcement I am directed to enquire if there is any foundation for this reported arrangement, and whether any measures are in contemplation by which the prompt delivery of our overland mails shall be continued as heretofore.

If the telegram is correct, it will be the duty of this Chamber to protest against so partial an application of

the sea sorting process and conceding to the Presidency of Bombay alone postal advantages to which Madras and Bengal and other parts of India are equally entitled.

From the Post Master General to the Chamber.

Calcutta, 5th May 1877.

In reply to your letter dated 5th instant, I have the honor to state that I have no official information to the effect of your letter, and think it extremely unlikely that any such delay as that supposed will occur. I have asked the Director General to let me know what is the truth, and shall again address you on hearing from him.

From Post Master General to Chamber.

Calcutta, 18th June 1877.

In reply to your letter dated 5th May last and in continuation of my No. 2723 of the same date, I have the honor to inform you that I learn from the Director General that no such detention of mails as you contemplate will take place.

From Chamber to Post Master General.

Calcutta, 25th June 1877.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to thank you for your letter of the 18th instant, from which they were glad to learn that the detention of overland mails for Calcutta which it was apprehended would be occasioned by the sea sorting process being discontinued as reported some weeks ago, will not take place.

As this matter was one of interest to the commercial and general public of Calcutta the Committee have had the correspondence between yourself and the Chamber published for general information.

Presidency Courts of Small Causes.

From Govt. of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce.

Darjeeling, 10th September 1877.

I am directed to forward herewith for the information of the Chamber a copy of a letter No. 1231 of 13th August 1877 from the Government of India in the Home Department, from which it will be seen that the subject of amending the law relating to Presidency Courts of Small Causes is still under the consideration of the Supreme Government.

From Govt. of India to Govt. of Bengal.

Simla, 13th August 1877.

With reference to the correspondence ending with your letter No. 2042 of the 20th April last, on the question of reducing the work of the High Court by an extension of the Jurisdiction, or an amendment of the procedure, of the Presidency Town Small Cause Court, I am directed to say that the Governments of Madras and Bombay have been requested to submit their opinion on the several new points raised in the papers received with your letter. Early replies have been asked for and the Government of India will dispose of the case as soon as possible; and, if legislation be necessary, will endeavour to legislate on the subject in Calcutta next cold season.

THE PORT OF ROUEN.

From Consul General for France to Chamber.

Calcutta, 15th August 1877.

The Chamber of Commerce of Rouen has thought good to draw the attention of foreign merchants and ship-owners on the good conditions of navigableness of the River Seine and on the advantages of the port of Rouen, its quite advantageous situation on account of the many communications which connect this port with all the points of France either by railways or by rivers.

For this purpose a table has been made showing the results of the year 1876. This document proves that the advantages of the port of Rouen have been yet appreciated by many French and foreign merchants, that, on the other side, the river which gives way to this port presents all the desirable security on account of the height's perfect regularity which the minimum keeps up generally to 5 metres or more than 16 English feet.

The Chamber of Commerce of Rouen thinks that the statement of these results may altogether dissipate some prejudices which could be yet in the mind of some ship owners and foreign captains in regard to the condition of navigability of the River Seine. These prejudices were reasonable, twenty years ago, but since this time the works executed by the French Government have dispelled the dangers of navigation and made easier the river's access.

The President of the Chamber of Commerce being

wishful that the maritime commerce of India may take knowledge of the above mentioned table intended to make known abroad the present condition of the port of Rouen and the good results obtained recently, I have the honor to forward you enclosed two copies of this document begging of you to give it in communication to the merchants or ship-owners who would like to look over it.

No. 354.

From Govt. of India, to Govt. of Bengal.

Simla, dated 6th Sept. 1877.

I am directed to forward for communication to the Chamber of Commerce at Calcutta, the accompanying statements shewing the rising commercial importance of Rouen and giving particulars in regard to the navigation of the river Seine.

The Consul General for France at Calcutta desires the information there given to be made known to merchants and ship-owners, and I am to request that this may be done.

No. 2712.

Copy with the statement in original, forwarded to the Chairman to the Chamber of Commerce for communication to merchants and ship-owners.

By order of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

(Sd.) H. H. RISLEY,

GENERAL DEPARTMENT :
MARINE,
CALCUTTA,
The 18th Sept. 1877.

*Offy. Under-Secy. to the
Govt. of Bengal.*

NEW MEMBERS.

Messrs. Oldmeyer and Hadenfeldt, and Messrs. Bullock Wellstead and Co. of Cuttack, have been elected by the Committee members of the Chamber, subject to confirmation.

FUNDS OF THE CHAMBER.

The Chamber's balance on 31st October amounted to Rs. 2,760-9-1, exclusive of Rs. 12,000 in 4 per cent Government Securities.

DUNCAN MACKINNON,
President.

APPENDIX.

FUNDS OF THE CHAMBER.
Statement of the Funds of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce
from 1st May to 31st October 1877.

<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">To Office Rent</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: right;">Rs. A. P.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>" Establishment</td> <td style="text-align: right;">500 0 0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>" Charges General</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5,361 0 0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>.. .. .</td> <td style="text-align: right;">4,243 10 10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>.. .. .</td> <td style="text-align: right;">10,504 10 10</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>" Balance in Bank of Bengal</td> <td style="text-align: right;">650 1 10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>" " " " in hand</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2,261 7 3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Government Paper</td> <td style="text-align: right;">12,000 0 0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>.. .. .</td> <td style="text-align: right;">14,750 9 1</td> </tr> </table>	To Office Rent	Rs. A. P.	" Establishment	500 0 0	" Charges General	5,361 0 0	4,243 10 10	10,504 10 10			" Balance in Bank of Bengal	650 1 10	" " " " in hand	2,261 7 3	Government Paper	12,000 0 0	14,750 9 1	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">By Balance of 1st May 1877</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: right;">Rs. A. P.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cash in Bank of Bengal</td> <td style="text-align: right;">20 5 0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>" " " " in hand</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1,204 15 8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>.. .. .</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1,225 4 8</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>" Government Paper</td> <td style="text-align: right;">12,000 0 0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>" " " " " "</td> <td style="text-align: right;">400 0 0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>" Subscriptions</td> <td style="text-align: right;">9,016 0 0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>" " " " " "</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5,243 15 3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>" " " " " "</td> <td style="text-align: right;">11,500 15 3</td> </tr> </table>	By Balance of 1st May 1877	Rs. A. P.	Cash in Bank of Bengal	20 5 0	" " " " in hand	1,204 15 8	1,225 4 8			" Government Paper	12,000 0 0	" " " " " "	400 0 0	" Subscriptions	9,016 0 0	" " " " " "	5,243 15 3	" " " " " "	11,500 15 3
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Rupees 25,265 3 11

CALCUTTA,
31st Oct. 1877.

E. E.

H. W. L. WOOD,
Secretary.

Rupees 25,265 3 11

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 1873, with effect from 1st September 1872, except as regards the measurement of Cotton, Hemp, Jute, Jute Cuttings, Rice, Safflower, and other articles similarly packed, which, under the Chamber's Resolution of 14th June 1872, had effect from 1st July 1873.

ARTICLES.	Cwt. per Ton Nett.	Cubic feet per Ton.
Aloes, in bags and boxes	20	.....
Alum, in ditto	20	.....
Aniseed, in bags	8	.....
Arrowroot, in cases .. .. .	.....	50
Arsenic, in bags or cases	20	.....
Asafetida, in bags and boxes	20	.....
Apparel, in boxes .. .. .	.....	50
Bark, in bags	8	.....
Bees' Wax	20 gross	.....
Barilla	20	.....
Betel-nut	20	.....
Books .. .. .	.....	50
Borax	20	.....
Bran	14	.....
Brimstone	20	.....
Bullion .. .. .	.....	at percent
Cake-lao, in bags	16	.....
Camphor, in cases	3	.....
Cardamoms, in robins .. .. .	.....	50
" " boxes .. .. .	.....	50
" " bags .. .. .	.....	50
Castor Seed	15	.....
Chillies, (dry) in bags	8	.....
China Root, in bags	11	.....
" " boxes .. .. .	.....	50
Chivetta .. .. .	.....	50
Churrah	14	.....
Cigars .. .. .	.....	50
Cloves, in bags	8	.....
" " boxes .. .. .	.....	50
Coals	20	.....
Cochineal .. .. .	.....	50
Coffee, in bags	18	.....
" " coals	16	.....

ARTICLES.	Cwt. per Ton Nett.	Cubic feet per Ton.
Sugar	20	.....
Tallow, in cases or casks	20	.....
Talc	20	.....
Tamarinds, in cases or casks	20	.....
Tapioca	50	.....
Tea	50	.....
Toel Seed	20	.....
Timber, round	40	.....
" squared	50	.....
Tinell	20	.....
Tobacco, in bales	16	.....
Tortoise Shells, in chests	50	.....
Turneric	16	.....
Wheat	20	.....
Wool	50	.....

1. Goods in Casks or Cases to be calculated gross weight when paying freight by weight; and where freight is made payable on measurement, the measurement be taken on the 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 Screw-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, Dholi, Peas, Linseed, Rapeseed and oil 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.

- On the sale, purchase, or shipment of Bullion, Gold Dust or Coin ... 1 per cent.
- On the purchase (when in funds) or sale of Indigo, Raw Silk, Silk Piece Goods, Opium, Pearls, Precious Stones, or Jewellery ... 2½ "
- On purchasing ditto when funds are provided by the Agent ... 5 "
- 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 "
- On returns for Consignments if made in produce ... 2½ "
- On returns for Consignments if in Bills, Bullion, or Treasure ... 1 "
- On accepting Bills against Consignments ... 1 "
- On the sale or purchase of Ships, Factories, Houses, Lands, and all property of a like description ... 2½ "
- 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 2s. per rupee. half com.
- On making advances or procuring loans of money for commercial purposes, when the aggregate commission does not exceed 5 per cent ... 2½ per cent.
- 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 ... 2½ "

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 constituents for vessels to proceed to outports for loading ...	2½ "
16. On advertising as the Agents for Owners or Commanders of ships for cabin passengers, on the amount of passage money, whether the same shall pass through the Agent's hands or not ...	2½ "
17. On procuring freight for a ship by a shipping order or charter, or on procuring employment for a ship on monthly hire, or acting as Agents for owners, Captain, or charterers of a vessel upon the gross amount of freight, brokerage inclusive	5 "
18. On engaging Asiatic Emigrants for a ship to the Mauritius, the West Indies, or elsewhere, upon the gross amount of earnings . . .	5 "
19. On engaging troops for a ship to Great Britain or elsewhere, on the gross amount of passage money for rank and file ...	2½ "
20. On realising inward freight, inward troop, Emigrant, or Cabin passage money ...	2½ "
21. On landing and re-shipping goods from any vessel in distress, or on landing and selling by auction damaged goods from any such vessel, and acting as Agent for the Master on behalf of all concerned on the declared value of all such goods as may be re-shipped, and on the net proceeds of all such goods as may be publicly sold ...	5 "
If Opium, Indigo, Raw Silk, or Silk Piece Goods...	2½ "
If Treasure, Precious Stones, or Jewellery ...	1 "

22. On effecting Insurances, whether on lives or property ...	½ per cent.
23. On settling Insurance claims, losses, and averages of all classes, and on procuring returns of premium ...	2½ "
24. On drawing, purchasing, selling, or negotiating Bills of Exchange ...	1 "
25. On debts or other claims when a process at law or arbitration is incurred in claiming them ...	2½ "
Or if recovered by such means ...	5 "
26. On Bills of Exchange returned dishonored ...	1 "
27. On collecting House Rent ...	2½ "
28. On ship's Disbursements ...	2½ "
29. On realising 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 ...	½ "
32. On delivering up Government Securities and Bank or other Joint Stock Shares, on the market value ...	½ "
33. On all amounts debited and credited within the year (less the balance brought forward) upon which no Commission amounting to 5 per cent. has been charged ...	½ "

☞ Brokerage when paid is to be separately charged.

H. W. I. WOOD,

Secretary.

MEMBERS OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Allman, J., Esq., <i>Acting Agent, Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China.</i>	King, Hamilton and Co.
Agelsto, A. and Co.	Longuir, T., <i>Manager, Delhi and London Bank, Limited.</i>
Apear and Co.	MacKilloan, J. and Co.
Ashburner and Co.	MacCallister, R. and Co.
Anderson, Wright and Co.	Macdonald, Mackenzie and Co.
Barlow and Co.	Mackenzie, Lyall and Co.
Beag, Dunlop and Co.	Macneill and Co.
Banks, E. G.	Macknight, Anderson and Co.
Burn and Co.	Melintosh, A. R. & Co.
Bulloch Waddell and Co., (<i>Mafnasil</i> .)	Moran, W. and Co.
Carlises Nephews and Co.	Morris, E., <i>Agent, Hong-Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation.</i>
Carritt & Co.	Nicol, Fleming and Co.
Cochrane, S., <i>Manager, Agra Bank, Limited.</i>	Olinogor and Hokenficht.
Colvin, Cowie and Co.	Payer, T. Esq., <i>Manager, Comptoir d'Escompte de Paris.</i>
Crosby, Bone and Co.	Petrocchino Brothers.
Cox, Henry S.	Prawhissen Law and Co.
Colin Brothers and Co.	Prestige, F. Esq., <i>Agent of the Eastern Bengal Railway Company.</i>
De Souza, Thos. and Co.	Ralli Brothers.
Duncan Brothers and Co.	Ralli and Marrojal.
Dwarkanath Dutt and Co.	Reinhold and Co.
Ebb and Holson.	Robert and Charriol.
Ernsthausen and Oesterley.	Rentiers and Co.
Erving and Co.	Schroder, Smith and Co.
Elliott, John and Co.	Schoene, Kilburn and Co.
Ezra, E. D. J.	Sassoon, David and Co.
Ferguson, J. H. and Co.	Shaw, Finlayson and Co.
Finsy, Muir and Co.	Stoek, Octavius & Co.
Glaborne and Co.	Thomas, J. and Co.
Got, Bru & Co.	Turner, Morrison and Co.
Grat and Rumpier.	Toulmin, L. W. and Co.
Grahlan and Co.	Tanvaco and Co.
Grimley and Co.	Tanlock, Paul and Son.
Gulkey, Elias S.	Ullmann, Hirschhorn and Co.
Huyser, G. Esq., <i>Agent, Oriental Bank Corporation.</i>	Yaketa, N. J. and Co.
Headless George and Co.	Weinhold Brothers.
Heiglers, F. W. and Co.	Wilkinson, Captain C. J., <i>Superintendent F. & O. Company.</i>
Herbert, C. H., Esq., <i>Agent, Chartered Mercantile Bank of India, London and China.</i>	Wilson, H. F., (<i>Mafnasil</i> .)
Heave, Miller and Co.	Wintrop, J., <i>Manager, National Bank of India.</i>
Howe, Goodwin & Cole.	Whitney Brothers and Co.
Hulter and Co.	Williamson Brothers and Co.
Jarvis, Skinner and Co.	Wiseman, Mitchell, Reid and Co.
Kettlewell, Bullen and Co.	Yule, Andrew and Co.
Kelly and Co.	
Ker, Boils and Co.	

Honorary Member.

J. A. Crawford, c. s., 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 and seconded by two members, and may

be elected by the Committee provisionally, such election being subject to confirmation at the next ensuing General Meeting.

Fifth.....That the subscription of firms and banks shall be 16 rupees per mensem, of individual members 10 rupees per mensem, and of mofussil members 32 rupees per annum.

Sixth... That any member of the Chamber whose subscription shall be three months in arrears shall cease to be a member, and his name shall be removed by the Committee from the list of members after one month's notice of such default.

Seventh... That the business and funds of the Chamber shall be managed by a Committee of 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 procuration shall, in the absence of their principals, be eligible to serve as members of the Committee.

- Tenth...* Two members of a firm or representatives of a bank shall not serve on the Committee at the same time.
- Eleventh.* That the Committee shall meet for the purpose of transacting such business as may come within the province of the Chamber at such times as may suit their convenience, and that the record of their proceedings be open to the inspection of members, subject to such regulations as the Committee may deem expedient.
- Twelfth.* That all proceedings of the Committee be subject to approval or otherwise of General Meetings duly convened.
- Thirteenth.* That a half-yearly report of the proceedings of the Committee be prepared, printed, and circulated for information of members three days previous to the General Meeting, at which such report and proceedings of the Committee shall be submitted for approval.
- Fourteenth.* That the Secretary shall be elected by the Committee; such election to be subject to confirmation at the next ensuing General Meeting.
- Fifteenth.* That General Meetings of the Chamber shall be held at such times as the 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 procuration shall, in the absence of their principals, be entitled to vote.
- Twentieth.* That voting by proxy shall be allowed; provided proxies are in favour of members of the Chamber.
- Twenty-first.* That the Chamber reserves to itself the right of expelling any of its members;

such expulsion to be decided by the votes of three-fourths of members present in person or by proxy at any Special General Meeting of the Chamber convened for the consideration of such expulsion.

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

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



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