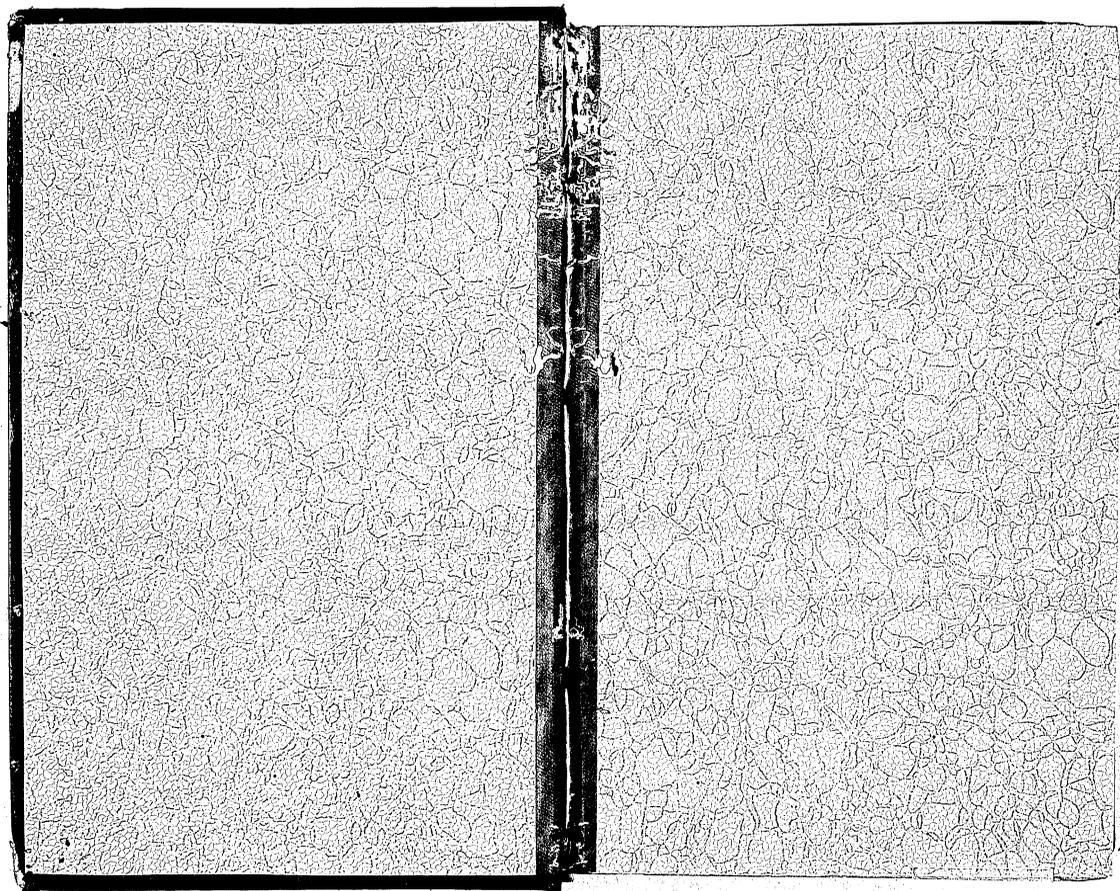
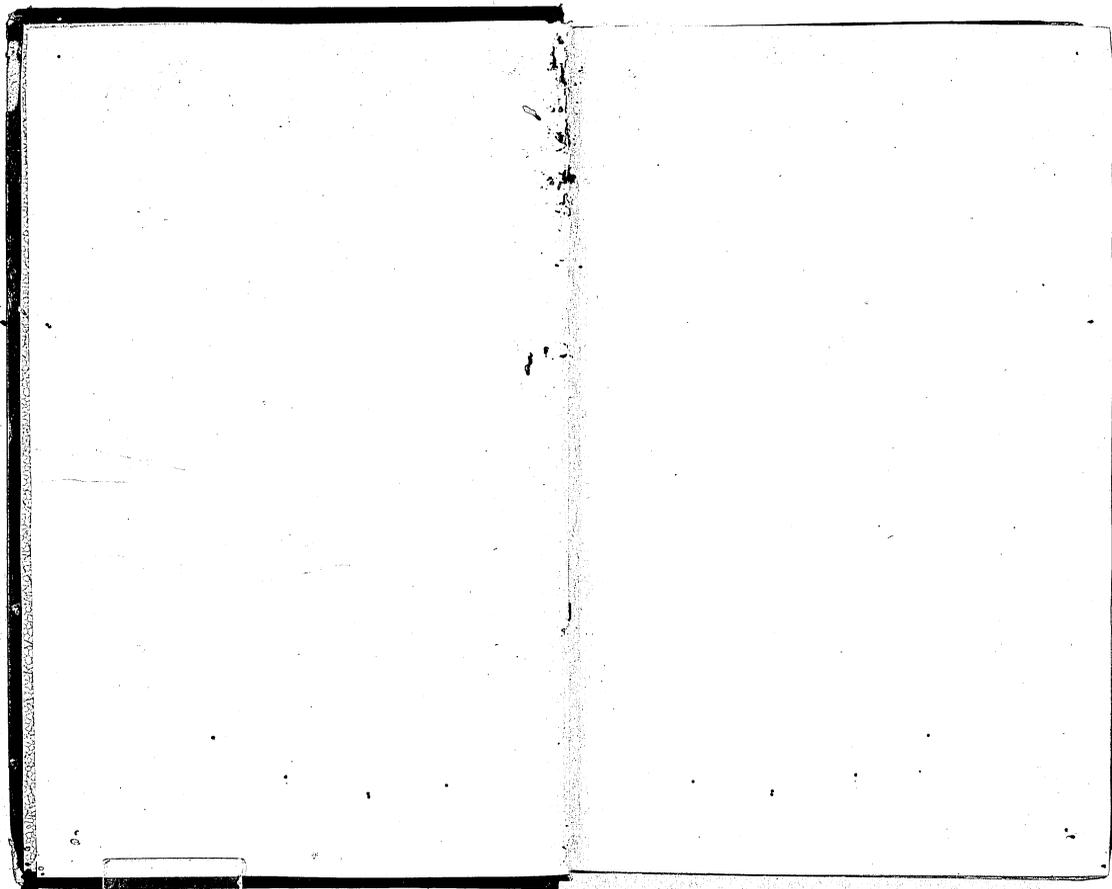


REPORT
OF
THE COMMITTEE
OF THE
BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
—
FOR THE YEAR 1905
—
VOL. II.
DOCUMENTS & CORRESPONDENCE





REPORT
OF
THE COMMITTEE
OF THE
BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
FOR THE YEAR 1905.

Vol. II.

Documents & Correspondence.

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Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

REPORT.

DETAILED CORRESPONDENCE.

GENERAL.

ARMY ADMINISTRATION.

From Chamber, to Private Secretary to the Viceroy.

No. 1266-1905.—CALCUTTA, 27th July 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to refer to the recently published correspondence regarding the Administration of the Army in India.

2. The Committee have considered the correspondence with very great attention and interest. They do not pretend to any special knowledge qualifying them to say whether the system of military administration which has hitherto existed, or that proposed by Lord Kitchener, or that defined by the Secretary of State is the better system from a military point of view. That is, they recognise, a matter for decision by military experts. But they are interested in the financial aspect of the question; and they noticed with apprehension that H. E. the Viceroy, in his Minute dated 6th February 1905 on the proposals advanced by H. E. the Commander-in-Chief, endorsed the opinion previously expressed by the Marquis of Dufferin that, under any such arrangement, "the revenues of the country would be at the mercy of the Commander-in-Chief."

3. In view of this expression of opinion on the part of His Excellency, the commercial community of Calcutta naturally regard the Secretary of State's scheme, which appears to be modelled largely on that advanced by His Excellency Lord Kitchener, with great anxiety. In so regarding it, they are not moved by any distrust of or want of confidence in that distinguished soldier, who so ably fills the high office of Commander-in Chief. But they feel that the introduction of a system which would admit the possibility of such a contingency as that foreshadowed by the Marquis of Dufferin, would be entirely subversive of the principles which have hitherto controlled the military policy of the Government of India.

4. The main features of the new scheme are defined in Mr. Brodrick's despatch dated 31st May 1905. The scheme distinguishes between the purely military services, and the services of supply and manufacture. The former will be controlled by the Army Department, at the head of which will be the Commander-in-Chief, who will be as now a member of Council; and the latter by the Military Supply Department, which will be in charge of another member of Council. In para 18 of the despatch certain measures are proposed which will, it is stated, strengthen the financial control of the Government over military expenditure. Apart from this

reference to finance, the Committee have been unable to gather what measure of control will be or can be exercised by the Governor-General-in-Council over proposals emanating from the Army Department. Hitherto the Governor-General-in-Council has exercised his control, both financial and otherwise, through the Military Department. But that Department will cease to exist, and no other controlling agency is presumably to be created; for the Military Supply Department is evidently to be concerned only with its own proper business, as paragraph 15 of the despatch clearly lays down that there shall not be "two officers appointed to the Viceroy's Council for the purpose of giving expert opinions on military questions." In these circumstances the question whether the contingency feared by Lord Dufferin may not be realised under the new system has naturally suggested itself to the Committee. They do not assume that such will be the case; but, speaking on behalf of the commercial community, they feel that some additional information as to what agency is to be called into existence to enable the Governor-General-in-Council to exercise that financial control which it is his prerogative to exercise, is very desirable in the public interest. In other words the Committee venture most respectfully to ask if His Excellency the Viceroy will be pleased to communicate such further information upon this point, as may be calculated to define clearly the financial relations which will subsist between the Government of India and the new Army Department.

From Government of India (MILITARY), to Chamber.

No. 2507-B.—SIMLA, 7th August 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1266-1905 dated the 27th July 1905, asking for further information regarding the financial relations between the Governor-General-in-Council and the new Army Department, and in reply I am to say that the question of the financial control to be introduced under the new system is at present engaging the attention of the Government of India and that a full announcement of the measures contemplated will be made as soon as they have received the sanction of the Secretary of State for India.

THE PARTITION OF BENGAL.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA—HOME DEPARTMENT.

PUBLIC.

No. 2491.—SIMLA, 19th July 1905.

RESOLUTION.

In December 1903 the Government of India in letters to several of the Local Governments, which were published in the Official Gazette, announced their desire to consider the redistribution of certain of the territories of the Eastern and North Eastern Provinces of India, notably of Bengal and Assam. Their attention had been called to the matter by the constantly accumulating evidence of the excessive and intolerable burden imposed upon the Bengal Government by a charge too great for any one administration, and of the consequent deterioration in the standards of Government, notably in portions of Eastern Bengal. Simultaneously the importance of rendering Assam a self-contained and independent administration with a service of its own, and of providing for its future commercial and industrial expansion, was impressed upon them. These considerations suggested a careful investigation of the circumstances and surroundings of both provinces, and resulted in the formulation of certain proposals for the readjustment of their territorial boundaries. The criticism which was invited, and which was freely and usefully bestowed upon these proposals justified substantial alterations in the original plan, and led in the end to the abandonment of that portion of the scheme which contemplated the transfer of certain territories from Madras to Bengal, and of the greater part of Chutia Nagpur from Bengal to the Central Provinces. The Government of India were convinced by the arguments placed before them by the Local Governments concerned that in neither case would the transfer promote the end which they had in view. Reasons of administrative expediency, arising out of the peculiar linguistic and racial conditions and the geographical conformation of Ganjam and the Agency tracts of Vizagapatam, were opposed to the transfer of those areas from the Government of Madras. Commercial considerations were mainly responsible for the continued retention of the British districts of Chutia Nagpur under the Government of Bengal.

2. Two changes only have been decided upon in the territories bordering upon Bengal and the Central Provinces. It was proposed

by the Lieutenant-Governor, and accepted by the Chief Commissioner, that the five Native States of Jashpur, Sarguja, Udaipur, Korea, and Chang Bhakhar, at present attached to the Division of Chutia Nagpur, and forming a solid block of territory with a Hindi-speaking population, on the west of the districts of Falmanu and Ranchi, should be handed over from Bengal to the Central Provinces, and this proposal has been accepted by the Governor-General in Council. Owing to their physical remoteness these States have not hitherto received as much attention as might be desired; and it is hoped that their administration will be improved, while the status of the Chiefs will be raised by their being placed under the Political Agent of Raipur, who is already invested with a similar political charge in the Central Provinces.

3. Both the Local Governments similarly recommended, and the Government of India have agreed, that the Sambalpur District (with the exception of the Chandarpur-Padampur estate and the Phuljar zamindari) and the five Uriya-speaking States of Patna, Kelahandi or Karond, Sonpur, Ramra, and Rairakhol should be transferred from the Central Provinces to the Orissa Division of Bengal. Linguistic considerations are the main reason for this transfer, which it is confidently believed will be beneficial to the interests of the people. It is in contemplation to protect the interests of the Chiefs affected by appointing a European Political Officer to take charge of the entire group of Uriya-speaking States.

4. These proposals are, however, of minor importance compared with the principal changes to which the Secretary of State has given his sanction, and which involve the creation of a new administration of the first class out of certain divisions of Bengal, together with the territories at present administered by the Chief Commissioner of Assam. In their original form these suggestions arose from a proposal which had already on a previous occasion been under the consideration of the Government of India and had then only been postponed by them, namely, to incorporate the Chittagong Division with Assam. It was proposed in the letters of December 1903 to include the districts of Dacca and Mymensingh also, for reasons which were then stated, and which it is not necessary now to repeat. The discussion which was elicited by these suggestions indicated to the Government of India that, large as were their proposals they were not large enough if satisfaction were to be given to the feelings of those who were alarmed at the possible deprivation of privileges which they had for long enjoyed and to which they attached a not unnatural value. These feelings attracted the earnest attention of the Government of India; and in February 1904, His Excellency the Viceroy, in a series of speeches delivered in reply to public addresses at Chittagong, Dacca, and Mymensingh, foreshadowed the willingness of Government to consider a wider scheme involving the creation of a Lieutenant-Governorship with a Legislative Council and an independent Revenue authority and the transfer of so much territory as would be required to justify the institution of so highly organized and fully equipped an administration.

5. From that date the efforts of Government were principally directed to a discussion of the areas that could most advantageously be assigned to the new province, and to an examination of the safeguards that were required to secure the legitimate interests of their inhabitants. A scheme was submitted by the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal for the amalgamation with Assam of the Chittagong and Dacca Divisions, and the districts of Pabna, Bogra, and Raugpur. This proposal did not seem to the Government of India to be proportionate to the scope of the important administration which it was now contemplated to create, nor would it have given to Bengal, whose population would still have exceeded 59 millions, the permanent relief that ought to ensue from an adequate reduction of its existing area and responsibilities. Accordingly it was proposed to increase the transferred area by the districts of Rajshahi, Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri, Malda, and the State of Cooh Behar. These additions were thought by the Government of India to be justified on the grounds that they would constitute a new province with a population of over 31 millions, while leaving Bengal with a little more than 54 millions; that they would provide a clearly defined western boundary corresponding with well-recognised characteristics, both geographical, ethnological, social, and linguistic; that they would concentrate in a single province the typical Muhammadan population of Bengal, for whom Dacca would furnish a natural capital; that the whole of the tea industry (with the exception of the Darjeeling gardens), and the greater part of the jute tracts, would thus be brought under a single Government, and that long-established divisional areas would thereby remain undisturbed.

6. The enlarged scheme was cordially accepted by the Governments both of Bengal and Assam. The Lieutenant-Governor reported that he had discussed the proposal with the Members of the Board of Revenue and with his most senior officers, and had found that with scarcely an exception there was complete unanimity in accepting it. The Chief Commissioner of Assam attached great value to the future association under a single Government of the tea-growing areas supplied by free labour with those worked by indentured labour, and thought that the gradual substitution of natural for artificial methods of recruitment would be accelerated. He also proposed the creation of a new Commissionerhip out of the Surma Valley Districts and Manipur, at present under his own direct control. This suggestion was accepted by the Government of India, and will raise the number of Commissionerhips in the new province to five.

7. The effect of the proposals thus agreed upon and now about to be introduced, will be as follows.—A new province will be created, with the status of a Lieutenant-Governorship, consisting of the Chittagong, Dacca, and Rajshahi Divisions of Bengal, the district of Malda, the State of Hill Tipperah, and the present Chief Commissionerhip of Assam. Darjeeling will remain with Bengal. In order to maintain associations, which are highly valued in both areas, the province will be entitled Eastern Bengal and Assam. Its capital will be at Dacca, with subsidiary head-quarters at Chittagong. It will comprise an area of 106,540 square miles and a

population of 31 millions, of whom 18 millions are Muhammadans and 12 millions Hindus. It will possess a Legislative Council, and a Board of Revenue of two Members, and the jurisdiction of the High Court of Calcutta is left undisturbed. The existing province of Bengal, diminished by the surrender of these large territories on the east and of the five Hindi States of Chutia Nagpur, but increased by the acquisition of Sambalpur and the five Uriya States before mentioned, will consist of 141,580 square miles with a population of 54 millions, of whom 42 millions are Hindus and 9 millions Muhammadans. In short, the territories now composing Bengal and Assam will be divided into two compact and self-contained provinces, by far the largest constituents of each of which will be homogeneous in character, and which will possess clearly defined boundaries and be equipped with the complete resources of an advanced administration.

8. The Governor-General-in-Council is fully aware of the opposition which these proposals have encountered, and has no desire to undervalue the sentiments upon which it has been based. Ties of mutual association grow up so quickly and become so closely interlaced, that territorial redistribution can rarely be accomplished except at the cost of a disruption which is often painful and generally unpopular. On the other hand, when old connections are severed new ones almost immediately take their place, growing with a rapidity that in a very short time is found to invest them with a sanctity scarcely inferior to that of the associations which they have superseded.

9. The Government of India are encouraged by previous experience to hope that such will be the case in the present instance. They will be greatly disappointed if there are not found in the new province elements of cohesion which will speedily endow it with a stability and individuality of its own. In any case the Government that is called upon to decide such cases must regard them from a wider standpoint than that of purely local, and, in all probability, transient considerations. They are bound to keep in view the interests of the Government and of the people as a whole. If they are convinced that owing to arrangements, devised for a different state of affairs and now obsolete, the administration suffers, if they see one Government weighed down with a burden which it cannot properly discharge, and another Government shut out from the development that ought naturally to await it, they cannot permanently remain indifferent to the situation thus produced. Either a remedy must be sought, or the responsibility for a conscious neglect of duty is incurred.

10. Upon two conditions, however, the community has a claim to insist. The first is that the solution ultimately approved shall not be arrived at in haste or until all available alternatives have been fully considered, and its superiority over them conclusively established. This procedure has been followed in the present case. It is now more than 18 months since the first proposals of the Government of India were officially published. In the interval they have been the subject of wide-spread and searching criticism

at the hands of those who were directly or indirectly concerned. Representations from an immense number of public bodies or gatherings have reached the Government. These have in every case been attentively examined; many of them have not been without effect upon the course adopted; and the very last charge that could with justice be brought against the Government would be one of undue speed in arriving at a final decision. In the course of this prolonged study of the case, the various suggestions that have at different times been put forward for the relief of Bengal have been exhaustively examined. The idea of creating a new Commission or Chief Commissionership out of portions of the Province, the separation from Bengal of smaller areas than those ultimately selected, the transfer of sufficient territory to the Central Provinces to convert the latter administration into a Lieutenant-Governorship, the substitution of administration in Bengal by a Lieutenant-Governor and Council for administration by a Lieutenant-Governor alone—all of these have been duly considered and have not been rejected until they were found to contain flaws or drawbacks which were inconsistent with the essential aim. On the other hand, the scheme which was preferred to them has received the practically unanimous approval of the leading officials of the three administrations whom it directly affects, as well as the final sanction of the Secretary of State.

11. The second condition above referred to is that, as far as possible, an attempt should be made to remove every well-grounded cause of complaint and to satisfy every reasonable demand on the part of those who will be personally affected by the new arrangement. The Government of India have endeavoured throughout to act in accordance with the principle, and to let the majority of the modifications in the original plan are due. The grant to the new province of a Legislative Council and a Board of Revenue, and the retention of the jurisdiction of the High Court are instances of this desire; and the Governor-General-in-Council can confidently state that there is no guarantee for the good government of the transferred populations which has not been willing, if its merits were satisfactorily demonstrated, to adopt.

12. The result is the creation of a new province, founded upon that which is the secret of all good administration, namely, the close contact—in so far as this is possible in areas of great size—of the governors with the governed. The welfare of the people will be more vigilantly safeguarded, and larger opportunities will open up before the educated classes, when they are the nucleus of a powerful and self-contained administration exclusively devoted to their interests than when they have been either the appendage of an overgrown and overworked province or the constituents of a relatively backward and arrested organisation. The change may be expected to raise the administrative standards and to revive no small portion of the former prosperity of Eastern Bengal. It will communicate a much desired impetus to the hitherto retarded development of Assam.

13. The Governor-General-in-Council, in directing that the necessary measures shall now be taken to introduce the scheme,

looks forward to the day, as not far distant, when not merely will the new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam have amply vindicated its creation, as an administrative reform of the first importance, but when it will have acquired a character and influence not inferior to those of any of the older Indian provinces, and will have attracted to itself the spontaneous and devoted loyalty of its sons.

ORDER.—Ordered that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to all local Governments and Administrations and to the several Departments of the Government of India, for information.

Ordered also that the Resolution be published in the *Gazette of India* for general information.

H. A. STUART,

Offg. Secretary to the Government of India.

From Chamber, to Government of India (HOME).

NO. 1267-1905.—CALCUTTA, 27th July 1905.

The Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce have considered with great care and attention the Resolution No. 2491, dated 19th July, of the Government of India, creating the new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam.

2. This important question was referred to in the Committee's letter No. 491, dated 19th March 1904, to the Government of Bengal, a copy of which I annex for your information.* On general grounds the Committee did not take exception to the proposed partition of the existing Province. But they would, they said, "strongly object to the proposals generally unless it is made absolutely clear, and unless definite guarantees are given, that the jurisdiction of the High Court over the transferred districts will not be interfered with in the slightest degree." So far as the commercial public are concerned, any measures which may, either in the present or in the future, have the possible effect of restricting the jurisdiction or weakening the prestige of the High Court at Calcutta are viewed with the very gravest apprehension. It was for this reason that the Committee, in the letter which I have quoted, ventured to go the length of asking that definite guarantees should be given for the maintenance of the jurisdiction of the High Court over the transferred districts. Had the procedure of Government admitted of the new province being created by an Act of the Legislature, the Committee would have suggested the inclusion in the Act of a section safeguarding the position of the Court. But the new province is created by resolution; and the Committee fully recognise that under such a procedure it is a difficult matter for H. E. the Governor-General-in-Council to bind his successors in office to any particular line of action. At the same time the opinion is, they fear, general in Calcutta that the references, in the Resolu-

* See pages 385-388 of Chamber Report for 1904, Vol. II.

tion, to the High Court are not so definite as is desirable, or as was contemplated when the partition was originally proposed. It is true that in para. 7, and again in para. 11, the statement is made that the jurisdiction of the Court will be retained. But the opinion has been expressed that these references do not indicate with sufficient precision whether the Government of India have in mind a permanent or only a temporary retention. Doubts upon the point have also been accentuated by an announcement in the public press of this city that the arrangement would be "for the present" only. Nothing is further from the desire of the Committee than to suggest that the Government of India have anything else in view than the permanent maintenance of the existing position. Seeing, however, that the question has been raised, and that doubts exist as to what really is intended by the Resolution, they take the liberty of respectfully suggesting that it would be generally advantageous, and might tend to diminish the popular feeling against the partition scheme, if a definite announcement were made to the effect that the jurisdiction of the High Court is to remain permanently undisturbed. Although such an announcement might not be binding on future Governments, it would be a lasting record of the intentions of the administration by which the province of Eastern Bengal and Assam has been created, and being such it would not be lightly overlooked or departed from.

From Government of India (HOME), to Chamber.

No. 2703.—SILHA, 11th August 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1267-1905, dated the 27th July 1905, in which the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce ask for a definite announcement that the jurisdiction of the High Court, Calcutta, over the new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam shall remain permanently undisturbed.

2. In reply I am to say that the intention of the Government of India, as at present constituted, to leave the jurisdiction of the High Court undisturbed is clearly stated in paragraphs 7 and 11 of the Home Department Resolution No. 2491, dated the 19th July 1905, but though they do not contemplate any interference with that jurisdiction, it is evidently impossible for them, as you have foreseen, to commit themselves to an assurance that in no circumstances will any modification of the existing conditions ever be found expedient. Should the question of altering the jurisdiction be raised at any future date, it will no doubt be decided on a consideration of the conditions prevailing at the time which it would be fruitless at the present juncture to attempt to forecast.

From Chamber, to Government of India (Home).

No. 1423-1905.—CALCUTTA, 26th August 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 2703 dated 11th August 1905, upon the question of the maintenance of the jurisdiction of the Calcutta High Court over the new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam.

2. The Committee observe with a certain measure of satisfaction that it is the intention of the Government of India, as at present constituted, to leave the jurisdiction of the Court undisturbed. But it is also clear to them that Government see a difficulty in binding themselves, much less their successors, to an assurance that the jurisdiction may not be curtailed or modified in the distant or even the immediate future, under the altered circumstances which the partition will entail. This inherent difficulty of committing succeeding Governments to a particular course of action is, as you have observed, fully appreciated by the Committee. When reviewing the original scheme, in their letter dated 19th March 1904 to the Government of Bengal, they stated that they were not opposed to partition. But, recognising the difficulty in question, they emphasised the need for guarantees for the maintenance of the jurisdiction of the High Court. For there was then a feeling of apprehension, which has lately been growing, that notwithstanding any expressed intentions of Government, the operation of the partition scheme might lead to the curtailment of the jurisdiction, and possibly the lowering of the status, of the High Court. And it now indeed seems to be evident, judging from your letter, that such a contingency may well arise, even within a short time after the transfer of territory has been effected.

3. The Committee, therefore, feel it to be essential that the public should be reassured upon this point; and they venture respectfully to urge that Government should endeavour to specify the means and methods by which at least satisfactory assurances may be given. It is becoming more and more necessary, by reason of the growing fears on the subject, that these assurances should be of such a nature as to go beyond an expression of the intentions of Government: they should be so devised as to constitute an effective safeguard against the contingency which is so much apprehended. They should provide, the Committee consider, firstly, that the High Court shall continue to exercise its existing jurisdiction. It is recognised, however, that notwithstanding any assurance to the contrary, a desire for the establishment of a superior tribunal may be evinced by the new province. To meet this contingency the Committee would urge:

- (a) That, if so recommended by the High Court, the needs of the new province should be met by a suitable modification of the English circuit system, whereby the Calcutta Court would depute its judges to visit periodically the capital and other populous centres of Eastern Bengal and Assam. The judges so

deputed would exercise locally, but in the name and with authority of the High Court, the jurisdiction now exercised in Calcutta in respect of the territories in question.

And (b) that, if the jurisdiction of the High Court should ever hereafter be altered as regards the new province, it should not be displaced by a Chief Court, but by another High Court, possessing a constitution and a status, and invested with jurisdiction and powers, similar to those of the Calcutta High Court. But that such a new High Court should not be established, save on the recommendation of the High Court at Calcutta, or as the result of the finding of a Royal Commission.

4. The Committee would most earnestly recommend that assurances to the foregoing effect should be included in, and should form an integral part of, the scheme for the creation of the new province. They have already alluded to the grave apprehensions which are felt by the public as regards the future of the High Court in relation to the partition scheme. These apprehensions are so generally and so strongly held, that public bodies and individuals who, like the Chamber, do not object to the partition on other grounds, are disposed to withhold their support—if they do not even enter into active opposition—unless it can be made as clear as is practicable that the status, jurisdiction and functions of the High Court will not be prejudicially affected. It is for this reason, and with the object of allaying public agitation, that the Committee have taken the liberty of making the recommendations detailed in the preceding paragraphs. They still adhere to the position defined in their letter of 19th March 1904, namely, that they do not take exception to the partition, provided the position of the High Court is properly and effectively safeguarded.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (JUDICIAL).

No. 1430-1905.—CALCUTTA, 28th August 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to forward a copy of the marginally noted letter, which they have addressed to the Government of India in the Home Department, with reference to the question of the maintenance of the jurisdiction of the Calcutta High Court over the new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam. In so doing I am to express the earnest hope of the Committee that His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor will see his way to support the proposals which they have ventured to urge upon the Government of India.

From Marwari Chamber, to Chamber.

CALCUTTA, 31st September 1905.

The Marwari Chamber of Commerce beg to report to your Chamber that there has been practically no sale of English piece-goods in the market since last week. Both local and mofussil Bengalee dealers as also ordinary Bengalee customers are not at all buying any English made piece-goods and on enquiry from them we have come to know that they are determined not to buy any English piece-goods till the Partition Resolution of the Government of India is withdrawn. The Durga Poojah is approaching and if the Bengalee dealers and customers persevere in their determination, as there is every indication that they will, if the partition of Bengal is persisted in, the members of our Chamber will be put to serious loss. Every day reports are reaching us that the movement against English piece-goods is spreading and gaining in volume and we may not be able to enter into fresh contracts. Our Chamber therefore earnestly requests your Chamber to represent matters to the Secretary of State and the Government in England so that the present tension may be relaxed. If an immediate assurance is not given to the people that the partition of Bengal will not be proceeded with or that the whole question will be reconsidered to meet the views of the people, the next Pujah sale will be a failure, indeed, and we shall be put to loss to the extent of a crore of rupees or more. If the present policy is persevered in we apprehend that it will ruin the trade in English piece-goods in Bengal. We, therefore, earnestly request you to give the matter your immediate and earnest consideration.

We beg that you will consider this matter as one of supreme urgency and should be settled without delay.

From Chamber, to Marwari Chamber.

No. 1503-1905.—CALCUTTA, 8th September 1905.

The Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce direct me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 31st August, with reference to the subject of the sale of imported piece-goods. In reply I am to say that the Committee are not disposed to take action in the direction which you suggest. It does not appear to them that there ought to be any connection between the Partition of Bengal and the sale of imported manufactured goods; and they do not think that the movement initiated by the Bengal community is one which is likely to modify the policy of Government.

From Government of Bengal (REVENUE), to Chamber.

No. 3011-T. R.—DARJEELING, 11th September 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge with thanks, the receipt of your letter No. 1430, dated 28th ultimo, forwarding copy of a letter, No.

1423 of the 26th idem, which the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce have addressed to the Government of India in the Home Department, regarding the maintenance of the jurisdiction of the Calcutta High Court over the new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam.

2. I am to say, however, that the Lieutenant-Governor cannot intervene in a correspondence conducted direct with the Government of India unless called upon by that Government for his opinion.

From Government of India (HOME), to Chamber.

No. 3187.—SIMLA, 2nd October 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 1423-1905, dated the 26th August 1905, in which the Chamber of Commerce refer to the apprehensions felt by the public that the formation of the province of Eastern Bengal and Assam may involve the reduction of the existing status and jurisdiction of the Calcutta High Court and may hereafter lead to the establishment, in the territories now separated from Bengal, of an appellate tribunal occupying a position of less authority and influence. With the object of allaying these apprehensions the Chamber urge that certain assurances should now be given by the Government of India.

2. The Governor-General in Council fully recognises the importance reasonably and properly attached to these questions by the Chamber of Commerce and he is in no way disposed to underrate the strength and reality of the feelings to which your letter gives expression. His Excellency in Council is, moreover, anxious to show such consideration as may be practicable to the views of a body representing large commercial interests in respect of a matter by which it is feared that those interests may be injuriously affected. It is obvious, however, as the members of the Chamber themselves realize, that the ability of the Government of India to give a positive guarantee as to the precise nature of future administrative changes is strictly limited by constitutional considerations. In a question of this kind the ultimate decision will rest, in virtue of powers conferred by a series of Parliamentary Statutes, with the Secretary of State for India, who will have before him the proposals of the Government of India as then constituted. Whatever opinion may be expressed by the present Government will of course receive the careful consideration of their successors, but it clearly cannot have the effect of binding them to re-commend, or the Secretary of State to adopt, a particular line of action merely because it had commenced itself, possibly under different conditions, to another Government at some previous time.

3. While thus emphasising the constitutional aspects of the question, the Government of India see no objection, to placing on record the opinions which they entertain regarding the subject discussed in your letter. It appears to them that should the time arrive at which it will be necessary to determine whether a separate tribunal should be created for the service of the Eastern Bengal and

Assam, one of the chief factors to be taken into consideration will be the wishes of the people of that province. It would seem to be in the highest degree improbable that the organized public opinion of an advanced community, closely linked by social ties and commercial relations with Calcutta and the rest of Bengal, would be satisfied with an appellate tribunal of lower status than a Chartered High Court. In support of their claims to be placed under a Court of superior standing the people of Eastern Bengal and Assam would even now be entitled to point to the facts that the new province compares not unfavourably in respect of area and population with other provinces where High Courts have already been established; that its population is exceptionally prosperous and shows a marked tendency to increase; that its litigation furnishes nearly one half of the business that comes before the Calcutta High Court and tends constantly to grow in volume and importance; and finally that it is the site of important industries called into existence and maintained by European capital and enterprise. These arguments will manifestly have gained in force when, in the course of time, the commercial resources and maritime advantages of Eastern Bengal have been still further developed. In the opinion of the Government of India their effect will be to render it most unlikely that in the event of the existing judicial machinery being found inadequate for the service of the two provinces and of public opinion then demanding the establishment of a Chartered High Court, any tribunal occupying a position of less authority and influence would either be proposed by the Government of India or sanctioned by the Secretary of State. Although, therefore, as has already been stated, it would be highly improper for the present Government to give any pledge on behalf of their successors in office they see no objection to assuring the Chamber that, so far as can now be foreseen, the considerations mentioned above cannot fail to carry great weight with the Government on whom will devolve the settlement of the questions discussed in your letter. They trust that this expression of opinion may not be without effect in relieving the apprehensions to which you have referred.

From Chamber, to Government of India (HOME).

No. 1786-1905.—CALCUTTA, 31st October 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 3187 of 2nd October 1905, replying to my letter No. 1423 of 26th August 1905, upon the question of the maintenance of the jurisdiction of the Calcutta High Court over the new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam.

2. I am instructed by the Committee to convey to you their best thanks for the very full explanation of the position generally which has been given in your letter. The Committee quite understand that, although any opinion that might be expressed by the present Government would receive the careful consideration of

their successors, it cannot have the effect of binding them to recommend, or the Secretary of State to adopt, a particular line of action, but they are glad to read that in the opinion of the Government of India the effect of the arguments adduced in the second para of your letter will be to render it most unlikely that in the event of the existing judicial machinery being found inadequate for the service of the two provinces and public opinion then demanding the establishment of a Chartered High Court, no tribunal occupying a position of less authority or influence would either be proposed by the Government of India or sanctioned by the Secretary of State.

3. I am also to thank you for the assurance of the Government of India that, so far as can now be foreseen, the considerations referred to cannot fail to carry great weight with the Government on which the settlement of the questions discussed in my letter of 26th August will devolve.

PRESIDENCY GENERAL HOSPITAL.

From Government of Bengal (MUNICIPAL), to Chamber.

No. 1196-T. M.—DARJEELING, 21st June 1905.

The Committee appointed in 1897 to enquire into the administration of the Presidency General Hospital recommended that a Lay Committee of Visitors consisting largely of non-officials should be appointed. This recommendation was accepted by Government, but action was deferred pending the reconstruction of the Hospital.

2. The new buildings are now practically completed, and the Lieutenant-Governor proposes that a Visiting Committee should be constituted. The object in view is to provide a body through which the wants of the public may be readily made known to the Hospital authorities and by means of which any defects that are found to exist may be brought to notice and suggestions made for their removal. The Committee would be an advising, and not an executive body, and would have functions similar to those of the Board of Visitors of a Lunatic Asylum. It would have power to inspect all the internal arrangements of the Hospital, and to offer suggestions for their improvement. Copies of all notes recorded by the Committee would be forwarded to the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals together with the remarks of the Surgeon Superintendent showing the action taken by him on the same, or furnishing any explanations that might seem to be called for. The Committee would visit the Hospital as a body, and not individually, and it is proposed that for this purpose three should constitute a quorum. It might be convenient for the Committee to divide itself into groups of three or four, each group to be on duty for a certain period in the year. It is thought that visits should be paid by the Committee at intervals of about a month.

3. Before issuing orders in the matter the Lieutenant-Governor would be glad if the Chamber of Commerce would favour him with their opinion on the general proposal, and also on the details as outlined above.

4. In order that the various interests may be represented on the Committee it has been suggested that it should consist of 12 members to be nominated as follows:—

	Number of Members.
Chamber of Commerce	...
Trades Association	... 3
Jute Mills Association	... 2
Indian Tea Association	... 2
Port Commissioners	... 2
	... 3
	...
Total	... 12

I am to enquire if this arrangement is considered suitable; and if not what modifications may be suggested. I am also to enquire for what period it is thought that the members should hold office.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (MUNICIPAL).

No. 1170-1905.—CALCUTTA, 11th July 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1196-T. M. dated 21st June 1905.

2. You invite the views of the Chamber upon a proposal to constitute a Lay Committee of visitors in connection with the Presidency General Hospital. The members of this Committee would be largely non-officials; and their duties would be to inspect and to offer suggestions for the improvement of the internal arrangements of the Hospital. The Committee of the Chamber are in sympathy with the proposal; and they have carefully discussed the constitution of the new body. They have taken into consideration the fact that a large and representative Committee already exists in connection with the Calcutta Hospital Nurses' Institution; and they are disposed to think that it might be desirable to include in the new Committee the non-official European members of the Institution Committee. On the latter the Chamber of Commerce, the Trades' Association, the European and Anglo Indian Defence Association, and the Indian Jute Mills' Association are all adequately represented. Four additional members might be appointed, two on the recommendation of the Calcutta Port Commissioners, one on the recommendation of the Indian Tea Association, and one on the recommendation of the Liners' Conference. If this suggestion be adopted a thoroughly representative Committee of twelve members will have been constituted.

3. The Committee of the Chamber have mentioned the Liners' Conference, because they think it is of importance that shipping interests in the port should be represented. The representative of the Tea Industry should also, they consider, be nominated by the Indian Tea Association rather than by the Calcutta Tea Traders' Association. With this suggestion the latter Association is, I may add, in accord. Two nominees of the Calcutta Port Commissioners should, the Committee think, be sufficient.

4. In addition to the twelve gentlemen members, the Committee of the Chamber are inclined to propose that a few ladies should also be appointed. On the Committee of the Calcutta Hospital Nurses' Institution there are six lady members. These ladies might be invited to join the new Committee, bringing the total membership to eighteen. This would be a somewhat large Committee, possibly larger than is contemplated by Government. But to the Committee of the Chamber it seems to be desirable that the Nurses' Institute should be closely associated with the lay visitors. For by such association the possibility of friction would probably be mini-

mised; and a large proportion of the members would have the advantage of entering upon their new duties with a more or less intimate knowledge of the working of the Hospital. These are considerations of some consequence, which ought not to be altogether overlooked in determining the matter.

5. As to the length of the term of office of members, the Committee of the Chamber have no particular suggestion to offer. They notice that no period is fixed in the case of the Nurses' Institution Committee; and they think that perhaps the present thus established might be followed in the case of the new Committee.

From Government of Bengal (MUNICIPAL), to Chamber.

NO. 2836-T. M.—DARJEELING, 4th October 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1170-1905, dated the 11th July 1905, with regard to the appointment of a Lay Committee of Visitors in connection with the Presidency General Hospital. The Chamber propose that the proposed Committee should comprise all the non-official European members of the Committee of the Hospital Nurses' Institution, together with two members nominated by the Port Commissioners' one by the Indian Tea Association and one by the Liners' Conference. The Chamber observe that in this way a thoroughly representative Committee of twelve members will be constituted. It is also suggested that the six lady members of the Nurses' Association Committee should join the new Committee.

2. In reply I am to say that the Lieutenant-Governor considers the arrangement suggested to be a very good one, and action is being taken to give effect to it at once.

3. It appears, however, from the enclosed list of members of the Committee of the Hospital Nurses' Institution that there are at present only six non-official European members of that Committee whereas the Chamber's proposal implies that there are eight. The rules of the Institution (copy enclosed) provide that there shall be a General Committee which shall include at least six ladies and three native gentlemen. But the total number of members is not laid down, their term of membership is not prescribed and nothing is said as to the manner in which they are to be appointed or the interests which should be represented. It might easily happen, therefore, that a particular interest, say the Jute Association, might cease to be represented. In these circumstances the Lieutenant-Governor thinks that the constitution of the Committee of the Hospital Nurses' Association should be more clearly defined. I am to ask that the Chamber will consider the question in consultation with the Committee of the Hospital Nurses' Institution and the other public bodies concerned and that the Lieutenant-Governor may be favoured with their recommendations on the subject.

From Government of Bengal (MUNICIPAL), to Chamber.

NO. 2831-T. M.—DARJEELING, 4th October 1905.

COPY of the following Resolution forwarded with reference to their letter No. 1170, dated 11th July 1905, with the request that the nomination of the Liners' Conference may be submitted as soon as possible.

By order of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal,

E. A. GAIT,

Offg. Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL.—MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENT.

Sanitation Branch.

NO. 2830-T. M.—DARJEELING, 4th October 1905.

RESOLUTION.

READ—The Report of the Committee appointed to enquire into the Administration of the Presidency General Hospital, Calcutta, under Resolution No. 2045-Med. dated 9th April 1897.

READ ALSO—Letter No. 548-T. M., dated 27th September 1898, in which the views of this Government with regard to the Report of the Committee were communicated to the Government of India : and

Letter No. 425, dated 11th March 1899, from the Secretary to the Government of India in the Home Department communicating the orders of the Government of India in the matter.

READ ALSO—Replies from the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta Traders Association, Port Commissioners of Calcutta, Calcutta Tea Traders Association and the Indian Jute Mills' Association submitting their views with regard to the constitution of a Visiting Committee of the Presidency General Hospital.

In paragraph 60 of their Report the Committee which was appointed in 1897 to enquire into the Administration of the Presidency General Hospital recommended that a Lay Committee of visitors consisting largely of non-officials should be appointed. This proposal was accepted by Government but action was deferred pending the reconstruction of the Hospital.

2. The new buildings are now practically completed, and the Lieutenant-Governor has decided that the Visiting Committee shall be formed at once. The public bodies named in the preamble were asked to state their views regarding the constitution of the proposed Committee. The Chamber of Commerce, who are supported by

the other public bodies consulted, suggest that it should be composed of all the non-official European Members of the Committee of the Hospital Nurses' Institution together with two members to be nominated by the Port Commissioners, one by the Liners' Conference and one by the Indian Tea Association. The Chamber observe that in this way a thoroughly representative Committee will be obtained. The Chamber also suggest that the six Lady Members of the Committee of the Hospital Nurses' Association should be invited to join the new Committee. The above recommendations have been accepted by the Lieutenant-Governor.

3. The Committee will have functions similar to those of the Board of Visitors of a Lunatic Asylum. They will visit the Hospital as a body, and not individually, and for this purpose three will constitute a quorum. If desired the Committee might divide themselves into groups, each group being on duty for a particular period, according to a roster to be kept for the purpose. The Committee, or group, will visit the hospital at least once a month, on dates to be fixed by themselves, and will inspect the internal arrangements and offer such suggestions regarding the administration of the Hospital as may seem called for. A visitor's book will be kept in the Hospital in which all such recommendations will be recorded. The Surgeon Superintendent will note in the margin the action taken on the same and any other remarks of explanations that he may have to offer. He will transmit a copy of the entries without delay for the consideration of the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals who will take such further action as may be needed.

E. A. GAIT,

Offg. Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (MUNICIPAL).

No. 1915-1905.—CALCUTTA, 22nd November 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 2831-T. M., dated Dairehing 4th October 1905, with reference to the formation of a Lay Committee of Visitors in connection with the Presidency General Hospital. You also comment upon the constitution of the Committee of the Calcutta Hospital Nurses' Institution and invite, on behalf of H. H. the Lieutenant-Governor, suggestions for its improvement and clearer definition.

2. The Committee of visitors referred to in the first paragraph of your letter having been duly formed by Resolution No. 2830-T. M., of 4th October 1905 of the Government of Bengal, Municipal Department, in accordance with the suggestions made by the Committee of the Chamber, in consultation with other public bodies, requires no further reference from the Committee. With regard to the constitution of the Calcutta Hospital Nurses' Institution I am instructed to suggest that in order to give it the thoroughly re-

presentative character which is desirable, it should be formed as follows:—

The President of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, *ex-officio* ;
A Judge of the High Court ;
A representative of the Bar ;
A representative of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce ;
A representative of the Calcutta Trades Association ;
A representative of the European and Anglo-Indian Defence Association ;

Two representatives of the Port Commissioners ;
One representative of the Liners' Conference ;
One representative of the Indian Tea Association ;
One representative of the Indian Mining Association ;
One representative of the Indian Jute Mills' Association ;
One Banker ;
Two Hindoo gentlemen ;
Two Mahomedan gentlemen ;
One Parsi gentleman ;
Six ladies (as at present) nominated by the Ladies' Committee ;

The Sister Superior Lady Canning Home *ex-officio* ;
The Principal, Medical College, *ex-officio* ;
The Surgeon Superintendent in charge of the Presidency General Hospital, *ex-officio* ;

The Medical Officer in charge of the Eden Hospital.

3. The above, in the opinion of the Committee of the Chamber, would be a thoroughly representative body, and they would suggest that the number of members should never exceed 30, and that each member should remain in office until his or her resignation, when the interest represented should be called upon to make a fresh nomination. So far as the interests represented by the Chamber are concerned they are all provided for, with the exception of the Banks. The Committee would suggest the name of Mr. D. King, Managing Director of the Bank of Calcutta, Limited, as the Banking member. This gentleman with Mr. R. H. A. Gresson who, the Committee understand, has been nominated by the Indian Tea Association, will make up the number of members representing what may be called mercantile interests. The Committee understand that the Port Commissioners have nominated two representatives and the Liners' Conference one. The list of the Committee, enclosed in your letter under reply, does not appear to have been corrected up to date as the names of the Hon. Mr. J. T. Woodroffe, Sir Allan Arthur, Mr. H. S. Ashton and Mr. H. W. Cassels, who have all resigned their seats, are included in it. Further the names of Mrs. H. S. Ashton, Mrs. R. C. Mawdsley, and Mrs. Nowell Watkins all of which ladies have left for England also appear, while the name of Mrs. C. G. H. Allen, who is on the Committee, is not included in the list. If the Committee were constituted as above the Committee of visitors would then be entirely chosen from the Committee of the Calcutta Hospital Nurses' Institution which, it appears to the Committee of the Chamber, would be an advantage.

From Government of Bengal (MUNICIPAL), to Chamber.

No. 259-MED.—CALCUTTA, 17th January 1906.

COPY of the following Resolution forwarded for information, with reference to their letter No. 1915, dated 22nd November 1905.

By order of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal,
S. RAINEY,

Under Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENT—MEDICAL.

CALCUTTA, 17th January 1906.

RESOLUTION No. 258-Med.

In a Resolution dated the 4th August 1902, certain rules framed for the management and control of the nursing arrangements of the Calcutta Hospitals were approved by Government. It was laid down that there should be one general Committee of the Hospital Nurses' Institution, all the members and the President of which would be appointed by Government. The Committee would include at least six ladies and three native gentlemen; and the Principal of the Medical College, Calcutta, the Superintendent of the Presidency General Hospital and the Sister Superior would be members *ex-officio*. The rules did not, however, prescribe the total number of members, their term of membership, the manner in which they were to be appointed, or the interests which should be represented on the Committee.

2. It has been thought desirable that the constitution of the Committee should be more clearly defined. The Lieutenant-Governor has accordingly, after consulting the Chamber of Commerce and the other public bodies who are interested in the matter, revised Rule 2 of the Rules referred to above. A copy of the revised rule is annexed to this Resolution.

3. The reconstitution of the Committee of the Hospital Nurses' Institution renders it necessary that some alterations should be made in the arrangements sanctioned in the Resolution of this Government No. 2830-T.-M., dated the 4th October 1905, for General Hospital. It was stated that the Committee would consist of all the non-official European members of the Committee of the Hospital Nurses' Institution, together with two members to be nominated by the Port Commissioners, one by the Liners' Conference and one by the Indian Tea Association. The representatives of these bodies will now be members of the Committee of the

Hospital Nurses' Institution and, therefore, *ex-officio* members of the Visiting Committee.

ORDER.—Ordered that copies of this Resolution be forwarded to the Committee of the Hospital Nurses' Institution, the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals, the Calcutta Trades Association, the European and Anglo-Indian Defence Association, the Port Commissioners of Calcutta, the Indian Tea Association, the Indian Mining Association, the Jute Mills' Association, and the Liners' Conference, for information.

By order of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

L. P. SHIRRES,

Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

Rule 2 of the Rules for the management and control of the nursing arrangements of the Calcutta Hospitals, as revised by Government Resolution No. 258-Med., dated 17th January 1906.

Rule 2.—The General Committee shall be constituted as follows:—

- The President of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, *ex-officio* ;
- The Principal, Medical College, *ex-officio* ;
- The Surgeon-Superintendent in charge of the Presidency General Hospital, *ex-officio* ;
- The Medical Officer in charge of the Eden Hospital, *ex-officio* ;
- The Sister Superior of the Lady Canning Home, *ex-officio* ;
- Six European Ladies ;
- A Judge of the High Court ;
- One representative of the Bar ;
- One representative of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce ;
- One representative of the Calcutta Trades' Association ;
- One representative of the European and Anglo-Indian Defence Association ;
- Two representatives of the Port Commissioners ;
- One representative of the Liners' Conference ;
- One representative of the Indian Tea Association ;
- One representative of the Indian Mining Association ;
- One representative of the Indian Jute Mills' Association ;
- One Banker.
- Two Hindu gentlemen ;
- Two Muhammadan gentlemen ; and
- One Parsi gentleman.

LAW AND LEGISLATION.

INDIAN PAPER CURRENCY BILL.

From Chamber, to all Members.

CIR. No. 70-1905.—CALCUTTA, 17th February 1905.

Indian Paper Currency Bill.

MEMO:—The following correspondence is published for the information of members of the Chamber:—

From Government of Bengal (FINANCE), to Chamber.

No. 546-F.—CALCUTTA, 26th January 1905.

I am directed to forward a copy of a letter from the Government of India, in the Legislative Department, No. 31, dated the 7th January 1905, with which is enclosed a Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to Government Paper Currency, and a Statement of Objects and Reasons.

2. I am to request that the Lieutenant-Governor may be favoured with an expression of the opinion of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce. I am to ask that your reply may be sent so as to reach this office not later than the 7th February 1905.

No. 31.—CALCUTTA, 7th January 1905.

From—The Secretary to the Government of India, Legislative Department,

To—The Secretary to the Bengal Council and Assistant Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Legislative Department.

I am directed to forward herewith twelve copies of the papers noted on the margin, and to request that His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor will favour the Government of India in this Department with an expression of his opinion on the provisions of the Bill, and with the opinions of such selected officers and other persons as His Honour may think fit to consult on the subject.

2. I am also to request that the Bill and Statement may be published in the *Calcutta Gazette* in English, and in such other languages as His Honour may deem proper, and that the dates of such publication may be communicated in your reply.

The Publisher of the *Gazette of India* at Calcutta has been instructed to furnish the Publisher of the *Calcutta Gazette* with English copies of the Bill and Statement (in Gazette form) for publication in the latter Gazette.

3. The reply to this letter should be sent in by the 15th February

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (FINANCE).

No. 219-1905.—CALCUTTA, 14th February 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 546 F of 26th January 1905, under cover of which you forward a copy of a letter from the Secretary to the Government of India, Legislative Department, No. 31 of 7th January 1905, enclosing a Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to Government Paper Currency with a Statement of Objects and Reasons, and you ask for the views of the Chamber upon this measure.

2. The primary object of the Bill is, as indicated in the Statement of Objects and Reasons, to consolidate the Acts relating to the Government Paper Currency, but the opportunity has at the same time been taken to propose certain amendments in the existing law. In the view of the Committee, the most important provision in the Bill is that in Clause 20 which raises the amount of the reserve that may be invested from ten to twelve crores of rupees, and permits of the whole or part of the investment to be made in Securities of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland or Securities issued by the Secretary of State for India in Council under the authority of Act of Parliament and charged to the revenues of India. The views of the Committee on the proposal to increase the invested portion of the Paper Currency Reserve from ten to twelve crores of rupees and to make the new investment in Sterling Securities, have already been given in my letter No. 931 of 9th June 1904 to the Secretary to the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department, copy of which I have the honor to enclose for information. It will be seen from this letter that the Committee expressed their opinion in favour of the increased investment and also of the advisability of investing the additional two crores in sterling securities. The Committee at the same time intimated that they would not suggest any alteration of this kind being made in connection with the ten crores already invested. They notice, however, that power is taken in the clause under reference for the whole or part of the investment to be made in Sterling Securities. The Committee would, however, reiterate the opinion already expressed that the sterling investment should not extend beyond the equivalent of two crores of rupees, and they assume that Government have no intention of going beyond this figure, the only object in view being to supply in London a ready fund for procuring silver for coinage or sovereigns as the case may be, in the unlooked-for event of a sudden demand for encashment of notes.

3. The Committee are by no means clear as to the object or the full bearing of the provisions of Clause 12 which deals with the issue of currency notes for gold coin not legal tender or gold bullion. It is provided in this clause that the officers in charge of circles of issue shall on the requisition of the Comptroller-General issue currency notes in exchange for gold coin which is not legal tender under the Indian Coinage Act or for gold bullion. As the Government of India have refused, since the year 1900, to accept Japanese gold coin or indeed any gold coin other than sovereigns and half sovereigns, this clause as it stands is misleading and should, in the opinion of the Committee, be worded somewhat more clearly, as in its present form it might be taken to refer to the receipt of gold coin from the public. The Committee, however, have reason to believe that this is not the intention of Government and that the clause only refers to the issue of notes from the Currency Department to Government Treasuries.

4. With regard to the provision in Clause 13 that gold coin or bullion or silver bullion may be held by the Secretary of State as part of the Paper Currency Reserve, the Committee are strongly of opinion that no part of the reserve in gold or silver, coined or uncoined, should be held in London except for a short time and to a limited degree, but should be remitted to India as quickly as possible.

5. Subject to the above criticisms, the Committee approve of the provisions of the Bill.

From Chamber, to Government of India (FINANCE).

NO. 931-1904.—CALCUTTA, 9th June 1904.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 2632-A., dated Simla, 29th April 1904,* asking for an expression of opinion on the proposal now under the consideration of the Governor-General in Council to take power by legislation to increase the invested portion of the Paper Currency Reserve from ten to twelve crores of rupees.

2. In paragraph 7 of your letter you ask for a further opinion on a proposal also before the Government of India to make the investment not in rupee securities but in sterling securities either of the British Government or of the Government of India.

3. The Committee have given their very close and careful attention to both the points raised in your letter, and I am instructed to say with reference to the first that they are unanimously of opinion that the invested portion of the Paper Currency Reserve can be safely increased from ten to twelve crores of rupees.

4. As to the second point on which an opinion is asked, *viz.*, the advisability of making the new investment in sterling securities, the Committee are in favour of this proposal notwithstanding that it involves a departure from long established precedent. Although the Committee would not suggest any alteration of this kind being made

in connection with the ten crores already invested, they consider it would be advisable to invest the additional two crores now under consideration, in sterling securities either of the British Government or the Government of India. It appears to them that in case of need such securities would be more readily and quickly realised in London where they would no doubt be held, than would be possible with rupee securities either in India or in England, and occasions might arise for the speedy purchase of silver, for which this investment would be available on the spot, and the time required for the transmission of gold from India would be saved.

* See Page 313 of Chamber Report for 1904, Vol. II.

JOINT STOCK COMPANIES' BALANCE SHEETS.

From Messrs. Kilburn & Co., to Chamber.

CALCUTTA, 16th February 1905.

Joint Stock Companies' Balance Sheets.

The Auditors appointed by a Company in our Agency have ruled that a lien on Stocks is a mortgage within the meaning of that word as used in item 5 of the Balance Sheet at the end of Table A, Schedule 1a in the Companies' Act.

We hold a different view and shall be glad of an expression of opinion by the Chamber on the subject.

The Auditors holding this view wish us to publish loans from Banks or elsewhere, as loans "Secured on Stocks." It is a matter of common knowledge that such loans are thus secured. To say so in the balance sheet appears to us unnecessary and likely to lead to complications in respect to stamps and in respect to where the definitions of such securities should cease.

From Messrs. Shaw Wallace & Co., to Chamber.

CALCUTTA, 16th February 1905.

Messrs. Meugens King & Simson, and Messrs. Lovelock & Lewes have recently come to the conclusion that loans secured by a lien on stocks should be classed in the Balance Sheet of Companies with limited liability as Mortgages. That is to say that such liabilities should be under item 5 of the Balance Sheet given in Table A, of the Indian Companies' Act.

In consequence of this opinion our Auditors have urged us in the case of a Concern we are Agents for to enter in its Balance Sheet a loan from the Bank of Bengal, which is secured by a lien upon stocks and a promissory note from ourselves, as a Mortgage. We objected to this procedure and the point has been left in abeyance pending a reference to your Committee.

The question at issue is one effecting many Concerns, and we think a ruling from the Chamber is advisable.

The liabilities prescribed in the skeleton Balance Sheet of Table A, as to be shown under item 5 are:—

"The amount of loans on mortgages or debenture bonds." We think ourselves that the item is meant to refer only to Block loans, but if the Auditors are correct in their view concerning loans secured by a lien on stocks, and the borrower admits in his Balance Sheet that he has given a mortgage, then the question of stamp duty may arise. The specific case referred to above is that of a Bank of Bengal loan, and the nature of the documents used to secure their lien is doubtless well known to your Committee, but if the Auditors are

JOINT STOCK COMPANIES' BALANCE SHEETS.

right in their ideas, it appears to us that loans against hypothecation of crops, against railway receipts, or any warehousing receipt, would all have to be similarly dealt with, and that the question of stamps is very likely to arise in varying degrees, and all Companies and Concerns financing on the security of such liens run the risk of being subjected to a largely increased burden of taxation.

From Chamber, to Chairman Exchange Banks Association.

No. 251-1905.—CALCUTTA, 22nd February 1905.

Joint Stock Companies' Balance Sheets.

The Committee of the Chamber have been asked for a ruling on a point raised by Messrs. Lovelock & Lewes and Messrs. Meugens, King & Simson in connection with the inclusion as mortgages of loans secured by a lien on stocks, in Balance Sheets of Companies with limited liabilities. The point raised is detailed in the accompanying copies of letters received from members of the Chamber and the Committee would feel indebted to your Association for any assistance you can offer them in considering the question, which they believe has already been placed before you.

From Chairman, Exchange Banks Association, to Chamber.

CALCUTTA, 13th March 1905.

Joint Stock Companies' Balance Sheets.

Your letters of the 22nd and 28th ultimo and the enclosures received therewith have been duly considered by the Exchange Banks. They are of opinion that loans on stocks should in all Balance Sheets be described as such. The other points raised by the firms who have referred to the Chamber, should the Banks submit, be preferred by the parties interested to their solicitors as the questions are purely legal ones, and no ruling of the Chamber can alter the law on the subject.

From Chamber, to Messrs. Kilburn & Co., and Messrs. Shaw, Wallace & Co.

No. 582-1905.—CALCUTTA, 4th April 1905.

Joint Stock Companies' Balance Sheets.

I am now directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 16th February in which you ask for an expression of opinion on a point which has recently been raised by Messrs. Lovelock & Lewes and Meugens,

King and Simson in their capacity as auditors. Briefly stated, the point is that loans secured by a lien on stocks should be included in the Balance Sheets of Companies with limited liability as mortgages *z. c.*, that such liabilities should be under item 5 of the Balance Sheet given in table A, of Indian Companies' Act.

The Committee have given this matter their most careful consideration from all points of view, and now instruct me to express their regret that they do not see their way to issue a ruling on the subject, as both the main and subsidiary points raised in your letter appear to them purely legal questions and no ruling of the Chamber can alter the law on the subject.

Under these circumstances they would suggest that you should refer the matter to your solicitors for opinion.

From Messrs. Kilburn & Co., to Chamber.

CALCUTTA, 1st May 1905.

Joint Stock Companies' Balance Sheets.

We beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 4th ultimo, conveying an expression of your Committee's opinion on the point which has recently been raised by Messrs. Lovelock and Lewes and Meugens, King and Simson in their capacity as Auditors: namely that your Committee do not see their way to issue a ruling on the subject as the points raised appear to them purely legal questions, and that the ruling of the Chamber cannot alter the law on the subject, and they suggest that we should refer the matter to our solicitors for opinion.

We shall, however, be obliged by your putting the case again before your Committee with the request that they will obtain an opinion from the Chamber's Solicitors or from Counsel if necessary, as a matter of general commercial interest, as such opinion will have much greater weight than an opinion obtained as suggested by the Committee.

The point raised by the Auditors is entirely new, and should their contention be correct, it would mean that balance sheets of most limited liability concerns under advance from bankers or others have not for many years complied with the requirements of the Act.

It is further most desirable that there should be uniformity as regards the method of dealing with hypothecated assets in the published Balance Sheets of public Companies, which is only likely to be obtained through a ruling from the Chamber.

From Chamber, to Messrs. Kilburn & Co.

No. 858-1905.—CALCUTTA, 19th May 1905.

Joint Stock Companies' Balance Sheets.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge your further letter of 1st May, in connection with this matter in which you point out that it is one of general commercial interest and that a legal opinion obtained by the Chamber would have greater weight than one obtained privately, and you ask the Committee to reconsider their decision.

I am instructed to say in reply that the Committee will be very pleased to obtain Counsel's opinion if your firm in consultation with Messrs. Shaw Wallace and Co, who have also addressed them on the subject, would state the case fully and clearly for them in the first instance so that there may be no mistake or misunderstanding in making the reference to Counsel.

From Chamber, to Messrs. Shaw Wallace & Co.

No. 859-1905.—CALCUTTA, 19th May 1905.

Joint Stock Companies' Balance Sheets.

With reference to my letter No. 523 of 4th April, Messrs. Kilburn and Co., have since requested the Committee to reconsider the matter and obtain legal opinion upon the points raised, in the general interests of the mercantile community. The Committee are quite willing to do this, but would feel much obliged if Messrs. Kilburn & Co., and yourselves would state the case fully and clearly for them in the first instance, so that there may be no mistake in placing it before Counsel.

From Messrs. Shaw Wallace & Co., to Chamber.

CALCUTTA, 27th May 1905.

Balance Sheets of Joint Stock Companies.

We are obliged for your letter of the 19th current under the above head, and beg to thank your Committee for declaring themselves willing, upon further consideration, to obtain Counsel's opinion upon the question we referred to them on the 16th February last. The point at issue is as follows:—

Firms of Auditors in Calcutta have recorded it as their opinion that Section 74 of the Indian Companies' Act of 1883 (sic) requires that all loans in any way charged upon the assets of a Company in such a manner as to constitute the lenders secured creditors,

must be separately stated; and they contend that sums loaned by a Bank upon a Promissory Note and hypothecation bond should be placed upon exactly the same footing as Debenture Mortgages. We take exception to this view upon two grounds.—

(1) In the schedule to the Companies' Act, a *pro forma* Balance Sheet is printed showing how Liabilities and Assets are to be set forth. In this Balance Sheet, under Section II "Debts and Liabilities of the Company," "The amount of loans on mortgages or Debenture Bonds" alone is placed under item 5, and nothing else. All other loans are grouped under item 6, headings (a) to (f).

We maintain that by no process of reasoning can a loan from a Bank, secured by a promissory note accompanied by a hypothecation bond giving a lien upon certain floating and constantly varying stocks, be regarded in the same light as a debenture or mortgage loan secured upon certain fixtures or immovable property. We are purports to exempt from stamp duty all hypothecation bonds accompanied by a promissory note; but if Companies impliedly admit in their Balance Sheets that such loans are in fact Mortgages, Providence alone knows what the Stamp Collector might attempt in the way of exacting some additional duty.

(2). It has been the practice in Calcutta for years to compile the Balance Sheets of Companies without indicating that loans from Banks are "secured on stocks," and, apart from the fact that such loans as are granted upon a guarantor's Pro-Note are *not* "secured on stocks," any alteration is unnecessary and inexpedient.—

- (a) Unnecessary, because such alteration cannot fulfil any good purpose and is not required by the Act and
- (b) inexpedient because the effect of such an innovation would probably be to confuse and mislead shareholders, and also because difficulties would almost certainly arise as to what constitutes a secured and an unsecured loan.

In order that the case may be placed before Counsel in as complete a form as possible, we enclose copy of the first communication we received from our Auditors on this subject, and we would also ask you to submit with this letter the documents sent you with ours of 27th February last.

CALCUTTA, 8th September 1904.

From—MESSRS. MEUGENS KING & SIMSON,
To—The MANAGING AGENTS, Bengal Nagpur Cotton Mills,
Limited.

With reference to the Balance Sheet as at 30th June 1904 now audited by us we would draw your attention to the fact that the Indian Company's Act 1883, Section 74, requires that all loans, that are in any way charged upon the assets of the concern in such a

manner as to constitute the lenders secured creditors, must be separately stated.

In your Balance Sheet you should therefore state:—

400 Mortgage Debentures	Rs.	4,00,000
Advances against Banks say	"	4,61,000

Due to Banks of Bengal.

We do not propose to delay the present Balance Sheet provided you will give us your assurance that the matter will receive due consideration before our next audit.

From Messrs. Kilburn & Co., to Chamber.

CALCUTTA, 29th May 1905.

Joint Stock Companies' Balance Sheets.

We beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 19th instant, and are obliged to your Committee for agreeing to obtain Counsel's opinion on the above matter.

The point on which advice is required is whether it is necessary to publish in a Company's Balance Sheet, loans from banks or elsewhere as loans "Secured on Stocks." We enclose for inspection a copy of the report of the Dunbar Mills, Limited, showing on page 8, the Balance Sheet as at 31st December, 1904.

The Auditors consider that the item under Liabilities:—"Bank of Bengal, Rs. 2,05,770-9-0" should have the words "Secured on Stocks" added thereto, and hold that a lien on stocks is a Mortgage within the meaning of that word as used in item 5 of the Balance Sheet at the end of Table A, Schedule I, in the Companies Act of 1882.

It is a matter of common knowledge that such loans are thus secured, and to say so in the Balance Sheet appears to us at once uncalled for by the Act, inexpedient, unnecessary, and likely to lead to complications in respect to stamps and in respect to where the definitions of such securities should cease.

The loans in question, moreover, are primarily secured by a Promissory Note signed by Messrs. Kilburn & Co. and secondarily by a hypothecation of the stocks.

We submit that it is undesirable to make any change in established practice unless the necessity for such change is made out. In the present case no such necessity is urged, and if the change required in the Stamp Collector insisting on Mortgage Stamps being affixed to the documents securing such loans, the injurious effect of the proposed change might be considerable.

From Chamber, to Messrs. Sanderson & Co.

No. 986-1905.—CALCUTTA, 8th June 1905.

Joint Stock Companies' Balance Sheets.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to ask you if you will kindly state a case for Counsel's opinion (Mr. Stokoe for preference) based on the statements in the two enclosed letters of 27th May, from Messrs Shaw Wallace & Co., and of 29th May, from Messrs Kilburn & Co. The points raised in both letters are identical but it is possible that one may be found to amplify the other. The letters and their enclosures explain themselves and do not seem to require any further elucidation on my part, but I should feel obliged if you would let me have in due course a copy of the case before it is submitted to Counsel. The case is to go up as from the Committee of the Chamber and not from the writers of the letters, the question being one of public interest.

From Messrs. Sanderson & Co., to Chamber.

No. 7209.—CALCUTTA, 15th July 1905.

Joint Stock Companies' Balance Sheets.

Referring to your letter No. 986 of the 8th ultimo, we beg to hand you herewith a copy of Mr. Stokoe's opinion on the question raised in Messrs. Meugens, King & Simson's letter of the 8th September last to the Managing Agents Bengal Nagpur Cotton Mills, Ltd., and commented on by Messrs. Shaw Wallace & Co., in their letter of the 27th May last and by Messrs. Kilburn & Co. in their letter of the 29th idem. As you will see Counsel is of opinion that the Auditors are right in their view.

We return the correspondence received with your letter under reference.

OPINION.

In my opinion the Auditors are right in their view that in the Balance Sheet to be made out and filed under section 74 of the Indian Companies' Act, 1882, all loans in any way charged upon assets of a company, in such a manner as to constitute the lenders secured creditors, should appear as secured debts, and be stated to be secured 'upon stocks,' or otherwise, as the fact may be.

The question is rendered difficult, and more or less doubtful, by the looseness of the language used in the form of Balance Sheet referred to in the section. Many securities which operate as a charge and security upon property, fall short of being mortgages. And on the other hand a 'debenture bond' is not necessarily a charge, or security, upon property at all. Probably most of the securities, such as are referred to by the Auditors, held by Banks and other creditors, for advances to the Companies are not 'mort-

gages' in the strict and true sense of the word. Whether they are so or not will depend upon the form of the instrument effecting the security, and the circumstances of the particular transaction. And in most instances they will not be debenture bonds. But although they may therefore not come within item 5 of the Statutory Balance Sheet, I think upon the true construction of section 74 and the Balance Sheet they nevertheless ought to appear upon the Balance Sheet as what they are, *viz*: as debts secured upon assets of the company. I think that the natural and reasonable meaning of items 5 and 6 of the Balance Sheet is, that the nature, including the circumstances that the debt is either secured, or unsecured, as the case may be, and, in the former case, the nature of the security, of all of the Company's debts, is intended to be disclosed. I think the word 'distinguishing' in item 6 should have this force given to it; and that the requirements of item 6 (f) are not satisfied by merely entering the name of the creditor and the amount of the debt under a general heading of debts 'not enumerated above,' or under no particular heading at all; but that as in the items (a) (b) (c) (d) and (e) the nature of each particular debt, or class of debts, should be stated. So that whether debts such as the Auditors refer to, fall within item 5 or item 6 (f) they should appear as secured debts, and the security should be indicated.

I may observe that the effect the mode of framing the Balance Sheet may have upon the view of the Collector of Stamps as to the liability of the Company's securities to different scales of Stamp-duty though a matter it may be of great practical importance—cannot affect the question of the construction of section 74 and the Statutory Balance Sheet, as on the other hand the contents of the Balance Sheet, or their form or mode of entry, cannot properly have any bearing upon the question of the stamp duty properly chargeable upon the securities.

14th July 1905.

THOS. R. STOKOE.

From Chamber, to Messrs. Shaw Wallace & Co., and Messrs. Kilburn & Co.

No. 1236-1905.—CALCUTTA, 21st July 1905.

Joint Stock Companies' Balance Sheets.

Adverting to previous correspondence ending with your letter dated 29th May, I am now directed to hand you a copy of a letter dated 15th July from Messrs. Sanderson & Co., forwarding Mr. Stokoe's opinion upon the point raised in this connection. The Committee will be glad to consider any remarks which you may wish to offer upon the opinion.

From Messrs. Shaw Wallace & Co., to Chamber.

CALCUTTA, 25th July 1905.

Joint Stock Companies' Balance Sheets.

We thank you for your letter of the 21st current, and are obliged for the copy of Messrs. Sandersons' note, covering an opinion of Mr. Stokoe's on the above question, submitted to them by your Committee.

Whilst expressing our obligation for the trouble taken in this connection, we beg to say that we do not propose to pursue the matter further.

From Messrs. Kilburn & Co., to Chamber.

CALCUTTA, 5th August 1905.

Joint Stock Companies' Balance Sheets.

We beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 21st ultimo, handing us a copy of a letter dated 15th July from Messrs. Sanderson & Co. forwarding Mr. Stokoe's opinion upon the point raised in this connection.

After perusal of Mr. Stokoe's opinion, which appears to us conclusive, we have no further remarks to offer. We thank your Committee for the trouble they have taken in this matter.

PETROLEUM RULES.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (GENERAL).

No. 883-1905.—CALCUTTA, 23rd May 1905.

The Committee have been favoured by Messrs. Graham & Co., Agents of the Asiatic Petroleum Co., Ltd., with copy of their letter of 13th February, to your address, embodying a number of suggestions on the subject of the rules for the importation, possession and transport of petroleum in British India, and asking them to support the representation.

2. The Committee have ascertained that the representations contained in the letter are all more or less in accord with the views of the representatives of the petroleum trade generally, but their attention having been drawn to the fact that there are points in the letter which have not been dealt with by the trade as a whole, and that the rules now in force render the Act in many ways unsuited to existing conditions. I am instructed to suggest as the best method of dealing with the matter that Government should appoint a special Committee consisting of the Government officials concerned and representatives of the Petroleum trade, to discuss generally the regulations existing under the petroleum Act which contain, as they stand at present, a number of anomalies and unnecessary restrictions which could be largely done away with by a careful revision of the rules.

3. The Committee understand that this recommendation has been already submitted to you by Messrs. Shaw Wallace & Co., Agents of the Burma Oil Co., Ltd., and they instruct me to say that it has their support.

From Government of Bengal (MARINE), to Chamber.

No. 1050-MNE.—CALCUTTA, 23rd June 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 883, dated the 23rd ultimo, drawing attention to a letter dated the 13th February last, from Messrs. Graham & Co., Agents of the Asiatic Petroleum Co., Ltd., to the address of this Government in which certain suggestions were made on the subject of the rules for the importation, possession and transport of petroleum and suggesting that a Special Committee consisting of the Government officials concerned, and the representatives of the petroleum trade may be appointed to consider the subject.

2. In reply, I am directed to say that a copy of Messrs. Graham & Co.'s letter was forwarded to the Government of India for consideration. That Government have now replied that the majority of the suggestions made by Messrs. Graham & Co., have already

been embodied in a consolidated set of petroleum rules for the whole of British India which are at present under consideration and that it is hoped that the new rules will remove the inconvenience hitherto experienced. I am, therefore, directed to request that you will be so good as to state whether in the circumstances, the Chamber still desire the appointment of a Committee.

GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL—MARINE DEPARTMENT.
NOTIFICATION.

The 4th August 1905.

No. 83-Marine.—The following draft of rules which it is proposed to make under the Indian Petroleum Act, 1899, in place of those published under this Department Notification No. 105 Marine of 20th September 1904, is published for the information of persons likely to be affected by the rules.

The draft will be taken into consideration on the expiry of a month from the date of its publication in the Gazette, and any objections or suggestions which may be received by the undersigned before that date will be duly considered:—

DRAFT RULES.

4A. Notwithstanding anything contained in rules 3 and 4,*
* For these rules, see licenses for the possession of dangerous petroleum
Notification No. 24-Marine, 1904 otherwise than in bulk shall be granted
dated 15th March 1904. only on the following conditions:—

- (a) The petroleum must be stored in gas-tight tin or galvanized sheet-iron, steel or lead-plate drums or receptacles, each containing not more than 10 gallons and screw-plugs or fitted with screw-cap with metal air-tight under-cap. Such drums or receptacles must be packed in strong wooden cases, the thickness of the wood being not less than half an inch. Provided that or receptacles are made of tin, galvanized sheet-iron, or steel, and have the following thickness of metal:—

	Not less than
(1) when the capacity does not exceed 2 gallons ...	25 B. W. G.
(2) when the capacity exceeds 2 gallons, but does not exceed 4 gallons ...	22 B. W. G.
(3) when the capacity exceeds 4 gallons ...	16 B. W. G.

- (b) An air space of at least one-tenth of its capacity must be left in each drum or receptacle.
- (c) The drums or receptacles must be so substantially constructed and secured as not to be liable, except under circumstances of gross negligence or extraordinary accident, to be broken or become defective, leaky or insecure.
- (d) Before any vessel which contains or has contained dangerous petroleum is repaired by the licensee or is sent by him to be repaired, the vessel shall, as far as practicable, be cleared of all dangerous petroleum and of all dangerous vapours arising from the same.
- (e) The building in which the petroleum is to be stored must be constructed of masonry or other unflammable material, with terraced, tiled or iron roof, and a tiled, paved or earthen floor.
- (f) Either (1) the doorways and other openings of such building must be built up to such a height above the level of the road or street, or the floor thereof must be sunk to such a depth below the level of the road or street, that the petroleum stored in it cannot flow out of the building in case of its escape from the receptacles in which it is contained, or (2) the building must be surrounded with a masonry wall or embankment sufficiently high to contain all the petroleum in the building in case of its escape therefrom: Provided that combination of methods (1) and (2) may be adopted.
- (g) All ventilating openings in such building must be protected by strong wire gauze.
- (h) No smoking or light or fire of any description shall be permitted at any time within or near any such building.
- (i) All due precautions must be taken for preventing (1) accidents by fire or explosion and (2) access by unauthorized persons to any dangerous petroleum or to any vessels containing or intended to contain or having actually contained the same.
- j) Every person managing, or employed on or in connection with, the building in which the petroleum is stored shall abstain from any act whatsoever which tends to cause fire or explosion and the doing of which is not reasonably necessary, and shall prevent any other person from doing any such act.
- (k) The said building shall be liable to inspection by an officer authorised in this behalf.
- (l) No drum or other receptacle containing dangerous petroleum shall be opened or the petroleum drawn off within the room in which the stock of petroleum is kept.

- (m) The filling or replenishing of any vessels with dangerous petroleum shall not be carried on, nor shall the contents of any such vessel be exposed, in the presence of fire or artificial light, except a light of such strength, position and character as is not liable to ignite any inflammable vapour arising from the petroleum; and no artificial light shall be brought within dangerous proximity of the place where any vessel containing dangerous petroleum is kept.
- (n) The following distances must be kept clear from the protected works round the building in which the petroleum is stored, namely:—

Quantity to be stored.		Distances to be kept clear when dangerous petroleum is stored in drums of capacity not exceeding 4 gallons.	Distances to be kept clear when dangerous petroleum is stored in drums of capacity exceeding 4 gallons, but not exceeding 10 gallons.
Gallons.	Gallons.	Feet.	Feet.
Not exceeding 1,000	...	25	30
Exceeding 1,000, but not exceeding 5,000	...	40	50
" 5,000 "	" 10,000 "	60	70
" 10,000 "	" 15,000 "	90	100
" 15,000 "	" 20,000 "	130	150
" 20,000 "	" 30,000 "	180	200
" 30,000 "	...	200	200

- (o) When the quantity of dangerous petroleum to be possessed does not exceed 40 gallons, the following conditions shall be imposed instead of those mentioned in clauses (e.), (f.) and (n), namely:—

- (i) The store-house or building in which the petroleum is stored must be well ventilated, and must be constructed of unflammable material, except that the doors and windows may be of wood.
- (ii) When such store-house forms part of, or is attached to, another building, and the intervening floor or partition is of an unsubstantial or inflammable character or has openings therein, the whole of such building shall be deemed to be the store-house, and no portion of such store-house shall be used as a dwelling-house or as a place where persons assemble; and the store-house must have an entrance from the open air, distinct from any dwelling-house or any place in which persons assemble.

W. A. INGLIS,
Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

No. 1411-1905.—CALCUTTA, 29th August 1905.

Copy of above Notification forwarded to:—

Messrs. Gillanders Arbuthnot & Co.
" Graham & Co.
" Shaw Wallace & Co.
" Kettlewell Bullen & Co.
" The Arracan Co., Ltd.
" The Standard Oil Co. of New York and
" Macneill & Co., Agents, Assam Railways and Trading Co., Ltd.

for information, in continuation of No. 384-1904, dated the 29th September 1904, and for favour of any objections or suggestions they may wish to offer.

Copy also forwarded to Messrs. A. J. Mantacheff & Co., Agents, La Societe de l'Industrie de Naphte et du Commerce for information, and for favour of any objections or suggestions they may wish to offer.

H. M. HAYWOOD,
Acting Secretary,
Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (MARINE).

No. 1381-1905.—CALCUTTA, 20th September 1905.

The Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce have had under consideration the draft rules which it is proposed to make under the Indian Petroleum Act, 1899, and which were published for criticism in your Notification No. 83 Marine, dated 4th August 1905.

2. There are certain points in these rules to which the Committee wish to draw the attention of Government. These are:—
Rule 4 A (a).—With regard to this condition the Committee agree that whether the drums or receptacles are packed in cases or are naked, they should never be of a thinner material than a certain fixed minimum. The Committee also think that the minima stipulated for in the rule are fair, except in the case of (3), *i. e.* when the capacity exceeds four gallons. They suggest that there should be an intermediate size, say when the capacity exceeds four gallons, but does not exceed eight gallons. The thickness for this size should be 20 B. W. G., which would be a perfectly safe thickness for eight gallons of motor spirit. The Committee urge the insertion of this intermediate size because Petrol or Motor spirit is usually imported in drums. If four gallon drums are used the space occupied in the hold of a steamer by a consignment would make the freight prohibitive. But if an eight gallon drum were used a much

larger quantity of petrol could be stowed in the same space. If a thickness of 16 B. W. G. were insisted upon, the cost of manufacture would be prohibitive, while the extra weight would take away the advantage of size as regards freight.

Rule 4 A (1).—This condition provides that drums containing dangerous petroleum shall not be opened or tapped in a building specially designed and licensed for the storage of dangerous petroleum. The question has been raised as to where it is intended under the rules that drums should be opened and tapped. The Committee will be glad if this point can be made clear.

Rule 4 A (n) & (o).—According to these conditions a dealer in dangerous petroleum is allowed to store only forty gallons, unless he keeps a clear space round the store-house. According to Rule 4 (8), published in Marine Department Notification No. 68 Marine, of 27th June 1905, the owner of a motor vehicle is allowed to store up to sixty gallons. To fix a lower limit for a dealer seems to the Committee to be somewhat unreasonable; and they would suggest that the point be reconsidered.

3. The Committee have no further remarks to make with reference to the proposed rules. But they would like to add that they hope the rules in their final form will state clearly the cost of the license. They would further express the hope that the cost will be kept as low as possible. At present the demand for petrol is so small in comparison with the necessarily onerous rules with which the article is surrounded, that there is no chance of the trade becoming remunerative for some years. Every endeavour should therefore, the Committee think, be made by Government to keep the license fees at merely nominal rates until there is a large development of the trade.

From Government of Bengal (MARINE), to Chamber.

No. 1608-MNE.—CALCUTTA, 27th September 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1581 of the 20th instant; communicating the views of the Chamber on the Draft rules proposed to be issued under the Indian Petroleum Act, 1899, which were published under this Department notification No. 83 Marine, dated the 4th August 1905, and in reply to state that these views will be submitted for the favorable consideration of the Government of India.

2. With regard to the observations in para. 3 of your letter regarding the reduction of the prevailing rates of the fees for the possession and transport of petroleum, I am to state for the infor-

mation of the Chamber that it is proposed to introduce the following reduced scales of fees:—

<i>For the Possession of dangerous Petroleum.</i> —	
For quantities not exceeding 40 Gallons	Rs. 3 0
For quantities exceeding 40 but not exceeding 500 Gallons	" 8 0
For quantities exceeding 500 but not exceeding 1,000 Gallons	" 12 0
For quantities exceeding 1,000 but not exceeding 5,000 Gallons	" 12 0 plus Rs. 2 extra for every 1,000 Gallons or part thereof in excess of 1,000 Gallons.
For quantities exceeding 5,000 Gallons and upwards to 50,000 Gallons	" 20 0 plus Rs. 4 for every 1,000 Gallons or fraction thereof in excess of 5,000 Gallons.
For quantities exceeding 50,000 Gallons	" 250 0
(2)	
<i>For Transport of Dangerous Petroleum.</i> —	
For quantities not exceeding 40 Gallons	" 2 0
For quantities from 40 to 480 Gallons	" 2 0 for the first 40 Gallons plus 8 (eight annas) for every addl. 40 Gallons or part thereof.
For quantities exceeding 480 Gallons	" 8 0 plus Rs. 2 for every addl. 480 Gallons or part thereof.

From Chamber to Messrs. Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co., Graham & Co., Shaw, Wallace & Co., Kothlewail, Bullon & Co., The Axtmann Co., Ltd., The Standard Oil Co. of New York, Macneill & Co., and A. J. Mantachoff & Co.

No. 1668-1905.—CALCUTTA, 10th October 1905.

Petrol Rules.

With reference to my No. 1411, dated 24th August 1905, I am now directed to forward for such remarks as you may wish to offer a copy of a letter No. 1608 Mne., dated 27th September, from the Government of Bengal, Marine Department. You will observe that the letter states the fees which it is proposed to levy for licenses for the possession and transport of dangerous petroleum.

From Government of Bengal (MARINE), to Chamber.

No. 132-MNE.—CALCUTTA, 18th January 1905.

With reference to your letter No. 1581, dated the 20th September 1905, I am directed to enclose a copy of Notification No. 4 MNE., dated the 9th January, 1906, issued by this Government, amending the rules for regulating the importation of petroleum by sea into the Lower Provinces of Bengal.

2. I am to observe that the Government of India have expressed their inability to accept the suggestion put forward by the Chamber that an intermediate thickness of metal should be prescribed for drums of between 4 and 8 gallons capacity. The Chief Inspector of Explosives consulted all the leading firms of Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and Rangoon on this point, and no objection was raised by them to the proposed draft rule on this subject. Moreover the Government of India are advised that a thickness of 16 B. W. G. cannot be considered excessive when the rough usage to which drums are often subjected is taken into account.

3. The other points referred to in the Chamber's letter quoted above are under the consideration of the Government of India.

GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL—MARINE DEPARTMENT.
NOTIFICATION.

The 9th January 1906.

No. 4-Marine.—In exercise of the powers conferred by section 9 of the Indian Petroleum Act, 1899, the Lieutenant-Governor is pleased with the previous sanction of the Governor-General in Council, to make the following additional rule for regulating the importation of petroleum by sea into the Lower provinces of Bengal. The rule will be inserted after rule 18 of the Rules sanctioned under Notification No. 102 Marine, dated the 1st November, 1892:—

18A. Dangerous petroleum, otherwise than in bulk, may be imported subject to the following conditions:—

That it is contained in gas-tight tinned or galvanized sheet-iron, steel or lead plate drums or receptacles, containing each not more than 10 gallons, and fitted with well-made filling holes and well-fitting screw plugs, or fitted with screw-cap with metal air-tight under-cap. Such drums or receptacles shall be packed in strong wooden cases, the thickness of the wood to be not less than half an inch. Provided that wood cases shall not be necessary when the drums or receptacles are made of tinned or galvanized sheet-iron, or steel, and have the following thickness of metal:—

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-------------|
| | <small>Not less than</small> | |
| (1) When the capacity does not exceed 2 gallons .. | .. | 25 B. W. G. |
| (2) When the capacity exceeds 2 gallons, but does not exceed 4 gallons... | .. | 22 B. W. G. |
| (3) When the capacity exceeds 4 gallons... | .. | 16 B. W. G. |

W. A. INGLIS,
Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

No. 224-1906.—31st January 1906.

Copy of above letter and Notification forwarded to—

Messrs. Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co., Graham & Co., Shaw, Wallace & Co., Kettlewell, Bullen & Co., The Arracan Co., Ld., The Standard Oil Co. of New York, Macneill & Co., A. J. Mantacheff & Co., and Turner, Morrison & Co. for information, in continuation of No. 1658-1905, dated the 10th October 1905, together with copy of Notification No. 4 Marine, dated the 9th January 1906.

W. PARSONS,
Secretary,
Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

REGISTRATION OF PARTNERSHIPS.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Royal Exchange Building,
CALCUTTA, 24th March 1905.

REGISTRATION OF PARTNERSHIPS.

An informal conference was held this day at the office of the Legal Member of Council to discuss some of the provisions in the Bill for the Registration of Partnerships, drafted by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and submitted to Government.

PRESENT :

The Hon. Mr. H. Erle Richards, Legal Member of Council.
The Hon. Mr. J. F. Hewitt, C.S.I., C.I.E.
The Hon. the Advocate General.
The Hon. Mr. E. Cable.
Mr. J. M. Macpherson, I.C.S., C.S.I.
Mr. H. W. C. Carnduff, I.C.S., C.I.E.
Mr. C. C. Robinson, Secretary, Bengal Chamber of Commerce.
Mr. W. Parsons, Secretary, Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

(1) It was decided to adopt the suggestion made by the Bombay Chamber of Commerce for the amendment of section 18 of the Bill so as to exempt small trading partnerships from its operation by including a provision to enable such partnerships although not registered to sue for a debt not exceeding Rs. 1,000. The limit suggested by the Bombay Chamber was Rs. 500.

(2) The question of exempting single ventures was to be reconsidered by Mr. Robinson.

(3) A suggestion was made that the difficulty in connection with the Hindoo Joint Family System might be surmounted by Gomasta of the firm. This, however, was to be reconsidered with the Hon. Mr. Nalin Bihari Sircar as early as possible.

From Chamber, to Government of India (Home).

No. 1949-1205.—CALCUTTA, 29th November 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to enquire whether any progress has been made with the consideration of the draft Bill for the Registration of Partnerships submitted under cover of my letter No. 207-1904* of 5th February 1904, and discussed with the Hon. the Legal Member of Council at a meeting of the conference held on 24th March 1905.

* Vide page 26 of Chamber Report for 1904, Volume II.

2. In this connection I am directed to hand you for the information of the Hon. the Legal Member copy of a Bill entitled "An ordinance for the registration of partnerships and firms" recently introduced by the Government of the Straits Settlements and read for the first time on the 1st November 1905.

From Government of India (Home), to Chamber.

No. 1862.—CALCUTTA, 22nd December 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1949-1905, dated the 29th November 1905, inquiring whether any progress has been made with the consideration of the draft Bill for the registration of partnerships which was submitted with your letter of the 5th February 1904 and discussed at a conference held on the 24th March 1905. You forward at the same time, a copy of a Bill which has recently been introduced by the Government of the Straits Settlements with a similar object.

2. In reply I am to say that, at the meeting of the conference alluded to above, the representatives of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce expressed a desire to consider further the legal difficulties arising out of the proposal, and, if practicable, to devise amendments in the draft Bill which was forwarded with your letter of the 5th February 1904. In particular they proposed to reconsider, and make further suggestions in regard to, the registration of partnerships in the case of Hindu joint families. The Government of India are awaiting the result of these deliberations.

3. I am to add that the Government of India are obliged for the copy of the Straits Settlements Bill which they will be glad to consider in connection with the proposals under discussion.

CHIEF JUDGESHIP OF THE BURMA CHIEF COURT.

From Chamber, to Rangoon Chamber.

Private Deferred Telegram.

No. 588-1905.—CALCUTTA, 4th April 1905.

"Chief Judgeship, Committee wish to know if your Chamber are taking any action."

From Rangoon Chamber, to Chamber.

TELEGRAM.—RANGOON, 6th April 1905.

Replying to your telegram Chamber are preparing memorial to Government of India regarding Chief Judgeship; copy will be sent you as early as possible.

From Rangoon Chamber, to Chamber.

RANGOON, 5th June 1905.

With further reference to your telegram dated the 4th April 1905, I beg to forward (under separate cover) a copy of this Chamber's Memorial submitted through the Local Government, to the Viceroy, on the subject of the appointment of the Chief Judge of the Chief Court of Lower Burma.

MEMORIAL.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY,

BARON CURZON OF KEDLESTON, P.C., G.M.S.I., G.M.I.E.,
Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

The Memorial of the Rangoon Chamber of Commerce.

RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH,

It is with profound regret and disappointment that your Memorialists have observed the official announcement by the Government of India of the appointment for the third time in succession, of a Member of the Indian Civil Service to be Chief Judge of the Chief Court of Lower Burma.

Your Memorialists have no desire to recapitulate in detail the arguments and considerations which they have laid before the

Government of India on the previous occasions when they ventured to respectfully protest against the selection of an Indian Civilian as Chief Judge, but they desire to record their view that it appeared, and still appears to them, to be axiomatic that the head of a Court of Justice should be a person of lengthened judicial experience acquired by practice as a barrister. In Burma, Judicial has invariably been subordinated to Executive work, and your Memorialists can scarcely think that two or three years' experience as Judicial Commissioner in Upper Burma, coming at the end of a career passed as an Executive Officer, is a sufficient preparation for the highest Judicial office in Lower Burma. This was always recognised until the last few years, and previous to the establishment of the Chief Court, Judicial Commissioners of Lower Burma were invariably selected from the Judicial Branch of the Bombay or Bengal Civil Service.

It has been suggested that the constitution of the Chief Court involved certain administrative changes which required that the Head of that Court should at first be an officer of administrative experience. Your Memorialists are not aware that the constitution and working of the inferior courts in any way differ from what they were under a Judicial Commissioner, but even if such administrative changes were necessary, they respectfully submit that an amply sufficient time has now elapsed since the Chief Court was constituted in which to carry out and establish the new order of things.

In the communication of the Government of India to the Government of Burma in which the appointment of Mr. Adamson as Chief Judge is announced and sought to be justified, your Memorialists note that an entirely new consideration has been imported into the case. It is said that Mr. Adamson has been appointed because he is the best "local" officer available. Admitting that this may be so, it appears to your Memorialists as being beside the question. It has never been contended that the Chief Judgeship should of necessity be recruited from the Local Bar. The Chief Justices of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay, have it is believed, almost invariably been selected from England, and your Memorialists know of no reason why it should be regarded as essential that the Chief Judge of Lower Burma must be chosen either from the Local Bar or from the Local Civil Service. The public ask for a Chief Judge who has had experience as a practising barrister as opposed to a titular one, and they have never specially urged that he should be taken from the Rangoon Bar. Your Memorialists desire to record their respectful dissent from the proposition that the appointment of a Civilian as Chief Judge is or can be justified by the real or assumed incompetence of the Local Bar. The less competent that Bar the more imperative is it to have a strong and capable lawyer at the head of the Bench and assuming that no local barrister is fit for the appointment, it is respectfully urged that that does not justify the appointment of an Indian Civilian of inadequate judicial training. Your Memorialists are convinced that there is no Province in India in which Civilians have had less judicial training and experience than in Burma, and submit, that if the Government of India find themselves unable to appoint a barrister who has had suitable

practising experience as a pleader at the Bar of a Supreme Court, they should appoint a Civilian of Judicial experience from Bombay or Bengal until such time as there is in Burma a branch of the Civil Service adequately trained in judicial work.

In conclusion your Memorialists desire to place on record the grave objection which they have on principle to the elevation of the Chief Judge of the Chief Court of Lower Burma to the Lieutenant-Governorship of the Province. Your Memorialists desire to disassociate their remarks on this point from any personal reference to the appointment of Sir Herbert Thirkell White as Lieutenant-Governor. His appointment has been cordially received throughout the Province, and your Memorialists believe that his intimate knowledge of, and varied experience in its service, render him peculiarly fitted for the high office, but they feel that if the Chief Judgeship is to be regarded as a step to the Lieutenant-Governorship, the Chief Judge in the discharge of his duties might not unnaturally be unable to dismiss from his mind the possibility of his actions meeting the approval or disapproval of the Government of India and so rendering higher promotion probable or improbable. Your Memorialists believe that the principle against which they contend is bad and cuts at the root of thorough independence and sound judicial administration.

The representations contained herein are capable of much amplification but your Memorialists submit that they have said sufficient to justify a reconsideration of all the circumstances relating to the appointment of the Chief Judge of the Chief Court of Lower Burma and, they also hope, ensure that in future the appointment shall be conferred upon a Barrister of suitable attainments who has practised before a Supreme Court either in England, India or Burma.

And your Memorialists, as in duty bound shall ever pray.

Signed on behalf of the Members of the Rangoon Chamber of Commerce.

RANGOON, }
30th May 1905. }

J. G. REDDIE,
Chairman.

From Chamber, to Government of India (Home).

No. 1132-1905.—CALCUTTA, 6th July 1905.

The Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce have been favoured by the Committee of the Rangoon Chamber of Commerce, with a copy of a Memorial dated 30th May, to His Excellency the Viceroy, on the subject of the appointment, for the third time in succession, of a member of the Indian Civil Service, to the Chief Judgeship of the Chief Court of Lower Burma. So long ago as the 5th of July 1901, the Committee of this Chamber supported a similar Memorial addressed by the Rangoon Chamber

to His Excellency the Viceroy, praying that in appointing a successor to the Hon. Mr. Justice Coppleston, effect would be given to the general wish that the post should be held by a Barrister of wide practical experience, and of assured legal attainments.

2. The views of the Committee of this Chamber on the general question of appointing a person of long judicial experience, acquired by practice as a Barrister, to be Chief Judge of a Chief Court in a large and populous mercantile centre like Rangoon, have not changed, and in common with the representatives of the mercantile community in Rangoon with whom they are closely connected by business relations they feel much disappointed that for the third time a member of the Indian Civil Service has been appointed to the post. The Committee note from the Memorial under reference that an entirely new consideration has on this occasion been introduced into the case, *viz.*, that the present Chief Judge has been appointed because he is the best local officer available. The Committee understand that the mercantile community of Rangoon have never contended that the post should be given to a member of the local bar, unless a lawyer of sufficient eminence and experience were procurable. They understand that the request of the public in Rangoon, as voiced by the Rangoon Chamber of Commerce, is for a Chief Judge who has had experience as a practising Barrister. The arguments adduced in the Memorial from the Rangoon Chamber against the appointment of a Civilian as Chief Judge, and also against the principle of making the Chief Judgeship a stepping stone to the Lieutenant-Governorship of the Province, appear to the Committee to rest upon an extremely sound basis. I am instructed to say that the Committee trust that the Government of India will on the occasion of the next vacancy consider all the circumstances relating to the appointment, and confer it upon a Barrister of suitable attainments, whether practising at the local bar or not.

Copy forwarded to the Secretary Rangoon Chamber of Commerce, for information, with reference to correspondence ending with his letter dated the 5th June 1905.

From Government of India (Home), to Chamber.

No. 1101.—SILMA, 25th July 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1132-1905, dated the 6th instant, and to say that the Memorial from the Rangoon Chamber of Commerce to which it refers has already been considered by the Government of India and an answer has been returned to them.

From Rangoon Chamber, to Chamber.

RANGOON, 25th July 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of a copy of your letter dated the 6th July 1905, addressed to the Government of India in the Home Department relative to this Chamber's Memorial on the subject of the Chief Judgeship of this Province and to convey the thanks of my Committee for the support of your Council in the matter.

From Chamber, to Rangoon Chamber.

No. 1304-1905.—CALCUTTA, 2nd August 1905.

Burma Chief Court.

Advertising to previous correspondence ending with your letter dated 25th July, I am now directed to hand you, for information, the accompanying copy of the marginally noted letter with reference to this question. I am to ask if you will be so good as to favour the Committee with a copy of the letter which has been addressed to you by the Government of India.

From Rangoon Chamber, to Chamber.

RANGOON, 10th August 1905.

With reference to your letter dated the 2nd August 1905, I am desired to hand you herewith a copy of the letter from the Government of India in reply to the Memorial submitted by this Chamber relative to the appointment of Chief Judge of the Chief Court.

No. 1063.—13th July 1905.

From—The Officiating Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department,

To—The Chief Secretary to the Government of Burma.

I am directed to reply to your letter No. 395 T, dated the 21st June 1905 with which you submit a memorial from the Rangoon Chamber of Commerce, protesting against the recent appointment of a member of the Indian Civil Service as the Chief Judge of the Chief Court of Lower Burma.

2. In commenting upon the memorial it is unnecessary for the Government of India to recapitulate the arguments which justified them in accepting the advice of the late, Lieutenant-Governor of

Burma and of Sir Herbert White that ordinarily the Chief Judge should be a member of the Indian Civil Service, although the Government of India should hold themselves entirely free to select the best local officer available. The grounds upon which this decision was based have been repeatedly explained, and are well known to the Rangoon Chamber of Commerce. Moreover, on the occasion of the latest vacancy the case was presented to the Government of India by the Local Government and the Chief Judge in the form of a choice between a local civilian and a local barrister, and the question at issue was decided, as already explained, mainly on personal considerations.

3. The Governor-General in Council now learns for the first time that the memorialists recommend in certain conditions, the appointment of a Chief Judge from outside the province, and that they do not desire that the choice should be necessarily confined either to a local civilian or to a member of the Rangoon Bar. The previous memorials from the Chamber of Commerce and from other Associations in Rangoon did not lay stress upon this view of the case, and, for the reasons given above, it was not before the Government of India when they appointed a Chief Judge in March last. In the case of future appointments this representation will doubtless be present to the mind of the Government of India, although it is clear that in both cases the advantages of outside experience could only be purchased at the cost of the local knowledge which in Burma perhaps, more than in other parts of India, is a consideration of extreme importance.

4. The Government of India do not wish, however, to say anything which might unduly fetter the action of their successors in making any appointment that may appear suitable to them. But it would appear that the following general considerations are those which must ordinarily be borne in mind.

If a local civilian be appointed it will be because his judicial and administrative attainments and his knowledge of the people and their customs are such as to render him, in the opinion of the Government, the person best qualified to do justice to the post. The Governor-General in Council is unable to accept the contention of the memorialists that it is axiomatic that the head of a Court of Justice should be a person of lengthened judicial experience acquired by practice as a barrister. No analogy can properly be drawn in this connection from the Chartered High Courts in the long settled provinces, and the memorialists appear to forget that in the only other Chief Court in India all three of the permanent Chief Judges have been members of the Indian Civil Service—a state of affairs entirely inconsistent with the proposition which the memorialists have laid down.

If a local barrister be appointed the reason will be that there is in the local bar an advocate possessed of judicial and other qualifications superior to those of any available member of the Indian Civil Service.

If a Chief Judge be appointed from outside the province it will be because the post cannot be suitably filled by selection from either

the first or second category, or because there are thought to be special advantages in external experience.

Thus, in all cases the decision may be expected to be determined in the main by the eligibility of the candidates although for the reasons indicated the chances are likely as a general rule to be in favour of Burma, whilst among local candidates a member of the Indian Civil Service will probably be found more frequently to possess the necessary qualifications than a member of the Bar.

5. In the fifth paragraph of their memorial the Rangoon Chamber of Commerce urge the objections which they entertain on principle to the elevation of the Chief Judge of the Chief Court of Lower Burma to the Lieutenant-Governorship of the province. While the Government of India fully appreciate the point of view of the memorialists that it is of the utmost importance to maintain intact the independence of the judicial service, and while they cordially accept the assurance that the remarks made in the memorial have no personal application to the appointment of Sir Herbert White, yet they must point out that any definite ruling that a Judge should be ineligible for elevation to high executive office would be both unequalled for and injurious. In practice it has been found from time to time that the appointment of a Judge of the High Court to the Council of one or other of the Presidency Governors has resulted in great advantage to the interests of the administration, and it may be recalled that one of the most vigorous and successful of the Lieutenant-Governors of Bengal was appointed to that office after occupying a seat on the Bench of the High Court of Calcutta. Though the occasions on which such transfers take place must necessarily be rare, the Government of India cannot admit that the independence of the judiciary in India is in any way impaired by them, nor would they be willing to make any declaration on the subject which might tie the hands of their successors in a manner that is unnecessary and might in particular cases, be prejudicial to the public interest.

BILL TO AMEND THE COURT FEES ACT, 1870.

From Government of Bengal (Judicial), to Chamber.

No. 2807-J.—CALCUTTA, 28th March 1905.

I am directed to forward the accompanying copy of the papers Letter No. 633, dated the 11th March 1905, from the Government of India, Legislative Department, and the enclosed Bill further to amend the Court Fees Act, 1870, with the Statement of Objects and Reasons.

2. I am to ask that a reply may be sent to this office not later than the 30th April 1905.

No. 633, CALCUTTA, 11th March 1905.

From.—J. M. MACPHERSON, ESQ., C.S.I., Secretary to the Government of India, Legislative Department.

To.—The Secretary to the Bengal Council and Assistant Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Legislative Department.

I am directed to forward herewith twelve copies of the papers noted on the margin, and to request that His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor will favour the Government of India in this Department with an expression of his opinion on the provisions of the Bill, and with the opinions of such selected officers and other persons as His Honour may think fit to consult on the subject.

2. I am also to request that the Bill and Statement may be published in the *Calcutta Gazette* in English and in such other languages as His Honour may deem proper, and that the dates of such publication may be communicated in your reply.

The Publisher of the *Gazette of India* at Calcutta has been instructed to furnish the Publisher of the *Calcutta Gazette* with English copies of the Bill and Statement (in Gazette form) for publication in the latter Gazette.

3. The reply to this letter should be sent in by the 15th June 1905.

A BILL

Further to amend the Court-fees Act, 1870.

VII of 1870. Whereas it is expedient further to amend the Court-fees Act, 1870; It is hereby enacted as follows:—

1. This Act may be called the Court-fees (Amendment) Act, 1905:—
Short title.

VII of 1870. 2. In section 7, sub-head xi, of the Court-fees Act
Amendment of section 7, 1870:—
Act VII, 1870.

(1) after clause (c), the following clause shall be inserted, namely

"(cc) by a landlord to eject a tenant or a person remaining, after the determination of his tenancy, in possession of any immovable property;"

(2) for the word "land," in clause (c), the words "any immovable property" shall be substituted; and

(3) for the word "land," in the concluding clause, the word "property" shall be substituted.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS.

It has been held by the Chief Court of Lower Burma that the court-fee payable in suits for the ejection of persons remaining in possession of immovable property after the determination of their tenancy must, under clause v of section 7 of the Court-fees Act, 1870, be computed upon the value of the property. The effect of the decision referred to is to require the payment of an unduly heavy fee in suits the object of which is solely to secure ejection, and in which the title to property is not in dispute. It is accordingly proposed by the present Bill, which has been prepared after consultation with the various Local Governments and High Courts, to declare that the court-fee in such suits shall be computed upon the yearly rent of the property. This is the effect of the new clause (cc) which sub-clause (1) of clause 2 of the Bill proposes to insert in sub-head xi of section 7 of the Act. The other clauses of the Bill are designed to remove the possibility of doubt as to the meaning of the word "land" as used in clause (c) and the last clause of the same sub-head.

The 8th March 1905.

A. T. ARUNDEL.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (JUDICIAL).

No. 708-1905.—CALCUTTA, 26th April 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No 2807 J of 28th March 1905, with enclosures, in which you request an expression of opinion on the part of the Committee of the Chamber on the provisions of the Bill further to amend the Court-fees Act, 1870.

2. I am instructed by the Committee to intimate in reply that, after giving due consideration to the amendments proposed by the Bill, they are prepared to support the measure to the full extent as providing desirable changes in the law.

BILL TO AMEND THE BENGAL TENANCY ACT.

From Government of Bengal (REVENUE), to Chamber,

CALCUTTA, 3rd December 1904.

Land Revenue.

In the year 1901 the question of the validity of compromises which contravene the provisions of section 29 of the Bengal Tenancy Act VIII of 1885, in suits brought by landlords against tenants was considered by Government; and after discussion it was held to be settled law that contracts for the adjustment of differences with regard to rents when made in Court are valid even though they may not be in accordance with the provisions of section 29 of the Act. This decision was intimated to the Board of Revenue, Lower Provinces, with the remark that the result was unsatisfactory, and that the desirability of undertaking legislation on the subject would have to be considered.

2. Early in the year 1903, the Board reported that a large number of *kabuliyats* had been executed by raiyats of the Darbhanga Estate for the payment of rents in excess of those which had been recorded in the record-of-rights as payable, and also in transgression of the terms of section 29 of the Bengal Tenancy Act. The then Lieutenant-Governor, Sir James Bourdillon, agreed with the Board as to the illegal nature of the proceedings; and at his instance the Maharaja Bahadur issued instructions directing the cancellation of the *kabuliyats* in question. Later in the same year and at the beginning of the current year it was reported that other Zemindars in the district of Darbhanga had taken from their raiyats *kabuliyats* contravening the provisions of the Bengal Tenancy Act; and these zemindars also were with the approval of Government desired by the local officers to cancel the illegal documents which had been executed.

3. In view of this and other similar information which has been received by Government in recent years, especially from the Patna, Bhagalpur and Rajshahi Divisions, the Lieutenant-Governor has considered the question whether legislative action is required in order to protect raiyats from unlawful or undue enhancements. Various suggestions have been made both by Executive and Judicial Officers as to the remedies which are required; and the opinions of these officers have received the careful attention of the Commissioners of Divisions and the Board of Revenue. The conclusions which have been arrived at by His Honour, as the result of prolonged discussion with his most experienced officers, are incorporated in the draft Bill to amend the Bengal Tenancy Act, VIII of 1885, which is appended to this letter.

4. *Part I, Section 2 of the Bill.*—Section 27 of the Act, as it at present stands, lays down that the rent for the time being pay-

able by an occupancy raiyat shall be presumed to be fair and equitable until the contrary is proved. The provisions of this section, which are based upon similar provisions to be found in Act X of 1859 and Act VIII (B.C.) of 1869, are intended to afford a presumption in favour of the tenant, the object of which is to protect him against arbitrary enhancement. Experience shows, however, that this presumption may be employed to the tenant's detriment by throwing upon him the burden of proving that he is paying an illegally enhanced rent. Such a view was in fact taken by the High Court in the case of Muthura Mohan Laha and others (plaintiffs) *versus* Moti Sircar and others (defendants), cited at pages 781 to 786, Volume 25, of the Indian Law Reports. The proposed proviso to section 27 meets such a case, and enjoins upon Revenue Officers and the Courts the duty of ascertaining that a rent which has been enhanced within the previous five years is fair and equitable.

5. *Part I, Section 3, of the Bill.*—The first proviso to section 29 of the Act has given rise to much difference of opinion, it not being clear whether a landlord can recover rent enhanced so as to exceed by more than two annas in the rupee the rent previously payable by the raiyat, even if such rent has actually been paid for a continuous period of not less than three years immediately preceding the period for which it is claimed. The ruling of the High Court cited in the last paragraph favours the view that rent so claimed is recoverable; but it seems desirable to make the meaning of the proviso manifest beyond doubt. The revised proviso follows the ruling of the High Court; but it further enacts that the rent actually paid must also be, in the circumstances of the case, fair and equitable.

6. *Part I Section 4, of the Bill.*—The object of the proposed section 102A is to guide Revenue Officers in recording rents payable under section 102, c) in cases in which they find that enhancements have taken place. At present there are no provisions of law on the subject, and Revenue Officers are not infrequently at unnecessary pains to disentangle the lawful rent from illegal cesses or enhancements granted on to the lawful rent. It is proposed that, like the Courts, they should in future be bound by the provisions of sections 27 and 29 revised in the manner explained in paragraphs 4 and 5 of this letter.

7. *Part I, Sections 5 and 6, of the Bill.*—The object of these sections is to ensure that the relevant facts contained in the record-of-rights shall be brought to the notice of the Courts in all suits between landlords and tenants in areas in which a record-of-rights has been prepared. This is not at present required, and many cases are decided by the Courts without reference to that essential source of information. It has been suggested that provision might be made for this by a rule passed by the High Court under section 65a of the Code of Civil Procedure, but the legal advisers of the Government are of opinion that this course is not feasible. Section 148 (b) lays down that the plaint shall contain, in addition to the particulars specified in section 50 of the Civil Procedure Code, a statement of

the situation, designation, extent and boundaries of the land held by the tenant, or, where the plaintiff is unable to give the extent or boundaries, in lieu thereof a description sufficient for identification. When this section was enacted, no record-of-rights had been prepared in any district of the Province, and the desirability of incorporating in the plaint information derived from that record was not foreseen. These amendments may therefore be considered as following naturally the completion of a record-of-rights.

8. *Part I, Section 7, of the Bill.*—This section has been drafted in order to meet the cases referred to in paragraph 1 of this letter. One of the chief objects of preparing a record-of-rights is to put tenants in possession of accurate information as to the rents legally payable by them. This object is largely frustrated if, as soon as the record has been prepared, landlords are able to procure decrees for rent in excess of those recorded as lawfully payable by means of *ex-parte* or uncontested suits, or by means of agreements or compromises entered into during proceedings in Court. The need for legislation has been emphasized by a recent opinion given by the Advocates-General that the word "lawful," which occurs in section 375, Civil Procedure Code, does not require the Court to look behind an agreement or compromise in order to ascertain whether the rent agreed to is legally payable under the provisions of the Bengal Tenancy Act. The main object of the proposed section is to prevent enhancement of rent by means of *ex-parte* decrees or compromises in Court where the enhancement is of such a nature that it could not be legally effected by contract made out of Court. The section is also framed so as to prevent not only illegal enhancements of rent, but also illegal or unfair alterations of other entries in the record.

9. *Part II, Section 8, of the Bill.*—Part II of the Bill makes provision for the preparation of a record-of-rights in water used for agricultural purposes. As indicated by section 102 D, such a record has in fact already been made in several districts in which settlement and survey operations have been undertaken under Chapter X of the Act. This course was taken with the approval of the legal advisers of Government of the time. An opinion has, however, been held to cover the preparation of a full record-of-rights of the definite provisions on the subject in the present Bill.

10. I am now to request that your Chamber will consider the provisions of the Bill and favour Government with their opinion on the subject as early as practicable.

DRAFT BILL.

WHEREAS it is expedient to amend and supplement the Bengal Tenancy Act, 1885, it is hereby enacted as follows:—

1. This Act may be called the Bengal Tenancy Amendment Act, 1904. It shall be read with and taken as part of Act VIII of

1885, and shall come into force from the date on which it may be published in the *Calcutta Gazette* with the assent of the Governor-General.

PART I.

Provisions (1) with regard to maintenance of the Record-of-Rights, and (2) with regard to enhancement of rent.

2. To section 27 add the following proviso, namely:—

"Provided that if the rent has been enhanced within the preceding five years otherwise than by decree of Court or by contract in accordance with section 29, the rent so enhanced shall not be presumed to be fair and equitable unless the Revenue Officer is satisfied on enquiry made, or unless the Court is satisfied on evidence adduced by the landlord, that the rent so enhanced is, in the circumstances of the case, fair and equitable."

3. In section 29 for proviso (1) substitute the following proviso, namely:—

"Nothing in sub-clauses (a) and (b) of this section shall prevent a landlord from recovering rent at the rate at which it has been actually paid for a continuous period of not less than three years immediately preceding the period for which the rent is claimed, provided that the Court be satisfied, but not otherwise, that such rent in the circumstances of the case is fair and equitable. This proviso is subject to the provisions of sub-clause (c)."

4. In Part IV, Chapter X, after section 102, insert the following section, namely:—

"102A. In recording the rent payable under clause (c), section 102, the Revenue Officer shall have regard to the provisions of sections 27 and 29, in so far as they may be applicable.

"Provided that when a Revenue Officer finds that a rent has been enhanced, he shall not record such enhancement unless it is proved that the enhanced rent has been paid for five consecutive years, and that such rent is fair and equitable."

5. After section 147 insert the following section, namely:—

"147A. In all suits between landlord and tenant, including suits for the recovery of rent in areas in which a record-of-rights has been duly published under section 103A (2) of this Act, the plaintiff shall file with the plaint a copy of the record-of-rights relating to the tenancy which is the subject matter of the suit certified by a public officer, or failing this, verified by the plaintiff as correct. If the plaintiff does not file such copy of the record-of-rights with the plaint, the suit shall be dismissed unless the omission is supplied before the first day of hearing, or in lieu thereof a certificate signed by the Collector that no such copy can be given is produced."

6. In clause (b), section 148, after the words "a statement of" insert the following words:—"the rent shown for the tenancy in the records-of-rights where such record exists, and of"

7. After the said section 147A insert the following section, namely:—

"147B. In areas in which a record-of-rights has been finally published under section 103A (2), in all suits between landlord and tenant, including declaratory suits, if the defendant is absent on the day fixed for hearing the suit, or if, being present, he does not *bonâ fide* contest the suit, or enters into an agreement or compromise with the plaintiff at any stage of the proceedings, no decree shall be given in any way affecting the correctness, force or validity of any entry in the record-of-rights, unless and until the Court has been satisfied by evidence that such decree is consistent with the provisions of section 29 or with other provisions of the Act and is also fair and equitable.

"Provided that in a suit brought under section 30 for the enhancement of rent it shall be lawful for the Court to settle such rent as the Court upon evidence adduced may consider fair and equitable.

PART II.

Provisions as regards Records-of-Rights in water used for agricultural purposes.

8. After section 102 insert the following sections, namely:—

"102A. Whenever an order has been passed under section 101 directing that a survey be made and a record-of-rights prepared in respect of the lands in any local area, estate or tenure, or part thereof, the Local Government may direct that the Revenue Officer shall make a record of all rights and obligations with respect to the user of water for agricultural purposes whether obtained from rivers, *Jhis*, tanks, wells or any other source or with respect to the repair and maintenance of private irrigation works within or affecting the cultivation of such lands.

"102B. Whenever it appears to the Local Government desirable, for the prevention of disputes, that in any district or part of a district, there should be a survey made and a record-of-rights and obligations prepared with respect to the user of water for agricultural purposes whether obtained from rivers, *Jhis*, tanks, tenance of private irrigation works within or affecting the cultivation of the lands in the district or part of a district, the Local Government may make an order directing that such survey and record be made.

"102C. The survey and record-of-rights and obligations under made in this behalf by the Local Government, and the provisions of sections 103A, 103B, 105, 107, 108, 109, 109A, 111, 111A, and 114, shall, or as far as may be, be applicable to such record.

"102D. All notifications heretofore issued by the Local Government under section 101 of this Act, for the survey and the preparation of a record-of-rights (and obligations) with respect to irrigation or the user of water for agricultural purposes shall be deemed to

have been issued under section 102A, and the legality of such notifications and of surveys made and record-of-rights prepared thereunder shall not be questioned in any proceedings before a Court or a Revenue Officer."

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (REVENUE).

No. 576-1905.—CALCUTTA, 4th April 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your circular-letter No. 48 of 3rd December 1904, forwarding copy of a draft Bill to amend the Bengal Tenancy Act VIII of 1885, and requesting an expression of opinion on the part of the Chamber on the provisions of the Bill, which you state is the result of prolonged discussion between His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor and his most experienced officers.

2. The Committee assume that the Bengal Tenancy Act, as it stands, has not been found in practice to express the views of the Government of Bengal, and that the Bill now drafted is intended to make more clear the determination of Government to protect the tenant not only against the landlord, but also against himself. The Committee fear that the Bill will not improve the relations between the landlord and the tenant, which year by year appear to get worse; nor is it likely to improve the selling value of landed property, which appears, especially in such districts as Behar, to be steadily depreciating. This no doubt is due partly to the decline of the indigo industry and to the consequent impoverishment of the district, but probably it is also partly due to the disinclination of many native buyers to pay as much for rent as they did a few years ago, previous to the Cadastral Survey, and it does not appear likely that the proposed legislation will in any way lessen such disinclination. The Committee last expressed their views in connection with this matter in my letter No. 1017* of 6th July 1897, and it will be clear from that letter that they do not in any way demur to the due protection of the rights of tenants, while, at the same time, they are inclined to think that unscrupulous landlords are the exception and not the rule.

3. With regard to clause 2 of the amending Bill, the Committee demur to the proviso it is proposed to add to section 27 of the Act. At present the rent for the time being payable by an occupancy ryot is presumed to be fair and equitable, until the contrary is proved. Under this new proviso the onus of proof is thrown upon the landlord instead of on the ryot. The chances of landlord being able to maintain an enhanced rental that has been made and agreed to by the ryot for three years previously will, the Committee think, be small, while the fact that no enhancement within five years will be recorded by the Revenue Officer, though the amount of rent may have been mutually agreed upon and regularly paid, must be most prejudicial to the interests of landlords, who, especially when European, have quite enough trouble to collect their rents already.

* Vide page 14 of Chamber Report for 1897-98, Vol. II.

4. With regard to the proposal in clause 5 of the amending Bill for the introduction of a new section, No. 147-A, in the Act, dealing with the filing with the plaint of copies of the Record-of-Rights, the Committee would point out (1) that rent suits are often brought for very small sums, so small indeed that the cost of obtaining a copy of the Record-of-Rights to be filed along with the plaint, may, in some cases, possibly exceed the value of the suit; and (2) that no provision is made for the contingency of the plaintiff being for any reason unable to obtain the Collector's certificate referred to in this clause of the Bill, or for undue delay in issuing the same. The Committee would suggest that this clause should be amended by providing (1) that the copy of the Record-of-Rights should be furnished free of cost at any rate in suits below a given value; and as to (2) that suits should not be dismissed, if the non-production of the Collector's certificate be attributable to any refusal, neglect or delay, in the Collector's office in issuing the same. As to defraying the cost of the copy of the Record-of-Rights, the existing Rule No. 35 under the present Act will meet the case; but this Rule, copy of which is appended, only provides for "Proprietors" being furnished with copy of their Record-of-Rights, whereas the plaintiffs interest as landlord may fall short of the status of "Proprietor." With further reference to this matter, the Committee would point out that the owners of indigo concerns are to a great extent only *Tikadars*, and not proprietors, and therefore, in many instances, they do not hold copies of the records, such copies being made over to the proprietors, or where there are more proprietors than one, to their common agent. It might not, therefore, be possible for *Tikadars* to procure these records, without applying to the Court for them, and this would add to the trouble and delay involved in recovering rents due by tenants through the Courts, even if Government decided to grant free copies. On the other hand, every tenant will have been supplied with a copy of his *Khatian*, and the Committee would suggest that when he requires this to defend a rent suit, in the event of his being lost, Government should supply him free of cost with a duplicate on the certificate of the official before whom the case will be tried. This would probably mean the maintenance of a much smaller establishment to supply copies of the records. In the event, however, of Government not seeing their way to provide either tenant or proprietor or their *locum tenens* with copies free of charge, the Committee consider that if the plaintiffs have to file them, the cost of obtaining them should be added to the cost of the suit.

5. Whilst fully appreciating the motives that animate the Government in its desire to hold the scales fairly and evenly between landlord and tenant, the Committee perceive that the trend of legislation undertaken for effectuating that desire justifies, to some extent at least, the apprehensions which have been expressed in various representations emanating from the landlord interest that freedom of contract and harmonious relationships between landlord and tenant are being sacrificed or imperilled without any real or lasting compensating benefit being secured to the tenant. In this connection I am instructed to enclose, for the further

information of Government, copy of a letter dated 4th February, from one of the leading native firms in Calcutta (members of the Chamber) who are the proprietors of large zemindaries, and to ask for careful consideration of its contents.

(Enclosure No. 1.)

Supply of copies of the Record of Rights to parties interested.

35. The Revenue Officer having completed the record, shall cause copies of it to be made, one of which will be made over to the proprietor of the village or where there are more proprietors than one, to their common agent or common manager, as the case may be, one to the village *patwari*, if there be a *patwari*, and one to the Collector or Sub-Divisional Officer.

A copy of the *Khatian* relating to his tenancy shall be given to every tenant under the signature and seal of the Revenue Officer.

(Enclosure No. 2.)

Calcutta, 4th February 1905.

W. PARSONS, ESQ.

Secretary to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

DEAR SIR,

We beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 108 dated the 24th ultimo, with enclosures, inviting an expression of opinion on the provisions of the proposed Bill to amend the Bengal Tenancy Act. At the outset we may state that it will materially affect the rights and interests of the landlords, and we, therefore, make the following observations for the consideration of the Committee of the Chamber:—

Section 2.—Under the existing Act, the burden lies on the landlord to prove that the rent to be enhanced is not fair and equitable. If the proviso, proposed to be added to section 27, be passed into law, it would impose on the landlord to prove, in the first instance, that the existing rent is fair and equitable or run the risk of getting his rent reduced. And then to prove that it is not so and that it should be enhanced. It would also be a bar in the way of an amicable adjustment between them. It will further conflict with the proviso 1 of section 29.

Section 3.—The proposed addition to proviso 1 of section 29 of the existing Act would have the effect of converting a suit for arrears of rent into one for enhancement of rent. It will nullify any adjustment of rent made by the tenant and ratified by him by a voluntary payment for three years previous to the institution of the suit.

Section 4.—The object of the existing section 102 of the Bengal Tenancy Act is to record the rent paid by the tenants. The proviso

proposed to be added would empower the Settlement Officer to open and decide the question as to whether the rents paid by the tenants are fair and equitable, and to make his work much more costly and dilatory and involve the parties in useless litigation.

Sections 5 and 6.—Generally speaking, most of the rent suits instituted by landlords are for small amounts, and are not lodged till the last day of limitation. The effect of the proposed amendment necessitating a copy of the Record-of-Rights to be filed even in non-contested and *ex parte* cases, would be—

- (1) To saddle the tenant with the cost of the copy together with the cost of stamps, &c., which will come to about twice or thrice the amount claimed as rent.
- (2) To prevent the landlords from instituting suits for recovery of their just demands for arrears of rent owing to (a) the trouble, delay and expense of getting such copies (b) the uncertainty of realising this additional cost from the tenants who are not even able to pay the bare arrear of rent (c) the uselessness of such copies of the record which might contain the name of a tenant who is no longer in possession of the holding, and which, since the record, may have passed to some other person by transfer or succession (d) and the impossibility of getting a copy when the necessity for a suit for arrears of rent arises on the very last day of limitation.

Section 7.—The proposal is wholly impracticable, and will not only bring the work of the Court to a standstill, but will bring ruin on the landlords who are bound to be punctual in the payment of Government revenue but cannot recover their rents promptly.

Section 8.—The amendments proposed by this section will be harmful to the interests of both the landlords and tenants. Any hard and fast rule respecting the rights of tenants to the use of water from tanks and wells belonging to their neighbours for the purpose of irrigation will simply introduce complications which rarely exist at present, most of the disputes arising in regard to the right of use being at present settled by the headmen of the villages. The owners of the tanks and wells in their turn will not care to maintain them as it will create nothing but irritation and bad feeling.

From the above it will be seen that the proposed amendments will do more harm than good. They will engender bad feelings which ought not to subsist between landlords and their tenants, prevent an amicable adjustment of rent being entered into between them, encourage the tenants to put serious obstacles in the way of recovering just arrears of rent by suits, and bring ruin on the landlords by their inability to pay punctually the Government demands owing to want of facility for the prompt realisation of the arrears of rent.

Yours faithfully,

THE ALLUVION BILL.

From Government of Bengal (REVENUE), to Chamber.

GR. No. 2-T. R.—DARJEELING, 25th April 1905.

Char lands have always been a fruitful source of contention, and the laws* hitherto enacted for the determination of the rights of claimants to such lands, though they facilitate the decision of disputes brought before the

* Regulation XI of 1825; Act IX of 1847; Bengal Act IV of 1868.

Civil Courts, do not provide any agency for the prevention of affrays and riots. These disturbances arise between lawless and ignorant rival claimants, before the disputes reach the Civil Courts, or are deliberately planned by turbulent zamindars with the object of forcing their opponents to appear in the Civil Court in the disadvantageous position of plaintiffs.

2. The duty of preventing these affrays and riots at present rests with Magistrates under section 145 of the Criminal Procedure Code, but there is convincing evidence that it is indifferently discharged. The main reason for this is that, under existing conditions the section cannot be worked except through the police; and as it puts a premium on forcible seizure, the temptation to, and opportunities for, corruption are very great. *Char* lands are generally of considerable value; the rival claimants are often rich zamindars; the police officers whom the information of the dispute first reaches are poor and at the same time vested with powers which enable them to do much to assure the success of the claimant in whose interest they use their influence. The result, which is a matter of common notoriety, is that they are frequently bought at a high price and fail to do their duty.

3. The Lieutenant-Governor considers it very desirable that all possible steps should be taken to remedy the evil alluded to above. The question was discussed in conference, in October 1904, by the most experienced officers of Government, and the conclusions arrived at are embodied in the accompanying draft Bill by which it is proposed to give the Collector power to take possession of *char* land and to retain possession until he makes it over to the person entitled to it. It is probable that the Collector will seldom actually be called on to interfere, since it may be expected that the knowledge of the power vested in him to give possession to whosoever is entitled to it will check, if it does not entirely prevent, resort to the creation of disturbances with a view to obtaining and maintaining illegal possession.

4. In districts in which there has recently been a *diara* survey, it is proposed to keep the maps up to date by making a river-bank survey at the commencement of each cold season and thus keep the Collector informed of all changes in the river course; while in those districts in which the *diara* maps are too old to be of direct service, there will probably be placed at the Collector's disposal a Deputy Collector, who will make enquiries and take necessary action in

places in which experience shows that alluvial formations are the subject of dispute. These matters will, however, be finally determined hereafter; but it is recognized that it will not be possible altogether to exclude the interference of the police in regard to newly-formed or newly-occupied *char* lands. As guardians of the peace, the police are bound to bring to notice the existence of disputes in regard to such lands, which are likely to cause a breach of the peace; and if a breach of the peace actually takes place, the police are bound to deal with it. But if the undue importance which now attaches to possession by seizure, even when it is obtained by violence, can be diminished, it seems probable that the assistance of the police being rendered less valuable great temptations to bribery will be removed.

5. It is also to be hoped that, since possession obtained merely by force will no longer have the value which it now has, the attempts to gain possession will no longer be so fierce as they now are, or be fought with such determination and obstinacy.

6. It is not intended under the proposed law to interfere with lands which have been in undisturbed possession by cultivation or otherwise even for one whole season, and this is provided for by restricting the law to newly-formed or newly-occupied lands.

7. The Collector will not step in until a dispute arises. The intention of the Bill is that this dispute should not merely be any claim by a party out of possession who desires by such claim to obtain the assistance of the Collector to secure possession, but should be an actual dispute of a serious character which calls for the interference of the Collector in the interests of the general peace and good administration of his district. This will be made clear by instructions to be issued by the Board under the provisions of section 3.

8. It is admitted that it will be practically impossible for the Collector to anticipate disputes in the districts to which this Act interfere more than is absolutely necessary. The existence of a dispute, therefore, is made a condition of the Collector's interference. It may be said that this is to shut the stable door after the steed is stolen. But besides the advantages indicated in paragraphs 4 and 5 above, the proposed Bill offers other advantages. Primarily Collector power to deal immediately with the cultivator's possession under the provisions of section 5. Suitable rules will be issued by the Board of Revenue as to the selection of tenants. The interest priors will thus be removed, since they will, if the Collector undertakes the temporary management, no longer be able to play off proprietor against another and so escape, as now they often do, payment of rent while the dispute lasts.

9. Further, in the case of *bona fide* conflicting claims, the important question of first possession will no longer be decided on the irrelevant grounds of mere brute force, but with regard to facts as determined by survey of the land and the correct ascertainment

of its position relatively to surrounding estates. Apart from the effect which this will have in discouraging rioting, it will afford a more equitable basis for the important decision as to who is to obtain possession.

10. The Bill may not go as far as some officers and others would recommend, but it goes as far as the Lieutenant-Governor, as at present advised, considers to be expedient. It will not throw more work on the district establishment. It will remove the disposal of certain difficult cases of dispute as to possession from the magisterial to the revenue side. It will no longer be necessary to hear the vast mass of unrelatable and often practically irrelevant evidence as to actual possession which the Magistrates' Courts dealing with cases under section 145 of the Criminal Procedure Code are bound to receive before they can dispose of such cases and which cause such cases to take so long for their disposal. In its place accurate material obtained by survey, and evidence, much of which will be documentary, will form the basis on which a decision will be come to.

11. I am now directed to request that your Chamber will consider the provisions of the draft Bill, and favour Government with their opinion on the subject as early as practicable.

A BILL

To authorise local officers to take temporary possession of certain lands gained from a river or sea.

Whereas it is expedient to authorise local officers to take possession of certain lands gained from a river or sea, pending an authoritative decision as to what person is entitled to such lands;

It is hereby enacted as follows:—

Short title and extent 1. (1) This act may be called the Bengal Alluvion Act, 1905; and
(2) it shall extend only to districts to which it may be applied by the Lieutenant-Governor by notification in the Calcutta Gazette.

Definitions.

2. In this Act—

- (a) "alluvial land" means land which is gained from a river or sea in any of the ways referred to in the Bengal Alluvion and Diluvion Regulation, 1825, the Bengal Alluvion and Diluvion Act, 1847, or the Bengal Alluvion (Amendment) Act, 1868; and
(b) "Collector" means the Collector of any district in which any tract of alluvial land, or any portion thereof, is situated, and includes any officer to whom the Collector may by written order, delegate his functions under this Act.

3. Notwithstanding anything contained in any of the enactments mentioned in section 2, clause (a), or in any other law, the Collector may, subject to such instructions as the Board of Revenue may from time to time issue in this behalf, summarily take possession of any alluvial land which the Collector declares in writing to be newly formed or newly occupied and the possession of which is disputed, and may retain possession thereof—

- (a) until he ascertains and declares in writing, after such summary inquiry as he may consider necessary, what person is entitled to possession of the land, or
- (b) if the Collector makes no such declaration, until a competent Civil Court declares what person is entitled to possession of the land.

The provisions of this section shall not apply to a *char* which is at the disposal of Government under clause *third* of section 4 of the Bengal Alluvion and Diluvion Regulation, 1825, or section 2 of the Bengal Alluvion (Amendment) Act, 1863.

4. Whenever a Collector or a Civil Court makes a declaration under section 3 in respect of any land, the Collector shall transfer the possession of the land to the person named in such declaration; and such person shall be entitled to retain possession of such land until evicted therefrom in due course of law.

5. When the Collector retains possession of any land under section 3, he shall, subject to the control of the Board of Revenue, manage it for the benefit of the rightful owner, and may, subject to such control, make a *riyatwari* settlement of such land, or he may appoint a Receiver thereof who, subject to his control, shall have all the powers of a Receiver appointed under the Code of Civil Procedure.

6. When a proceeding has been instituted under this Act to determine the *primâ facie* right to possession of any land, no proceedings under section 145 of the Criminal Procedure Code shall be instituted in any Criminal Court in respect of the same land, or of any part thereof, and any such proceedings already commenced and pending in any such Court shall be stayed.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (REVENUE).

No. 1275-1905—CALCUTTA, 28th July 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your circular No. 2-T.R. Alluvion Bill, a copy of which is appended to the circular.

2. The Committee have thoroughly examined the questions raised in the circular, and have considered the objects which Government hope to attain by the new law. They are not in timately

acquainted with the circumstances in which disputes over the possession of *char* lands occur. But from the information before them it would appear that some modification of the law is needed, in order that the disturbances which now arise out of such disputes may be as far as possible prevented. It is with this object, as they understand, that the Bill now under discussion has been proposed. The laws hitherto enacted for the determination of the rights of claimants,—*i.e.*, questions of title—although they facilitate the decision of disputes brought before the Civil Courts, do not (it is stated in your circular) provide any agency for the prevention of disturbances. This, the Committee apprehend, would naturally be the case, as laws for the determination of questions of title have nothing to do with the prevention of breaches of the peace, the latter coming within the province of the criminal law and the police. As is mentioned in the circular, the duty of preventing affrays and riots rests with Magistrates under section 145 of the Criminal Procedure Code. The provisions of this section are directed to ascertaining which of the rival parties is in possession; and to maintaining that possession until the question of title is decided by a Civil Court, which is of course the only tribunal capable of deciding it.

3. But it is complained in the circular that the duty thus devolving upon Magistrates is indifferently discharged. The main reason is, that the section cannot be worked except through the agency of the police; and that their employment tends to foment rather than to quell the disturbances. It is hoped that these evils will be remedied to a great extent by the new law. According to the Bill as drafted, Collectors will be empowered (regardless of any other law, but subject to such instructions as the Board of Revenue may issue from time to time) to take possession of any alluvial lands which they may declare in writing to be newly formed or newly occupied, and the possession of which is disputed. The existence of a dispute is made a condition of the Collector's interference. He will not step in until there arises an actual dispute of a serious character, which calls for his intervention in the interests of the general peace and good administration. He is not expected to prevent affrays and riots. But it is hoped that the knowledge of the power vested in him of taking possession and of demanding the surrender to him of possession by the party who has forcibly obtained it, will check the inclination to resort to force with the object of obtaining possession. The incentive to violence will also be it is hoped be controlled by rendering possession, obtained merely by force, of less value than it now is. It remains to be seen, the Committee think, if this will really be the result in practice. If the Bill be passed as drafted, the provisions will still afford to such persons as are disposed to be turbulent, a hope that the Collector, finding them in possession, may make a declaration in their favour.

4. The preamble of the Bill recites that it is expedient to authorize local officers to take possession of alluvial lands, pending an authoritative decision as to what person is "entitled" to such lands; in other words until a Civil Court has made a decree determining questions of title. According to clause 3 the Collector, having obtained

some germicidal action which bronze may possibly not possess. The Committee cannot offer any definite opinion on this point; but they think that it might be desirable for the Government of India to institute such bacteriological experiments as would enable an authoritative decision to be given upon the respective merits of bronze and copper.

4. Clause 11 of the Bill provides that gold coins, whether coined at the Royal Mint, or at any branch of the Royal Mint, shall be legal tender in India. With reference to this clause I am to enquire whether the Mint which is about to be established in Canada is a branch of the Royal Mint; and if coins coined at it will be admitted as legal tender in India.

5. Clause 12 provides that the rupee and half-rupee will be legal tender provided they have not lost more than two per cent in weight. This maintains the existing rule; but the Committee notice that no provision is taken for maintaining the existing practice by which the maximum allowance is fixed at 64 per cent. But possibly the intention is to make a rule under clause 18 (2) (d) to provide for this.

6. The Committee are inclined to think that the opening word of clause 16 should be "when" instead of "where." At least the former word is used in section 16 of Act XXIII of 1870 from which the clause is copied.

STAMP DUTY ON LETTERS OF HYPOTHECATION.

From Exchange Banks, to Chamber.

CALCUTTA, 30th August 1905.

DEAR SIR,

By Act XV of 1904 the Government of India were good enough in response to a representation of the Exchange Banks made through the Chamber to alter the provisions of Article 6, Schedule 1 of the Indian Stamp Act, 1899. The object was to avoid the higher mortgage duty of half per cent. and to permit hypothecations of moveable property whether intended to secure an existing account or a future advance being charged with either the duty payable on Bills of Exchange or half that duty according as the loan is repayable within a year or within three months of the advance. The change has been carried out by repealing entirely Article 6 of the Act of 1899 and substituting the clause set out in section 8 of the later Act. But the clause so substituted and which for convenience of reference is copied in the margin only applied to pawns or pledges of

moveable property and we are advised that as a pawn or pledge implies actual possession and therefore can only be made of something in existence and the property of the pledger at the time when the security is created a hypothecation of property to be afterwards acquired is outside the article and it follows that the forms of security most generally in use, *viz.* hypo-

theation of goods intended to be brought into press or warehouses, produce in the course of manufacture at Mills, and which is constantly being changed, and all moveable property intended to be purchased from advances are not entitled to the benefit that was intended to be conferred when the Act was introduced into the Legislature.

It was expressly stated in the statement of objects and reasons annexed to the Bill on its introduction that the higher mortgage duty tended to retard the development of the system of cash credits which had hitherto proved of great assistance to trade and it was therefore proposed to relieve instruments of hypothecation from the higher duty and to place them all on the same footing whether their execution was or was not simultaneous with the advances secured by them.

Agreement relating to deposit of title deeds, pawn or pledge that is to say, any instrument evidencing an agreement relating to—

- (1) the deposit of title deeds or instruments constituting or being evidence of the title to any property whatever (other than a marketable security); or
 - (2) the pawn or pledge of moveable property, where such deposit or pledge has been made by way of security for the repayment of money advanced or to be advanced by way of loan or an existing or future debt.
- (a) if such loan or debt is repayable on demand or more than three months from the date of the instrument evidencing the agreement;
- (b) if such loan or debt is repayable not more than three months from the date of such instrument.

The same duty as a Bill of Exchange No. 13 (b) for the amount secured.

Half the duty payable on a Bill of Exchange (No. 13(b) for the amount secured.

On a reference, however, to the select Committee this object appears to have been strangely overlooked. The view was accepted that the word hypothecation as used in Article 6 of the Act of 1899 was synonymous with pawn or pledge, that that construction had been adopted by the Calcutta High Court in a case reported in the 21st vol. of the I. L. Reports at p. 244, and that the article in question was therefore intended to relate only to cases in which property was actually given in pledge.

The Committee proceeded therefore to omit all reference to a hypothecation of moveable property in the new Act, and the omission has had the effect of withholding a considerable if not the main measure of relief contemplated by the Act of 1904.

It is submitted that the case referred to by the select committee is in fact no authority for the construction in aid of which it was invoked. The judgment dealt with the particular instrument which was before the Court and pronounced that it must be treated as a mortgage because there was no provision for anything in the nature of a delivery actual or constructive of the property affected and no pledge of it.

The word hypothecation is not mentioned or referred to in the judgment and we submit that no valid reason exists for limiting the relief for which we previously applied.

We are advised that the addition of the words "or hypothecation" to Article 6 of the Act of 1899 as amended by the Act of 1904 after the words pawn or pledge wherever they occur in the article will afford the relief for which we ask and we therefore invite the aid of the Chamber in applying for a further amendment of the act.

Yours faithfully,
T. FRASER,
Agent.

For the Chartered Bank of India Australia and China,

For the National Bank, of India, Ld.,
CHAS. NICOLL,
Manager.

For the Hongkong & Shanghai Banking Corporation,
W. K. DODS,
Agent.

For the Delhi & London Bank, Ld.,
E. J. WRIGHT,
Manager.

For the Mercantile Bank of India, Ld.,
J. STEWART,
Manager.

For the Deutsch-Asiatische Bank,
M. GUTSCHKE,
Manager.

For the Russo-Chinese Bank,
A. MAIR,
Manager.

For the International Banking Corporation,
E. F. GROS,
Manager.

From Chamber, to Government of India (FINANCE).

No. 1558-1905—CALCUTTA, 18th September 1905.

I am directed to address you in continuation of previous correspondence—ending with your No. 5475-S. R., dated 7th September 1905—with reference to Article 6 of Schedule I of the Indian Stamp Act, 1899.

2. By Act XV of 1904 the Government of India, in response to representations from the Chamber, altered the provisions of this article. The object of the alteration was to avoid the higher mortgage duty of half per cent., and to permit hypothecations of moveable property—whether intended to secure an existing account or a future advance—being charged with either the duty payable on Bills of Exchange, or half that duty, according as the loan is repayable within a year or within three months of the advance. This object has been effected by repealing Article 6 entirely, and substituting for it the clause set out in section 2 of the later Act. But the new clause (which is quoted below) applies only to pawns or pledges of moveable property. And the Committee of the Chamber are advised that a pawn or pledge implies actual possession; and that it can therefore be only made of something in existence, and the property of the pledger at the time when the security is created. It follows that a hypothecation of property to be afterwards acquired is outside the Article; and that the forms of security most generally in use—*viz.*, hypothecations of goods which are to be brought into presses, or warehouses, produce in the course of manufacture at mills, which is constantly being changed, and all moveable property which is to be purchased from advances—are not entitled to the benefit which was intended to be conferred when the Act was introduced into the Legislature.

3. In the Statement of Objects and Reasons annexed to the Bill, it was expressly mentioned that the higher mortgage duty tended to retard the development of the system of cash credits which had hitherto proved of great assistance to trade. It was therefore proposed to relieve instruments of hypothecation from the higher duty, and to place them all on the same footing, whether their execution was or was not simultaneous with the advances secured by them. But on the Bill being referred to the Select Committee this object appears to have been strangely lost sight of. The view was accepted that the word "hypothecation," as used in Article 6 of the Act of 1899, was synonymous with pawn or pledge; that that construction had been adopted by the Calcutta High Court, in a case reported at page 224 of the 21st volume of the Indian Law Reports; and that the article in question was therefore intended to relate only to cases in which property was actually given in pledge. The Select Committee consequently proceeded to omit all reference to a hypothecation of moveable property; and the omission has had the effect of withholding a considerable, if not the main, measure of relief contemplated by the new Act.

** Vide page 42 of Chamber report for 1903, Vol. II.

4. The Committee of the Chamber are advised that the case referred to by the Select Committee is in fact no authority for the construction in aid of which it was invoked. The judgment dealt with the particular instrument which was before the Court, and pronounced that it must be treated as a mortgage, because there was no provision for anything in the nature of a delivery actual or constructive of the property affected, and no pledge of it. The word hypothecation is not mentioned or referred to in the judgment; and it is contended that no valid reason exists for limiting the relief for which the Committee previously asked. I am to add that the Committee are further advised that the insertion of the words "or hypothecation" after the words "pawn or pledge," wherever the latter occur in Article 6 of the Act of 1899, as amended by the Act of 1904, will suffice. And I am to ask that the matter may be re-considered by Government, and that the Act may be further amended in this sense.

Clause referred to in para 2:—

6. AGREEMENT RELATING TO DEPOSIT OF TITLED ECTS, PAWN OR PLEDGE, that is to say, any instrument evidencing an agreement relating to—

- (1) the deposit of title-deeds or instruments constituting or being evidence of the title to any property whatever (other than a marketable security), or
- (2) the pawn or pledge of moveable property, where such deposit, pawn or pledge has been made by way of security for the repayment of money advanced by way of loan or an existing or future debt—

(a) if such loan or debt is repayable on demand or more than three months from the date of the instrument evidencing the agreement;

The same duty as a Bill of Exchange [No. 13 (b)] for the amount secured.

- | | |
|--|--|
| (b) If such loan or debt is repayable not more than three months from the date of such instrument. | Half the duty payable on a Bill of Exchange [No. 13 (b)] for the amount secured. |
|--|--|

From Government of India (FINANCE), to Chamber.

No. 5627-EXC.—SIMLA, 6th October 1905.

With reference to your letter No. 1558, dated the 18th September 1905, I am directed to forward a copy of a notification, in this Department, No. 5614-Exc., dated the 6th October 1905, from which it will be seen that the Government of India have been pleased to reduce the duty chargeable under Article No. 40 of Schedule I to the Indian Stamp Act, 1899 (II of 1899), on instruments of hypothecation of moveable property, to that payable under Article No. 6 (2) of the same Schedule on similar instruments relating to the pawn or pledge of moveable property.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA—FINANCE DEPARTMENT.

No. 5614-EXC.—SIMLA, 6th October 1905.

NOTIFICATION. SEPARATE REVENUE.
STAMPS.

In exercise of the power conferred by section 9, clause (1), of the Indian Stamp Act, 1899 II of (1899), the Governor-General in Council is pleased to direct that the duty, chargeable under Article No. 40 of Schedule I to the said Act, on an instrument evidencing an agreement relating to the hypothecation of moveable property where such hypothecation has been made by way of security for the repayment of money advanced or to be advanced by way of loan, or of an existing or future debt, shall be reduced,

- (a) if such loan or debt is repayable on demand or more than three months from the date of the instruments to the duty payable under Article No. 13 (b) of the said Schedule on a Bill of Exchange for the amount secured;
- (b) if such loan or debt is repayable not more than three months from the date of the instrument, to half the duty payable under Article No. 13 (b) of the said Schedule on a Bill of Exchange for the amount secured.

W. S. MEYER,

Secretary to the Government of India.

From Madras Chamber, to Chamber.

MADRAS, 14th October 1905.

I beg to enclose copy of a letter which this Chamber has addressed to the Government of India supporting the request contained in your letter of the 18th ultimo, regarding Article 6, Schedule I, of the Indian Stamp Act. I shall be much obliged if you will send me two more copies of your letter.

MADRAS, 13th October 1905.

From—Vice-Chairman, Chamber of Commerce, Madras,
To—The Secretary to the Government of India, Finance Department.

The Chamber has been favoured with a copy of a letter, dated the 18th ultimo, which has been addressed to you by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, with reference to Article 6 of Schedule I of the Indian Stamp Act, 1859, as amended by Act XV of 1904.

The Act as it stands is not at all clear as to what duty is payable on advances made against letters of hypothecation, and therefore the only safe course to pursue is to pay the higher mortgage duty of a half per cent. This is a serious matter when letters of hypothecation are renewed at frequent intervals, as is often the case, and one which has greatly limited the extent of the relief, which the Act was presumably designed to afford.

I have the honour, therefore, to inform you that this Chamber strongly supports the request of the Bengal Chamber that Article 6, Schedule I, should be amended by the insertion of the words "or hypothecation" after the words "pawn or pledge" wherever the latter occur.

From Chamber, to Madras Chamber.

No. 1743-1905.—CALCUTTA, 25th October 1905.

Stamps on letters of Hypothecation.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 14th October enclosing copy of a letter addressed by your Chamber to the Secretary, Government of India, Finance Department, supporting the representation made by this Chamber for the amendment of the Indian Stamp Act, 1859, so far as regards Article 6 of Schedule I.

The Committee desire me to convey to you their best thanks for the support you have been good enough to give to their representation, and you have no doubt ere this noticed that the Act has been amended in the manner desired.

INDIAN MERCHANDISE MARKS ACT—MARKING OF
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN ON IMPORTED GOODS.

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

No. 5985-B.—CALCUTTA, 22nd August 1905.

I am directed to forward the accompanying copy of the letter cited on the margin,* on the question of modifying the practice which at present obtains at Indian ports in respect of the marking of the country of origin on imported goods, and to request that the Board may be favoured at an early date with an expression of the Chamber's opinion on the subject.

No. 3636-3640-C.—SIMLA, 20th July 1905.

From—J. CAMPBELL, ESQ., I.C.S., Under Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Commerce and Industry,

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

The Government of India have recently had under their consideration the question of the advisability of modifying the practice which at present obtains at Indian ports, in respect of the marking of the country of origin on imported goods. The law on this subject is contained in section 18 of the Sea Customs Act, 1878 (VII of 1878) as amended by section 10 (1) of the Indian Merchandise Marks Act, 1889 (IV of 1889) and by the Sea Customs Amendment Act, 1904 (XVI of 1904). Sub-section (1) clause (d) of section 10 of the Merchandise Marks Act, read with section 2 sub-section (1) of the Act, prohibits the importation into British India of goods bearing any false description, statement or other indication direct or indirect as to the place or country in which they were made or produced; while sub-section (1) clause (e) of section 10 of the Act prohibits the importation of goods made or produced beyond the limits of the United Kingdom or British India, and having applied to them any name or trade mark being, or purporting to be, the name or trade mark of any manufacturer, trader or dealer in either country, if the goods do not bear a definite and conspicuous indication of the country in which they were actually made or produced.

2. The prohibition contained in clause (e) is conditional on the non-application of the counterradication prescribed in sub-clauses (i) and (ii); and, as the provisions of the law are clear and specific and as there appears to be no valid ground for any alteration in this respect, the Government of India do not propose to introduce any change in respect of the marking of this class of goods.

3. The absolute prohibition contained in clause (d) becomes applicable only when the goods bear a false trade description; and it is a question of fact, to be determined on the merits in each

individual case whether the marking on any goods does amount to a "false trade description." The Government of India are disposed to think that this point has been to some extent overlooked in the course of the previous discussions on the subject; and they consider that there has been a tendency to apply the provisions of sub-clauses (i) and (ii) of clause (e) to cases falling under clause (d), in a manner much more rigid than the law contemplated, or than the requirements of legitimate trade necessitated. For example goods described in the English language the use of which is held to be in itself indicative of British origin or goods bearing some pictorial or other representation calculated to deceive the purchaser as to their real origin, are not admitted into British India unless, on the analogy of Section 10 (i) (e), and in accordance with paragraph 2 of the Executive Instructions issued with the Resolution in the Finance and Commerce Department No. 2914 S.R., dated the 6th July 1896, such direct or indirect trade description is corrected by a specific indication of the country of production or manufacture. This practice is not authorized by any of the provisions of the Act; and the Government of India consider that it should now be modified to the extent proposed in paragraph 4 below.

4. In the year 1901, the Chambers of Commerce were consulted as to the suitability of the words "Made abroad" as a counterindication applicable to goods manufactured outside the United Kingdom and India. The majority of the Chambers were then opposed to any change in the existing system; they considered that the words "Made abroad" would prove to be too indefinite an indication for practical purposes, and were inclined to think that such an indication would frequently be misconstrued by the average Indian purchaser. The Government of India accepted this opinion; and they informed the Secretary of State that in view of the attitude assumed by the Chambers of Commerce on the question, they were not prepared to agree to any alteration of the practice then in force. The attention of the Government of India has again been drawn to this question by the Resolution passed at the recent conference of Indian and Ceylon Chambers of Commerce; and in view of the terms of that Resolution, they are of opinion that, subject to anything which may be urged by the Government of Bengal and by the commercial associations concerned, it will probably be advisable to abrogate, in respect of the class of goods covered by section 10 (i) (d) of the Act, the existing rule which requires that a specific indication of the country in which the goods were actually made or produced must be given. They consider that such expressions as "Not made in the United Kingdom or in India," "Foreign make," "Foreign produce," "Made abroad," and allied phrases, may be accepted as counterindications sufficient to render admissible a trade description which would, if unaccompanied by any such qualifying phrase, be held to be a false trade description.

5. I am to request that the Government of India may be favoured, at an early date, with the views of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor on this question, after consultation with the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and such other commercial bodies as it may be deemed advisable to refer to.

From Chamber, to Calcutta Import Trade Association.

No. 1510-1905.—CALCUTTA, 9th September 1905.

Marking of Country of Origin on Imported Goods.

I am directed to submit copies of the marginally noted papers upon this subject, and to invite an expression of the views of your Association upon the points raised in them.

From Calcutta Import Trade Association, to Chamber.

No. 64-M.—CALCUTTA, 20th September 1905.

Marking of Country of Origin on Imported Goods.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1510-1905 of 9th September, forwarding copies of the marginally noted papers on the question of modifying the practice which at present obtains at Indian ports in respect of the marking of the country of origin on imported goods, and asking for an expression of the views of this Association on the subject.

2. The Committee are much obliged for your letter and its enclosures, to which they have given their careful consideration. In reply, I am directed to refer you to the correspondence on this subject which took place in 1901, when they were similarly favored with a reference from the then Committee, of the Chamber. I enclose, for the information of your Committee, a copy of this Association's letter No. 63-M, of 2nd December 1901, together with a copy of the replies to the five specific points brought forward by the Government of India.

3. The Committee find that the views expressed in response to the reference alluded to above, are still held by the majority of import firms; and they therefore consider that they need do no more than confirm them.

From Calcutta Import Trade Association, to Chamber.

No. 68-M.—CALCUTTA, 2nd December 1901.

The Indian Merchandise Marks Act and Custom Regulations in connection therewith.

I am directed by the Committee of the Calcutta Import Trade Association to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 1219-01* dated 7th September, forwarding copy of a letter No. 4359 S. R. †

* Vide page 46 of Chamber Report for 1901, Vol. II.

† Vide page 16 of Chamber Report for 1901, Vol. II.

dated Simla, the 19th August 1901, from the Secretary to the Government of India. Finance and Commerce Department, with its enclosures, relative to suggestions which have been put forward for a relaxation of the present Customs regulations in connection with the marking of "Country of Origin" on imported Continental manufactured goods.

The letter from the Government of India above quoted asks for the views of the Chamber on five specific points and the Committee of the Chamber, in turn, request the opinion of the Association on these points to assist them in framing their reply to Government.

In reply I am directed to state that the Committee have circulated the questions to the members of the Association and whilst different views have been expressed, the opinion of the majority may be taken as under:—

(a) Should the mere use of the English language in a description be considered, as at present, as suggesting that the goods to which it is affixed are of British origin?

The answer to this is in the negative.

(b) In cases in which a trade description is held to suggest that the goods are of British origin, would it be sufficient to provide for the addition of some general terms indicative of foreign origin?

The answer to these is in the affirmative.

(c) If so, are the words "made abroad" suitable for use in India and properly applicable to non-Indian goods manufactured outside the United Kingdom?

(d) Do the Committee of the Chamber recommend any further relaxation of the provisions of the Indian Merchandise Marks Act or of the present practice thereunder?

(e) In particular would the Chamber recommend the Government to dispense altogether with any marking on goods indicative of the country of origin?

The answer to these is in the negative.

With regard to question (d) the Committee would remark that whilst they would not advocate any further relaxation of the Act

itself or the rules applicable to it, it would probably be found upon enquiry that the Customs officials were in the best position to suggest in what other directions the Act and the rules might be made to work more smoothly.

With regard to (e) the Committee would like to draw the attention of the Committee of the Chamber to the inconsistency of the English and Indian Acts being worked under different systems, the inevitable result being a maximum of inconvenience and trouble to all concerned.

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

No. 156-1906.—CALCUTTA, 20th January 1906.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 5985 B, of 22nd August 1905, enclosing copy of a letter of 20th July, from the Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Commerce and Industry, on the question of modifying the practice which at present obtains at Indian ports in respect of the marking of country of origin on imported goods, on which you request an expression of opinion on the part of the Chamber.

(1). I must apologise for the delay which has taken place in dealing with this reference which is of much interest to a large number of members of the Chamber; but with regard to which there has existed a considerable divergence of opinion. Under these circumstances the Committee were anxious to obtain from members of the Chamber as comprehensive an expression of opinion as possible, and this has necessarily taken some time to secure.

(2). The history of the proposals which have been made to modify the Indian Merchandise Marks Act in connection with the marking of the country of origin, is stated concisely in paragraph 4 of letter of 20th July 1905, from the Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Commerce and Industry, to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Finance Department. In December 1901 the views of the Chamber were opposed to any relaxation of the provisions of the Indian Merchandise Marks Act in this direction; but in January 1905 the Conference of Indian and Ceylon Chambers of Commerce passed a resolution to the effect that the provision in the Act which requires all foreign goods to be marked with the country of origin tended to divert trade from British merchants to foreign competitors. Under these circumstances the Government of India considered it might be advisable to abrogate the existing rule requiring that a specific indication of the country of origin must be given on foreign goods, and to substitute for it a rule permitting a general declaration to the effect that the goods are of foreign produce or of foreign make.

(3). I am now instructed by the Committee to state that as a large majority of members of the Chamber interested in the matter are in favour of a modification of the Act, such as suggested by the Government of India, they would approve of such action being taken.

INDIAN ARBITRATION ACT, 1899.

From Government of India (HOME), to 'Secretary Conference of Indian and Ceylon Chambers of Commerce.

No. 1606.—SIBLA, 19th October 1905.

I am directed to address you with reference to Resolution No. 5 passed at the Conference of Indian and Ceylon Chambers of Commerce held at Calcutta in January last. In that Resolution the Conference expressed the opinion that the Indian Contract Act, 1872 (IX of 1872), or the Indian Arbitration Act, 1899 (IX of 1899), should be amended so as to empower partners or recognized agents of firms to enter into contracts on behalf of the firms to which they belong, or which they represent, (binding them) to submit to arbitration any dispute which may arise in connection with the contract.

2. I am to say that, after a careful consideration of this question, the Government of India are not at present prepared to undertake legislation in the direction proposed. They observe that the difficulty to which the Conference refers does not seem to have been commonly experienced and that in England where on this point the law appears to be the same as in India no such measure as that proposed has been found necessary. Moreover, the correctness of the statement of law in the judgment to which reference has been made is a matter which will no doubt come under the consideration of one or other of the High Courts and possibly of the Privy Council in some similar case and it would in any view be premature to legislate until it is established that that judgment is correct. For these reasons the Governor-General in Council has decided to take no action in the matter until further experience proves the necessity for doing so.

From Chamber, to Bombay, Coconada, Karachi, Madras, Upper India and Ceylon Chambers.

No. 1823-1905.—CALCUTTA, 7th November 1905.

First Conference of Chambers of Commerce of India and Ceylon.

I have the pleasure to enclose for the information of the Committee of your Chamber copy of a letter of 19th October 1905 from the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, addressed to me in my capacity as Secretary to the First Conference of Indian and Ceylon Chambers of Commerce, with reference to Resolution No. 5 of the Conference proposed by the Karachi Chamber and seconded by the Bombay Chamber.

2. In this Resolution an opinion was expressed that the Indian Contract Act of 1872, or the Indian Arbitration Act of 1899, should be so amended as to empower partners, or recognised Agents

of firms to enter into contracts on behalf of the firms to which they belong, or which they represent, binding them to submit to arbitration any disputes which may arise in connection with a contract.

3. In the present letter from the Government of India you will see that it is intimated that Government are not at present prepared to undertake legislation in the direction proposed and have decided to take no action in the matter until further experience proves the necessity for doing so.

From Colombo Chamber, to Secretary First Conference of Indian and Ceylon Chamber of Commerce.

COLOMBO, 14th November 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 1823-1905 of 7th instant, enclosing copy of letter received by you from the Secretary to the Government of India, with reference to Resolution No. 5 of the First Conference of India and Ceylon Chambers of Commerce.

I am to state that my Committee will be glad if you will keep advising from time to time any further action you take on the matter.

From Karachi Chamber, to Chamber.

No. 694.—KARACHI, 21st November 1905.

The Indian Contract Act and the Indian Arbitration Act.

I beg to thank you for your letter of the 7th instant, No. 1823, and enclosure therewith. Our Chairman has received a demi-official letter from the Hon'ble Mr. Hewett to the same effect as Government's letter to you No. 1606 of the 19th October, explaining that there is no chance of the Contract Act being amended in the way proposed at the First Conference of Indian and Ceylon Chambers of Commerce.

Para 2 of Government's letter to you states "that the difficulty to which the Conference refers does not seem to have been commonly experienced." I should esteem it a favour if you could kindly inform me if arbitrations under the Indian Arbitration Act are common in Calcutta. Have members of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce much experience of the advantages or otherwise of the Act? And what is their opinion of the Act?

From Chamber, to Karachi Chamber.

No. 2007-1905.—CALCUTTA, 7th December 1905.

The Indian Contract Act and the Indian Arbitration Act.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 694 of 21st November 1905, and in reply to the enquiry in the second paragraph I am instructed to state, that all the arbitrations conducted under the rules of the Tribunal of Arbitration of this Chamber—and they are very numerous—are dealt with in accordance with the provisions of the Act, and practically no difficulties arise in connection with it.

BILL TO AMEND THE INDIAN FACTORIES ACT, 1881.

From Government of Bengal (GENERAL), to Chamber.

No. 2766-T. G.—DARJEELING, 19th October 1905.

Copy of Bill to amend the Indian Factories Act, 1881, forwarded to the Secretary, Bengal Chamber of Commerce, with the request that His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor may be favoured with any remarks which the Chamber may wish to offer thereon.

From Chamber, to Indian Jute Mills' Association.

No. 1828-1905.—CALCUTTA, 7th November 1905.

Bill to Amend the Indian Factories Act.

The Committee have been asked by the Government of Bengal to express their opinions on the above Bill, and as they understand that the measure is under your consideration, I am instructed to say that they would feel much indebted if you would favor them with a copy of any letter which you may address Government on the subject.

From Indian Jute Mills' Association, to Chamber.

No. 308-D.—CALCUTTA, 10th November 1905.

Bill Further to Amend the Factories Act XV of 1881.

With reference to your No. 1828, dated 7th November, I have now the pleasure to forward a copy of a letter (No. 307-D, dated 10th November) which the Committee have addressed to the Government of Bengal regarding the provisions of this Bill.

No. 307-D.—CALCUTTA, 10th November 1905.

From—The Secretary, Indian Jute Mills' Association,
To—The Secretary Government of Bengal, General Department.

I am directed by the Committee of the Indian Jute Mills' Association to address you with reference to the Bill further to amend the Indian Factories Act, 1881, which is now before the Council of the Governor-General of India.

2. The Committee have examined the measure with attention, and they notice one clause which prescribes what is, so far as the Calcutta Jute Mills are concerned, an impracticable procedure. They refer to the proposed new clause 11 A. Sub-clause (b) of this clause requires the setting up in the factory of notices showing the intervals of rest allowed to women and children—sections 6 (3) and 7 (4) of Act XV of 1881. In the Calcutta mills the system of working in shifts is generally followed. But a complete shift of

workers does not stop and commence at the same moment. The work people stop in detachments to suit their own convenience. They are quite alive to the hours of working, and do not overrun their duty periods. If the workers in the several detachments were regular and steady in attendance, a list of the names of those in each detachment, together with their periods of work and rest, could be posted on a notice board. But as the opposite is the case the posting of accurate notices would be practically an impossibility. In the circumstances the Committee would suggest that, in those factories where the shift system is in force, an exception should be made similar to that provided for in Section 5 A (1) of the existing Act.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (GENERAL).

No. 2020-1905.—CALCUTTA, 8th December 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to address you with reference to the Bill further to amend the Indian Factories Act, 1881, copy of which was forwarded under cover of your docket No. 2766-T. G., dated Darjeeling, 19th October 1905, and which is now before the Council of the Governor-General of India.

2. After consultation with members of the Chamber interested in the question, I am directed to state that the Committee are in accord with the views expressed in letter No. 307-D, of 10th November 1905, from the Secretary of the Indian Jute Mills' Association to your address, copy of which they have had the opportunity of perusing.

3. The provisions of the Bill are principally directed to affording greater facility in securing convictions for infringement of the provision as regards interval of stoppage of work and more efficient control in other respects. With the modifications suggested by the Committee of the Indian Jute Mills' Association, the Bill would appear to answer the purpose for which it is intended, and subject to such modifications the Committee would accord to it their support.

From Karachi Chamber, to Chamber.

(With Compliments.)

FROM—THE HON'BLE MR. M. DE P. WEBB, Chairman, Karachi Chamber of Commerce,

TO—The Acting Secretary to Government, General Department, Bombay.

No. 782.—KARACHI, 18th December 1905.

The Indian Factories Act.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 5647 of the 10th October asking for the opinion of this Chamber on

the provisions of the draft Bill to further amend the Indian Factories Act of 1881.

In reply I beg to inform you that the provisions of the proposed legislation have been carefully considered, and my Committee fully approve of the same except in regard to those sections which provide for Government supervision in the appointment of certain of a factory owner's agents or representatives. The objectionable sentences occur in clauses 8 and 9 of the Bill. My Committee are strongly of opinion that the words—"an approved,"—in clause 1 of proposed section 15, and—"to be approved by the District Magistrate"—in proposed section 17. A, should be omitted. My Committee urge that the proposal to introduce legislation giving the District Magistrate powers to approve or disapprove of a factory owner's agents or representatives is objectionable in that it interferes with the right and freedom of action of the owner or occupier of a factory to appoint whoever he thinks best in his own interests; moreover it is not at all clear that the District Magistrate is able of his own knowledge to say whether a person is competent to manage a factory or not.

For the above reasons my Committee object to clauses 8 and 9 of the Bill as they now stand.

From Chamber, to Karachi Chamber.

No. 50-1906.—CALCUTTA, 10th January 1906.

The Indian Factories Act.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of copy of the letter of 8th December, addressed by your Chamber to the Secretary to the Government of Bombay on the provisions of the draft Bill to further amend the Indian Factories Act of 1881, and to thank you for placing this document at their disposal.

BILL TO AMEND THE COURT OF WARDS ACT, 1879.

From Government of Bengal (LEGISLATIVE), to Chamber.
No. 290-T.—CALCUTTA, 22nd November 1905.

I am directed to forward six copies of a Bill to amend the Court of Wards Act, 1879, which was introduced in the Legislative Council on the 18th November, 1905, and also a Statement of Objects and Reasons, which together with the Bill, was published in the Calcutta Gazette of the 22nd November, 1905. I am to request that the Lieutenant-Governor may be favoured with an expression of the opinion of your Chamber on the Bill by the 5th December next, if possible.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (LEGISLATIVE).

No. 26-1906.—CALCUTTA, 6th January 1906.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 290T of 22nd November 1905 forwarding copy of a Bill to amend the Court of Wards Act, 1879, introduced in the Legislative Council on the 18th November 1905, with a Statement of Objects and Reasons, and asking, for the information of H. H. the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, for an expression of opinion on the Bill.

(2). The Committee now instruct me to submit the following comments:—

Clause 2 of the Bill provides for the proposed partial repeal of section 9 which is necessitated by the insertion of the proposed new section 13 A. This is, the Committee think, clearer than the portion proposed to be repealed.

(3). In connection with the amendments provided by clause 3 of the bill the Committee would suggest that the following words should be added after the words "local official Gazette" and before the words "and in such other manner" in sub-section 1 of the proposed new section 10A:—

"and also in at least two issues each of one leading English "and one leading vernacular daily newspaper. published in Calcutta and also in two issues of one of the "newspapers (if any) published in the District in which "the ward ordinarily resides or has last resided."

The object of the publication is to provide for notice of the assumption by the Court of Wards of charge of any estate, &c., being given to all persons having claims against the estate. It is desirable and expedient therefore that such notice should be as widely published and circulated as is reasonably possible so as to afford every claimant reasonable opportunities of submitting and

prosecuting his claim and the more so as in view of the provisions of sub-section 2 of this proposed new section such claimant would forfeit his claim if not duly submitted in terms of sub-section (1). It is in fact an essential and elementary principle of law that all reasonable publicity should be given to notices of this character; and the practice followed by the Courts of law in sales of properties and similar matters is to publish the notice of sale in more than one paper. It seems to the Committee that it is hardly fair to claimants that the publication beyond that in the official Gazette should be left entirely to the discretion of the Court.

The following paragraph might also with advantage be added at the end of the clause:—

"Similar notice shall also be addressed by post to each person "whose name shall have been furnished by the ward as "having claims against the ward or his estate."

(4). With reference to the proposed new Sections 10 B and 10 C the Committee would only suggest that in the fourth line of section 10 B, sub-section (1) and between the words "and" and "shall" the following words should be inserted:—

"In all cases where the same are in his possession power or "control."

Section 10 D does not appear to call for any remark save that in the interests of claimants and to obviate all possible doubts of construction the following proviso might be added at the end thereof:—

"provided also that where a claim which had been wholly or "partially rejected by the Court is subsequently wholly "or partially allowed by a Civil Court of competent "jurisdiction and a certified copy of the decree or order "of such Court is filed in the Court of Wards the claim "shall forthwith be admitted and registered for the whole "amount allowed by such decree or order without fur- "ther evidence being required."

As the proposed section 10 D at present stands it is perhaps open to argument that even after decree the Court of Wards has the discretion to admit or reject the claim thus adjudicated upon so long as its management continues.

Section 10 E. For the reasons above stated similar amendments to the giving of notices as are above suggested with regard to sub-section 1 section 10 A should also be made here.

(5). The remaining clauses of the Bill do not appear to call for any comment.

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STAMPS ON SHARE TRANSFERS.

From Chamber, to Collector of Stamp Revenue.

No. 44-1905.—CALCUTTA, 12th January 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 248 R. S.² of 1st October, drawing attention to the reduction in the sale of Share Transfer Stamps, which you attribute, after making enquiries, to the practice of issuing blank transfer deeds. You consider that this practice, which is admittedly followed to a large extent, constitutes a fraud on the Government Stamp Revenue, and you ask for the opinion of the Committee as to the best means of protecting Government Revenue without interfering with the speculative run of business in the share market.

2. The Committee have been giving their most careful consideration to the subject referred to in your letter, which is a somewhat difficult one to deal with, as it involves interference with a long established and well-known custom in connection with the buying and selling of shares. After making inquiries in several quarters, the Committee are inclined to doubt whether the system of holding shares on blank transfer deeds has been more generally resorted to in recent years than formerly, and they incline to attribute any falling off in Government Revenue, from this source, to the fact that the shares in the leading industry of Calcutta, *viz.*, jute, are more firmly held by investors and, therefore, change hands less frequently.

3. The Committee have reason to believe, however, that the Stamp Revenue is being defrauded by the adhesive stamps being removed from completed transfer deeds and used again on new transfers. This practice might easily be prevented by legislation requiring the Registrars of Share Transfers to clearly mark or perforate used stamps with the word "cancelled" or "used." The Committee are not in favour of making it compulsory to stamp every blank transfer between a *bond fide* sale and the finding of a *bond fide* or a holding purchaser. These transfers are often mere financial facilities and a fresh stamp on each occasion would greatly restrict business. The Committee would suggest that blank transfers should be given a recognised standing as legal tender, provided they are dated by the seller, and their currency as such recognised for a period not exceeding six months from the date of sale, blank transfers undated or remaining uncompleted for more than six months not being recognised as legal tender. There are numerous objections to shares standing for longer than six months on the footing of blank transfers.

4. The Committee consider that the rate of duty on share transfers, *viz.*, $\frac{1}{4}\%$, is sufficiently heavy to form a direct encourage-

* Vide page 112 of Chamber Report, for 1904, Vol. 11.

STAMPS ON SHARE TRANSFERS.

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ment to evasion. They are of opinion that if the stamp duty on share transfers were reduced to $\frac{1}{8}\%$, as on Bills of Exchange, and the use of blank transfers were restricted, their abuse would be lessened without any material diminution of the Government Revenue, and the result would be generally beneficial.

From Collector of Stamp Revenue, to Chamber.

No. 111-R. S.—CALCUTTA, 14th July 1905.

With reference to your No. 44-1905 dated the 12th January last I have the honour to communicate to you the observation of the Board of Revenue on para 3 of your letter concerning the extraction of adhesive stamps from completed transfer deeds and their use again on new transfers.

Vide extract of para 6, of the Board's letter No. 558 B. T. dated 29th May 1905.

Under section 11 (e) of the Stamp Act adhesive stamps may be used for transfers by endorsement of shares, Rule 13 of the Stamp Manual quoted in the margin allows of the additional duty on deeds executed on stamped paper (i.e. impressed paper) being levied by means of adhesive stamps.

But the law does not provide for the use of adhesive stamps on separate deeds. I am therefore to enquire what is the practice observed in stamping original transfers of shares as well as transfers by endorsement and whether the same practice is observed in all limited Companies and Banks. An early reply is requested.

(Extract of para 6 of the Board's letter No. 558 B/T, dated the 29th May 1905.)

"6. There is however one point to which I am to invite attention. The Chamber of Commerce have reason to believe that the Stamp Revenue is being defrauded by the removal of adhesive stamps from completed transfer deeds for use again. The forms of share transfers accompanying the Collector's letter indicate that adhesive stamps are used for payment of the original as well as excess duty thereon. The Board are not aware of any provision of law or any rule authorising the use of adhesive stamps for payment of the original duty on share transfers which forms the subject of a separate deed. Section 11 (e) of the Stamp Act permits of the use of adhesive stamps for transfers by endorsement, and rule 13 of the Stamp Manual allows of additional duty on deeds executed on stamped paper being levied by means of adhesive stamps. Rule 15 (on the same page) merely prescribes the use of particular kinds of stamps on certain instruments, when stamped with adhesive stamps. I am therefore to request that an enquiry may be

made as to the manner in which the original duty on share transfers by a separate deed is levied. If adhesive stamps are used for this purpose I am to ask that the Board may be favoured with your opinion and that of the Collector as to the legality of the practice and as to the advisability of discontinuing it, and if necessary, amending the rules with that object."

From Chamber, to Collector of Stamp Revenue.

No. 1377-1905.—CALCUTTA, 15th August 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No 111 R. S., dated 14th July 1905, on the subject of the use of adhesive stamps on share transfer deeds.

2. In reply to your enquiry I am to say that the practice in Calcutta for the past thirty years has been, and still is, to affix adhesive stamps to all share transfers. This use of adhesive stamps is, the Committee now understand, irregular and not in compliance with the law. But it is their opinion that engraved or embossed share transfers are altogether unsuited to the requirements of this market. They venture, therefore, respectfully to suggest, for the consideration of the Board of Revenue, that the existing practice be sanctioned by an amendment of the law. The most convenient way of effecting this alteration would be, they are advised, to delete the words "by endorsement" in Section 11 (e) of the Indian Stamp Act, 1899. The Committee trust that this proposal will commend itself to the members of the Board, as they are convinced that much inconvenience would be experienced in the share market if the use of stamped paper for transfer deeds were insisted upon.

3. In their previous letter (No 44 dated 12th January 1905) the Committee suggested (a) that blank transfers should be given a recognised standing as legal tend or for six months from the date of sale; and b) that the rate of stamp duty on share transfers should be reduced from $\frac{1}{4}\%$ to $\frac{1}{8}\%$. They hope that these proposals are receiving the sympathetic consideration of the Board of Revenue.

From Collector of Stamp Revenue, to Chamber.

No. 173-R. S.—CALCUTTA, 31st August 1905.

Referring to your letter No. 1377-1905, dated the 15th instant in para. 2 of which you state that engraved or embossed share transfers are entirely unsuited to the requirements of the market, and suggest that the Stamp Law be amended so as to sanction the existing practice of using adhesive stamps on share transfer deeds, I fully have the honor to request that you will be so good as to explain the difficulties that would arise, and the inconvenience that would be experienced in the share market, if the use of stamped paper for transfer deeds be insisted upon.

From Chamber, to Collector of Stamp Revenue.

No. 1631-1905.—CALCUTTA, 29th September 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 173-R. S., dated 31st August, in which you ask for a full explanation of the difficulties which would arise, and the inconvenience which would be experienced in the share market, if the use of stamped paper for transfer deeds were insisted upon.

2. In reply I am to say that there are many difficulties in the way of using stamped paper for share transactions in this market. In the first place it must be remembered that the present system has been in existence for upwards of thirty years; and it would naturally be most inconvenient to make a radical change now. Many Companies transfer only on their own transfer forms; and it is unlikely that they would agree to keep a stock of stamped forms on hand. Bankers and Brokers would also object to lock up money in a stock of stamped forms, either special or ordinary, for the use of their constituents. The stamp duty rises by four annas per cent. to Rs. 2-8 on Rs. 1,000 consideration money. It thereafter increases by Re. 1-4 on every additional Rs. 500; and as the money involved in a share transaction may be anything from Rs. 100 to Rs. 1,00,000 or more, the keeping of a proper supply of stamped forms would mean a very considerable and unremunerative outlay. Further, those who did lay in a stock of stamped forms would be practically forced to buy at the start particular values, which might not be required for years, if at all. On the other hand the present adhesive stamp denominations are so few in number, that they are sure to be serviceable sooner or later; and for that reason alone they are preferable. The petty dealers who at present retail the adhesive stamps, as and when they are required by brokers, who are the largest consumers, would be unwilling, if not unable, to keep a supply of any but the lower values of stamped paper. There would consequently be a continual necessity for applying to the Stamp Office, which would be not only a waste of public time and money, but a great inconvenience to the public themselves.

3. The present system is, the Committee consider, not only simple but useful; and it is the only one suited to share business as transacted in Calcutta. The embossed stamp works well in London and elsewhere, but only, because, all transactions are for the fortnightly or monthly settlements, which admit of ample time being allowed to procure the stamped forms required. The Calcutta market would never agree to make periodical settlements in shares, as too much risk and trouble would be involved. Cases occur very frequently where a seller of 100 shares has already signed and stamped the transfer deed, when he is asked to deliver in small lots. At present this can be easily and quickly done by manipulation of the adhesive stamps and without loss to their owner. But in the case of embossed or engraved stamps, the only way of recovering the stamp value would be to claim for a refund; if it may be presumed that there would be no disability to make such a claim. The procedure for obtaining refunds or allowances is prescribed

in Chapter V of the Act of 1899. It involves the expenditure of some time and trouble on the part of the applicant, which is avoided when adhesive stamps are used. To increase the number of applications merely to ensure the use of stamped paper would be, the Committee think, a mistake, as it would be giving unnecessary trouble to Companies and Bankers and Brokers, not only in connection with spoiled stamped forms, but also in the case of surplus papers which could not be sold.

4. The foregoing are some of the principal reasons why the Committee deprecate any change being made in the existing system. It was pointed out in my previous letter (No. 1377, dated 15th August 1905), that a very simple amendment of the Stamp Act would legalise the use of adhesive stamps; and the Committee again venture to suggest that this amendment, carrying retrospective effect should be made without delay.

5. Reference has been made in the previous correspondence to the blank transfer, which is a feature of this market. It may be urged that the use of the blank transfer is an aid to speculation. But on the other hand it must be remembered that were there no speculators in the market, transactions in shares would be very limited, and the revenue derived from the sale of transfer stamps would be greatly diminished. At the fortnightly settlements in London the practice is, the Committee believe, for the first seller to deliver to the last buyer; the duty being paid on a single transaction, although the same lot of shares may have changed hands many times during the fortnight. The Committee have previously made certain recommendations in regard to the blank transfer, which they have instructed me again to put forward. These are—

- (a) That the seller must date the transfer deed the day on which it is executed by him; the date on the deed to be the date of execution;
- (b) That blank transfers so dated be recognised as legal tender for six months. As, however, cases might occur where it would not be possible to have the shares transferred within that period, provision should be made for the payment in such cases of extra duty by way of penalty.
- (c) That the duty on share transfers should be reduced from $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. to $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. The present charge is, the Committee believe, largely evaded, because, it is so heavy.

REGISTRATION OF BRITISH SHIPS IN BRITISH INDIA.

From Government of Bengal (MARINE), to Chamber.

No. 569-MNB.—CALCUTTA, 29th March 1905.

With reference to the correspondence ending with your letter No. 1568* dated the 14th October 1904, on the subject of the Bill to make better provision for the registration of British Ships in British India, I am directed to invite attention to para. 7 of the letter from the Government of India No. 4286 S.—R., † dated the 7th July 1904, a copy of which was forwarded to you with the endorsement from this Department No. 1245 M., † dated the 21st idem and to request that you will be so good as to furnish the Government with the views of the Chamber on the proposals of the Government of Bombay therein referred to regarding the enactment of a special law for the registration and measurement of native craft.

2. I am also to forward herewith a copy of a letter No. 3772 dated the 24th September 1904, from the Port Officer of Calcutta, containing his views on this subject together with a copy of the Rules for the measurement of vessels which are in use in the Port of Calcutta.

No. 3772.—CALCUTTA, 24th September 1904.

From—The Port Officer of Calcutta,

To—The Secretary, Government of Bengal, Marine Department.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Office endorsement No. 1245 Mnc.† dated the 21st July 1904, with enclosure, and in reply to state as follows:—

(1) There are so many Acts and rules in India already respecting Ships and Shipping in India that I am of opinion every endeavour should be made to reduce and consolidate them when possible rather than add to their number. Under the provisions of the English Merchant Shipping Act of 1894 it is possible to register foreign going Ships, coasting-ships, native ships and inland steamers if necessary.

(2) With regard to para 6 of letter No. 4286 S.—R.† dated 7th July 1904 from the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department to your address, I consider the proposal to treat vessels which trade between ports in India and places in India not within His Majesty's dominions and those trading between ports in India and the Straits Settlements, Ceylon and the Laccadive and Maldivé Islands as being in the coasting trade should not be pressed. The necessity of registering coasting vessels such as above described in any other way than is provided for in the Mer-

* Vide page 80 Chamber Report for 1904, Vol. II.

† Vide page 64-65 of Chamber Report for 1904, Vol. II.

chant Shipping Act of 1894 is not apparent. All vessels being registered under similar conditions there is no restriction to their trade as far as registration is concerned. To register a vessel for a particular trade restricts her to that trade until registered anew for another; such action is distinctly harassing to trade and is to be deprecated. Native vessels trade elsewhere than the coast of India only, and if seaworthy and properly manned there is no reason why they should not do so, they should however be registered in the same manner as other vessels.

(3) With regard to para 8 of the Government of India letter under reference, I am of opinion that Rules I and II of the second Schedule of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1894 for the measurement of tonnage could be used for native craft as well as for all other ships; it is, however, possible a slight modification of the co-efficients for use under rule II might be found necessary after comparing the application of the two rules to typical vessels. The tonnage found by rule II should always be a little more than that given by Rule I, so as to encourage owners to have their vessels registered finally under Rule I which is the standard.

(4) All inland steam vessels and large flats measured in Bengal for tonnage are measured by Rule I, though instances may occur making it necessary at first to measure by Rule II. Very few native craft have been measured in this port for tonnage, those measured were done under Rule I, they were not, however, typical within the meaning of the term native craft.

(5) The maximum tonnage of a ship of the native craft class visiting this port is 109.33 tons; they ply to Andamans, Nicobars, Ceylon, Laccadive and Maldivé Islands.

From Chamber, to Bombay Chamber.

No. 687-1905.—CALCUTTA, 19th April 1905.

Registration of British Ships in British India.

This question has been under the consideration of this Chamber for a considerable time and has been the subject of some lengthy correspondence with the Government of Bengal.

The Committee have now been asked to furnish Government with their views on the proposals of the Government of Bombay regarding the enactment of a special law for the registration and measurement of native craft. The Committee are inclined to agree with these proposals in the interest of navigation but before submitting their opinion would be glad to know how the matter is regarded by the Committee of your Chamber, who have no doubt also been consulted in connection with it.

The views of the Government of Bombay are set forth in their letter No. 155-G,* of 14th April 1904, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Finance & Commerce Department; copy of which together with other connected papers is enclosed for your information.

Vide page 68 of Chamber Report for 1904, Vol. II.

The favour of an early reply with the return of the papers is requested.

From Chamber, to Bombay Chamber.

No. 754-1905.—CALCUTTA, 4th May 1905.

Registration of British Ships in British India.

I had just received your telegram of yesterday's date as follows:—

Telegram begins:—"Your letter 687. Kindly send copy Bill Registration British Ships";—Telegram ends.

In compliance with the request therein contained I was just on the point of forwarding you a copy of the Bill under reference, when your second message of today's date reached me as follows:—

Telegram begins:—"My telegram. Please await letter";—Telegram ends.

I now await your further advices.

From Bombay Chamber, to Chamber.

BOMBAY, 4th May 1905.

Registration of British Ships in British India.

I am directed to confirm the following telegrams despatched to your address yesterday evening and today:—

Telegram dated 3rd May 1905:—"Your letter No. 687. Kindly send copy Bill Registration British Ships."

Telegram dated 4th May 1905:—"My telegram. Please await letter."

These messages are in reference to your letter No. 687 of the 19th ultimo, with accompaniments, on the above subject.

The matter is now before the Committee but it is difficult without a copy of the bill in question to give more than a general opinion. If therefore you can favour me with a copy of the proposed Measure, to which the correspondence refers, I should be much obliged.

I understand no Bill has been drawn up yet regarding the control of coasting craft.

From Chamber, to Bombay Chamber.

No. 773-1905.—CALCUTTA, 8th May 1905.

Registration of British Ships in British India.

In compliance with the request in your letter of 4th instant I have the pleasure to forward herewith copy of the Bill for the Registration of British Ships in British India, and now await your reply to my letter No. 687 of 19th ultimo. I am not aware of any measure but this one being in contemplation, but it would apparently cover the coasting trade.

From Bombay Chamber, to Chamber.

BOMBAY, 22nd May 1905.

Registration of British Ships in British India.

Under the instructions of the Committee of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 687 of the 19th April 1905, giving cover to copy of a letter from the Government of Bengal, No. 1245,* dated 21st July 1904; copy of a Circular letter (No. 4286-S. R.,† dated 7th July 1904) from the Government of India to the Governments of Madras, Bengal and Burma; and copy of a communication (with its accompaniments) from the Acting Secretary to the Government of Bombay, Marine Department, No. 155-G,‡ dated 14th April 1904—to the address of the Secretary to the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department. I am also to acknowledge the receipt of your further communication, No. 773 of the 8th instant, with which you forward a copy of the "Bill for the Registration of British Ships in British India," and state in reply to an enquiry from my Committee that you are not aware of any measure but this one being in contemplation, and that it would apparently cover the question of the coasting trade.

In the first place, I am to state that the Bill mentioned above was referred to my Committee by the Bombay Government on the 26th July 1899, for an expression of opinion, and that the Committee, under date 23rd August 1899, intimated that they did not find any points calling for criticism, and had therefore no remarks to offer on the provisions of the proposed measure.† It is assumed that the Bill of 1899 is identical with the one now under consideration.

If, however, it is proposed to recast the Bill, and to make better provision for the Registration of *Sailing Ships* in British India, I am to say that the Committee of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce would be inclined to agree generally with the recommendations of the Government of Bombay (contained in their letter to the Government of India, No. 155-G, dated 14th April 1904), and would endorse the opinion expressed by the Port Officer of Karachi, which is embodied in the second para of the letter from the Commissioner in Sind to the Government of Bombay, No. 225-M,§ dated 1st December 1903, to the effect that native "men going ashore, irrespective of tonnage, should be registered throughout British India under one and the same law for the sake of uniformity, simplicity and convenience.

They would further suggest that the definition of a "Native Coasting Ship" as given in part 11, Section 8 of the Draft of the "Indian Merchant Shipping Bill 1895," be embodied in the Bill now before you.

* Vide pages 64-65 of Chamber Report for 1904, Vol. II.

† Vide page 68 of Chamber Report for 1904, Vol. II.

‡ See Report of Bombay Chamber for 1899, p. p. 97-99, 232-233.

§ Vide page 71 of Chamber Report for 1904, Vol. II.

For facility of reference I give below the Section in question:—

Part 11, Chapter 11, Section 8.

In this Chapter, "Native Coasting Ship" means a Sailing Ship not square-rigged, which is owned by one or more Indian Subjects of Her Majesty and is a Coasting Vessel, within the meaning of the Sea Customs Act, 1878."

The Committee would also point out that while it is stated in para 2 of the letter from the Commissioner in Sind, to which reference has already been made, that in *Madras* and Bengal Presidencies and in Burma the Registration of Coasters of any tonnage is compulsory under the Merchant Shipping Act of 1894, the Port Officer of Bombay, in para 5 of his communication to the Local Government, No. 3720 R.,* dated 16th October 1903, mentions that there is no properly qualified passed Board of Trade Surveyors stationed at Madras for the purpose of taking all measurements of tonnage.

In conclusion I am to state that the Committee notice a considerable difference between the wording of the present proposed Act and Part 11 of the Draft of the General Merchant Shipping Bill, reference to which is made by the Hon'ble Mr. Raleigh, in his Statement of Objects and Reasons, dated 28th June 1899, attached to the "Bill for Registration of British Ships in British India."

From Chamber, to Bombay Chamber.

NO. 932-1905.—CALCUTTA, 31st May 1905.

Registration of British Ships in British India.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 22nd May, and to convey to you their best thanks for the full expression of your views on the point raised in my letter No. 687 of 19th April, 1905.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (MARINE).

NO. 949-1905.—CALCUTTA, 2nd June 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 566 Marine of 29th March 1905, with further reference to the Bill to make better provision for the registration of British ships in British India.

2. You invite attention to paragraph 7 of the letter from the Government of India, No. 4286-S. R.,† of 7th July 1904, and you mention of the Chamber on the proposals of the Government of Bombay, therein referred to, regarding the enactment of a special law for the registration and measurement of native craft.

3. I am directed to intimate in reply that the Committee have always been of opinion that in the interest of shipping generally,

* Vide page 71 of Chamber Report for 1904, Vol. II.

† Vide pages 64-65 of Chamber Report for 1904, Vol. II.

native craft should be registered for the sake of minimising the risks of navigation if for no other reason. The Committee are further of opinion that the Act should be far reaching and embrace them all as far as possible, irrespective of their sailing routes. The Committee have been in communication with the Committee of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, who are inclined to agree generally with the recommendations of the Government of Bombay in their letter to the Government of India No. 115-G,* of 14th April 1904, and also endorse the opinion expressed by the Port Officer, Karachi, and embodied in the second paragraph of the letter from the Commissioner in Sind, to the Government of Bombay, No. 225-M,† dated 1st December 1903, to the effect that native sea-going craft, irrespective of tonnage, should be registered throughout British India under one and the same law for the sake of uniformity, simplicity and convenience. I am directed to state that the Committee of this Chamber are in accord with these views.

4. The Committee have given their careful attention to the letter of 24th September 1904, from the Port Officer of Calcutta, copy of which you enclose in your letter under reply, and they note that in his opinion native craft can be measured under the Merchant Shipping Act with perhaps a slight modification of the co-efficients of the same, and as the Port Surveyor would have to do the measuring this opinion appears to them satisfactory. The Committee of the Bombay Chamber suggest that the definition of a "native coasting ship" as given in Part 2, Section 8, of the Draft of the Indian Merchant Shipping Bill, 1905, should be embodied in the Bill now under reference.

* Vide page 68 of Chamber Report for 1904, Vol. II.

† Vide page 73 of Chamber Report for 1904, Vol. II.

BILL TO AMEND THE CALCUTTA PORT ACT, 1890.

From Government of Bengal (LEGISLATIVE), to Chamber.

No. 120-T.—CALCUTTA, 25th March 1905.

I am directed to forward, for the information of the Chamber, the enclosed copy of the Calcutta Port (Amendment) Bill, 1905, and to ask that you will be so good as to favour the Lieutenant-Governor with an expression of the Chamber's opinion thereon by the 15th May next.

A BILL TO AMEND THE CALCUTTA PORT ACT, 1890.

WHEREAS it is expedient to amend the Calcutta Port Act, 1890; It is hereby enacted as follows:—

1. This Act may be called the Calcutta Port (Amendment) Act, 1905.

2. In section 5 of the Calcutta Port Act, 1890, for the words "fifteen Commissioners" the words "seventeen Commissioners" shall be substituted, and for the words "five nominated Commissioners" the words "seven nominated Commissioners" shall be substituted.

3. After clause (7) of section 35 of the said Act, the following clause shall be inserted, namely:—

"(7A) The building of vessels for the carrying of goods or passengers, or both, within the limits of the port, or partly within and partly without those limits."

4. After section 35 of the said Act the following shall be inserted, namely:—

"35A. The Commissioners shall not undertake the carrying of goods for hire in any vessel belonging to or hired by them, except with the sanction of the Local Government.

Such sanction may be general in its terms subject to any restrictions which the Local Government may enjoin in respect of the carriage of any class or classes of goods between specified places."

5. After section 105 of the said Act the following shall be inserted, namely:—

"105A. The Commissioners shall also frame a scale of charges for the carrying of goods and passengers, respectively, on vessels belonging to or hired by them."

6. In section 106 of the said Act, for the words "for hire" the words "whether for hire or not, and" shall be substituted.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS.

The object of this Bill is to increase the constitution of the Port Commission to 17 members and to empower the Commissioners to improve and regulate the means of communication across and along the river Hooghly within the limits of the Port of Calcutta.

2. The constitution of the Port Commission is under section 5 of the Calcutta Port Act (Ben. Act III of 1890), fixed at 15 members. This number only allows of two of the three Railway Companies carrying traffic into Calcutta being represented on the Commission and does not provide for the interests of Howrah in the Port of Calcutta. It is proposed in section 2 of the Bill to add two members to the Port Commission to allow of these important interests being adequately represented.

3. The Commissioners already have power, under section 55 of the Calcutta Port Act, 1890 (Ben. Act III of 1890), to acquire vessels, and it is proposed in clause 3 of the Bill to empower them to build vessels for carrying passengers or goods within or partly within and partly without the limits of the Port; while clause 5 introduces an amendment to enable them to require payment for the carrying of goods or passengers in vessels belonging to or hired by them.

4. Existing conditions render it desirable that a ferry service for passengers should be established and worked by the Port Commissioners by way of an addition to the private passenger services already working. It is not intended that the Commissioners should carry goods in their vessels in competition with companies and other boat-owners already engaged in business of this class; but the necessity for carrying goods in the Commissioners' vessels in some cases might arise at any time, and it is expedient to recognise and provide for such a necessity. It is proposed, however, by clause 4 of the Bill, to require the general sanction of the Local Government to the carrying of goods, under such restrictions as may appear necessary so as to prevent any undue competition with private trade.

5. Under section 6 (k) of the Indian Ports Act, the Local Government is vested with powers to frame rules for licensing and regulating cargo, passenger and other boats plying, *whether for hire or not*, in any port in which the Act is in force. In the Port of Calcutta this duty of licensing and regulating boats is vested in the Commissioners of the Port; but under section 106 of the Calcutta Port Act, the Commissioners are empowered to frame a scale of tolls, rates, charges and fees to be paid by owners of vessels *plying for hire only*. Consequently when framing the rules under section 6 (k) of the former Act, vessels not plying for hire were excluded from licensing and registration.

6. A comparison of section 6 (k) of the Indian Ports Act with the corresponding section of the repealed Act of 1875 shows that it was the object of the Legislature to make no distinction in the treatment of vessels that are plying for hire and vessels that are not plying for hire, and it was clearly due to an omission that the correction was not made in the Calcutta Port Act when it was last amended in 1898. In the interests of the Port it is necessary that

vessels not plying for hire should be regulated and brought under the same control as those plying for hire, and it is now proposed to do this by amending section 106 of the Act.

W. A. INGLIS.

The 8th March 1905.

From Chamber, to all Members.

CIR. No. 136-1905.—CALCUTTA, 28th March 1905.

Bill to Amend the Calcutta Port Act, 1890.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to forward copy of a Bill to amend the Calcutta Port Act 1890 which has been introduced in the Bengal Council. The object of the Bill is to increase the constitution of the Port Commission to 17 members and to empower the Commissioners to improve and regulate the means of communication across and along the river Hooghly within the limits of the Port of Calcutta. This will include the provision of a ferry service for passengers. There are other minor provisions in the Bill. The Committee have been asked to submit the views of the Chamber for the information of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, and will be glad if you will favour them with an expression of your views not later than the 15th of April.

From Government of Bengal (LEGISLATIVE), to Chamber.

No. 183-T.—CALCUTTA, 31st May 1905.

I am directed to invite attention to the letter from this Department No. 120 T., dated the 25th March, 1905, asking that the opinion of the Chamber on the Calcutta Port (Amendment) Bill, 1905, might be furnished to Government by the 15th instant; and to say that it would be convenient if the Chamber's opinion could be forwarded not later than the 15th June.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (LEGISLATIVE).

No. 950-1905.—CALCUTTA, 2nd June 1905.

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter No. 183 T of 31st May, intimating that it would be convenient if the opinion of the Chamber on the Calcutta Port Amendment Bill, 1905, were furnished to Government not later than the 15th of June. I am to say in reply that the matter has proved a more difficult one than the Committee expected, but at the same time every effort will be made to submit their opinion to Government by the date named.

From Chamber, to all Members.

CIR. No. 243-1905.—CALCUTTA, 12th June 1905.

Bill to Amend the Calcutta Port Act, 1890.

Under cover of my Circular No. 136 of 28th March 1905, addressed to all members of the Chamber, I forwarded copy of a

Bill to amend the Calcutta Port Act, 1890, recently introduced in the Bengal Council, intimating that the views of the Chamber had been asked on the Bill for the information of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, and asking members if they would kindly assist the Committee by expressing their views upon it.

(2) The objects of the Bill, briefly stated, are to increase the constitution of the Port Commission to seventeen members, and to empower the Commissioners to improve and regulate the means of communication across and along the river Hooghly within the limits of the Port of Calcutta. It is proposed to effect this in the following manner:—

- (a) By adding two members to the fifteen already authorised by the constitution of the Commission, in order to admit of the three Railway Companies carrying traffic into Calcutta being represented on the Commission, and also the interests of Howrah being provided for.
- (b) By giving the Commissioners power to build vessels for carrying passengers or goods within, or partly within and partly without, the limits of the Port, and also by giving the Commissioners power to establish and work a ferry service for passengers, in addition to the private passenger services already working.
- (c) By giving the Commissioners power to license and regulate cargo, passenger and other boats not plying for hire in the same manner as they are empowered to do with vessels plying for hire.
- (3) After careful consideration of the replies received from members, the Committee propose to make the following recommendations to Government in connection with the Bill:—
- (a) To press for an increase in the number of Port Commissioners to eighteen instead of to seventeen, and to ask that the Chamber should nominate six members instead of five as at present, in order to keep the proportion of Chamber representatives in the same ratio as now existing, *viz.*, one in three.
- (b) As the Commissioners have already power under Section 55 of the Act to acquire vessels, the Committee acquiesce in their being given power to build them. The Committee are also satisfied that other ferry services, in addition to the private passenger services, are desirable to facilitate communications between different points in the Port, and taking the view that the maintenance of such services is a duty which properly comes within the functions of a public body such as the Port Trust to discharge, the Committee approve of power being given to the Port Commissioners to establish such ferry services. Private enterprise has so far not kept pace with public requirements in this matter. The Committee

although in favour of the Commissioners being empowered to establish ferries for passengers and their luggage would not, however, extend this power to the carrying of goods.

- (c) The Committee see no objection to the proposal to empower the Port Commissioners to license and regulate passenger and other vessels not plying for hire in addition to the powers they now have in connection with those plying for hire.
- (4) As, however, the Committee are aware that conflicting opinions exist on some of the provisions of this Bill, they have decided to ask for the further opinion of members before finally writing in to Government, and I am instructed to invite you to record your approval or disapproval of the Committee's decision on the annexed sheet, which please return to me within one week from date.

Accompaniment to Circular No 243—1905, dated 12th June 1905.
Bill to Amend the Calcutta Port Act, III of 1890.

We approve of proposed recommendation. (a).	We disapprove of proposed recommendation. (a).
Sd. _____	Sd. _____
We approve of proposed recommendation. (b).	We disapprove of proposed recommendation. (b).
Sd. _____	Sd. _____
We approve of proposed recommendation. (c).	We disapprove of proposed recommendation. (c).
Sd. _____	Sd. _____

CALCUTTA: June 1905.

TO
THE SECRETARY,
BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (LEGISLATIVE),

No. 1131-1905.—CALCUTTA, 6th July 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 120-T, of 25th March, forwarding a copy of the Bill to amend the Calcutta Port Act 1890, and asking for an expression of the opinion of the Chamber on the provisions of the Bill.

2. It is proposed under section 2 of the Bill to increase the number of Commissioners from fifteen to seventeen, the object of this, as explained in the "Statement of Objects and Reasons," being to allow of the three Railway Companies carrying traffic into Calcutta, and also the interests of Howrah, in the Port of Calcutta being represented. I am directed by the Committee to suggest that the number of Commissioners should be increased to eighteen instead of seventeen, and that the Chamber should be allowed to nominate six members instead of five as at present, which would keep the proportion of Chamber representatives in the same ratio as now existing, *viz.*, one in three, and also provide for the more adequate representation of the mercantile community in connection with the different branches of trade.

3. As the Commissioners have already power under section 55 of the Act to acquire vessels, the Committee acquiesce in their being given power to build them. The Committee are also satisfied that other ferry services in addition to the private passenger services already working, are desirable to facilitate communication between different points in the Port, and taking the view that the maintenance of such services is a duty which properly comes within the functions of a public body such as the Port Trust to discharge, the Committee approve of power being given to the Port Commissioners to establish such ferry services. Private enterprise has so far not kept pace with public requirements in this matter. The Committee although in favour of the Commissioners being empowered to establish ferries for passengers and their luggage, are opposed to the extension of this power to the carrying of goods. The Committee see no objection to the proposal to empower the Port Commissioners to license and regulate passenger and other vessels not plying for hire, in addition to the powers they now have in connection with those plying for hire.

4. I am to say that the Committee have arrived at these conclusions after a reference to all the members of the Chamber, who were called upon to record their votes on the different points in the Bill.

BENGAL SMOKE NUISANCES BILL, 1904.

From Government of Bengal (LEGISLATIVE) to Chamber.

No. 23-T.—CALCUTTA, 12th January 1905.

I am directed to forward herewith a copy of the Smoke Nuisances Bill, 1904, which was introduced in the Council of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal on the 7th instant, and has been referred to a Select Committee for consideration and report.

2. The Select Committee will meet on Saturday next the 14th instant to consider the Bill, and if your Chamber desires to offer any further remarks on the proposed measure, I am to request the favour of a very early reply to this letter.

From Chamber, to all Members.

CIR. No. 19-1905.—CALCUTTA, 17th January 1905.

Bengal Smoke Nuisances Bill, 1904.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to circulate for the information of members of the Chamber, copy of the Bengal Smoke Nuisances Bill, 1904, which was introduced in the Council of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal on the 7th January 1905. The Bill has already been referred to a Select Committee and the opinion of the Chamber has been asked upon it. I am instructed to ask that your views, if you have any to put forward, may be furnished to me not later than the 21st January.

From Indian Jute Mills' Association, to Government of Bengal (LEGISLATIVE).

No. 22-D.—CALCUTTA, 6th February 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Indian Jute Mills' Association to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 26-T, dated Nuisances Bill, 1904. You also invited an expression of the opinion of the Committee upon the provisions of the Bill.

2. In reply I am to say that the Committee have thoroughly examined the Bill, the provisions of which are, they notice, in practical accord with those suggested by Mr. Fredk. Grover in the 14th para. of his Report. When commenting upon Mr. Grover's suggestions the Committee expressed the opinion that, with certain modifications, an Act drawn upon such lines as he indicated might be expected to work with a fair prospect of success.

They are still of that opinion, and they need not therefore on the present occasion repeat what they then ventured to say, except as regards the points to which they took exception. But in the new Bill

Letter No. 11-D, of 28th January 1905, from the Association to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

there are, they observe, certain clauses which were not apparently proposed by Mr. Grover. Of these the Committee would refer particularly to clause 4, which provides for the formation of a Commission to supervise and control the working of the Act. The Committee approve of this idea, being of opinion that the interposition of some such body between the Government and the Inspectors on the one hand, and steam users on the other, is very desirable. They are also glad to note that half of the members of the Commission are to be non-officials. But they consider that the other half and the President—who are to be officials—should be gentlemen possessing expert knowledge of steam-raising installations. In other words the Commission should be a body of the roughly practical men, familiar with all matters pertaining to steam raising in mills, factories and elsewhere.

3. Turning now to the powers of the Commission, it does not seem to the Committee that these are defined with sufficient precision or in such detail as is required. They are aware that the Local Government will make rules (clause 11) prescribing the powers and duties to be exercised and performed by the Commission. But this is not, in their opinion, by any means all that is needed. Clearly the Bill is altogether an enabling Bill. That is to say it is a Bill the main purpose of which is to vest the Local Government with power to make rules for the regulation of the nuisance which it is designed to prevent. Naturally therefore the rules will be of equal importance with—and to steam users of even greater importance than—the measure itself. They will certainly require to be thoroughly revised, if not entirely drafted, by experts; and in this connection the Committee would invite a reference to section 20 (5) of the Indian Mines Act VIII of 1901. According to that section any rule to be made under the Mines Act must be referred, before publication, to the Mining Board for criticism; and it cannot be published until the Board has reported as to the expediency of making it, and as to the suitability of its provisions. That the Smoke Commission should be vested with similar powers is, the Committee consider, very necessary. Indeed, they are disposed to go further and to suggest that the Commission should be made responsible for the preparation of the rules. And they think that if this suggestion be not approved of, the intentions of Government in regard to all matters of consequence should be set forth in the Bill itself.

4. There is another point respecting the Commission to which I am to refer. So far as the Committee understand the Bill, there appears to be no provision in it for placing the Inspectors under the control of the Commission. It is, they think, of great importance that the Bill should be so amended as to admit of this. The Inspectors should not be allowed to exercise their powers and to perform their duties independently of the Commission, except of course as regards minor matters. As an example of what the Committee have in mind I may cite clause 10, which empowers Inspectors: (a) to enter a building and to inspect furnaces, &c.; (b) to test any appliances used for preventing the emission of smoke and (c) to direct the experimental working or stoking of furnaces

There is no objection to Inspectors inspecting furnaces without the direct orders of the Commission. But the other two powers should certainly not be exercised except under the express instructions of that body. Again, in clause 12 it is provided that a Magistrate may take cognizance of an offence against the Act upon the complaint of an Inspector only. This is a provision to which the Committee take strong exception. The Inspector should not, they consider, be permitted to do more than to report to the Commission. He should not be allowed to institute prosecutions on his own initiative. It is an admitted fact, as Mr. Grover clearly brings out in his Report (para. 44), that in Calcutta "the smoke abatement problem is one of no mean difficulty." That being so, prosecutions should clearly not be instituted until after exhaustive investigation and serious deliberation by such a body of experts as the Commission ought to be. The time limit—six months—for instituting prosecutions, is, the Committee consider, much too long. It should be, they suggest, reduced to three months, which ought to be ample in all cases.

5. Before leaving the subject of the Commission, I am to emphasise the reference which the Committee have made to the Bengal Mining Board. From the information at their disposal they are, they believe, correct in asserting that the Board has worked to the satisfaction of all concerned in the coal mining industry of the Province. And, although it may not of course be possible, or even desirable, to follow the provisions of the Indian Mines Act in every particular, it should, the Committee strongly urge, be the object of Government so to constitute the Commission as to make it broadly a body corresponding to the Mining Board. In other words its powers should most certainly be no less extensive than those vested in the latter body, but if anything they should be even wider. The amendments which the Committee suggest practically all tend in that direction. Indeed the whole aim of their criticism is to ensure: firstly, that the powers taken by the Bill should be concentrated in the hands of the Commission; and secondly, that the members of the Commission should all possess the expert knowledge necessary to enable them to work the measure in an intelligent and a liberal spirit.

6. Clauses 7 and 8 are undoubtedly the most important clauses of the Bill. The former prescribes the penalty when smoke is emitted in greater density, or for a longer time, than is permitted by rules to be made under the Act. It will not be necessary, as the Hon. Mr. Carlyle pointed out in his speech, to prove negligence. The Court will be called upon to decide the simple issue of whether the smoke is of excessive density or is emitted for an excessive time. A consideration of this clause emphasises the need of such an amendment of clause 12 as the Committee have suggested. Clause 8 is Mr. Grover's suggestion No. 144 (II). When commenting upon it in their previous letter the Committee expressed the opinion that to fix a definite period would be impracticable. They held that the Chief Inspector should be left to determine the period. This suggestion they would now modify to the extent of substituting the Commission for the Chief Inspector. They would also repeat their

previous recommendation that due regard should be paid to the conditions obtaining at each individual concern, to the nature of the alterations and appliances proposed, and to the source from which the latter can be supplied. Further, the Committee suggest that the notifications to be issued by the Local Government should relate to those furnaces only which have been either condemned by the Commission, or—in the case of new furnaces—which are not being built in accordance with the requirements of the Commission.

7. The Committee have no further remarks to make upon particular clauses. But as regards the Bill generally, they would lay stress on the difficulty of criticising such a measure in the absence of a draft of the rules to be made under it. They are for example without information as to the time limit which will be proposed for the emission of smoke; although they are glad to see that the Hon. Mr. Carlyle accepts their previously expressed view that ten minutes will be too low a limit at first. The rules when drafted will, the Committee assume, be published for criticism in the usual course; and they hope then to have an opportunity of making such further suggestions as may seem to them to be necessary.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (LEGISLATIVE).

No. 273-1905.—CALCUTTA, 24th February 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 23-T., of 12th January 1905, under cover of which you forwarded a copy of the Smoke Nuisances Bill, 1904, and requested an expression of the opinion of the Chamber upon its provisions.

2. I am to refer to my letter No. 214-1904, of 5th February 1904, in which the Committee commented on Mr. Frederick Grover's Report on the Abatement of the Smoke Nuisance in Calcutta, and intimated their agreement with the views expressed about the same time by the Committee of the Indian Jute Mills' Association, in their letter to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal dated 28th January 1904. The suggestions as to the introduction of a Smoke Abatement Act and as to the organisation under which the provisions of the Act would be worked, formed the most important portion of Mr. Grover's Report, and the Bill now under consideration has been apparently drafted to a great extent on Mr. Grover's proposals. When forwarding their views on Mr. Grover's Report, the Committee supported the suggestion made by the Committee of the Indian Jute Mills' Association for the formation of an Advisory Board to aid and advise the Chief Inspector in regard to the various industries, and to act as an intermediary in the event of difficulties and friction arising between the authorities and steam-users. They are, therefore, glad to notice that this suggestion has been given practical effect by the provision of a Commission to supervise and control the working of the Act. The Committee have also had the advantage of perusing the letter, of 6th February 1905, addressed to you by the Secretary of the Indian Jute Mills

Association, and they desire me to say that they fully concur in the views expressed in that letter.

3. I am now instructed to comment in detail on the various clauses in the Bill, and in the first instance, to enquire whether private installations for the working of electric lights and fans are intended to be exempted under clause 3 as being "for household or domestic purposes." The Committee further direct me to suggest the deletion of the words "not moored or anchored and not lying in dock" after the words "the raising of steam on ocean-going steamers." They think that all ocean-going steamers should be exempted whether on the move in the stream or moored and anchored.

4. As noted above, the Committee are specially glad to see the provision in clause 4 of the Bill for the formation of a Commission to supervise and control the working of the Act, and they also note with satisfaction that half the members of the Commission are to be non-officials, but they are strongly of opinion that the remaining members, including the President, should be officials with some knowledge of steam-raising installations, thus making the whole Commission a body of thoroughly practical men. They would suggest that the nomination of the non-official members to represent the interests likely to be affected by the Act, should rest with the Chamber. They are pleased to note that Mr. Carlyle, in introducing the Bill, intimated that it was important that Government should be assisted by the advice of business men interested in seeing that no undue restrictions are placed upon the industries affected.

5. With reference to clause 6, giving power to prohibit the erection of kilns or furnaces for the manufacture of coke within specified areas, the Committee are of opinion that the penalties provided in this clause are much too heavy, and suggest that they should be reduced by one-half, viz., Rs. 250 for the first conviction and Rs. 500 for any subsequent convictions. This suggestion also applies to the provision of penalties in clauses 8 and 10. The provisions of clause 8, as they at present stand, appear to give arbitrary powers to the Local Government to order steam-users to adopt a particular style of furnace or appliance, and as to this the Committee are strongly of opinion that the manner in which excessive smoke is to be prevented should be left entirely to the owner to decide. The prevention of smoke at the expense of economical working may possibly be attained, but the difficulty has hitherto always been to obtain an appliance which combines economical steam raising with smoke consumption. The selection, therefore, of the apparatus which best suits a set of boilers should, the Committee think, be left to the owner who is the person most interested in the matter. The obligation under clause 7, controlling the permissible density of smoke is quite sufficient protection of the public interest, and in connection with this clause the Committee think that the provisions of section 2 of the Bengal Act of 1863 in favour of those who, in the opinion of the Magistrate, have done their best to minimise a nuisance might be continued in the present Act.

6. With reference to clause 10, governing the powers of Inspectors, the Committee desire to record their strong objection

to Inspectors being allowed to enter and inspect, without notice, any buildings which contain a furnace and to use and test any appliances for preventing the emission of smoke and to direct experiments. Any such procedure, the Committee consider, would be most inconvenient and friction would be inevitable on the question of interference with the business. Inspectors should be placed under the control of the Commission and should not be allowed to exercise their powers or perform their duties independently of that body to whom they should be generally responsible. There might be no objection to Inspectors inspecting furnaces without the direct orders of the Commission, but they certainly should not be allowed to test appliances and to direct experiments without express instructions.

7. The Committee now come to the crux of the whole Bill, *viz.*, the powers given under clause 11 to make rules to carry out the objects of the Act. It is evident that the rules in connection with a Bill of this kind are of even greater importance than the measure itself, and it is clearly necessary that they should be drafted and revised by experts. Under the Indian Mines Act of 1901, section 20 (5), any rule to be made must be referred to the Mining Board for criticism, and it cannot be published until the Board has reported as to the expediency of making it and as to the suitability of its provisions. The Committee consider that the Smoke Commission should be vested with similar powers, and that it would be well if the Commission itself were made responsible for the preparation of the Rules. Failing this, they support the suggestion of the Committee of the Indian Jute Mills' Association that the intentions of Government in regard to all important matters should be set forth in the Bill itself. They also consider that any rules made, whether by the Local Government or by the Commission, should be submitted to the Chamber for an expression of opinion before publication, in order that they might be examined by experts representing the interests affected by the Act. The Committee understand that the Bengal Mining Board has worked to the satisfaction of the coal mining industry, and for this reason they think it would be advisable so to constitute the Smoke Commission as to make it assimilate very closely to the Mining Board.

The Committee object to the provisions of clause 12 giving Magistrates power to take cognizance of offences under the Act, only (a) upon the complaint of an Inspector and (b) within a period of six months from the date of the commission of the offence. The Committee are of opinion that Inspectors should not be allowed to do more than to report to the Smoke Commission, and should be prohibited from instituting prosecutions on their own responsibility. They consider that it is absolutely necessary that no prosecutions should be instituted except after careful investigation by the Commission. The Committee also object to the fixing of six months as the time limit for instituting prosecutions, and consider that all practical purposes would be served by reducing the limit to three months or even less.

9. The Committee have no further criticisms to offer on the provisions of the Bill but they trust that the rules, whenever drafted and published, will be submitted to the Chamber and other public bodies representing the interests affected by the Bill for consideration before being brought into operation.

From Chamber, to all Members.

CIR. NO. 260-1905.—CALCUTA, 20th June 1905.

Bengal Smoke Nuisances Act, 1905.

MEMO.—The following correspondence is published for the information of members of the Chamber:—

No. 76-T. MNE.—DARJEELING, 20th May 1905.

From—W. A. INGLIS, Esq., Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Marine Department,

To—The Secretary to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

The Act to amend the law relating to the abatement of nuisances arising from the smoke of furnaces and fire-places in the town and suburbs of Calcutta and Howrah has now been passed by the Legislature.

2. Section 4 of the Act provides for the appointment of a Commission, to be called the Bengal Smoke Nuisance Commission, to be composed of a President and members, one half of whom shall be official and the remainder non-officials and I am desired by the Lieutenant-Governor to ask for the views of the Chamber as to the constitution of the Commission. I am to suggest for your consideration that the Commission should consist of a President and six members, three of whom shall be non-officials, to be nominated in such manner as the Local Government may direct by local bodies or associations whose interests are likely to be affected by the Act.

3. I am to ask that you will be so good as to favour this Government with the opinion of the Chamber on the following points:—

- (a).—A suitable number of members for the Commission.
- (b).—The bodies or associations whose interests require representation.
- (c).—To which bodies or associations the right of nomination should be entrusted by the Local Government.

No. 1029-1905.—CALCUTA, 19th June 1905.

From—The Secretary, Bengal Chamber of Commerce,

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

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 76-T. M., of

20th May, in which you refer to Section 4 of the Bengal Smoke Nuisances Act, 1905, in which provision is made for the appointment of a Commission to be called the Bengal Smoke Nuisance Commission, and to be composed of a President and members, one half of whom shall be officials and the remainder non-officials. You ask for the views of the Chamber as to the constitution of the Commission, and you suggest for consideration that it should consist of a President and six members, three of whom should be non-officials, to be nominated in such manner as H. H. the Lieutenant-Governor may direct, by local bodies or Associations, whose interests are likely to be effected by the Act.

2. The special points on which you desire the opinion of the Chamber are the following:—

- (a) A suitable number of members for the Commission.
 - (b) The bodies or Associations whose interests require representation.
 - (c) To which bodies or Associations the right of nomination should be entrusted by the Local Government.
3. The Committee having given due consideration to the matter direct me to reply as follows:—
- (a) The Committee approve of the proposed constitution of the Commission, *viz.*, that it should consist of a President and six members.
 - (b) The Committee consider that the interests requiring representation are the Port Commissioners, the Municipal Corporation, Steamers, Jute, Cotton, Paper, Flour and Oil Mills, and steam users generally.
 - (c) The Committee suggest that of the three non-official members the Bengal Chamber of Commerce should have the right of nominating two, as the following important Associations are connected with the Chamber:—

Indian Jute Mills Association, Calcutta Baled Jute Association, Indian Mining Association, Indian Paper Makers Association, Engineering and Iron Trades Association, Calcutta Hydraulic Press Association, and the Liners' Conference.

The remaining non-official member might be nominated by the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce.

From Government of Bengal (MARINE), to Chamber.

No. 2050-MNE.—CALCUTTA, 19th December 1905.

I am directed to invite the attention of the Chamber to your letter No. 1029-1905, dated the 19th June last regarding the appointment of a Commission to supervise and control the working of the Bengal Smoke Nuisances Act, 1905, and to state that the Lieutenant-Governor accepts the views therein expressed that two of

the non-official members of the Commission should be nominated by your Chamber.

2. It is proposed to appoint the Commission at a very early date and I am to request that you will be so good as to report the names of the gentlemen nominated by your Chamber.

3. A very early reply is requested.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (MARINE).

No. 121-1905.—CALCUTTA, 16th January 1906.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 2060 Marine, of 19th December 1905, in which you intimate that H. H. the Lieutenant-Governor accepts the suggestion of the Chamber that two of the non-official members of the Bengal Smoke Nuisance Commission about to be appointed should be nominated by the Chamber. The Committee have received this intimation with much satisfaction and instruct me to ask you to convey their best thanks to His Honour for his action in the matter.

2. In compliance with the request contained in paragraph 2 of your letter, I am directed to submit the names of the following gentlemen for appointment to the Commission as the representatives of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce:—

MR. D. W. FERRIER, *Manager of the Hooghly Mills.*
MR. J. GILLESPIE, *Messrs. Burn & Co., Ltd.*

STAMP DUTY ON LABOUR CONTRACTS.

From Collector of Stamp Revenue, to Chamber.

No. 146-R. S.—CALCUTTA, 9th August 1905.

I have the honour to state that the amount of stamp duty chargeable on an agreement for the performance of work on a Coffee plantation in the Madras Presidency, Coorg or Mysore, when the advance given under the agreement does not exceed Rs. 20, was under para 57 of the notification by the Government of India in the Finance and Commerce Department, No. 785-S. R., dated the 17th February 1899, reduced to one anna.

2. It is now proposed to extend the concession to all Estates* as defined in the Madras Planters' Labour Act, 1903, and to include in the reduction all agreements under

* Estates mean land not less than ten acres in extent whether held by one person or by more than one as co-owners and whether in one or more blocks and situated within any local area to which this Act has been extended which is being prepared for the production of, or actually produces tea, coffee, pepper, cardamum or such other products as the Local Government may by order duly notified specify.

being reduced the number of such labour agreements is likely to increase and whether the extent of the transactions is such, as to warrant the belief that an appreciable diminution of revenue would be occasioned thereby.

From Chamber, to Indian Tea Association.

No. 1379-1905.—CALCUTTA, 16th August 1905.

Stamp Duty on Labour Contracts.

I am directed to ask if the General Committee of the Indian Tea Association will be good enough to favour the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce with an expression of their views upon the points raised in the marginally noted letter, a copy of which is forwarded here-with.

From Indian Tea Association, to Chamber.

No. 539-O.—CALCUTTA, 28th August 1905.

Stamp Duty on Labour Contracts.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 16th instant, forwarding for consideration, a copy of a letter No. 149, R. S., dated 9th instant, from the Collector of Stamp Revenue, Calcutta, regarding a proposal to reduce to one anna, the stamp duty upon all agreements under which the advance given does not exceed fifty rupees.

2. In reply I am to state that the Association would welcome such a reduction.

From Chamber, to Collector of Stamp Revenue.

No. 1493-1905.—CALCUTTA, 7th September 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 146-R. S., dated 9th August.

2. You state that in February 1899 the Government of India reduced to one anna the stamp duty chargeable on labour agreements on coffee plantations in the Madras Presidency, Coorg and Mysore, in those cases where the advance under the agreement did not exceed Rs. 20. You add that it is now proposed to extend the concession to all estates defined in the Madras Planters' Labour Act, 1903, raising the limit to Rs. 50; and you ask for particulars as regards the procedure at present observed in the case of plantations in Bengal.

3. In reply I am to say that the labourers working on tea estates in Bengal, both in the plains and in the hill districts, are not usually placed under written contracts. In Jalpaiguri—which is the chief plains district—the labour is imported, but it is worked on the Sirdari system. There are no written contracts between employers and employed. And in Darjeeling and the Terai the gardens are worked by local labourers, with whom contracts are unnecessary. So far as plantations in Bengal are concerned, the question which you raise need not therefore be considered. But I am to invite your attention to the provisions of sections 44 and 72 of Act VI of 1901 (The Assam Labour and Emigration Act) from which you will observe that labourers recruited for Assam under the Act enter into agreements in the recruiting districts. Some of the principal recruiting districts are within the jurisdiction of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal; and if the concession to which you refer could be extended to all labour agreements made in those districts, it would be welcomed by the tea industry. A certain number of tea garden labourers recruited in the non-act districts, e. g. Ranigunj, are also placed under contract before starting on the journey to Assam. These agreements are generally subject to the provisions of section 492 of the Indian Penal Code. The concession should likewise be made applicable to them if it is to be extended to Act VI contracts.

4. You make two further enquiries: (a) whether, in the case of the stamp duty payable for labour contracts being reduced, the number of such agreements would be likely to increase; and (b) whether the extent of the transactions is such as to warrant a belief that an appreciable diminution of revenue would be occasioned thereby. In reply to (a) I am to say that it is not, the Committee think, likely that the incidence of the stamp duty can have any effect on the importation of tea garden labour. Nor is it probable that those districts which now work without contracts, will introduce such if the duty be lowered. On the other hand, as regards (b) the Committee doubt whether the concession would entail an appreciable diminution of revenue. It is true they are without statistics upon this point, but they question whether even with the present eight anna duty the revenue derived from labour agreements amounts to a large sum. They, therefore, recommend that the concession be granted to all labour agreements entered into within the limits of the province of Bengal.

CUSTOMS.

WASTAGE ALLOWANCE ON SALT IN INLAND BONDED WAREHOUSES.

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

NO 869-B.—CALCUTTA, 2nd February 1905.

I am directed to refer the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to the correspondence ending with your letter No. 1305-1902*, dated the 24th September 1902, regarding the wastage allowance on salt stored in and delivered from inland bonded warehouses. The question was ultimately referred by the Government of India to the Salt Committee, 1904, and it was finally decided by that Government that a deduction from the duty payable should be allowed on account of such wastage as might actually occur up to a maximum of 2 per cent on the consignment. A Notification giving effect to this decision (copy enclosed), was published in the *Calcutta Gazette* of 23rd November 1904.

2. A further question was raised at the instance of the Salt Committee whether a lower maximum should not be fixed for certain classes of salt, such as Hamburg and Salif salts, on which the actual rate of wastage is said to be very small. I am to forward a copy of a letter from the Collector of Customs, Calcutta, No. 858, dated the 14th October 1904, reporting on the subject. He suggests that the 2 per cent. maximum wastage should be only applicable to Liverpool and other "boiled" salts which are imported exclusively from England, while 1 per cent. would be a liberal maximum for special salt, *i.e.*, the crude or tuboiled salts which come from Aden, Hamburg, Rowayah, Salif, Linga, Muscat, Hanjam and Bombay. I am to say that before the Board communicate further with Government they will be glad, bearing in mind the part which the Chamber have previously taken in the discussion, to hear anything which they may now desire to represent.

No. 858.—CALCUTTA, 14th October 1904.

From—B. FOLEY, ESQ., I.C.S., Officiating Collector of Customs, Calcutta.

To—The Secretary to the Board of Revenue, L. P.

With reference to your No. 9310-B., dated the 29th September 1904, asking for a report on the question whether a lower maximum

* Vide page 202 of Chamber Report for 1902, Vol. II.

of wastage than 2 per cent. should not be fixed for special salts, have the honour to report as follows:—

2. The salts which are imported into Calcutta are, roughly speaking, of two kinds (1) the boiled or "panga" salt and (2) the crude or unboiled. The boiled salt is imported exclusively from England, and bears, like most other salts, the name of the place from which it is imported, e.g., Liverpool, Cheshire, Middlesbrough, etc. The other class of salt is imported from various countries, either in a rock crystal (commonly called Kurkutch) or crushed state. These include Hamburg, Rowayah, Salif, Linga, Muscat, Aden, Hanjam and Bombay salts. I disregard Fort Said salt since only one consignment of this was received in 1902 as a sample, and as it was found not to take the market, no other consignments have followed.

3. Wastage is caused by the salt draining away after absorption of moisture. A series of experiments in the Salt Department has proved that Liverpool and other panga salts readily absorb moisture, and as readily throw it off in wastage, while the unboiled salts receive moisture and retain it for a considerable period with the consequence that for some time at any rate the wastage is practically nil and it is not of infrequent occurrence to get a small excess from this class of salt after a short storage.

4. It is obvious, therefore, that the maximum wastage of the two classes of salt should not be the same.

Looking at the figures for 1902-1903 and 1903-1904 both of Suleka and Kidderpore for wastage after storage at the golahs (para. 9 of our salt report), I find that the total wastage of Liverpool salt is 2½ per cent. and that of the other salts, with the exception of Aden, is less than 1 per cent. Aden salt works out a wastage of 1½ per cent.

Of this wastage a certain proportion, at least ½ per cent., must be put down to handling. The time of storage at the inland warehouses is, or should be, considerably less than that at the golahs and a smaller maximum wastage would undoubtedly ensure a shorter period of storage at the warehouses which is desirable for obvious reasons. The accommodation at the inland warehouses and the facilities for handling, compare very favourably with those at the golahs in Calcutta, and, therefore, we may fairly say that a less wastage should be expected from them.

5. I would accordingly suggest that the 2 per cent. maximum wastage should be only applicable to Liverpool and other panga salts, while 1 per cent. would be a liberal maximum for special salts, i.e., the crude or unboiled salts which come from Aden, Hamburg, Rowayah, Salif, Linga, Muscat, Hanjam and Bombay.

6. I notice that the Salt Committee appointed under the Resolution of the Government of India, Department of Finance and Commerce, No. 484-S.R., dated the 11th of August 1903, in their report classify with Liverpool salt, Aden and Rowayah crushed salts. It is certainly a fact that the Aden or Rowayah crushed salts, when crushed, are liable to a greater wastage, but the figures tend to

show that such a wastage is not as great as that of Liverpool salt. We have never had a wastage of 1 per cent. of Rowayah salt in any form and the admixture of Kurkutch and crushed Aden salt has given us, taking the figures for two years quoted above, a percentage of only 1½ after storage in the golahs. Under these circumstances I think we may rightly classify Aden and Rowayah crushed salt with the other "unboiled salts."

NOTIFICATION.

No. 5247-S.R.—The 18th November 1904.—With effect from 1st January 1905, the following rule is substituted for rule 33 of the rules framed under sections 9, 105, and 130 of the Sea Customs Act, VIII of 1878, for regulating the weight and removal by rail or water under bond of non-duty paid salt from shipboard or from the Government salt golahs to a warehouse appointed or licensed under the Sea Customs Act, or under Act VIII of 1896 (the Inland Bonded Warehouses Act), and for the clearance of salt from the warehouse, and published under the Notification No. 1390-T.F., dated the 6th July 1903, at pages 922-25, Part I of the *Calcutta Gazette* of the 15th idem:—

"33. The owner of the salt shall be required to pay full duty on any difference between the quantity of salt originally delivered from shipboard or the golahs and the quantity cleared from the warehouse, less an allowance not exceeding 2 per cent., on the whole if such wastage actually occurs."

L. P. SHIRRES,

Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

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

No. 505-1905.—CALCUTTA, 22nd March 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 869-B of 2nd February 1905, with enclosures, in connection with a proposal made by the Collector of Customs, Calcutta, but apparently emanating in the first instance from the Salt Committee, to modify the recent decision of the Government of India, gazetted on the 23rd November 1904, under which a maximum allowance of 2½ per cent. for wastage was sanctioned.

2. The proposal now under consideration and on which the opinion of the Committee is invited, is, that this allowance should be only applicable to Liverpool and other boiled salts exported exclusively from England, while other salts described in your letter as Special, would be limited to a 1½ allowance, which the Collector of Customs considers would be liberal.

3. The Committee have given due consideration to all the points raised by the Collector of Customs, and have been satisfied

in dealing with the matter by a number of firms engaged in the salt trade. The Committee desire me, in the first instance, to express their surprise that after a decision of Government notified so recently as the 18th November 1904 and which they considered (in view of the very full discussion which took place upon it in 1902) would have proved a final settlement of this matter for a considerable time to come, the question should now be reopened with the object of discriminating between different kinds of salt, which they fear will be a very difficult matter to settle with fairness and satisfaction to importers and will probably be harassing in the extreme. As the whole subject presumably received full consideration before Notification No. 5247-S-R. of 18th November 1904 was published, the Committee consider the present proposal somewhat unreasonable, and it also appears to be based on inaccurate knowledge of the conditions of the trade.

The Committee have good reason to believe that the relative low wastage of other salts, as compared with Liverpool salt, is mainly due to the fact that these descriptions are almost invariably stored for shorter periods. They also consider that it is unreasonable to fix the maximum shortage allowance on the basis of an average, as, although the importer pays duty on any shortage in excess of the maximum, he does not get any allowance, if the shortage should be less. In the view of the Committee the present manner of dealing with the question of wastage is not a fair one. The measure of shortage should be based on the total bondings of particular importers for each year, on the debit and credit system.

4. In any case, it has been pointed out to the Committee that, if the principle of discrimination be accepted, difficulties will at once arise with reference to particular kinds of salt. As cases in point, it is stated that it would be manifestly unjust that Aden salt should be put on the same basis as other salts in which the wastage is less by from 50 to 75%, and further, it has been pointed out by large importers of Salif salt, that although this is practically a rock salt, a large proportion of it has to be crushed locally before it goes into consumption. In the process of crushing, a certain percentage of water is added to modify the naturally dry and brittle nature of the salt with the result that, after crushing, it very nearly approximates to other descriptions in the degree of moisture it contains, and being liable to the same climatic influences as Fanga salt, it is only fair that it should be subject to the same wastage allowance. Again, to take the case of the special quality of fine salt, shipped from Salif, which is obtained from the solar evaporation of brine, and probably contains on an average more moisture than any other description imported into Calcutta; although only a small quantity has so far arrived, the Committee understand that arrangements are being made to largely increase its production, and that regular shipments will soon become the custom. Under these circumstances, this description of salt would seem to claim the same wastage allowance as is allotted to Liverpool salt.

5. In view of what has been written, the Committee venture to suggest the withdrawal of the present proposals and also the

advisability of dealing generally with the question of wastage in the manner suggested in the closing sentence of paragraph 3 of this letter.

Copy forwarded to:—

Messrs. Turner, Morrison & Co.	} for information,	18th February 1905.	
" Balmer, Lawrie & Co.		} with reference to	20th " "
" Graham & Co.			} their letter dated	25th " "
" Gladstone, Wyllie & Co.	} for information.		
" Hoare, Miller & Co.			

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, }
Calcutta, 27th March 1905. }

W. PARSONS,
Secretary.

CUSTOMS DUTY ON GUNNIES IMPORTED INTO
BULGARIA.

From Chamber, to Government of India (COMMERCE
& INDUSTRY).

NO. 296-1905.—CALCUTTA, 25th February 1905.

The attention of the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce has been drawn to a change in the mode of levying customs duty on gunnies in Bulgaria, which threatens to interfere very considerably with the trade between Calcutta and that Principality, which amounts annually to an import of over two million bags. So far as the Committee understand the question, the duty is now levied on weight at varying rates per 100 kilos on gunny bags of European or Indian manufacture without distinction of qualities. It is represented that this will interfere with the import into the Principality of Indian gunnies, for, these being of heavier weight than those manufactured in Austria and in Italy, the consumers will find an advantage in purchasing lighter gunnies entailing less taxation. The jute cloth manufactured in Austria and Italy, transformed and mixed as it is with other materials mostly washed and bleached, cannot be compared with the rough Calcutta cloth which, being in its natural state, is heavier and coarser. Bags of Austrian or Italian make are generally sold C. I. F., Bulgarian Ports, at 77 to 80 centimes per kilo, while the coarser Calcutta bags are sold only at 45 centimes per kilo. It is consequently easy to see the disadvantage under which the heavy bags shipped from India lie in competing with those manufactured in Austria and Italy. In some instances, as pointed out to the Committee, the difference in the incidence of the duty amounts to nearly 100 per cent.

2. I am instructed to suggest that the Secretary of State for India should be asked to move the Foreign Office to make a representation on the matter in the interests of Indian manufactures.

From Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY),
to Chamber.

NO. 324.—CALCUTTA, 28th February 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 296-1905, dated the 25th February 1905, in which you suggest that the Secretary of State for India should be asked to move the Foreign Office to make a representation regarding the change in the mode of levying customs duty on gunnies imported into Bulgaria. I am to say that your letter will be submitted for the consideration of the Government of India.

From Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY),
to Chamber.

NO. 2891-C.—SIMLA, 19th June 1905.

In continuation of my letter No. 324, dated the 28th February 1905, I am directed to say that the Government of India have had under consideration the question whether India should adhere to the new Commercial Convention which is now being negotiated between the United Kingdom and Bulgaria. After full consideration, they have decided that India should become a party to the agreement, subject to certain reservations which have been communicated for the acceptance of the Bulgarian Government.

2. The Customs Tariff which is appended to, and which forms an integral part of that Convention provides for a specific duty of 20 francs per 100 kilogrammes on jute fabrics; but the Government of India have urged that jute sacks of Indian origin or manufacture, if intended for the exportation of cereals, should be admitted into Bulgaria free of duty. If this concession cannot be secured, it has been suggested that the Bulgarian Government should be requested to fix the import duty on jute fabrics on an *ad valorem* basis, and the practical differentiation against Indian goods which is involved in the imposition of a specific duty has been brought to notice.

3. I am to add that a further communication will be made on the subject when the Government of India are in a position to state definitely the result of the pending negotiations.

TARIFF VALUATIONS FOR COTTON GOODS.

From Government of Bengal (FINANCIAL), to Chamber.

No. 355-T. S. R.—DARJEELING, 26th July 1905.

I am directed to forward a copy of a letter from the Government of India in the Department of Commerce and Industry, No. 3159-3163-C, dated the 7th July 1905, on the question of the intervals at which the tariff values of cotton goods fixed under section 7 of the Cotton Duties Act, II of 1896, should be revised, and to request that the Chamber will be so good as to favour the Lieutenant-Governor with an expression of their views on the subject.

No. 3159-3163-C.—SIMLA, 7th July 1905.

From—J. CAMPBELL, ESQ., I.C.S., Under-Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Commerce and Industry,
To—The Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Financial Department.

The Government of India have recently had under consideration the question of the intervals at which the tariff values of cotton goods, fixed under section 7 of the Cotton Duties Act, 1896 (II of 1896), should be revised. Half-yearly revisions were introduced in 1899, at the instance of the Bombay Millowners' Association, but it is understood that that body is now opposed to revisions at half-yearly intervals, on the ground that frequent changes in the valuations tend to hamper trade, and to affect running contracts. The Government of India are disposed to think that the fiscal advantages of half-yearly revisions are not commensurate with the possible embarrassment to trade which may be occasioned thereby.

2. I am directed to request that the Government of India may be favoured with the views of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor on the subject, after previous consultation with the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

3. I am to explain that the Government of India will in any case reserve the right, in the interests both of the Government and of traders, to revise the tariff valuations at any period, in the event of a material fluctuation occurring in the prices of cotton goods.

From Chamber, to Piece-Goods Sub-Committee and Calcutta Import Trade Association.

No. 1305-1905.—CALCUTTA, 2nd August 1905.

Tariff Values of Cotton Goods.

I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber to forward for your consideration the accompanying copies of the marginally

No. 355-T. S. R., dated 26th July 1905, from the Government of Bengal, Financial Department, to the Chamber of Commerce, with enclosure.

noted correspondence on the question of the intervals, at which the tariff values of cotton goods fixed under section 7 of the Cotton Duties Act, II of 1896, should be revised. I am to invite an expression of the views of your Sub-Committee upon the points raised in the correspondence.

From Calcutta Import Trade Association, to Chamber.

No. 43-M.—CALCUTTA, 7th August 1905.

Tariff Values of Cotton Goods.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1305-1905 of 2nd instant, forwarding, for information, copies of correspondence on the question of the intervals at which the tariff values of cotton goods fixed under the Cotton Duties Act should be revised, and inviting an expression of the views of this Association upon the points raised in the correspondence.

I placed your letter and its enclosures before the Committee, who direct me to say in reply that as the correspondence has reference evidently to country-made goods and not to imported articles, they regret they are unable to express any opinion on the matter.

From Piece-Goods Sub-Committee, to Chamber,

No. 42-A.—CALCUTTA, 8th August 1905.

Tariff Values of Cotton Goods.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1305-1905 of 2nd instant, forwarding, for information, copies of correspondence on the question of the intervals at which the tariff values of cotton goods fixed under the Cotton Duties Act should be revised, and inviting an expression of the views of the Piece-Goods Sub-Committee upon the points raised in the correspondence.

I placed your letter before the Sub-Committee, who direct me to say that imported cotton goods, with which they are concerned, are assessed to duty, *ad valorem*. The points raised in the correspondence evidently refer to excise duties on locally manufactured articles. In these the Sub-Committee are not interested and, are therefore, unable to express any opinion as to the intervals at which the valuations should be revised.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (FINANCIAL).

No. 1422-1905.—CALCUTTA, 26th August 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 355-T. S. R., dated 26th July 1905, forwarding a copy of the marginally

No. 3159-9169-C, dated 7th July 1905, from the Government of India, Department of Commerce and Industry, to the Government of Bengal, Financial Department.

2. In the letter in question it is stated that half-yearly revisions of the tariff values were introduced in 1899 at the instance of the Bombay Millowners' Association. But it is added that that body is now opposed to such frequent revisions on the ground that they tend to hamper trade and to affect running contracts. The Committee are invited to express an opinion upon this point.

3. In reply I am to say that, as there are no weaving mills in or around Calcutta, the subject is not one which materially affects members of this Chamber, except as regards the relation which exists between the incidence of the excise duty on locally manufactured goods, and that of the customs duty on imported goods. But after due consideration the Committee are disposed to suggest that the valuations should be revised at annual intervals. If this alteration were made there would be less embarrassment to trade than there is at present, while the difficulties which might attend upon less frequent revisions would be avoided.

From Government of Bengal (FINANCIAL) to Chamber.

No. 131-S. R.—CALCUTTA, 23rd January 1906.

With reference to the correspondence ending with your letter No. 1422, dated the 26th August 1905, I am directed to forward for the information of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce the accompanying copy of an endorsement No. 264-268-3, dated the 12th January 1906, together with its annexure, from the Government of India, in the Department of Commerce and Industry, in which it is decided that the tariff values of cotton goods, fixed under section 7 of the Cotton Duties Act 1896 (II of 1896), shall in future be revised annually in December of each year, instead of as hitherto, at intervals of six months.

No. 264-268-3.—CALCUTTA, 12th January 1906.

Copy of the following forwarded to the Government of Bengal, Financial Department, with reference to Mr. Gait's letter No. 457-T. S. R., dated the 22nd September 1905, and with the request that the commercial bodies concerned may be informed of the decision arrived at.

By order, etc.,

J. CAMPBELL,

Under-Secretary to the Government of India.

No. 263-3.—CALCUTTA, 12th January 1906.

From—J. CAMPBELL, ESQ., I.C.S., Under-Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Commerce and Industry,
To—The Director-General of Commercial Intelligence.

In continuation of the communication from this Department No. 3164-C, dated the 7th July 1905, and in pursuance of the orders contained in the letter from the Finance and Commerce Department, to the Director General of Statistics, No. 5603-S. R., dated the 12th December 1899, I am directed to say that the Government of India have now decided that the tariff values of cotton goods, fixed under section 7 of the Cotton Duties Act, 1896 (II of 1896), shall in future be revised annually in December of each year instead of, as hitherto, at intervals of six months. The Government of India reserve the right, however, to revise the tariff valuations at any period, in the event of a material fluctuation occurring in the prices of cotton goods.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (FINANCIAL).

No. 210-1906.—CALCUTTA, 27th January 1906.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 131-S. R. of 23rd January 1906, with enclosure, by which the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce are glad to learn that the tariff values of cotton goods, fixed under section 7 of the Cotton Duties Act, II of 1896, will in future be revised annually in December of each year instead of at intervals of six months as formerly.

CLASSIFICATION OF COTTON GOODS.

From Calcutta Import Trade Association, to Chamber,

No. 21-M.—CALCUTTA, 20th March 1905.

Import Duty on Cotton Shawls.

I am directed by the Committee of the Calcutta Import Trade Association to refer to your Circular No. 527-1902, dated 17th December 1902, publishing for the information of members of the Chamber a copy of Customs Circular No. XIX of 1902* in reference to this subject.

2. Although the Government of India expressed their inability, for the reasons stated in their letter No. 6635-S. R.,* dated 15th December 1902, to accede to the Association's request for a reduction of the duty on these goods from 5 per cent. *ad valorem* to 3½ per cent. *ad valorem*, the trade generally is strongly of opinion that the matter should again be referred to Government. The argument advanced in the 2nd paragraph of the Government letter above referred to, to the effect that cotton shawls being finished articles with a selvage and a fringe at either end, have received the manipulation preparing them for use as apparel and are, therefore, taxable as apparel at 5 per cent. *ad valorem* appears to the Committee to be somewhat illogical, inasmuch as cotton hosiery is taxed at 3½ per cent. only. It can hardly be said that articles classed as hosiery have not received the manipulation preparing them for use as apparel and, if this be admitted, cotton shawls are, the Committee submit, fully entitled to be charged the same duty.

3. The Committee will feel much indebted if the Committee of the Chamber will afford the Association the benefit of their assistance by addressing Government in support of this view of the matter.

From Chamber, to Calcutta Import Trade Association.

No. 607-1905.—CALCUTTA, 7th April 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 21-M., of 20th March 1905, in which you ask them to address Government in favour of a reduction of the import duty on cotton shawls from 5 per cent. to 3½ per cent. thus supplementing the representation say that the Committee will have much pleasure in complying with your request.

* Vide page 261 of Chamber Report for 1902, Vol. II.

From Chamber, to Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY).

No. 663-1905.—CALCUTTA, 17th April 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to refer to Customs Circular No. 19 of 1902, copy of which I enclose for easy reference, and from which it will be seen that the Government of India in December 1902 rejected an application made by the Calcutta Import Trade Association asking for a reduction of the assessment of customs duty on cotton prints imported in lengths of 2½ yards and upwards from 5 per cent. to 3½ per cent. on the ground that similar goods made in the Indian mills and only paying an excise duty of 3½ per cent. were thus protected to that extent against imported articles.

2. The question has been again raised by the Committee of the Calcutta Import Trade Association with reference to cotton shawls of which a sample is forwarded herewith for inspection. The Committee of the Calcutta Import Trade Association urge that the argument adduced on the former occasion by the Government of India against a reduction in duty, *viz.*, that cotton shawls being finished articles were therefore taxable as apparel is somewhat illogical as cotton hosiery which might also be classed as apparel is taxed at 3½ per cent. only. The Committee of the Calcutta Import Trade Association urge that both articles should be taxable on the same basis and it has been pointed out that Bombay-made shawls which only pay 3½ per cent. excise duty are seriously affecting the trade in the imported article. Under these circumstances the Committee of the Chamber would again ask the Government of India to give the matter their favourable consideration with regard to both shawls and printed chudders.

From Chamber, to Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY).

No. 1200-1905.—CALCUTTA, 17th July 1905.

With reference to correspondence ending with your letter No. 1262-Q, dated the 24th April 1905, I am instructed by my Committee to enquire whether any orders have as yet been passed by the Government of India on the representation made by this Chamber on the question of the assessment to Customs duty of cotton shawls and printed chudders imported into India.

From Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY), to Chamber.

No. 3669-28-2.—SIMLA, 21st July 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 1200-1905, dated the 17th July 1905, in which you enquired whether any orders have yet been passed by the Government of India on the representation made by the Chamber, regarding the assessment to customs duty of cotton shawls and printed chudders imported into India. In reply, I am to say that the matter is still under the consideration of the Government of India.

be ready for use or wear without further manipulation, or without further manipulation save of an unimportant character."

4. All articles of cotton, which are neither "piece-goods" nor "apparel," as defined in the foregoing paragraphs, and which are not specifically included in any other head of the Tariff Schedule, will in general be assessed to import duty under Article 30 as "other manufactured cotton goods not otherwise described."

No. 14380 C.—10th November 1903.

MEMO. from—E. GRAY, ESQ., L.C.S., Collector of Customs and Opium, Bombay.

To—The Commissioners of Customs, Salt, Opium and Abkari, Bombay.

The ruling contained in Customs Circular XI of 1895 has been applied at this Custom House only to the particular articles referred to in the ruling. Handkerchiefs, towels and shawls, when imported singly or in lengths held together only by the warp, have been passed at 5 per cent. *ad valorem* as apparel. When imported in the piece, they have been treated as piece-goods. Towels, if need hardly be added, are never imported in the piece—at least they have not been so within the experience of this Custom House.

2. As regards cotton goods which are recognised in the trade as *piece-goods*, a list is submitted which has been framed in consultation with the Chamber of Commerce. It is of course clear that no such list can be regarded as quite comprehensive—but it is believed that for practical purposes the present list will furnish an adequate basis for differentiation and will resolve the doubts of the Appraising Department, both at this Custom House and at Karachi. Only one comment is necessary on this list. As pointed out in the footnote, the term "scarves" has been taken to include cotton goods which are known in Calcutta as shawls and in Karachi as chuddars and dupetas.

3. In conclusion it should be noted that only such articles as are admittedly recognized in the trade as piece-goods have been included in this list and that no reason beyond such custom has been admitted as justifying inclusion in this list.

List of Cotton Goods recognised as Piece-Goods in the Trade.

Brocades.	Mulls.
Cambrics.	Muslins.
Crimps.	Nainsooks.
Checks, Spots and Stripes.	Net.
Chuddars.	Oxford Shirtings.
Coatings.*	Printers.
Crape.	Prints (including Printed Meltons).
Denims.	Saris (single or in pairs.)
Dhotis (single or in pairs.)	Scarves.†
Domestics.	Sheetings.
Dorias.	Shirtings.‡
Drills.	Silicia.
Flannel and Flanellettes.	Spanish Stripes.
Harvards.	Tanjibs.
Italian Cloth.	Touserings.
Jaconets.	Twills.
Jeans.	T. Cloth and Mexicans.
Lappets.	Velvet and Velveteen.
Lawns.	Venetian cloth.
Lenos.	Zephyr cloth.
Long cloth.	
Madapolams.	

From Chamber, to Calcutta Import Trade Association.

No. 1764-1905.—CALCUTTA, 27th October 1905.

Import Duty on Cotton Shawls.

In continuation of my letter No. 607 of 7th April 1905, and with further reference to your letter No. 21-M., of 20th March 1905, I am instructed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to intimate that the assessment of the cotton shawls under reference to import duty at 5 per cent. was technically correct and in accordance with the orders which are at present in force.

The Committee understand, however, that proposals are now under consideration for the proper classification for fiscal purposes of imported cotton goods, and that a revised procedure has been suggested for differentiating between piece-goods and apparel. The papers will be placed before your Committee in due course.

From Chamber, to Calcutta Import Trade Association.

No. 1788-1905.—CALCUTTA, 1st November 1905.

Classification of Imported Cotton Goods.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to ask for the views of the Committee of the Calcutta

* Coatings include Tweeds, Cashmeres and Serges.

† Scarves include Cotton Shawls, Chuddars and Dupetas.

‡ Shirtings include Dye Shirtings, and Umbrella cloth.

Import Trade Association on the suggestions made by the Government of India in the enclosure to their letter of 9th October to the address of this Chamber, for the revision of the classification for fiscal purposes, of imported cotton goods, specially with reference to differentiating between piece-goods and apparel. A copy of the letter referred to, with its enclosure, are handed you herewith.

The favour of an early reply will oblige.

From Bombay Chamber, to Chamber.

BOMBAY, 4th November 1905.

I am instructed to forward for the information of your Committee the accompanying copy of a letter addressed by this Chamber to the Government of India, on the subject of a proposal regarding the procedure for the proper differentiation between "piece-goods" and "apparel."

BOMBAY, 3rd November 1905.

From—The Chairman Bombay Chamber of Commerce,
To—Acting Under Secretary to the Government of Bombay,
Revenue Department.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your No. 834 of the 13th October 1905, covering a copy of a letter from the Government of India Nos. 5270-5273, dated the 23rd September 1905, and its accompaniment, regarding a proposed procedure for a proper differentiation between "piece-goods" and "apparel." In reply I am to say that my Committee after due consideration of the subject, are of opinion that a comprehensive and authoritative list of cotton piece-goods such as is desired by the Government of India would be difficult, if not impossible of attainment, owing to the constant changes in the manufacture of cotton goods, and the many new varieties that are continuously being introduced. An exhaustive list that would adequately differentiate between the two classes, and that would at the same time be correct and up to date is, therefore, not considered feasible under existing conditions.

In these circumstances my Committee would venture to suggest for the consideration of Government that the difficulty now felt by all imported cotton cloth, unless made up into garments, at a uniform rate of 34 per cent. Difficulties regarding assessment could not then arise; and a decision of this nature would, it is felt, be of great convenience to all who are interested in the importation of such goods.

If, however, this proposal does not commend itself to Government, my Committee can only suggest that in view of the fact that an exhaustive list of cotton piece-goods is not possible, the Customs Department might in the first instance, when a difficulty arises, consult with the local Chamber of Commerce as to whether, in their opinion, the goods in question should be assessed at 5 or

34 per cent. The eventual decision should, however, be acquiesced in at all the different ports.

In conclusion, I am directed to submit the following additional items of cotton goods which might be included in the list mentioned in the Bombay Collector of Customs' letter of the 10th November 1903, *vide*—Picture and Printed Handkerchiefs, Prayer Mats, Blankets, Socks, Rep Cloth, Silkettes, Satteens, Coloured Shirtings, Meltons, Undershirts, Towels, Ducks, Gauzes, Khaki, Regattas, Galateas, Sarongs, Grenadines, Chiffons, and Gailcloths. The item "Towels" has been advisably included in the list, as towels manufactured in the local mills pay an excise duty of only 34 per cent. as against 5 per cent. on the imported article. This extra duty it is felt places the latter at a disadvantage; and my Committee, therefore, consider that with a view to adjusting matters the locally manufactured and imported towels should be placed on an equal footing on the 34 per cent. list.

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

No. 8093-B.—CALCUTTA, 8th November 1905.

I am directed to forward the accompanying copy of a letter from the Government of India, Nos. 5270-5273 dated the 23rd September 1905, and of its enclosure, on the subject of the proper classification of imported cotton goods, and to request that you will be so good as to favour the Board with an early expression of the opinion of the Chamber in the matter.

From Calcutta Import Trade Association, to Chamber.

No. 70-M.—CALCUTTA, 13th November 1905.

Classification of Imported Cotton Goods.

I am directed by the Committee of the Calcutta Import Trade Association to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1738-1905, dated 1st November, with enclosures, in connection with this subject. You ask for an expression of the Committee's views on the suggestions made by the Government of India for the revision of the classification, for fiscal purposes, of imported cotton goods, specially with reference to differentiating between piece-goods and apparel.

2. The papers accompanying your letter have had the attentive consideration of the Committee and I am directed to say that they fully agree with the views expressed by the Committee of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce in their letter, of 4th November 1905 to the Government of India, regarding the difficulty of compiling an exhaustive and authoritative list of cotton piece-goods such as the Government of India contemplate, owing to the constant changes in the manufacture of cotton goods and the many new varieties constantly being introduced. No matter how exhaustive the list might be it could never be final, because, new styles, are continually coming into the market, and the old difficulty of deciding whether they should be

classified as piece-goods or apparel would probably crop up in each individual case. There is the further difficulty that the same classes of goods are frequently known by different names in different parts of the country, and also in different manufacturing centres.

3. The Committee of the Bombay Chamber suggest, as an alternative, that all imported cotton cloth, unless made up into garments, should be taxed at a uniform rate of 3½ per cent. But, having regard to the admitted difficulty of drawing a line between piece-goods and apparel and even garments, the Committee would go further than the Bombay Chamber and would strongly recommend that all imported cotton goods, whether dyed, printed or plain, and at present classified as "apparel" or "piece-goods," should be charged a uniform duty of 3½ per cent. If this recommendation were adopted it would obviate the difficulty of making up a list so difficult of differentiation. Seeing, moreover, that the great bulk of the imports of cotton goods consists of shirtings, dhooties, and chudders, it seems hardly worth while, for fiscal purposes, taking the trouble to make the exceedingly exhaustive differentiations that would be rendered necessary in compiling a list such as Government propose. The total value of miscellaneous cotton goods, as compared with shirtings, dhooties, and chudders, is small, and while the revenue would only be slightly affected, the gain in general convenience and an absence of the questions constantly arising regarding classification of goods would be enormous. As an illustration of the inconsistencies in the existing classification of goods, there is the case of printed cotton chudders, classed as wearing apparel and charged 5 per cent. duty, which has been the subject of more than one representation to Government. Again, certain kinds of cotton undershirts are classed as apparel and pay 5 per cent. duty, while cotton socks, equally articles of apparel, are classed as "piece-goods including hosiery," and are charged 3½ per cent.

From Chamber, to Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY).

No. 1979-1905.—CALCUTTA, 6th December 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 5741-283, dated Simla, 29th October 1905, in which you forward, for the information of the Chamber, copy of a letter of 23rd September, which the Government of India have addressed to the Local Government on the subject of the proper classification, for fiscal purposes of imported cotton goods.

2. The Committee notice in this letter that a revised procedure is suggested for differentiating between piece-goods and apparel, and that the basis of the system which it is proposed to adopt will be "a comprehensive and authoritative list of cotton piece-goods," the commercial acceptance of that term being accepted as a determining factor in the preparation of the list.

3. In considering this matter, the Committee have had the advantage of having before them not only the list of cotton goods recognised as piece-goods in the trade, submitted by the Collector

of Customs, Bombay, in his letter of 10th November, to the Commissioner of Customs, Bombay, but they have also had the opportunity of perusing a letter of 3rd November addressed by the Committee of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Bombay.

4. After careful consideration of these papers, in consultation with the Committee of the Calcutta Import Trade Association, I am directed to intimate that the Committee agree with the views expressed by the Committee of the Bombay Chamber in the above-mentioned letter with regard to the difficulty of compiling an exhaustive and authoritative list of cotton piece goods, such as is contemplated by Government, owing to the constant changes in the manufacture of cotton goods and the many new varieties constantly being introduced. No matter how exhaustive the list might be, it could never be final on account of new styles continually coming into the market, and the whole difficulty of deciding whether they should be classed as piece-goods or apparel would probably arise in each individual case. There is the further difficulty that the same classes of goods are frequently known by different names in different parts of the country and also in different manufacturing centres. These points are sufficiently evidenced by the number of additional items of cotton goods which the Bombay Chamber of Commerce recommend to be added to the list submitted by the Collector of Customs, Bombay.

5. The Committee of the Bombay Chamber suggest, as an alternative, that all imported cotton cloth, unless made up into garments, should be taxed at a uniform rate of 3½ per cent. But, having regard to the admitted difficulty of drawing a line between piece-goods and apparel and even garments, the Committee would go further than the Bombay Chamber and would strongly recommend that all imported cotton goods, whether dyed, printed or plain, and at present classified as "apparel" or "piece-goods" should be charged a uniform duty of 3½ per cent. If this recommendation were adopted it would obviate the difficulty of making up a list so difficult of differentiation. Seeing, moreover, that the great bulk of the imports of cotton goods consists of shirtings, dhooties, and chudders, it seems hardly worthwhile, for fiscal purposes, taking the trouble to make the exceedingly exhaustive differentiations that would be rendered necessary in compiling a list such as Government propose. The total value of miscellaneous cotton goods, as compared with shirtings, dhooties, and chudders, is small and while the revenue would only be slightly affected, the gain in general convenience and an absence of the questions constantly arising regarding classification of the goods would be enormous. As an illustration of the inconsistencies in the existing classification of goods, there is the case of printed cotton chudders, classed as wearing apparel and charged 5 per cent. duty, which has been the subject of more than one representation to Government. Again, certain kinds of cotton under-shirts are classed as apparel and pay 5 per cent. duty, while cotton socks, equally articles of apparel, are classed as "piece-goods including hosiery," and are charged 3½ per cent.

6. In view of all these considerations, the Committee suggest that customs duty on all imported cotton goods should be levied at a uniform rate of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

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

No. 2013-1905.—CALCUTTA, 8th December 1905.

In compliance with the request contained in your letter No. 8093-B, of 8th November 1905, I have the pleasure to hand you copy of my letter No. 1979 of 6th December 1905, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Commerce and Industry, on the subject of the proper classification for fiscal purposes of imported cotton goods.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (FINANCIAL).

No. 2014-1905.—CALCUTTA, 8th December 1905.

I have the honour to forward for the information of the Government of Bengal copy of my letter No. 1979, of 6th December 1905, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Commerce and Industry, on the subject of the proper classification for fiscal purposes of imported cotton goods.

From Calcutta Trades Association, to Board of Revenue, L. P.

CALCUTTA, 10th January 1906.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 8093, dated the 8th November 1905, forwarding copy of a letter addressed by the Government of India to the Governments of Bengal, Madras, Bombay, and Burma, and of a letter from the Collector of cotton goods and requesting to be furnished with the views of the Trades Association on the subject.

After carefully considering the question, the Committee of the Association would recommend the inclusion in the list of goods framed by the Collector of Customs, of the following additional goods which are recognised in the trade as cotton piece-goods when made exclusively of cotton.

Buckram.	Linings.
Canvas.	Linettes.
Calico.	Mercerised Cottons.
Chints.	Sateens.
Cretonne.	Suitings.
Diapers.	Shawls.
Dimity.	Tapestries.
Embroidered Allovers.	Ticking.
Embroidered Flouncing.	Towelling.
Galatees.	Tweeds.
Grey shirting.	Umbrella cloth.

In place of "Scarves" which mean a made-up wrap or ornament for the neck, the Committee would suggest the substitution, as shown above of the word "shawls," as the latter includes chud-ders and all wraps of a size, and suitable for covering the body. If squares such as shawls are included, the Committee would also suggest the addition to the list of—

Bed spreads, lace or printed.
Counterpanes.
Curtains, lace or printed.
Quilts.

Flannel has not been included by the Committee as it is recognised as being made either wholly or partly of wool.

Wearing Apparel.—The definition of wearing apparel as contained in the letter from the Government of India appears to the Committee of the Association to be sufficiently comprehensive.

Since drawing up the above list, the Committee of the Association have been favoured by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce with a copy of their letter dated the 6th December 1905, to the Government of India, in which they suggest that this difficult question, could be satisfactorily settled by the levy of customs duty at a uniform rate of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on all imported cotton goods; the alternative course suggested by the Chamber of Commerce would in the opinion of the Committee of the Association be preferable to the adoption of any list of goods, liable as such lists would be to constant alteration, and they, therefore, heartily support the recommendation of that body.

Apologising for the delay in submitting this reply.

From Chamber, to Calcutta Trades Association.

No. 119-1906.—CALCUTTA, 16th January 1906.

Classification of Imported Cotton Goods.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of copy of your letter of 10th January 1906 to the Secretary to the Board of Revenue submitting your views on the above subject. The Committee are glad to see from this letter that you have supported the suggestion they recently made for a uniform rate of duty on all imported cotton goods, and desire me to thank you for placing a copy of the letter at their disposal.

From Madras Chamber, to Board of Revenue, Madras.

MADRAS, 14th November 1905.

I have the honour to state that the Chamber has carefully considered the reference made to it under date the 9th October, 1905, on the subject of the classification of imported cotton goods.

The Chamber has had the advantage of perusing the reply made by the Bombay Chamber to a similar reference and agrees

with the view there expressed that it would be impossible to compile a list which would continue to be comprehensive for any considerable length of time.

I am further to state that this Chamber is of opinion that the alternative proposal of the Bombay Chamber, namely, that in case of doubt the Customs Department might in the first instance consult the local Chamber of Commerce, would meet the necessities of the trade at this Port.

TARIFF VALUATIONS FOR SUGAR.

From Karachi Chamber, to Chamber,

No. 400-1905.—KARACHI, 26th July 1905.

It has been suggested to the Committee of this Chamber that a fixed tariff value for beet sugar would be more advantageous to sugar importers, than the present system of adjusting the tariff value to the current market rate every twelve months or so,—a system that only leads to uncertainty, speculation, and possible loss. Further, it has been suggested by a Sub-Committee of this Chamber that the Government of India be moved to legislate in the direction of fixing the tariff value. The Committee before addressing Government on the subject, would be glad to receive the views of your Committee on the matter and to know if your Chamber would be disposed to support a representation in the direction indicated.

From Chamber, to all firms interested in Sugar.

CALCUTTA, 5th August 1905.

I am directed to forward for your information a copy of the marginally noted letter with reference to the question of fixing tariff valuations for sugar. I am to invite an expression of your views upon the suggestion that Government should be asked to modify the existing system, under which tariff valuations are fixed annually.

From Chamber, to Karachi Chamber.

No. 1508-1905.—CALCUTTA, 8th September 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 26th July, with reference to the tariff valuations for beet sugar.

2. You ask for the opinion of the Committee upon a suggestion that the present system of annually adjusting the tariff values to the current market rate, should be superseded by a system under which there would be no fixed tariff valuation. In reply I am to say that the Committee have consulted the different houses interested in the sugar trade. The balance of opinion is adverse to your suggestion, of which the Committee also do not approve. A fixed valuation would not, it is considered, be in the interest of the trade generally, seeing that there are constant and sometimes violent fluctuations in prices. And the fact that the valuations are revised only once a year give an interval so long as practically to eliminate any danger from speculation.

From Karachi Chamber, to Chamber.

No. 558-1905.—KARACHI, 23rd September 1905.

Tariff Valuations for Sugar.

I am directed to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 8th instant on the above subject.

From Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY), to Chamber.

D/O. No. 6919-78.—CALCUTTA, 27th November 1905.

Tariff Valuations for Sugar.

Telegrams have been received from the Chambers of Commerce at Bombay and Karachi, urging the immediate reduction of the tariff valuations for beet sugar fixed by the Notification of the 23rd December last, on the grounds that the net value of such sugar on import is now considerably less than the tariff value.

2. The Director General of Commercial Intelligence proposes the following revised tariff valuations:—

	Per cwt.
	Rs. As. P.
Sugar, China Candy	16 4 0
" Loaf (excluding cube and chopped)	12 0 0
" Crystallised, beet	9 0 0
" Crystallised and soft (other than beet)	9 0 0
" refined in the United Kingdom	9 8 0
" Crystallised and soft, refined in China	9 2 0
" Crystallised and soft, from Egypt	9 0 0
" Crystallised and soft, from Java	8 10 0
" Crystallised and soft, from Mauritius	2 12 0
Molasses	ad valorem.
All other sorts	ad valorem.

I am to request that the Government of India may be favoured with the views of the Bengal Chamber on the matter at their earliest convenience.

From Chamber, to Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY).

No. 1974-1905.—CALCUTTA, 4th December 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your D. O. letter No. 6919-78 of 27th November, in which you state that telegrams have been received from the Chambers of Commerce of Bombay and Karachi, urging the immediate reduction of the tariff valuation for beet sugar fixed by the Notification of 23rd December 1904, on the grounds that the net value of such sugar on import is considerably less than the tariff value. You specify the revised valuations which are proposed by the Director-General of Commercial Intelligence, and you ask for the views of the Chamber on this matter.

2. I am directed by the Committee to state that they find this question a somewhat difficult one to deal with, owing to the acutely divergent views held with regard to it by members of the Chamber interested in the sugar trade. The importers of beet sugar are for the most part in favour of an immediate revision of the tariff valuations. They consider they would suffer injustice if called on to pay duty based on valuations considerably in excess of the actual price of the sugar when imported, in view of the Government of India's promise to consider the advisability of revising the valuation should prices fluctuate to a material extent during the course of the year. Firms on the other hand who represent the refining interests are strongly opposed to a change in valuations being made at any other time than the ordinary annual revision which is now close at hand. They contend that such intermediate revisions tend to dislocate trade and that no other class of imports is selected for this special treatment.

3. It has never been the policy of the Chamber when interests are divided on an important question to take sides with either party, and under these circumstances the Committee refrain from making any definite recommendation. They feel that intermediate re-valuations, the effect of which is to dislocate trade, are to be deprecated. But at the same time they are of opinion that there are grounds for exceptional treatment in the present case, regard being had to the Government of India's promise which was no doubt made in view of the admittedly high valuations prevailing a year ago.

No. 1976-1905.

COPY of above letter and of the Tariff valuations for Sugar forwarded to all firms interested in Sugar for information.

W. PARSONS,
Secretary

From Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY), to Chamber.

No. 7173-78-16.—CALCUTTA, 7th December 1905.

I am directed to forward the accompanying copy of a telegram (GOSNORE) which has this day been sent to the Chambers of Commerce at Bombay, Madras, Rangoon, Karachi and Cawnpore.

No. 7174-7178-78-15.

GOVT. OF INDIA—DEPT. OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY.

TELEGRAM: CALCUTTA, 6th December 1905.

(CUSTOMS.)

From—Commerce,
From—Calcutta,To—Secretary, ^{Bombay}
^{Madras}
^{Calcutta} Chamber of Commerce.

Notification will issue in next Saturday's Gazette revising, with effect from that date, sugar tariff valuations as follows:—Sugar China Candy Rs. 16-4; loaf, excluding cube and chopped Rs. 12; crystallised beet Rs. 9; soft Rs. 9; China Rs. 9-8; Egypt Rs. 9-2; Java Rs. 9; Mauritius Rs. 8-10; Molasses Rs. 2-12; all other sorts *ad valorem*.

No. 2002-1905.—Calcutta, 7th December 1905.

COPY of above letter, with copy of telegram, forwarded to all firms interested in Sugar, for information.

W. PARSONS,

Secretary, Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

Extract, page 889, from "The Gazette of India," Part I, of Saturday, 9th December 1905.

GOVT. OF INDIA—DEPT. OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY.

NOTIFICATION.—CUSTOMS.

CALCUTTA, 9th December 1905.

No. 7227-78-17.—In exercise of the powers conferred by Section 22 of the Sea Customs Act, 1878 (VIII of 1878), the Governor-General in Council is pleased to direct that for entry No. 8 in the Notification of the Government of India in the Finance and Commerce Department, No. 8229-S. R., dated the 23rd December 1904, the following shall be substituted, namely:—

No.	Names of Articles.	Per	Tariff of valuations.	Duty.
8	SUGAR, China candy	cwt.	Rs. 4 P.	5 per cent.
	" Loaf (excluding cube and chopped)	"	16 4 0	
	" Crystallised, beet	"	12 0 0	
	" " and soft (other than beet) refined in the United Kingdom	"	9 0 0	
	" " and soft refined in China	"	9 8 0	
	" " " refined from Egypt refined, white from Java above 20 Dutch Standard	"	9 2 0	
	" " " refined from Mauritius	"	9 0 0	
	MOLASSES	"	8 10 0	
	Sugar, all other sorts, including saccharine produce of all kinds, and confectionery	"	2 12 0	

Extract, pages 903 & 904, from "The Gazette of India," Part I, of Saturday, December 16th 1905.

GOVT. OF INDIA—DEPT. OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY.

NOTIFICATION.—CUSTOMS.

CALCUTTA, 15th December 1905.

No. 7465-78.—In the Notification of the Government of India in the Department of Commerce and Industry, No. 7227-78-17, dated the 9th December 1905—

For.

No.	Names of Articles.	Per	Tariff of valuations.	Duty.
8	SUGAR, China candy	cwt.	Rs. A. P.	5 per cent.
	" Loaf (excluding cube and chopped)	"	16 4 0	
	" Crystallised, beet	"	12 0 0	
	" " and soft (other than beet) refined in the United Kingdom	"	9 0 0	
	" " and soft refined in China	"	9 8 0	
	" " " refined from Egypt refined, white, from Java above 20 Dutch Standard	"	9 2 0	
	" " " refined from Mauritius	"	9 0 0	
	MOLASSES	"	8 10 0	
	Sugar, all other sorts, including saccharine produce of all kinds, and confectionery	"	2 12 0	

Read.

No.	Names of Articles.	Per	Tariff of valuations.	Duty.
8	SUGAR, China candy	cwt.	Rs. A. P.	
	Leaf (excluding cube and chopped) ..		16 4 0	5 per cent.
	" Crystallised, beet	"	12 0 0	"
	" " and soft (other than beet) refined in the United Kingdom	"	9 0 0	"
	" " and soft refined in China	"	9 0 0	"
	" " refined from Egypt	"	9 8 0	"
	" " refined, white, from Java above 20 Dutch Standard	"	9 2 0	"
	" " and soft refined from Mauritius	"	9 0 0	"
	MOLASSES	"	8 10 0	"
	sugar, all other sorts, including saccharine produce of all kinds, and confectionery	"	2 12 0	"
			<i>ad valorem.</i>	

SUGAR BOUNTIES.

From Chamber, to Government of India (FINANCE).

No. 149-1905.—CALCUTTA, 31st January 1905.

The attention of the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce has been drawn to the following intimation appearing on page 315 of the *Board of Trade Journal*, for 17th November 1904, and I have been directed to submit it for such action as the Government of India may see fit to take, as it is regarded in some quarters to indicate an indirect bounty on sugar in the shape of a refund of freight by the Austrian-Lloyd's Steam Navigation Co., to Austrian sugar exporters to India:—

"A despatch has been received from H.M. Consul at Trieste reporting, with reference to the Agreement made in January last between the Austrian-Lloyd's Steam Navigation Co., and Austrian sugar exporters to India, China and Japan (see *Board of Trade Journal* 11th February p.274), that the Company have informed (on 19th October 1904) the "Central Association" of exporters, that they will refund 2s. for every metric ton on the agreed freight of 14s. net, to all those manufacturers and to all those firms, who, from October, 1904, to the end of September, 1905, will have loaded on board their steamers at least 20,000 tons for Karachi, Bombay, Colombo, and Calcutta. The Austrian-Lloyd's have also bound themselves not to increase (until August 31st 1905) the freight of 14s. for sugar export to the East Indies."

From David Sassoon & Co., to Chamber.

CALCUTTA, the 5th March 1905.

Your attention has been drawn to the clause headed "Sugar Bounties," in the abstract of the proceedings of the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, No. 7, in which we find that the Committee has addressed the Secretary to the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department, drawing their attention to an Agreement between the "Austrian-Lloyd's S. N. Co., and the Austrian sugar exporters to India, on the subject of an indirect bounty on sugar in the shape of a refund in freight and that you have since been informed that the matter is under the consideration of the Government of India. We as the Agents of the Austrian-Lloyd's S. N. Co. here, have drawn the attention of our Head Office to the same and they have replied to us as follows:—

"Sugar:—With reference to the para Sugar Bounties, in the abstract of the proceedings of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, we beg to say that the statement, according to which the rebate granted by our Company to the sugar exporters is to be considered an indirect bounty, is completely false. The rebate of 2s. which we were prepared to refund to firms having exported 10,000 tons or more during the season ending August next off the rate of 14s. per ton, for

Karachi, Bombay, Colombo, and Calcutta, was simply offered as an inducement to avail of our steamers, whereas foreign Companies, for instance the Società Veneziana di Navigazione a Vapore and outsiders Austrian and British, took sugar at 10s. and even less.

This proves clearly that the said rebate was only a step on our part for shipping competition's sake and can by no means be called a measure adopted with a view of facilitating the export of Austrian and Hungarian sugar.

We request you to convey this information to the proper party in order to prevent, that the false statement above referred to be availed of to our prejudice and to that of the Austro-Hungarian sugar trade.

We shall, therefore, thank you to kindly place the reply of our head office before the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce for their information.

From Chamber, to Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY).

No. 642-1905.—CALCUTTA, 11th April 1905.

In continuation of correspondence ending with letter No. 702 EXD, of 2nd February 1905, from the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department, to the address of this Chamber, I am directed to forward copy of letter of 5th March from Messrs. David Sassoon & Co., Ltd., Agents Austrian-Lloyd's Steam Navigation Company, with regard to the extract from the *Board of Trade Journal* of 17th November 1904, on the subject of the refund of freight by the Austrian-Lloyd's Steam Navigation Company to Austrian sugar exporters to India.

2. I am instructed to enquire at the same time whether the Government of India have been able to procure any further information on the matter.

From Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY), to Chamber.

No. 1204-C.—SIMLA, 19th April 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 642-1905, dated the 11th April 1905, on the subject of the refund of freight by the Austrian-Lloyd's Steam Navigation Company to Austrian sugar exporters. I am to say that your letter will be submitted for the consideration of the Government of India.

From Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY), to Chamber.

No. 1514-C.—SIMLA 10th May 1905.

In continuation of my letter, No. 1204-C, dated the 19th April 1905, I am directed to say that the Government of India have not received any further information regarding the grant of indirect bounties on sugar exported from Trieste on the Austrian-Lloyd's Steam Navigation Company's vessels.

2. I am to enclose a copy of a letter from this Department to the Agent General of the Company, No. 1513-C, of to-day's date, for the information of the Chamber; and to invite attention to Mr. Bonar Law's reply to a question put by Mr. Lough in the House of Commons on the 18th April, on this subject.

No. 1513-C.—SIMLA, 10th May 1905.

From—J. CAMPBELL, ESQ., I.C.S., Under Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Commerce and Industry,
To—Agent General Austrian-Lloyd's Steam Navigation Company.

In continuation of my letter, No. 1210-C, dated the 22nd April 1905, I am directed to say that the Government of India have not taken, and do not at present propose to take, any action in connection with the alleged grant of an indirect bounty on sugar shipped to India on the vessels of your Company by Austrian exporters.

Extract, pages 5 and 6, from "The Times" of Wednesday, 19th April 1905.

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 18th April 1905.

THE SUGAR CONVENTION.

Replying to Mr. Lough,

MR. BONAR LAW said.—A reduction in the sugar duty, known as the *détaxe de distance*, is allowed on French sugar sent from the northern ports of Paris to French ports on the Atlantic or Mediterranean to be refined for export. The continuance of an allowance of this kind, not exceeding 2*½* per 100 kilos, was expressly recognized by the Conference at which the Sugar Convention was signed. An allowance permitted by the contracting States could not be treated as a bounty for the purposes of the Convention.

In further reply to Mr. Lough,

MR. BONAR LAW said.—I understand that the Austrian-Lloyd's Steam Navigation Company have agreed to reduce the freight for sugar from Trieste and Fiume to Indian ports from 14*½* to 10*½* per ton from September 1st next, on condition that the sugar shall be carried exclusively by vessels of their line. The reduction is ascribed to the competition of Italian and other lines of steamers from Trieste and Fiume, Austria being a party to the Sugar Convention there could be no question of excluding Austrian sugar from the United Kingdom.

From Chamber, to Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY).

No. 864-1905.—CALCUTTA, 20th May 1905.

I have the honour to acknowledge with thanks receipt of your letter No. 1514-C, of 10th May, with its enclosures, on the subject of the agreement between the Austrian-Lloyd's Steam Navigation Co., Ltd., and the Austrian exporters of sugar to India, for a refund of freight. I have also to thank you for referring the Committee to a reply to a question put in the House of Commons on the 18th April on this subject.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS AT THE CUSTOM HOUSE
AND AT THE JETTIES.

From Calcutta Liners' Conference, to Chamber.

CALCUTTA, 19th December 1905.

I am instructed to request you to place before the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce the accompanying copy of a letter which the Liners' Conference have to-day addressed to the Vice-Chairman, Calcutta Port Commissioners, and to ask for the assistance of the Committee in this important question, especially with reference to the suggestions made in the last paragraph of the Conference's letter.

CALCUTTA, 19th December 1905.

From—The Calcutta Liners' Conference,

To—The Vice-Chairman, Calcutta Port Commissioners.

I am instructed by the Liners' Conference to address you again on the subject of the confusion and block at the jetties, and the enormous delay and expense caused thereby to incoming Conference Liners; and to enquire, in continuation of our previous correspondence, what steps have been taken to alleviate this congestion.

It is the opinion of the Conference that so far from there being any signs of improvement the position is rapidly becoming worse, and owners are naturally complaining bitterly about it.

I am instructed to suggest that, in view of the present exceptional circumstances, the list of coming holidays at the docks and jetties, as advertised by the Traffic Manager in the daily papers, should be considerably modified and curtailed, and also that holiday fees and night work fees should be abolished in the meantime.

From Chamber, to all Members.

Ctr. No. 531-1905.—CALCUTTA, 22nd December 1905.

Holidays at the Jetties and the Custom House.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to circulate for the information of the mercantile community generally, copy of a revised holiday notice which is being issued by the Port Commissioners cancelling their previous Notification so far as work at the Jetties is concerned. It will be noticed that the only days on which the Jetties will now be closed are Christmas Day and the 29th December, and that holiday fees on the remaining days will be remitted.

Arrangements have been made with the Collector of Customs under which the usual staff of Custom House Officers and Appraisers will be in attendance at the Jetties without any holiday fees being payable by the public.

In view of the present congestion at the Jetties and the absolute necessity for the early clearance of goods, to prevent a more serious block of traffic, importers are specially requested to avail themselves of the extra facilities now offered.

REVISED HOLIDAY NOTICE.

Referring to the advertisement, dated 18th December, intimating that the Jetties will be closed on certain days during the Christmas holidays, it is now notified that, so far as work at the Jetties is concerned, this notice is cancelled and that the Commissioners have ordered that work be carried on as usual throughout the holidays excepting on Christmas Day and the day of the arrival of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, *i. e.*, 29th December, and that the charge made for holiday work be remitted.

Importers are specially requested to avail themselves of the extra facilities now offered.

F. G. DUMAYNE,
Vice-Chairman,
Calcutta Port Commissioners.

22nd December 1905.

From Chamber, to Collector of Customs.

No. 2030-1905.—CALCUTTA, 22nd December 1905.

I have the honour to enclose for your information copy of a Circular which I have issued today to all members of the Chamber, with reference to the approaching holidays at the Jetties and the Custom House. The issue of this Circular has been rendered necessary by the revised Notification in view of the great congestion at the Jetties, and the absolute necessity for the early clearance of goods to prevent a still more serious block of traffic.

2. The circumstances of the case were fully detailed to you by the Hon. Mr. J. D. Nimmo, Vice-President of the Chamber, and myself in an interview which you kindly granted us this morning, and I am instructed to convey to you the best thanks of the Committee of the Chamber, on behalf of the mercantile community, for the sympathetic readiness with which you complied with their request for some modification of the Custom House holiday regulations.

3. It is understood, as arranged at the interview, that the new arrangements will not involve any additional opening of the Custom House to that already notified, but that arrangements will be made for any necessary Custom House Officers and Appraisers to be in attendance at the Jetties. The Committee desire me to express a hope that the Government of Bengal will be pleased to sanction these arrangements without any extra fees being charged to the

public in view of the exceptional circumstances under which they have been asked for.

From Chamber, to Port Commissioners.

No. 2031-1905.—CALCUTTA, 22nd December 1905.

Holidays at the Jetties.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to forward for your information copy of a Circular which I have this day issued to all members of the Chamber with regard to your revised holiday notice agreed to at the interview which the Hon. Mr. J. D. Nimmo, Vice-President of the Chamber, and myself had with you this morning.

The Committee desire me to convey to you their best thanks for the prompt issue of this revised Notification which will be, they feel sure, much appreciated by Steamer Agents, Importers, and the mercantile community generally, and I am also to express their appreciation of the courteous manner in which you received the representation made to you this morning.

CUSTOMS TARIFF CIRCULARS.

MEMO.—The following Customs Circulars, issued by the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department, and the Department of Commerce and Industry, have been circulated during the year for the information of members of the Chamber :—

Customs Circular No. I of 1905.

Notification—By the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department, No. 8129-S.R., dated the 23rd December 1904.

In exercise of the powers conferred by sections 22 and 23 of the Sea Customs Act, 1878 (VIII of 1878), in modification of the tariff values fixed by the Indian Tariff Act, 1894 (VIII of 1894), as amended by the Indian Tariff Act (1894) Amendment Act, 1896 (III of 1896), and as further altered from time to time by notifications of the Governor-General in Council, the Governor-General in Council is pleased to fix, with effect from the 1st of January 1905, for the articles specified in column 2 of the Schedule hereto annexed, the tariff values stated in column 4 of the said Schedule.

Provided that nothing in this notification shall affect any additional duty imposed under the powers conferred by sections 8 A and B of the Indian Tariff Act, 1894 (VIII of 1894), as amended by the Indian Tariff Act Amendment Act, 1899 (XIV of 1899), the Indian Tariff (Amendment) Act, 1902 (VIII of 1902), the Indian Tariff (Amendment) Act, 1903 (XII of 1903), and the Indian Tariff (Amendment) Act, 1904 (XI of 1904.)

SCHEDULE IV.—(IMPORT TARIFF).

GENERAL DUTIES.

No.	Names of Articles	Per.	Tariff Valuation.	Duty.
			Rs. As.	
	Animals living.			
1	HORSES, CATTLE, SHEEP, and all other living animals of all kinds	...	...	Free.
	Articles of Food and Drink.			
2	COFFEE	cwt.	30 0	Five per cent.
3	FRUITS AND VEGETABLES, (except fresh fruits and vegetables not separately enumerated, which are free)	...	...	...
	Almonds without shell	"	48 0	"
	" in the shell	"	14 0	"
	" (kâgzi)	"	35 0	"

CUSTOMS TARIFF CIRCULARS.

SCHEDULE IV.—(IMPORT TARIFF)—contd.

GENERAL DUTIES—contd.

No.	Names of Articles.	Per.	Tariff Valuation.	Duty.
	Articles of Food and Drink.—contd.		Rs. As.	
3	FRUITS AND VEGETABLES, (except fresh fruits and vegetables not separately enumerated, which are free)—contd.			
	Cashew or enjoo kernels	cwt.	15 0	Five per cent.
	Cocoanuts, Straits	...	65 0	"
	" other	"	30 0	"
	" kernel (khopra)	cwt.	12 0	"
	Currants, in cases	"	14 0	"
	" in cans	"	25 0	"
	" other	"	14 0	"
	Dates dry, in bags	"	6 8	"
	" wet	"	4 0	"
	" in pots, boxes and tins	"	8 0	"
	Pigs, Persian, dried	"	12 0	"
	Garlic	"	4 0	"
	Hops	"	...	Free.
	Pistachio nuts	cwt.	30 0	Five per cent.
	Prunes, Bussora (Bhu-Bokhara)	"	23 0	"
	Raisins black	"	8 0	"
	" Blühhish	"	11 0	"
	" Muskatel	"	8 8	"
	" other sorts	"	...	ad valorem
	Walnuts	cwt.	8 0	"
	All other sorts of fruits and vegetables	"	ad valorem	"
4	GRAIN AND PULSE, including broken grain and pulse, but not including flour	...	...	Free.
5	MINERAL AND AERATED WATERS, and all unfermented and non-alcoholic beverages	...	ad valorem	Five per cent.
6	PROVISIONS, OILMAN'S STORES, AND GROCERIES—			
	Bacon	"	"	"
	Beef and Pork	"	"	"
	Biche de mer	"	"	"
	Butter	"	4	"
	Cheese	"	ad valorem	"
	China preserves in syrup	box of six lbs.	4 8	"
	" dry, candied	lb.	0 4	"
	Conium	cwt.	4 0	Free.
	Fish-maws	"	...	Five per cent.
	Flour	"	ad valorem	"
	Ghi	cwt.	50 0	"
	Margarine	lb.	1 4	"
	Pork lard	"	ad valorem	"
	Sago	cwt.	6 8	Free.
	Shah-fins	"	...	"
	Singally and sozille	"	...	Five per cent.
	Tapioca	cwt.	8 0	"

SCHEDULE IV.—(IMPORT TARIFF)—*contd.*GENERAL DUTIES—*contd.*

No.	Names of Articles.	Per.	Tariff Valuation	Duty.
	Chemicals, Drugs, Medicines, and Narcotics, and Dyeing and Tanning Materials—<i>concl'd.</i>		Rs. As.	
11	DRUGS, MEDICINES, AND NARCOTICS—<i>concl'd.</i>			
	All other sorts of drugs, medicines, and narcotics, except opium (for which see Schedule III) ... ..	...	<i>ad valorem</i>	Five per cent.
12	DYEING AND TANNING MATERIALS—			
	Alizarine dye, dry, 40 per cent.	lb.	1 41	"
	" " " 50 "	"	1 34	"
	Alizarine dye, dry, 60 per cent.	"	1 12	"
	" " " 70 "	"	2 41	"
	" " " 80 "	"	2 41	"
	" " " 100 "	"	2 12	"
	" " moist, 10 "	"	0 41	"
	" " " 16 "	"	0 7	"
	" " " 20 "	"	0 8	"
	Aniline " " indigo, blue	"	0 61	"
	" " " dry	"	0 14	"
	" " salts ... ..	...	<i>ad valorem</i>	"
	Ayer bark	cwt.	4 0	"
	Buzard (galpalia)	"	40 0	"
	Cochineal	lb.	1 6	"
	Gallnuts (myrsabolans) ... ..	...	<i>ad valorem</i>	"
	" Persian	cwt.	40 0	"
	Madder or manjit	"	8 8	"
	Ochilla weed	"	4 0	"
	Sappan wood and root ... ..	...	<i>ad valorem</i>	"
	Turmeric	"	"	"
	All other sorts of dyeing and tanning materials ... ..	...	"	"
	Metals and Manufactures of Metals			
13	HARDWARE AND CUTLERY, including iron-mongery and plated-ware, and also including machines, tools, and implements to be worked by manual or animal labour. [Exemptions, which are free: (i) Water-lifts, sugar-mills, oil-presses, and parts thereof, and any other machines and parts of machines ordinarily used in process of husbandry, or for the preparation for use or for sale of the products of husbandry, which the Governor-General in Council may, by notification in the Gazette of India, exempt; (ii) the following agricultural implements, when constructed so that they can be worked by manual or animal power, namely, winnowers, threshers, mowing and cutting machines, elevators, seed crushers, chaff-cutters, root-cutters, horse and bullock gears, ploughs, cultivators, scarifiers, harrows, chisel-trainers, seed-drills, hay-tedders, and rakes; (iii) the following dairy appliances, when constructed so that they can be worked by manual or			

SCHEDULE IV.—(IMPORT TARIFF)—*contd.*GENERAL DUTIES—*contd.*

No.	Names of Articles.	Per.	Tariff Valuation	Duty.
	Metals and Manufactures of Metals—<i>concl'd.</i>		Rs. As.	
	animal power, namely, cream separators, milk sterilizing or pasteurizing plants, milk aerating and cooling apparatus, churns, butter dryers and butter workers; (iv) the following articles used in the manufacture of cotton, namely, bobbins (warping), bobbins for looms, heads, head cords, head knitting needles, laces, bags and needles for dobbies, pickers (buffalo and others), picking bands, picking levers, picking sticks (over and under), reed pickers, reeds shuttles (for power looms), springs for looms, strappings, and welt forks; (v) box backs and swells and rough unshaped bobbin ends, when imported by or on behalf of a manufacturer or mill owner, and certified by him to be intended exclusively for use in his mill) ... ..	...	<i>ad valorem</i>	Five per cent.
14	MACHINERY, namely, prime-movers and component parts thereof, including boilers and component parts thereof; also including locomotive and portable engines, steam-rollers, fire-engines, and other machines in which the prime-mover is not separable from the operative parts			
	MACHINERY (and component parts thereof, meaning machines or sets of machines to be worked by electric, steam, water, fire or other power not being manual or animal labour, or which before being brought into use require to be fixed with reference to other moving parts; and including bolting of all materials for driving machinery)			
	Provided that the term does not include tools and implements to be worked by manual or animal labour, and provided also that only such articles shall be admitted as component parts of machinery as are indispensable for the working of the machinery and are owing to their shape or to other special quality, not adapted for any other purpose.			
	Note.—Machinery and component parts thereof of substances other than metal are included in this entry.			
15	METALS, unwrought and wrought, and articles made of metals—			
	Brass, ordise and leaves, European ... ..	...	<i>ad valorem</i>	Five per cent.
	" " " China	"	"	"
	" patent or yellow metal, sheathing, sheets and plates	cwt.	44 0	"
	" patent or yellow metal, sheathing, sheets and plates (old)	"	31 0	"

SCHEDULE IV.—(IMPORT TARIFF)—*contd.*
GENERAL DUTIES—*contd.*

No.	Names of Articles.	Per.	Tariff Valuation.		Duty.
			Rs.	As.	
	Metals, and Manufactures of Metals—<i>contd.</i>				
15	METALS, unwrought and wrought, and articles made of metals— <i>contd.</i>				
	Brass Sheets, flat or in rolls, very thin ..	cwt.	135 0	Five	per cent.
	" wire .. .. .	..	<i>ad valorem</i>	..	..
	" all other sorts .. .. .	..	"	"	"
	Copper, hot and bar, rolled .. .. .	..	"	"	"
	" brazier's and sheets	cwt.	33 0	"	"
	" nails and composition nails .. .. .	..	<i>ad valorem</i>	"	"
	" old	cwt.	45 0	"	"
	" pigs, tines, ingots, cakes, bricks, and slabs .. .. .	..	50 0	"	"
	" sheathing, plate and raised hot tops .. .. .	..	57 0	"	"
	" China, white, copperware	lb.	1 2	"	"
	" foil or dampans, white, 10½ in. × 4½ in.	hundred leaves.	1 14	"	"
	" " " coloured, 10½ in. × 4½ in. .. .. .	..	2 0	"	"
	" wire, including phosphor bronze .. .. .	..	<i>ad valorem</i>	"	"
	" all other sorts, unmanufactured and manufactured except current coin of the Government of India, which is free .. .. .	..	"	"	"
	German silver .. .. .	..	"	"	"
	Gold bullion and coin .. .. .	..	Free	"	"
	" leaf .. .. .	..	<i>ad valorem</i>	"	"
	Iron, anchors and cables .. .. .	..	"	One	per cent.
	" angle, T, channel other than Lowmoor or Swedish	ton	100 0	"	"
	" angle, T, channel, other than Lowmoor or Swedish if galvanised, tinned, or lead coated .. .. .	..	<i>ad valorem</i>	"	"
	" bar, Lowmoor and similar qualities	ton	370 0	"	"
	" Swedish and similar qualities .. .. .	..	150 0	"	"
	" nail-rod, round, and square under half an inch in diameter	"	155 0	"	"
	" other kinds, including strips	"	100 0	"	"
	" " " nail-rod, round rod, and square, under half an inch in diameter .. .. .	..	105 0	"	"
	" " " if galvanised, tinned, or lead-coated .. .. .	..	<i>ad valorem</i>	"	"
	" beams, joists, pillars, girders, bridge-foots, and other such descriptions of iron, imported exclusively for building purposes .. .. .	..	"	"	"
	" plate and sheet, Lowmoor and similar qualities	ton.	460 0	"	"
	" " " Swedish and charcoal .. .. .	..	<i>ad valorem</i>	"	"

SCHEDULE IV.—(IMPORT TARIFF)—*contd.*
GENERAL DUTIES—*contd.*

No.	Names of Articles.	Per.	Tariff Valuation.		Duty.
			Rs.	As.	
	Metals and Manufactures of Metals—<i>contd.</i>				
15	METALS, unwrought and wrought, and articles made of metals— <i>contd.</i>				
	Iron, bars, plates, and sheets, Lowmoor Swedish, and charcoal if galvanised, tinned, or lead-coated .. .. .	..	<i>ad valorem</i>	One	per cent.
	" plate, other kinds above ½ inch thick	ton.	100 0	"	"
	" sheets other kinds up to	"	115 0	"	"
	" plates, sheets (other than corrugated), and strips other kinds galvanised, tinned, lead coated, or planished .. .. .	..	<i>ad valorem</i>	"	"
	" sheets, corrugated, galvanised or black	ton.	160 0	"	"
	" hoops .. .. .	..	115 0	"	"
	" nails, rore, wire, and flat headed	cwt.	8 8	"	"
	" other kinds including galvanised, tinned, or lead-coated .. .. .	..	<i>ad valorem</i>	"	"
	" nuts and bolts also hooks and nuts for roofing, galvanised or black .. .. .	..	2 0	"	"
	" Old	cwt.	2 0	"	"
	" pipes and tubes, including fittings therefor, such as bends, hooks, elbows, tees, sockets, flanges and the like .. .. .	..	"	"	"
	" rice-boilers .. .. .	..	"	"	"
	" ridging and guttering .. .. .	..	"	"	"
	" rivets and washers, all sorts .. .. .	..	"	"	"
	" wire, including fencing wire and wire rope, but excluding wire netting .. .. .	..	"	"	"
	" cans, tinned, when imported containing petroleum, which is separately assessed to duty at one anna per Imperial gallon under No. 16	can.	0 3	Five	per cent.
	" all other sorts, including wire-netting .. .. .	..	<i>ad valorem</i>	"	"
	Lametta .. .. .	..	"	"	"
	Lead all sorts (except sheets for tea-chests, which are free) .. .. .	..	"	"	"
	Quicksilver .. .. .	..	"	"	"
	Shan, bird	lb.	1 9	"	"
	"	cwt.	15 0	"	"
	Silver bullion or coin except current coin of the Government of India which is free .. .. .	..	<i>ad valorem</i>	"	"
	Steel, anchors and cables .. .. .	..	<i>ad valorem</i>	"	"
	" blooms .. .. .	..	"	"	"
	" angle, T, and channel	ton.	100 0	"	"
	" " " and hoop if galvanised, tinned, or lead-coated .. .. .	..	<i>ad valorem</i>	"	"
	" bars and strips (other than cast steel)	ton.	100 0	"	"
	" nail-rod, round, rod, and square, under ½ inch in diameter	"	105 0	"	"

SCHEDULE IV.—(IMPORT TARIFF)—*contd.*GENERAL DUTIES—*contd.*

No.	Names of Articles.	Per.	Tariff Valuation.	Duty.
	Metals and Manufactures of Metals—<i>contd.</i>		Rs. As.	
15	METALS, unwrought and wrought, and articles made of metals—<i>contd.</i>			
	Steel, bar, galvanised, tinted or lead-coated ...	...	<i>ad valorem</i> .	Five per cent.
	" plates above ½ inch thick ...	ton.	100 0 "	"
	" sheets up to ½ ...	"	115 0 "	"
	" plates, sheets, other than corrugated strips, if galvanised, tinted, lead-coated, or planished ...	...	<i>ad valorem</i> .	"
	" sheets, corrugated, galvanised or black ...	ton.	150 0 "	"
	" hoop ...	"	135 0 "	"
	" nails ...	...	<i>ad valorem</i> .	"
	" nuts and bolts, also hooks and nuts for roofing, galvanised or black ...	ton.	130 0 "	"
	" old ...	...	"	"
	" beam, joists, pillars, girders, bridge-work, and other such descriptions of steel, imported exclusively for building purposes ...	...	<i>ad valorem</i> .	"
	" cast and blisters, including spring and tub steel ...	...	"	"
	" rigging and guttering ...	...	"	"
	" pipes and tubes, including fittings therefor, such as bends, boots, elbows, tees, sockets, flanges, and the like ...	...	"	"
	" rivets and washers, all sorts ...	...	"	"
	" wire, including fencing wire and wire rope, but excluding wire-netting ...	...	"	"
	" cans, tinted, when imported containing petroleum, which is separately assessed to duty at one anna per imperial gallon under No. 16 ...	...	0 3 "	"
	" all other sorts, including wire-netting ...	...	<i>ad valorem</i> .	"
	" Tin, black ...	cwt.	105 0 "	"
	" foil, and other sorts ...	...	<i>ad valorem</i> .	"
	" Zinc or spelter, nails ...	cwt.	19 0 "	"
	" " tiles or slabs, soft ...	...	"	"
	" " plates and other shapes, hard ...	"	16 0 "	"
	" " all other sorts, including boiler tiles ...	...	<i>ad valorem</i> .	"
	" all other sorts of metals ...	...	"	"
	Oils.			
16	PETROLEUM, including also naphtha and the liquids commonly known by the names of rock-oil, Rangoon oil, Burma oil, Kerosene, paraffin oil, mineral oil, petroleum, gasoline, benzol, benzoline, kerosin, and any inflammable liquid which is made from petre-			

SCHEDULE IV.—(IMPORT TARIFF)—*contd.*GENERAL DUTIES—*contd.*

No.	Names of Articles.	per.	Tariff Valuation.	Duty.
	Oils—<i>contd.</i>		Rs. As.	
	leum coal, schist, shale, peat, or any other bituminous substance, or from any products of petroleum ...	Imperial gallon.	...	One anna.
16	PETROLEUM, which has its flashing point at or above two hundred degrees of Fahrenheit's thermometer and is proved to the satisfaction of the Customs Collector to be intended for use exclusively for the heating of stoves or other fires, or for lubricating purposes ...	...	<i>ad valorem</i> .	Five per cent.
	" which has its flashing point at or above one hundred and fifty degrees of Fahrenheit's thermometer and is proved to the satisfaction of the Customs Collector to be intended for use exclusively as fuel ...	...	"	"
	" Cocconut-oil ...	cwt.	20 0 "	"
	" All other sorts of oil animal or vegetable (including otto of all kinds), and mineral, including paraffin wax ...	...	<i>ad valorem</i> .	"
	Other Articles, unmanufactured and manufactured.			
17	APPAREL, including drapery, haberdashery, and millinery, and military and other uniforms and accoutrements, but excluding cotton-hosiery (for which see No. 30) and boots and shoes (for which see No. 45) and excluding also uniforms, and accoutrements appertaining thereto, imported by a public servant for his personal use, which are free ...	...	"	"
18	ART, WORKS OF, except (1) statutory and pictures intended to be put up for the public benefit in a public place, and (2) memorials of a public character intended to be put up in a public place, including the materials used, or to be used, in their construction, whether worked or not, which are free ...	...	<i>ad valorem</i> .	"
19	BAMBOOS, common, grass, hay, rushes, straw, and leaves ...	...	"	Free.
20	BOOKS, printed, including covers for printed books, maps, charts and plans, proofs, music, and manuscripts ...	...	"	"
21	BRISTLES AND FIBRE, for brushes and brooms ...	...	"	"

SCHEDULE IV.—(IMPORT TARIFF)—Contd.

GENERAL DUTIES—Contd.

No.	Names of Articles.	PER.	Tariff Valuation.	Duty.
	Other Articles, unmanufactured and manufactured—contd.		Rs. As.	
	regiment of His Majesty's regular forces serving in India, and certified by the officer commanding the regiment to be for the <i>bona fide</i> exclusive use of the regimental band, and the following accessories thereto, are also free of duty—			
	Silver buckles for drums. Castholders Buttons for drums. Cuirasses (brown or black). Green hoodlets for drums. Crooks. Green silk ribbons for drums. Cases (leather or wooden). Ropes for drums. Finger-ropes. Rings for trumpets. Mouthpieces and caps. Caps for trumpets. Barrels. Caps for trumpets. Reeds. Ribbons for trumpets. Springs. Pipe stands for trumpets. Rings. Valve tops and needles.			
42	IVORY AND IVORY-WARE—Unmanufactured—			
	Elephants' grinders	cwt.	350 0	Five Per cent.
	" tasks (other than hollows, centres, and points) each exceeding 20lb. in weight, and hollows, centres, and points each weighing 10lb. and over	"	750 0	"
	Elephants' tasks (other than hollows, centres and points) not less than 20lb. and not exceeding 20lb. each, and hollows, centres and points each weighing less than 10lb.	"	650 0	"
	Elephants' tasks, each less than 10lb. (other than hollows, centres, and points)	"	500 0	"
	Sea-cow or moyle teeth, each not less than 2lb.	"	200 0	"
	Sea-cow or moyle teeth, each not less than 1lb. and under 4lb.	"	185 0	"
	Sea-cow or moyle teeth, each not less than 2lb.	"	135 0	"
	All other sorts, manufactured and unmanufactured	"	ad valorem.	"
43	JEWELLERY AND JEWELS , including plate silverware and other manufactures of gold and silver—			
	embossed or chased } other than European } All other sorts, except precious stones and pearls, uncut, which are free—	tola.	1 0	"
	"	"	1 4	"
	"	"	ad valorem.	"
44	JUTE, raw	"	...	Free.
	" articles made of, except second hand or used gunny bags, which are free	"	ad valorem.	Five per cent.
45	LEATHER , and articles made of leather, including boots and shoes, harness and saddlery, except saddlery of a military pattern imported by an officer of His Majesty's regular forces and forming part of the equipment with which he is required to supply himself under Army Regulations, which is free	"	...	"

SCHEDULE IV.—(IMPORT TARIFF)—contd.

GENERAL DUTIES—contd.

No.	Names of Articles.	Per.	Tariff Valuation.	Duty.
	Other Articles, unmanufactured and manufactured—contd.			
46	MALT ... ..	...	ad valorem.	Five per cent.
47	MANURES of all kinds, including animal bones ... ..	...	...	Free
48	Oil, CAKE also bran, fodder, and cattle-food of all kinds ... ..	...	...	"
49	Oil-CLOTH and FLOOR-CLOTH , including lucrusta, lindetum, and tarpaulins ... ..	...	ad valorem.	Five per cent.
50	PAINTS COLOURS, PAINTERS' MATERIALS and compositions for application to leather wood, and metals—			
	Lead red, dry	cwt.	13 0	"
	whites dry	"	16 0	"
	Oxide, other than European, all colours	"	1 8	"
	Paints, composition ... ..	...	ad valorem.	"
	" patent driers ... ..	...	Imperial gallon.	3 0
	Verdigris ... ..	...	ad valorem.	"
	Vermillion, Canton ... ..	...	box of 50 bundles.	107 0
	Zinc white dry ... ..	...	ad valorem.	"
	All other sorts, including glue and putty ... ..	...	"	"
51	PAPER, PASTEBORD, MILLBOARD, AND CARD BOARD of all kinds, including ruled or printed forms and account and manuscript books tables, advertising circulars sheet or card almanacs, and calendars, Christmas, Easter, and other cards including card in booklet form, and including also waste paper and old newspapers for packing, but excluding trade catalogues and advertising circulars imported by packet, book or parcel post, which are free.	...	...	"
	" articles made of paper and papier-maché	...	"	"
52	PERFUMERY—			
	Glow's haked and unhusked	cwt.	40 0	"
	Kaputachri (zodany)	"	14 8	"
	Patch leaves (patchouli)	"	23 0	"
	Rose-flowers, dried	"	15 8	"
	Rose-water ... ..	...	Imperial gallon.	2 0
	All other sorts, except perfumed spirit (for which see Schedule III)	...	ad valorem	"
53	PITCH, TAR, AND DAMMER—			
	Bilumen ... ..	...	"	"
	Dammer	cwt.	5 0	"
	Pitch, American and European	cwt.	ad valorem.	"
	" coal	cwt.	3 8	"
	Tar, American and European	"	6 8	"
	" coal	"	4 0	"
	" mineral ... ..	...	ad valorem	"

SCHEDULE IV.—(IMPORT TARIFF)—*contd.*GENERAL DUTIES—*contd.*

No.	Names of Articles.	Per.	Tariff Valuation.	Duty.
	Other Articles, unmanufactured and manufactured—<i>contd.</i>		Rs. As.	
54	PLANTS AND BULBS, living, also dried for herbaria ... ..	...	...	Free.
55	PRECIOUS STONES AND PEARLS, unset (including the stones generically known as Cambay stones such as agates, corallians, and onyx) ... ..	...	...	"
56	PULP of wood, straw, rags, paper, and other materials ... ..	...	...	"
57	PRINTING AND LITHOGRAPHING MATERIAL, namely, presses, type, ink, brass rules, composing sticks, chases, imposing tables, and lithographic stones, and stereo-plates, but not including paper ... ..	...	...	"
58	RAGS ... ..	...	...	"
59	RACKS for the withering of tea leaf ... ..	...	...	"
60	RAILWAY MATERIAL for permanent way and rolling-stock, namely, cylinders, girders and other material for bridges, rails, sleepers, bearing and fish-plates, fish-bolts, chairs, spikes, crossings, sleeper fastenings, switches, interlocking apparatus, brake gear, couplings and springs, signals, turn-tables, weigh bridges, engines, tenders, carriages, wagons, tractors, trolleys, trucks, and component parts thereof; also the following articles when imported by or under the orders of a railway company, namely, cranes, water cranes, water tanks, and standards, wire and other materials for fencing. Provided that for the purpose of this exemption "railway" means a line of railway subject to the provisions of the Indian Railways Act, 1850, and includes a railway constructed in a Native State under the suzerainty of His Majesty, and also such tramways as the Governor-General in Council may, by notification in the <i>Gazette of India</i> , specifically include therein ... ..	...	...	"
61	SEEDS— Castor	cwt.	4 8	Five per cent.
	Cammin	"	11 8	"
	black	"	<i>ad valorem</i>	"
	Linseed	cwt.	5 0	"
	Mesti	"	4 0	"
	Mustard, rape, or sarson	"	6 0	"
	Poppy	"	5 0	"
	Chince, bhiliani	"	52 0	"
	Til or jingili	"	6 0	"
	All other sorts	"	<i>ad valorem</i>	"

SCHEDULE IV.—(IMPORT TARIFF)—*contd.*GENERAL DUTIES—*contd.*

No.	Names of Articles.	Per.	Tariff Valuation.	Duty.
	Other Articles, unmanufactured and manufactured—<i>contd.</i>		Rs. As.	
62	SHELLS AND COWRIES— Chanks—large shells, for cameos	<i>ad valorem</i>		Five per cent.
	" white, live	"	"	"
	" dead	"	"	"
	Cowries	"	3 8	"
	Cowries, bazar, common	cwt.	5 8	"
	" yellow, superior quality	"	3 0	"
	" Maldiva	"	5 8	"
	" gaudula	"	56 0	"
	Mother-of-pearl nares	"	60 0	Five per cent.
	Nahala	cwt.		"
	Tortoise shell	lb.	7 0	"
	" nahk	"	4 0	"
	All other sorts, including articles made of shell not otherwise described	<i>ad valorem</i>		"
63	SHIPS AND OTHER VESSELS for inland and harbour navigation, including steamers, steam-launches, boats, and barges, imported entire or in sections ... ..	...	...	Free.
64	SILK AND ARTICLES MADE OF SILK— Bokhara	lb.	9 0	Five per cent.
	Floss	<i>ad valorem</i>		"
	Piece goods	"	"	"
	Sewing thread China	"	"	"
	Raw silk—Chidaura, Cochia China, and yellow Shanghai	lb.	5 12	"
	Mulow	"	8 12	"
	Other kinds of China	"	6 8	"
	Waste and Kachra	<i>ad valorem</i>		"
	Panjan	lb.	2 0	"
	Persian	"	5 0	"
	Siam	"	2 0	"
	All other sorts, including cocoons	<i>ad valorem</i>		"
65	SOAP ... ..	...	...	"
66	SPECIMENS ILLUSTRATIVE OF NATURAL SCIENCE, including also antique coins and medals ... ..	...	...	Free.
67	STATIONERY, excluding paper (for which see No. 51)	<i>ad valorem</i>		Five per cent.
68	STONE AND MARBLE, and articles made of stone and marble ... ..	...	...	"
69	TALLOW AND GREASE including sterine	"	"	"
70	TEA CHESTS of metal or wood, whether imported entire or in sections, provided that the Customs Collector is satisfied that they are imported for the purpose of the packing of tea for transport in bulk ... ..	...	...	Free.

quent Acts, were imposed on sugar imported from the following countries, which have since adhered to the Convention :—

Germany	...No. 5720 S. R.,	dated the 15th December 1899.
Belgium	... „ 6524 S. R.,	„ „ 28th December 1900.
Austria-Hungary	... „ 573 S. R.,	„ „ 1st February 1901.
Italy	... „ 4110 S. R.,	„ „ 1st August 1901.
France	... „ 5502 S. R.,	„ „ 16th October 1902.
Holland	... „ 3494 S. R.,	„ „ 11th June 1903.

4. The countervailing duties which still remain in force were imposed by the Notifications quoted below :—

Duties under section 8 A of the Act :—

Denmark	.. Notification No. 1327 S. R.,	dated the 20th March 1899.
Chile	... „ „ 2280 S. R.,	„ „ 10th May 1900.
Argentine Republic	.. „ „ 3374 S. R.,	„ „ 20th June 1901.

Duties under section 8 B :—

Denmark	...) Notification No. 2026 S. R.,	dated the 25th March 1904, as amended by
Argentine Republic	...)	
Russia	...) Notification No. 2081 S. R.,	dated the 29th March 1904.

5. I am to point out that, as Notification No. 7251 S. R., dated the 2nd December 1903, has been cancelled, the only certificates which importers will now be required to produce are those prescribed in the revised rules published as Customs Circular No. X of 1904.

Notification—By the Government of India, Department of Commerce and Industry No. 535 dated 11th March 1905.

In exercise of the power conferred by section 9 of the Indian Tariff Act, 1894 (VIII of 1894), the Governor-General in Council is pleased to cancel the following Notifications of the Government of India, namely :—

No. 5720 S. R.,	dated the 15th December 1899.
„ 6524 S. R.,	„ „ 28th „ 1900.
„ 573 S. R.,	„ „ 1st February 1901.
„ 4110 S. R.,	„ „ 1st August 1901.
„ 5502 S. R.,	„ „ 16th October 1902.
„ 3494 S. R.,	„ „ 11th June 1903.
„ 7249 S. R.,	„ „ 2nd December 1903.
„ 7251 S. R.,	„ „ 2nd „ 1903.
„ 7699 S. R.,	„ „ 24th „ 1903.

Customs Circular No V of 1905.

Notification.—By the Government of India in the Department of Commerce and Industry, No. 535, dated the 10th March 1905.

In exercise of the powers conferred by section 8-A, sub-section (2) and section 8-B, sub-section (3), of the Indian Tariff Act, 1894 (VIII of 1894), as amended by Acts XIV of 1899, VIII of 1902 and XI of 1904, the Governor-General in Council is pleased to direct that the following amendment shall be made in the rules for the identification of sugar published in the Notification of the Government of India in the Finance Department, No. 4459-S.R., dated the 14th August 1902, as amended by the Notification in that Department, No. 5202 Exc., dated the 15th August 1904, namely :—

For forms G and H substitute the following forms, namely :—

FORM G.

Declaration by the Exporter or Shipper at a Foreign Port as to the Origin of Sugar produced in the Country from which it was exported either to the United Kingdom, or direct to India.

[Rule 7, sub-head (f).]

I, A. B.,
 declare that the consignment of _____ cwt. of ^{best}/_{raw} sugar
 of _____ degrees of polarization, in _____ bags,
 marked and addressed as follows :—
 and shipped on _____, 1905, per steamer _____
 & Co. of (a) _____, consigned to Messrs. _____
 was produced in (b) _____, ^{(c) Insert name of}
 _____, ^{port in}
 _____, ^{the United Kingdom.}
 _____, ^{India.}
 _____, ^{(d) Insert name of}
 _____, ^{country of export.}

Certified that I believe the above Declaration to be true.

Signature of Consul at Foreign Port of Exportation.

FORM H.

Declaration by the Exporter or Shipper at a Foreign Port as to the Origin of Sugar produced elsewhere than in the Country of Export.

[Rule 7, sub-head (H).]

I, A. B., declare that the consignment of sugar, of degrees of polarization, in bags, marked and addressed as follows: and shipped on 190, per steamer

(a) Insert name of consignee to Messrs. & Co. of (d), port in the United Kingdom was produced (b) and exported thence in bond on the transit through (c) for

(e) Insert name of country for shipment to India.

(f) Insert name of country, I produce and annex to this Declaration the bills of lading and other relevant documents attested by the Customs and other officials at (e) and at (f).

(g) Insert name of place whence the sugar was exported in transit.

(h) Insert port of shipment.

Signature of the Exporter or Shipper. Certified that I have examined the documents mentioned and believe the foregoing Declaration to be true.

Signature of Consul at Foreign Port of Exportation.

Customs Circular No. VI of 1905.

Notification—By the Government of India, Department of Commerce and Industry, No. 4787—18-2, dated the 6th September 1905.

In exercise of the powers conferred by section 8 A of the Indian Tariff Act 1894 (VIII of 1894), as amended by Acts XIV of 1899 and XII of 1903, the Governor-General in Council is pleased to direct that in the schedule to the notification of the Government of India in the Finance and Commerce Department No. 1327 S. R.*

* Customs Circular No. VII dated the 20th March 1899, as amended by notification No. 3374 S. R.,† dated the 20th June 1901, for the entries in columns 2, 3 and 4 against "Argentine Republic," the following shall be substituted:—

All Kinds	Kinds of sugar.	Bounties bestowed, per cwt.	Additional duties to be levied, per cwt.
		Rs. A. P. 10 15 8	Rs. A. P. 10 15 8
...

Notification—By the Government of India, Department of Commerce and Industry No. 4794—18-3, dated the 6th September 1905.

In exercise of the powers conferred by section 8 B, sub-section (1) of the Indian Tariff Act, 1894 (VIII of 1894), as amended by Acts VIII of 1902 and XI of 1904, the Governor-General in Council is pleased to direct that in the schedule to the notification of the Government of India in the Finance and Commerce Department, No. 2026-S. R., dated the 25th March 1904, for the entries in columns 2, 3 and 4 against "Argentine Republic" the following shall be substituted:—

Kinds of Sugar.	Amount of excess, per cwt.	Rate of special duty, per cwt.
	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
Refined sugar or sugar polarising 96° and more	12 9 4	6 0 2
Unrefined sugar or sugar polarising less than 96°	9 1 6	4 8 9
Sugar candy	6 5 6	3 2 9

Customs Circular No. VII of 1905.

Resolution—By the Government of India, Department of Commerce and Industry, No. 5528—59-6, dated the 3rd October 1905.

The Government of India have recently had under consideration the "Rules for the exemption of passenger's baggage from Customs duty," which were issued with the Resolution in the Finance and

Commerce Department, No. 399-S. R., dated the 19th January 1904. These rules have not in practice been found sufficiently definite to preclude the growth of considerable diversity in their application at the various Customs ports; and the concessions granted have been abused to a considerable extent by certain sections of the travelling public. Exemption has been claimed under the rules in respect of articles, such as pianos and motor cars, which are not "baggage" in the ordinary acceptation of the term; and it has been represented that this undue liberality in the present rules is not only prejudicial to the interests of British Indian retail dealers, but also occasions a large loss of legitimate revenue, and widens the scope of the concessions to a much greater extent than the convenience of the public demands.

2. For these reasons the Government of India are of opinion, after consulting the Maritime Local Governments, that the present rules are unduly liberal, and they have decided that they should now be revised in such a manner that, while adequately safeguarding the revenue, and affording reasonable protection to traders resident in India, the practice in respect of the examination of baggage will not be so rigid as to occasion undue inconvenience to passengers. The

From Chamber, to Calcutta Marine Insurance Agents' Association.

No. 226-1905.—CALCUTTA, 15th February 1905.

Rate of Exchange for Marine Insurance Policies.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 3-P of 13th January 1905, proposing that the rate of Exchange for Marine Insurance Policies should for the future be fixed at the standard rate of *1s. 4d.* instead of, as hitherto, at fluctuating rates of the market.

As the result of a reference to members of the Chamber on the subject, I am directed to state that the Committee of the Chamber see no objection to the proposal.

From Calcutta Marine Insurance Agents' Association, to Chamber.

No. 16-P.—CALCUTTA, 18th February 1905.

Rate of Exchange for Marine Insurance Policies.

I am instructed by the Committee of the Calcutta Marine Insurance Agents' Association to thank you for your letter No. 226-1905 of 15th instant, intimating that the Committee of the Chamber, as the result of a reference to its members, see no objection to the proposal to adopt a standard rate of exchange of *1s. 4d.* in future for Marine Insurance Policies, instead of the fluctuating market rates heretofore advertised.

It is proposed to give effect to the change from the beginning of next month

SCALE OF PROVISIONS FOR ARAB AND OTHER NATIVE SEAMEN.

From Government of Bengal, to Chamber.

No. 451-MNE.—CALCUTTA, 14th March 1905.

I am directed to forward, for the information of the Chamber, the enclosed copy of a correspondence regarding the scale of provisions to be allowed to

1. Letter to the Government of India No. 237-Mne dated the 10th February 1904.
2. Letter from the Government of India No. 1648-S. R. dated the 14th March 1904.
3. Letter to the Government of India No. 26-T. Marine dated the 23rd April 1904.
4. Letter from the Government of India No. 7568-S. R., dated the 2nd December 1904.
5. Letter to the Government of India No. 210-Marine, dated the 4th February 1905, and its enclosure.
6. Letter from the Government of India No. 433, dated the 6th March 1905.

Arab and other Native seamen who may be engaged on the understanding that they will be supplied with rations according to the European scale, and to request that you will be so good as to favour the Government with

the views of the Chamber on the points referred to in paras: 2 and 3 of the letter from the Government of India No. 433 dated the 6th instant.

No. 237-MNE.—10th February 1904.

From—The Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Marine Department,

To—The Secretary to the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department,

In paragraph 2 of your letter No. 351 S. R., of the 16th January 1904, it is requested that orders may be issued with the object of preventing the engagement at any British Indian port in the province of Bengal, under the ordinary articles applicable to British seamen, of Arabs, natives of Aden. The Government of India also desire to be informed of the steps taken to prevent the occurrence of the cases referred to in the papers forwarded with your letter.

2. I am directed to explain that in prohibiting the engagement of Arabs on European articles, the interests of the Mercantile Marine would appear to be interfered with. The Arab is acknowledged to be the best fireman procurable, and the fact that he commands from the Port of Calcutta the same wages and rations as the European, proves his work. To ship him off Indian articles will probably not affect his wages, but in the way of rations he will not be entitled to anything in excess of the scale for lascars sanctioned by the Government of India under section 27 of Act V of 1883; and as Arabs prefer the more substantial food of Europeans they will soon realise the situation, and in future, when signing

articles, declare themselves to be residents of some place other than Aden, which will enable them to engage on European articles.

3. It would, therefore, appear to be desirable that Arabs should be permitted to sign on European articles as hitherto with the introduction, if it is possible under the law, of the stipulation that in the event of their services ending at any port out of British India, fit employment should be provided for them on board a ship bound to some port in British India or that passage should be provided free of charge to some port in British India.

4. Before, therefore, giving effect to the orders confirmed in paragraph 2 of the letter under reply, I am to ask that this aspect of the question may receive the further consideration of the Government of India, and that the Lieutenant-Governor may be informed of the decision come to. The other points referred to in paragraphs 1 and 3 are receiving attention.

No. 1648-S. R.—14th March 1904.

From—The Secretary to the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department.

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

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 237-Marine, dated the 10th February 1904, regarding the shipment

A Proceedings for February of Arab seamen, who are natives of Aden, under European Articles. You represent that the orders conveyed in paragraph 2

of the letter from this Department, No. 351-S. R., dated the 16th January 1904, will probably interfere prejudicially with the interests of the Mercantile Marine, and you request that, before giving effect to these orders, this aspect of the question may be considered by the Government of India.

2. In reply, I am to point out that section 29 of the Indian Merchant Shipping Act, V of 1883, is mandatory; Arabs born at Aden are natives of India within the meaning of that Act, and it is therefore imperative that in all cases where such seamen are engaged for voyages to ports not in India, a stipulation must be inserted in the agreement providing for their return to some Indian port. No such stipulation is contained in the European Articles of agreement.

3. With reference to paragraph 2 of your letter, I am to say that section 27 of the Act merely prescribes a minimum scale of rations. Any seamen shipped under Native Articles is at liberty to stipulate for food in excess of this scale; and probably no practical difficulty would be experienced even if Arab seamen before engaging under Native Articles, insisted on receiving the scale of diet usually given to European sailors. The scales are essentially different, however; and should the Government of Bengal consider this necessary, the Government of India will be prepared to consider the advisability of adding to the "foreign-going scale" a note to

SCALE OF PROVISIONS FOR ARAB AND OTHER NATIVE SEAMEN. 191

the effect that a lascar or native seaman may by agreement with the master, consent to receive the same scale of diet as is given to European members of the crew, in which case the prescribed scale for native seamen would be inapplicable.

4. In these circumstances, I am to say that the orders issued in paragraph 2 of my letter of the 16th January last appear to be unobjectionable; and the Government of India do not propose to modify them.

No. 26-T.-MNE.—23rd April 1904.

From—The Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Marine Department.

To—The Secretary to the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department.

With reference to correspondence ending with your letter No. 1648-S.R., of 14th March last, I am directed to state that the Shipping Masters at Calcutta and Chittagong have been informed that Arabs, natives of Aden, are natives of India within the meaning of section 29 of the Merchant Shipping Act, V of 1883, and that, in future, no such Arab seamen must be shipped under the ordinary Articles applicable to British seamen.

2. To enable these seamen to be supplied with rations on the European scale, to which they have hitherto been accustomed, I am to say that the Lieutenant-Governor is of opinion that it is desirable to add a note to the "foreign-going scale" that a lascar or native seaman may by agreement with the master, consent to receive the same scale of diet as is given to European members of the crew.

3. In paragraph 3 of your letter No. 351 S.-R., of 16th January 1904, the Government of India ask to be favoured with the opinion of the Lieutenant-Governor

A Proceedings for February as to the desirability of securing the application of sections 125 and 135 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, to persons commonly designated East Indians or Eurasians of mixed race or to other classes of persons having their homes in India. I am to say that the Lieutenant-Governor has consulted the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and the Imperial Anglo-Indian Association as to the desirability of the steps suggested and both these bodies are unanimously against the sections of the Merchant Shipping Act referred to being made applicable to seamen of the domiciled community. I am to enclose a copy of these opinions and to say that the Lieutenant-Governor accepts the conclusions arrived at, and considers that it is unnecessary to make any change in the present interpretation of the law.

No. 7468-S.R.—and December 1904.

From—The Secretary to the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department,

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

I am directed to refer to the correspondence ending with your letter No. 207/Marine dated the 31st April 1904, on the subject of crew on foreign-going ships.

2. In reply, I am to say that, on a reconsideration of the question, the Government of India are of opinion that the course suggested in paragraph 3 of Mr. Mait's letter No. 1648-S.R. dated the 14th March 1904, would be inconsistent with the provisions of the Indian Merchant Shipping Act, 1883 (V of 1883). That section enacts that the minimum number of native seamen shall be fixed, and published by the Local Government with the previous sanction of the Governor-General in Council; and it is considered that these requirements would not be satisfied by allowing native seamen to agree to receive such provisions as may hereafter be given to the European seamen on board any particular ship.

3. I am accordingly to suggest that an alternative scale of provisions for native seamen, who are accustomed to receive that as European members of the crew may with the permission of His Majesty's Government, Governor, be drawn up, and submitted for the formal sanction of the Governor-General in Council.

No. 210-MINE.—14th February 1905.

From—The Secretary to the Government of Bengal,

To—The Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Finance and Commerce.

With reference to para. 3 of your letter No. 7468-S.R. dated the 2nd instant, I am directed to submit, for the sanction of the Government of India, the accompanying draft of a scale of provisions for Arab seamen, natives of Aden, who are accustomed to receive the rate allowed to European members of a crew.

**SCALE OF PROVISIONS
TO BE ALLOWED AND SERVED OUT TO ARAB SEAMEN, NATIVES OF ADEN, ENGAGING TO SERVE ON
FOREIGN-GOING SHIPS.**

NOTE.—The quantity and nature of the Provisions are a matter for agreement between Master and Crew, but the scale below prescribes the minimum quantity to be allowed to each Seaman.

The scale agreed upon is in addition to the Lime and Lemon Juice and Sugar, or other Anti-Scorbutics, in any case required by the Act.

	Salt Bread.	Biscuits.	Salt Beef.	Salt Pork.	Preserved Meat.	Potatoes or Yams.	Vegetables.	Flour.	Indian Beans.	Rice.	Onion.	Tea.	Coffee.	Cocon.	Sugar.	Marmalade.	Butter.	Starch.	Milk, Condensed.	Figs, pre-served or fresh.	Apples, tinned.	Bacon.	Water.	
Sunday	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4
Monday	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4
Tuesday	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4
Wednesday	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4
Thursday	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4
Friday	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4
Saturday	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4
Weekly	4	3	3	2	7	7	7	2	6	3	6	4	4	11	14	4	4	4	4	4	8	4	28	

Raisins 1 oz., currants 1 oz., dried figs 1 oz., apple rings 1 oz., weekly.

Fine salt 2 oz., mustard $\frac{1}{2}$ oz., pepper $\frac{1}{2}$ oz., chicory $\frac{1}{2}$ oz., curry-powder $\frac{1}{2}$ oz., and onions 3 oz., weekly.

In harbour soft bread is always to be issued.

Within the tropics $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. preserved meat, or 3 lbs. fresh meat, is to be substituted for the 2 lbs. salt pork.

In sailing ships after six weeks from home ports 1 lb. preserved potatoes may be substituted for 7 lbs. fresh potatoes.

Fresh vegetables may be substituted in the proportion of $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. to the ounce of preserved vegetables.

Stokehold hands to receive oatmeal and 1 quart water extra daily while under steam.

Substitutes and Equivalents—not to be used without reasonable cause.

Fresh meat	1 lb.	To be	Flour	1 lb.	To be	Raisins	} In equal quantities.	
Salt meat	1 lb.	considered	Biscuit	1 lb.	considered	Currants		
Preserved meat	2 lb.	equal.	Rice	1 lb.	equal.	Dried figs		
						Apple rings		
Coffee	6 oz.	} Ditto.	Split peas	6 oz.	} When issued with meat rations.	Marmalade	8 oz.	
Cocoa	12 oz.		Flour	12 lb.			Jam	6 lb.
Tea	12 lb.		Rice	12 lb.				

In port $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. fresh meat and $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. fresh vegetables daily in lieu of salt, and preserved meat and preserved vegetables whenever procurable at prices not excessive.

NOTE.—If this Scale is not adopted it should be detached, and the Master should then have a statement of the quantity and nature of the provisions which it may be agreed to furnish to each seaman day by day inserted in the vacant space.

No. 433.—6th March 1905.

From—The Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Commerce and Industry.

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

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 210-Marine, dated the 4th February 1905, with which you forwarded a draft of a scale of provisions which it is proposed to prescribe for Arab seamen, natives of Aden, who are accustomed to receive the diet allowed to European sailors.

2. Before passing final orders in the matter the Government of India would be glad to learn whether the Bengal Chamber of Commerce has been consulted as to the suitability of the scale proposed. If this has not already been done, I am to request that, with the permission of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, the opinion of the Chamber may now be obtained and communicated for the information of the Government of India.

3. I am also to point out that, as it is proposed to limit the application of the scale to Arab seamen who are natives of Aden, native seamen, not being Arab natives of Aden, must still in all cases receive diet according to the ordinary scale. The Government of India are doubtful whether this restriction will not occasion some inconvenience in actual practice, in view of the facts reported in your letter No. 237 (Marine), dated the 10th February 1904, and they are disposed to think that the scale which it is now proposed to prescribe might suitably be made applicable to all lascars and native seamen, who, by agreement with the ship's master, are engaged on the understanding that they shall receive diet according to the European scale. I am to suggest that the opinion of the Chamber of Commerce should also be obtained regarding this matter.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (MARINE).

No. 657-1905.—CALCUTTA, 15th April 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 461-Marine, of 14th March, forwarding copy of official correspondence with the Government of India with regard to the scale of provisions to be allowed to Arab and other native seamen engaged on the understanding that they will be supplied with rations according to European scale. You request that the Committee will furnish the Government of Bengal with their views on the points raised in paragraphs 2 and 3 of letter No. 433 of 6th March from the Government of India.

2. I am instructed by the Committee to say that, after giving their careful consideration to the questions raised in the correspondence, they are strongly of opinion that any such proposals as are detailed in paragraph 3 of the Government of India letter above referred to are most undesirable and they deprecate any alterations being

SCALE OF PROVISIONS FOR ARAB AND OTHER NATIVE SEAMEN. 195

made in connection with the scale of diet for native seamen of any description. Native crews include Goanese Christians, Hindus and Mahomedans, all of whom at present accept and are content with their present rations. If they once achieve the idea that by bargaining they can obtain better rations, discontent and consequent demoralisation will result. The scale proposed is ample and in many instances more than adequate; and the Committee have only to suggest that if Aden Arabs must have European rations, they should sign European articles which could, however, include a condition countersigned by the Shipping Master that they were entitled to a passage back to India. The Committee would point out that the alternative scale suggested for Aden Arab seamen has apparently been drafted without consideration of their prejudices, as they notice that pork is included in it.

From Government of Bengal (MARINE), to Chamber.

No. 35-T. MNE.—DARJEELING, 4th May 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 657-1905 of 15th ultimo, on the subject of the scale of provisions to be allowed to Arab and other native Seamen shipped from India.

2. In the concluding lines of para. 2 the Chamber "suggest" that if Aden Arabs must have European rations, they should sign "European articles which could, however, include a condition countersigned by the Shipping Master that they are entitled to a passage back to India." With reference to this I am to refer the Chamber to para. 2 of the letter No. 1648-S.R., of 14th March 1904 a copy of which was forwarded to you with my No. 461-Mne. of 14th March 1905. It will be seen that the Government of India have decided that Arabs, natives of Aden, are natives of India within the meaning of Act V of 1883 and as a condition of repatriation must sign under Indian Articles. Under the circumstances I am to enquire whether, in the opinion of the Chamber, it is, or is not, desirable that Aden Arabs should be allowed a special diet scale on Indian Articles.

3. With reference to the remarks of the Chamber on the alternative scale proposed by this Government, I am to forward for information a note, of 20th April last, by Commander Beaumont, Port Officer, Calcutta, on the subject.

Note, dated 20th April 1905, by Commander E. J. Beaumont, Port Officer, Calcutta.

I did not overlook the different sects named in the Chamber's letter. The crews for Calcutta are all Mahomedans with some Goanese in the saloon as servants. On the Bombay side the lascars from Surat are Hindus and those from Ratnagar are Mahomedans and they never mix. The native crews from here prefer their native rations and I do not anticipate the least difficulty as to bargaining for European rations particularly as the supply

of lascars and firemen is far in excess of the demand. Arabs, natives of India, who are accustomed to sign on European Articles eat pork and all that comes in their way. The fact of pork being included in the Articles will keep all Calcutta Mahomedans from asking for European rations.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (MARINE).

No. 876-1905.—CALCUTTA, 22nd May 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your further letter No. 35-T. Marine, of 4th May, with enclosure, on the subject of the scale of provisions to be allowed to Arabs, and other native seamen shipped from India.

2. In reply to the enquiry in paragraph 2 of your letter I am to say that the Committee of the Chamber do not consider it desirable that Aden Arabs should be allowed a special diet scale on Indian Articles.

HIRING OF THE BRIDGE FERRY STEAMERS.

From the P. & O. S. N. Co.; the B. I. S. N. Co.; and the Agents, City Line, to Chamber.

CALCUTTA, 5th April 1905.

The attached copy of a memorial, jointly addressed by ourselves, to the Port Commissioners will bring to your notice a grievance from which the Passenger-carrying Lines from Calcutta as well as the Public are suffering at the present time and to remove which we solicit the powerful assistance of the Chamber.

The Port Commissioners as you are aware have decided to erect a suitable Pontoon for the landing and embarking of passengers, as provided in other ports, and have been good enough, pending its completion, to allow Shipping Companies to hire their Bridge Ferry Steamers (when not otherwise engaged) for the purpose of taking off their passengers when, as it occasionally happens, the incoming Ocean Liner cannot get alongside the Town Jetties and also for putting on board the outgoing vessels, when lying in Garden Reach, the passengers who would otherwise have to undergo the inconvenience of boarding the Liner in the Docks. This concession has been greatly appreciated by the public, the Commissioners' vessels being admirably fitted for this work, and also by the Shipping Companies who find their work much more easily and quickly performed than hitherto.

Recently, however, a protest has been made against this facility being offered to the public, the objection being it is understood, raised by the Calcutta Steam Navigation Company who own some vessels which the Liners had formerly, in default of any more suitable or better steamers, been obliged to hire for the purpose of landing and shipping passengers. The Port Commissioners, it need hardly be said, would not have offered their Ferry Steamers had the Liners been satisfied with the C. S. N. launches or had that Company provided clean, full powered and up-to-date vessels suitable for the work and, moreover, in such case the Liners would have desired no change. The present objection is therefore, in the opinion of the undersigned, unwarrantable as there has been no enterprise shown with which the Port Commissioners have interfered.

CALCUTTA, 4th March 1905.

From—The P. & O. S. N. Co.; the B. I. S. N. Co.; and the Agents, City Line,

To—The Vice-Chairman, Port Commissioners, Calcutta.

As representing the regular passenger lines trading to Calcutta we learn with very great regret that the Port Commissioners have decided to withdraw the privilege of allowing passengers to be landed and embarked by the steamers "Buckland" and "Howrah"

when it has not been possible for the Ocean Steamer to disembark or embark passengers along side a Jetty Quay. The public have greatly appreciated the comfort and convenience afforded by these vessels, and we submit that it will be a great hardship if their use is now refused more especially as the passenger pontoon at Baboo Ghaut, the construction of which has been sanctioned, will not be ready for a considerable time.

If it were possible to hire elsewhere in Calcutta vessels as suitable or well arranged we should not press you to reconsider your decision but it is a matter of common knowledge that no craft so up-to-date are obtainable elsewhere for the purpose of landing and shipping passengers. The loan of the "Howrah" and "Buckland" cannot therefore in any way be said to interfere with private enterprise.

From Chamber, to Calcutta Port Commissioners.

No. 622-1905.—CALCUTTA, 10th April 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to forward, for the information of the Port Commissioners, copy of a joint letter of 5th April, from the Superintendent, India Steam Navigation Company Ltd. and the Agents, British Line of Steamers, in which the Committee are asked to support a memorial of which copy is enclosed, addressed to the Port Commissioners by these signatories, in which it is submitted that as shipping passengers by ocean-going vessels, the steamers "Buckland" and "Howrah" should be placed at the disposal of the Liners, at any rate until the new passenger pontoon which has been sanctioned by the Commissioners has been completed.

A contention has apparently been raised that such action on the part of the Port Commissioners would be undue interference with private enterprise, but as the only steamers available, privately owned, are not such as can be said to conduce to the comfort and convenience of passengers, otherwise the Port Commissioners would not have been asked, for the Committee do not see as the signatories the question of private enterprise arises, especially in view of suitable boats being provided by any private firm they will at once be prepared to hire them. Under these circumstances the Committee support the memorial in the public interest.

Copy with copy of letter and memorial referred to, forwarded to—

THE HON. MR. A. A. AFGAR.
MR. A. FORSYTH.
THE HON. MR. NALIN BEHARI SIRCAR, C.I.E.
MR. G. H. SUTHERLAND.
" JAS. TURNER.

for information.

Copy also forwarded to—

MR. FRANCIS MATHEWSON,
Superintendent, P. & O. S. N. Co.,
MESSRS. MACKINNON, MACKENZIE & CO.,
Agents, B. I. S. N. Co.
" GLADSTONE, WYLLIE & CO.,
Agents, City Line.

for information, with reference to ^{the} joint representation dated 5th April 1905.

W. PARSONS,
Secretary.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 11th April 1905.

From Calcutta Steam Navigation Co., Ltd., to Chamber.

No. 11462.—CALCUTTA, 12th May 1905.

We beg to enclose for the consideration of the Committee a copy of a letter addressed to the Government of Bengal on the subject of the hiring of the Bridge Ferry Steamers, and on the subject of the extension of the powers of the Port Commissioners proposed in the Port Act amendment Bill now before the Bengal Council.

The Chamber has always protested strongly against any encroachment by a Government Department on the sphere of private enterprise, and when we applied to the Government for protection in an exactly similar case, viz: the establishment by the East Indian Railway of a ferry at Azimganj, the Chamber supported our appeal by your letter No. 1228 '95 of the 11th October 1895.

In letter No. 5809 S. R. dated the 23rd November 1900 from the Secretary to the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department, to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Marine Department, it is stated that:—

"the Port Trust is not a Corporation doing business for the profit of shareholders; it is for all practical purposes a Department of Government."
and we trust that the Committee will consider that the recent action of the officers of the Port Trust is also "a committal of the State..... to an unnecessary and unwarranted competition with private enterprise" and will support us accordingly.

From Government of Bengal (MARINE), to Chamber.

No. 91-T/MNE. DARJEELING, 25th May 1905.

Copy of the following, with copy of letter under acknowledgement, forwarded, to the Secretary to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce,

* Vide page 731 of Chamber Report from 1st February-95 to 31st January 96, Vol. II.

for information in connection with the Bill at present before the Council for the amendment of the Calcutta Port Act:—

No. 89-T/MNE.—DARJEELING, 25th May 1905.

From—W. A. INGLIS, ESQ., Secretary to the Government of Bengal,

To—MESSRS. HOARE, MILLER & CO., Managing Agents, Calcutta Steam Navigation Co., Ltd.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your joint Memorial No. 11462 of 10th May 1905, protesting against any proposal of the Calcutta Port Commissioners to amend the Howrah Bridge Act III (B. C.) of 1880, so as to enable them to hire out the Bridge Steamers in competition with those of private Companies, and in reply to state that the Commissioners of the Port have not yet approached this Government in the matter. Should they decide to do so, the representation of the Inland Steamer Companies will receive due consideration.

No. 11462.—CALCUTTA, 10th May 1905.

From—The Calcutta Steamer Agents,

To—The Secretary, Government of Bengal, Marine Department.

We have the honor to invite your attention to the following statement:—

It has for some time been the practice for sea, going passenger steamers to leave the Kidderpore docks in the evening or the night, and to anchor in Garden Reach until a time of the tide next day suitable for the departure of the steamer. In order that passengers may not be compelled to embark in the evening and spend the night on board the steamer in the port, they have been conveyed on the following morning from one of the small jetties on the bank of the river by a river steamer. For the embarkation of passengers, the P. & O. and City lines usually hired a steamer from the Calcutta Steam Navigation Company Limited, and passengers proceeding by a British India Company's steamer, if too many to be embarked in that Company's own launch, were also embarked in a steamer hired from the Calcutta Steam Navigation Co.

In March 1904 the Port Commissioners decided that they would employ the steamers of the Howrah Bridge ferry by letting them out on hire at such times as they were not required on the bridge ferry, and it was announced that they would be available for the embarkation of passengers proceeding by the sea steamers.

The Calcutta Steam Navigation Co., Ltd., thereupon addressed a letter of protest to the Port Commissioners, pointing out that the with private enterprise. The unfairness of the competition of steamers of the Port Trust with privately owned steamers was also commented upon, and a reference was made to the fact that some

years before a similar protest had been made to the letting on hire of the ferry steamer "Buckland" in competition with the steamers of the C. S. N. Co., and that the objection was accepted, and that ferry steamer was never subsequently hired.

To this protest the Port Commissioners replied on the 13th April 1904, that it was not with the object of obtaining hire that the Commissioners were letting the steamers on hire, but because they considered it incumbent on them to provide for the comfort and safety of passengers by allowing the use of the ferry steamers for the embarkation and debarkation of passengers by the ocean-going steamers on occasions when those steamers could not themselves start direct from a jetty, and also that no steamers, privately owned or other, had before been employed on such work, and that consequently there could be no interference with private enterprise.

The Calcutta Steam Navigation Co., replied to this letter on the following day, traversing every statement in the Commissioners' letter, explicit and implicit, that had any relevance to the question at issue. It was explained that for several years the steamers of the C. S. N. Co., had been employed for embarking and landing passengers on and from ocean steamers, so that the statement in the Commissioners' letter that "no steamers privately owned, or other, have been before employed on such work," was incorrect. It is not understood, indeed, why the statement was made, as the writer must have been aware that it would be immediately contradicted. The C. S. N. Co., further stated that although it may be incumbent on the Port Commissioners, in the public interest, to provide for the comfort and safety of passengers proceeding to embark on an ocean steamer, there was no question in the present case of the provision of either greater comfort or greater safety than was already provided by the steamers of that Company, and that there was therefore no justification for the unfair competition of the steamers of the Port Commissioners providing precisely the same facilities at a price that would not give a private owner a return on his capital.

Repeated reminders failed to elicit any reply from the Secretary, Port Commissioners, and a letter to the Vice-Chairman on the 12th November 1904, asking him to take the matter up and have a reply sent, has likewise met with no response.

It was considered desirable to obtain a decision from the Commissioners withdrawing the ferry steamers from hiring, having regard only to the inequity of the interference with private enterprise, and without reference to the fact that they were breaking the law and "therefore" no mention was made of the latter fact. The attention of the Vice-Chairman having been lately directed to the matter, the Commissioners obtained the opinion of their Solicitor as to whether they were legally entitled to let the Howrah Bridge ferry steamers on hire. There was of course no real doubt about the legal position, the steamers having been constructed under Act III (B. C.) of 1880, by which the Port Commissioners can

"employ the same or any of them in towing vessels through
"the bridge, and generally in the service of the bridge, and
"also in carrying goods, merchandise, and passengers, to and

" from such places in Calcutta and Howrah as may from time to time be fixed by the Lieutenant-Governor."

We now observe from the newspaper reports that the Solicitor to the Port Commissioners having given his opinion, the Commissioners have decided to petition the Government to alter the existing law so as to permit the Commissioners to employ the bridge ferry steamers, in competition with private owners of steamers, in any way which may happen to seem desirable to the officers of the Port Trust.

On previous occasions when we have been forced to appeal against the unfair competition of a Government Department with our work, and have represented that the employment of the funds and resources of the State in competition with an ordinary trading Company is an unreasonable interference with private enterprise, we have invariably been granted protection. We may refer particularly to the case of the ferry at Azimganj, which the East Indian Railway attempted to establish in 1895, working side by side with a similar steamer belonging to the Calcutta Steam Navigation Company, maintaining precisely the same service for the public, and which the State owned railway was obliged to withdraw after the facts had been represented to the Government.

The present case is exactly parallel. The Calcutta Steam Navigation Company has for some years provided steamers for hire suitable for embarking passengers for the ocean steamers, and then the Port Trust, which in some respects may be regarded as for practical purposes a Department of Government, let the bridge ferry steamers on hire for the same service at one-third the rate. Naturally the Ocean Steamer Company engaged the bridge ferry steamer, as this was provided at a rate of hire that no private owner could compete with, being not more than one-fourth of what a private owner would require for a steamer of the same cost. When the Port Commissioners decided that they could not continue to hire out the bridge ferry steamers, the Ocean Steam Ship Companies protested and stated, among other things, that the bridge ferry steamers are much more suitable for the work being faster, higher powered, and more "up-to-date." The facts are that the steamer of the Calcutta Steam Navigation Company chiefly referred to is the steamer which worked for three years on the Howrah Bridge ferry, and in their salient features which specially fit them for the purpose of conveying passengers to and from ocean steamers, viz. the long upper deck and convenience of handling, the present bridge ferry steamers have copied the steamer of the C. S. N. Co. The bridge ferry steamers are wider and have, therefore, more deck space. There are no other important differences: in each case the steering is by steam, and the steamers are of similar speed, and are in charge of a European Commander and Engineer. In what respect the bridge ferry steamer can be said to be more "up-to-date" we are not aware.

The Despatch steamers of the India General Navigation and Railway Co. and the Rivers Steam Navigation Co. are also suitable and are generally available for the business of passenger tenders to ocean-going steamers, and have occasionally been engaged by the P. & O. S. N. Co. for this purpose.

These vessels are of larger accommodation than those of the Port Commissioners ferry steamers and are, therefore, more desirable when large numbers of passengers have to be carried.

Recently the Port Commissioners asked for an amendment of the Port Act so as to enable them to compete with private companies in conveying passengers and goods across the river and to and from any places in the port, and a Bill has been introduced in the Bengal Council to give effect to this, and we enclose an extract from a letter addressed to the Chamber of Commerce on this subject.

The case of the bridge ferry steamers illustrates the spirit in which the officers of the Port Trust, acting conscientiously for what they conceive to be the interests of the Trust, may be expected to use any powers they may have, whenever a department of the Trust comes into conflict with the business of any private firm or agency. And we regard with apprehension the acquisition of additional powers by the Port Commissioners of the kind applied for and proposed, which will simply permit them to use the funds of the Trust, practically the resources of the State, in unfair competition with private firms and trading companies, and to employ the extensive powers possessed by the officers of the Trust to compass the speedy effacement of those with whom they find themselves in competition.

We are convinced that the work which the Port Commissioners propose to do under the powers asked for would in every case result either in a waste of the funds of the Trust by expenditure in unremunerative work, or in the destruction of a business now being conducted by a private firm, or Company and we accordingly submit that the granting of such powers is against the public interest. We are satisfied that the legitimate functions of the Port Trust, viz., the provision and maintenance of facilities for the trade of the port, afford ample scope for the energies of all its officers, and, until these are discharged with the utmost perfection and efficiency, we venture to suggest that it would be unwise, in the interests of the trade of the port, to extend them.

We enclose copies of correspondence between the C. S. N. Co. and the Port Commissioners, and also a copy of a letter addressed to the Secretary Bengal Chamber of Commerce on the Port Act amendment Bill now before the Bengal Council, to which we would specially invite attention.

HOARE, MILLER & Co.,
Managing Agents,
Calcutta Steam Navigation Co., Ld.
KILBURN & Co.,
Managing Agents,
I. G. Navigation & Ry. Co., Ld.
MACNEILL & Co.,
Agents,
Rivers Steam Navigation Co., Ld.
ANDREW YULE & Co.,
Managing Agents,
Bengal Assam Steam Ship Co., Ld.

SIMPSON & Co.,
Managing Agents,
 Calcutta Landing & Shipping Co., Ltd.,
 FRASER & Co.,
 GIRISH CHUNDER BOSE.

No. 11462.—CALCUTTA, 23rd March 1904.

From—MESSRS. HOARE, MILLER & CO., Managing Agents,
 Calcutta Steam Navigation Co., Ltd.,

To—The Secretary, Port Commissioners, Calcutta.

We observe that in the proceedings of the meeting of the Commissioners published in to-day's "Englishman" it is recorded that the Commissioners propose to let out the bridge ferry steamers on hire.

We beg to protest against the proposed hiring of the bridge ferry steamers in competition with the steamers owned by the Companies. It is an interference with private enterprise that we do not consider to be justified.

There are other steamers in the port quite as suitable, safe and convenient for the embarkation of passengers for sea steamers, and it is not fair that the steamers of the Port Trust should compete with privately owned steamers for business which such steamers can equally well undertake.

Some years ago, we protested against the hiring of the ferry steamer "Buckland" in competition with our steamers, and our objection was accepted and the steamer "Buckland" was never subsequently hired.

OFFICE OF THE CALCUTTA PORT COMMISSIONERS.

No. ⁴⁵³~~452~~—18th April 1904.

From—R. A. DONNITHORNE, ESQ., Secretary,

To—MESSRS. HOARE, MILLER & CO., Managing Agents,
 Calcutta Steam Navigation Co., Ltd.

Bridge Ferry Steamers.

I am directed to inform you that your letter, dated 23rd March 1904, in which you protest against the proposed hiring of the Bridge Ferry Steamers, was considered by the Commissioners at a meeting, held on the 5th instant.

2. In reply I am to say that it is not with the object of obtaining hire that the Commissioners have made the ferry steamers available, but because, in the public interests, it is incumbent on them to provide for the safety and comfort of passengers, and that so far the only arrangement that has been made is one under which the Commissioners have agreed to allow the B. I. S. N. Company the use of one of the new ferry boats for the embarkation and disembarkation

lation of passengers by their large ocean-going steamers, on occasions when those steamers cannot conveniently come alongside the pontoons; and as no steamers privately owned, or other, have been before employed on such work, it cannot be said that in making the ferry boats available, there will be any interference with private enterprise.

3. I am to add that the Commissioners are about to undertake the improvement of the landing places when the employment of boats will probably not be necessary, as the Burmah steamers, and probably others also, may then be hauled alongside the pontoons to embark and disembark their passengers.

No. 11462.—CALCUTTA, 19th April 1904.

From—MESSRS. HOARE, MILLER & CO., Managing Agents,
 Calcutta Steam Navigation Co., Ltd.,

To—The Secretary, Port Commissioners, Calcutta.

With reference to your letter No. 453 of 18th instant, received to-day, we beg to say the statement that "as no steamers privately owned, or other, have been before employed on such work, it cannot be said that in making the ferry boats available there will be any interference with private enterprise" is incomprehensible, as for several years the steamers of this Company have been employed for embarkation and landing passengers by sea steamers, including occasionally the Burmah mail steamers.

It may be incumbent on the Port Commissioners in the public interest to provide for the comfort and safety of such passengers, but in the present case there is no question whatever of the provision of either greater comfort or greater safety than is already provided by the steamers of this Company by which such passengers have hitherto embarked, and there is, therefore, no justification for forcing this Company to lose the opportunity of hiring its steamers, by the provision by the Port Commissioners of precisely the same facilities at a price that would not give a private owner a reasonable return on his capital.

No. 11462.—CALCUTTA, 6th May 1904.

From—The Managing Agents, Calcutta Steam Navigation Co., Ltd.,

To—The Secretary, Port Commissioners Calcutta.

Bridge Ferry Steamers.

Your letter No. 453 of 18th instmt.

We beg to refer you to our letter No. 11462 of 19th April 1904, and will be glad to have the favour of an early reply.

No. 11462.—CALCUTTA, 7th July 1904.

From—The Managing Agents, Calcutta Steam Navigation Co.,
Ld.,

To—The Secretary, Port Commissioners, Calcutta.

Bridge Ferry Steamer.

We beg to invite your early attention to our letter No. 11462 of 19th April and subsequent reminder dated 6th May 1904, and will be obliged if you will favour us with a reply at your early convenience.

No. 11462.—CALCUTTA, 12th November 1904.

From—The Managing Agents, Calcutta Steam Navigation Co.,
Ld.,

To—The Vice-Chairman, Port Commissioners, Calcutta.

We beg to invite your attention to the correspondence ending with the Secretary's letter No. 453 of 18th April 1904 and our letter No. 11462 of 19th April and subsequent reminders of 6th May and 7th July, and to request that you will be good enough to take the matter up and let us have a reply at your early convenience.

CALCUTTA, 14th April 1905.

From—The Calcutta Steam Navigation Co., Ld.,

To—The Secretary, Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

With reference to your Circular No. 136-1905, we desire to submit the following for the consideration of the Committee.

When it was first proposed by the Vice-Chairman of the Port Commissioners to establish passenger ferries in the port, and to delegate the working of the ferries to a local firm or company, we addressed the Port Commissioners on behalf of the Calcutta Steam Navigation Co. Ld., describing our experience with ferry services in the port, and offering to at once place ferry boats on any service indicated by the Commissioners, and work them in such manner and at such fares as the Commissioners maintaining services at those points.

We did not ask for any financial guarantee from the Commissioners, nor did we require the Commissioners to obtain further powers so as to guarantee a monopoly of any ferry to the Calcutta Steam Navigation Co., which the Vice-Chairman had in his note anticipated would be necessary before any contractors would undertake to maintain a ferry.

We made this offer, to which we received no reply, because we were satisfied that, with one or two possible exceptions, there was not any ferry in the port upon which a steamer could be profitably employed, and we were anxious to prevent the construction, by a contracting firm, of a number of ferry steamers which would be thrown on the general trade of the port in search of remunerative employment.

We believe that the various ferries it was proposed to establish could not be worked except at a considerable annual loss, and in the event of the Commissioners establishing such ferries the loss would have to be made up from the general revenues of the Trust and we venture to suggest that the Commissioners would not be justified in expending the funds of the Trust in conveying passengers across the river at a charge per head below the cost of that service. If such a service is required on the ground that it would be a public convenience, then the cost of its maintenance should be met by the town, and should be a municipal charge, rather than that the shipping of the port should be taxed to provide improved means of communication between the two banks of the river.

Two years ago we learned that the Port Commissioners had addressed the Government, proposing that the Commissioners should be granted power to build vessels and maintain ferries to convey, not only passengers, but also goods and merchandise, and from any point within the port, and we addressed the Commissioners, and protested against the addition of powers to convey goods and merchandise.

We pointed out that there are a number of competing contractors who undertake the work of conveying by boat, and are able to efficiently transport goods and merchandise within the port. We do not believe that the Port Commissioners could do this work more efficiently than it is now done by contractors, nor more cheaply except at the cost of the general revenues of the Trust, but if such work is undertaken by the Commissioners taking into consideration the special facilities for controlling transport possessed by the officers of the Port Trust, the advantages with which the Commissioners would enter upon the work are so great that no Boating Contractors could compete.

In reply to our representation the Commissioners said that they "do not contemplate carrying goods, but that the necessity to do so might arise." We submit that as the principal officers of the Port Trust are unable to foresee any circumstances under which they contemplate carrying goods, it is not reasonable for them to ask for powers for the Commissioners to do so. There is always a tendency on the part of a chartered corporation or trust to exercise a power it may possess to the disadvantage of a private firm or trading company, whenever in the opinion of the officers of the Trust the interests of the firm and the trust are divergent, quite irrespective of the general interests of the trade of the province.

For instance, in order to protect the Commissioners from claims arising from accidents to vessels when under compulsory pilotage in charge of an Assistant Harbour Master, the Commissioners are exempted from liability for the acts of any persons in charge of vessels under the authority of the Harbour Master. It so happens that this includes all men in charge of tugs, launches, and all other craft belonging to the Port Commissioners. It certainly was not intended when the Act was drafted, that the Commissioners were to be freed from liability in the event of one of their vessels colliding with

any other vessel, owing to the carelessness or wilful misconduct of the officer in charge of their vessel, but the Commissioners have never, to our knowledge, hesitated to shelter themselves under the immunity accidentally and unreasonably conferred by Section 135 of the Calcutta Port Act. Therefore, as it is admitted that no case can be made out for the need for powers to carry goods, under any circumstances that can be foreseen, it appears that it is unnecessary, and might be unwise, to grant such powers.

With reference to the proposal to alter Section 106 so as to compel the registration and licensing of cargo boats that do not ply for hire, we desire to say that this will affect the boats owned by the Calcutta Steam Navigation Co., Ltd., as much as any others, but we do not feel that we should oppose this change, believing that all craft which make use of the port, and benefit by the facilities upon which the Port Trust has expended large sums of money, should contribute in some form to the upkeep of the port.

From Chamber, to Messrs. Hoare, Miller & Co.

No. 1002-1905.—CALCUTTA, 12th June 1905.

Hiring of Bridge Ferry Steamers.

I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 11462, dated 12th May, enclosing copy of a letter of 10th May, from yourselves and other signatories, to the Government of Bengal on the subject of the hiring of the Bridge Ferry Steamers, and also on the subject of the extension of the powers of the Port Commissioners proposed in the Port Act Amendment Bill now before the Bengal Council. Your letter has had the careful attention of the Committee, but I understand from the Government of Bengal that the Port Commissioners have not yet approached Government for an amendment of the Howrah Bridge Act.

With regard to the Port Act Amendment Bill I am, as intimated in another letter of this date, issuing a circular to members of the Chamber stating the Committee's views, and asking for further opinions.

TREATMENT OF LASCARS.

From Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY), to Chamber.

No. 157-165.—CALCUTTA, 17th February 1905.

I am directed to forward a copy of the correspondence noted in the margin, on the subject of exactions from lascars. The Board of Trade have drawn attention to the oppression to which lascars may sometimes be subjected, and to the possible effects of such oppression; and they desire to be informed whether practical measures can be devised to prevent or minimise the abuses which are at present alleged to exist. It is suggested that owners of vessels on which lascars are employed might be willing to co-operate to this end, if approached officially in the matter.

2. The abuses to which the Consul at Port Said has drawn attention undoubtedly exist, although there is at present no accurate information as to the extent to which they are prevalent, and the Government of India agree that all practicable means should be taken to prevent them. The remedy, however, appears to be in the hands of the ship-owners themselves, and the Government of India are doubtful whether any action which they could take would be effectual, or would assist in a material degree to promote the object in view. It is to the interest of ship-owners to check an abuse which, if it be permitted to assume serious proportions, will prejudicially affect the supply of lascars; without effective co-operation on their part, nothing can be done, while, on the other hand, if they take up the question vigorously, it is probable that action on the part of the Government will be unnecessary.

3. I am to request that the Government of India may be favoured with the Chamber's advice regarding the measures which should be adopted with the object of repressing or preventing the abuses to which the Board of Trade refer. In particular, I am to ask that, if action on the part of the Government is considered necessary or advisable, the scope of that action may be defined as clearly as possible.

No. 106-(REVENUE).—24th July 1903.

From—The Secretary of State for India,

To—The Government of India.

I forward for enquiry and report, and for such action as Your Excellency's Government may think proper, a copy of correspondence with the Board of Trade regarding a representation from the Superintendent of the Mercantile Marine Office and Lascar Transfer Officer at Liverpool, on the subject of abuses which are alleged to exist at Indian ports, notably Calcutta, in connection with the engagement of lascars.

No. M-11965.—8th July 1903.

From—WALTER J. HOWELL, ESQ., Marine Department, Board of Trade.

To—The Under-Secretary of State for India.

I am directed by the Board of Trade to transmit herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State for India in Council, a copy of a letter from the Superintendent of the Mercantile Marine Office and Lascar Transfer Officer for the Port of Liverpool on the subject of the engagement of lascars at Indian ports.

The Board of Trade have made enquiries through the Lascar Transfer Officers at Glasgow, Victoria Docks, and Tilbury, and find that, although considerable reluctance is shown by lascars and persons who come into contact with them in giving information on the subject, there is reason to think that at certain Indian ports, notably Calcutta, commissions are given by lascars to the serangs and tindals under whom they serve and by them to ghat-serangs in return for employment on board ship.

In this connection the Board of Trade invite the attention of Lord George Hamilton to the evidence taken by a Departmental Committee which has recently reported (Cd. 1567, 1608, 1609) and specially to the evidence of K. B. Chishgur and Sir M. M. Bhowanaggre, M. P., in which stress was laid on the superiority of the system of engagement of lascars at Bombay to that prevalent at other Indian ports.

While the Board of Trade are not in a position to recommend, as Sir M. M. Bhowanaggre suggested (Question 14,728), the general adoption of the system established at Bombay, they desire to suggest, for the consideration of the Secretary of State, that some inquiry should be made at Calcutta into the prevalence of complaints in connection with the shipment of lascars there, and, if necessary, that any steps which may be possible should be taken to prevent such abuses and to protect the lascars from extortion on the part of agents who procure employment for them.

No. M-10847.—4th June 1903.

From—J. MACNAB, ESQ., Superintendent, Mercantile Marine Office, and Lascar Transfer Officer, Liverpool.

To—WALTER J. HOWELL, ESQ., Marine Department Board of Trade.

As Superintendent of this office and principal Lascar Officer at the port, I deem it my duty to report certain complaints and allegations which have been made to me respecting the treatment of lascar crews sailing out of Indian ports, notably Calcutta.

It appears that at that port the custom is for all lascar crews to be obtained through a native known as the "ghat-serang" who, free of cost to the shipowner, provides crews, and through whom only can a lascar find employment, for which he has to pay a heavy price. This man, who it is said, has amassed quite a fortune at

the business, does no work himself but employs unscrupulous satellites to beat up the men, take them to the shipping office, and collect the money off them, a month's advance in cash being the regular thing—the price paid for obtaining employment, and no part of it being returned in clothing or supplies of any description. This money is handed to the ghat-serang, who divides it according to his custom, and it is openly alleged that the shipping office officials, amongst them Europeans, share in the money so obtained.

In the worst ports I have seen to the crimps who took a sailor's advance did return him something in the way of a bed or clothes, but it seems the poor lascar gets nothing, hence we see him generally inadequately clad for a European winter voyage.

And this extortion is not all the unfortunate lascar has to suffer; he still has to satisfy the rapacity of the head serang of his ship, who demands a payment for himself of generally half a month's wages, which is, I believe, drawn in an English port. That this amount is sometimes exceeded is evident from a report made to me last month to the effect that the head freeman serang Mahabatulla Sallialla—of the S. *Staffordshire* O. No. 102135—paid seven hundred rupees to somebody (presumably the ghat-serang in Calcutta) for his post, and to reimburse himself and make a profit, extorted two months' wages from each of the 48 freemen, etc., under him. As the wages of these men run from Rs. 26 to Rs. 12 per month, if the story be true, the serang would clear over £100 by the transaction independent of his own wages of Rs. 35 per month.

In fact, it would seem that the crimping atrocities of San Francisco and the Oregon coast are even exceeded in cruelty and extortion in British ships, the victims being our own fellow-subjects.

It is worthy of notice that the shipowner is loud in his complaints, and justly so, against the American crimping system, but the sailor is silent. In the lascar case, the shipowner never complains, but the lascars do. The reason is obvious—in America the monetary loss falls upon the shipowner and he shouts for Government interference, whereas the *ghat* and *burra* serangs of Calcutta are a great convenience and cost the ship nothing; only the poor lascar is fleeced, hence we hear no complaints from the captains or owners.

Knowing the East and its customs pretty well, I am fully aware of the difficulty of rooting out a long-established evil—based upon the traditions and nature of the people, but I feel convinced that an impartial enquiry on the spot by competent and trustworthy persons would at least lead to the removal of some of the most objectionable features of the present customs.

For much of the information I have had I am indebted to the efforts of the Rev. Mr. Wingfield Digby, Chaplain, Birkenhead Missions to Seamen, and to his native assistant, Mr. C. Madhusudan Seal, same address.

No. R. & S.-1754.—24th July 1903.

From—SIR A. GODLEY, K.C.B., Under-Secretary of State for India,

To—The Assistant Secretary, Marine Department, Board of Trade.

I am directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to acquaint you, for the information of the Board of Trade, that a copy of your letter M. 11965, of 8th July 1903, and its enclosure, on the subject of abuses which are alleged to exist at Indian ports, notably Calcutta, in connection with the engagement of lascars, will be forwarded to the Government of India for enquiry and report, and for such action as that Government may think proper.

No. 165.—19th May 1904.

From—The Government of India,

To—The Secretary of State for India.

We have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Lord George Hamilton's Despatch No. 106 (Revenue), dated the 24th July 1903, and of its enclosures, on the subject of abuses which are alleged to exist at Indian ports, and more especially at Calcutta, in connection with the engagement of lascars. His Lordship requested us to enquire and report as to the existence of these abuses, and to take such action as might seem proper with the object of repressing or preventing them. We have consulted the Maritime Local Governments regarding this matter, and we enclose copies of the correspondence for your information.

2. The abuses to which the Superintendent of the Mercantile Marine Office at Liverpool invites attention are the following:—

- (i) It is asserted that lascars can obtain employment only through the "ghat-serang," who is said to extort one month's pay from each lascar as a condition of providing employment. Crews are, it is stated, provided free of charge to shipping; and the exactions of the "ghat-serang" are therefore borne solely by the lascars.
- (ii) It is alleged that the officials of the shipping offices participate in the "ghat-serang's" gains from this source.
- (iii) The "serang" of the ship is understood to insist on receiving half a month's wages from each lascar serving under him.

3. The first charge appears to be based upon a fundamental misconception of the status of the "ghat-serang." Formerly the "ghat-tort" was an unlicensed crimp, subject to no control, and free to extort as much as possible from the men for whom he obtained employment; under existing conditions, however, lascars can be provided only by a licensed broker, who is appointed by the Local Government, or by some authority subordinate to the Local Government, and duly

empowered by it in this behalf. Licensed brokers are in general respectable men of good business standing; they are required to deposit security for the satisfactory performance of their duties; they are liable to dismissal for improper conduct; and they are prohibited from receiving fees in excess of a fixed amount. The fees are in all cases paid by the owner or master of the ship. There is no trustworthy evidence in support of the assertion, that the licensed brokers extort a commission from the lascars for whom they obtain employment; and, although exactions of this description may possibly occur in certain cases, we are of opinion, that the abuse, if it exists, is confined within narrow limits, and that every effort is made to check its extension.

4. No evidence whatever has been adduced in support of the second charge; and we consider that there is no justification for the aspersion which has been cast upon the officials of the various shipping offices.

5. The enquiries made support the statement that it is customary for lascars to pay a certain proportion of their wages to the serang of the ship. Although the shipping officers satisfy themselves that all sums due to the lascars are actually paid to them at the time of their discharge, they are of course powerless to prevent transactions of the nature described, which are customary in India. It would appear, however, that the lascars are slowly emancipating themselves from the control of the serang; and it is possible, that the practice alluded to, which is discontinued by the shipping office officials, and rendered as difficult as possible owing to the procedure adopted by them, will gradually cease.

6. With reference to paragraphs 3 and 4 of the letter from the Board of Trade, No. 11965, dated the 8th July 1903, we desire to point out that the system in force at Calcutta is, in all respects, the same as that adopted at Bombay. The practice varies slightly at different ports; but the system in force, and the procedure adopted for the engagement and discharge of lascars, are substantially the same throughout India.

7. We consider that the charges brought by the Superintendent of the Mercantile Marine Office at Liverpool, against the system under which lascars are at present engaged, have not been substantiated; and we are of opinion that this system, if carefully worked, affords as much protection to the lascars as could be obtained under any other practicable method of recruitment. In these circumstances, we do not propose to take any further action in this matter; but the subject will continue to receive our attention, and the Maritime Local Governments will be requested to supervise closely the actual working of the system.

No. 195 (REVENUE).—30th December 1904.
From—The Secretary of State for India,
To—The Government of India.

I forward a copy of correspondence with the Board of Trade which has taken place since the receipt of the letter of your predecessor's Government, No. 165 (Finance and Commerce) dated 19th May 1904, to Board of Trade, dated 30th June 1904, No. R. & S. 1321.
From Board of Trade, dated 25th July 1904.
From Board of Trade, dated 12th December 1904, with enclosure.
To Board of Trade, dated 28th December 1904, No. R. & S. 2962.

on the subject of exactions from lascars.

2. Paragraph 5 of that letter shows that the shipping office officials in India, though they are powerless to prevent the customary payment of commissions by lascars to the serangs of ships, discountenance the practice and render it as difficult as possible. The Board of Trade, in their last letter, drawing attention to the oppression to which lascars may sometimes be exposed, inquire whether it is possible for your Government by the issue of a circular to shipowners or their agents, or otherwise, to take any further action in view of the abatement of such abuses.

3. I shall be glad to be informed of the conclusion at which you arrive on this subject, and of any action that you may deem it advisable to take.

No. R. & S. 1321.—30th June 1904.

From—SIR A. GODLEY, K.C.B., Under-Secretary of State for India,

To—The Assistant Secretary, Marine Department, Board of Trade.

In continuation of my letter No. R. & S. 1754, of 24th July 1903, I am directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to forward, for the information of the Board of Trade and for any remarks that they may wish to make, a copy of a letter from the Government of India, with enclosures, showing the result of the enquiries that they have made regarding abuses which have been alleged to exist at Indian ports in connection with the engagement of lascars.

A copy of Articles 18, 19, 20, and 35 of the Indian Merchant Shipping Act, 1859, is enclosed herewith for easy reference. It will be observed that with slight variations at different ports, the system of engagement of lascars prescribed by the Act is in force throughout India, and that steps have been taken by the Burma Government to ensure the more complete fulfilment of the requirements of the Act at Rangoon in which port they had not been fully carried out.

No. M. 12578.—25th July 1904.

From—WALTER J. HOWELL, ESQ., Marine Department, Board of Trade.

To—The Under-Secretary of State for India.

I am directed by the Board of Trade to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. R. & S. 1321 of the 30th ultimo, forwarding by a letter from the Government of India, with enclosures, showing the result of the enquiries that have been made into the abuses which were alleged to exist at Indian ports in connection with the engagement of lascars.

The Board observe that steps have been taken by the Burma Government to ensure at Rangoon the carrying out of the requirements of the Indian Merchant Shipping Act with regard to the engagement of lascars as in Indian ports.

No. M. 22299.—12th December 1904.

From—WALTER J. HOWELL ESQ., Marine Department, Board of Trade,

To—The Under-Secretary of State for India.

With reference to your letter (R. & S. 1321) of the 30th June last, giving the result of enquiries made by the Government of India into alleged abuses in connection with the employment of lascars, I am directed by the Board of Trade to state that their attention has again been called to the prevalence of the payment of commissions to serangs by the men serving under them on board ship.

In a letter dated the 3rd ultimo, His Britannic Majesty's Consul at Port Said points out that, although it may be difficult to prevent such payments when regarded as fees paid to a friendly agent for engagement, the danger arises that if payment is refused, a serang may make a lascar's position on board so intolerable that he may prefer to jump overboard, either to commit suicide on the high seas or to take his chance of reaching a neighbouring shore.

Although the statistics in the possession of the Board of Trade do not lead them to attribute any considerable percentage of deaths of lascars by suicide to this cause, they consider that all practicable means should be taken to prevent lascars from being terrorised by the serangs to whom they refuse to pay commissions for engagement, and it has been suggested to the Board by a leading shipowner that owners of vessels on which lascars are employed would be willing to co-operate to this end if approached officially in the matter.

I am accordingly to invite the consideration of the Secretary of State for India in Council to the question, and to enquire whether it would be possible for the Government of India to take any further action either by the issue of a circular to the agents in India of the shipowners employing lascars, or in any other manner.

No. M.-29.—3rd November 1904.

From—D. A. CAMERON, ESQ., His Britannic Majesty's Consul,
Port Said,

To—The Assistant Secretary, Marine Department, Board of
Trade, London.

I have the honour to enclose herewith copy of a statement made to me by Joseph Nattasen, a lascar from the *Melilly Hall*, who jumped overboard from that vessel in the Suez Canal, October 29th, and was brought to me next day by the Police from Ismailia. The vessel was at Port Said from about 2 till 7 P.M. At 5.30 after office hours, the master reported the deserter verbally to the clerk, but as he had not brought the articles for endorsement, he was requested by the latter to write me a note. This note I received after the ship's departure for London, and it is annexed* with the note* from the

Governor.

In forwarding this correspondence, my object is not to advocate this particular charge brought by Nattasen against the engineers and serang, all of whom may be falsely accused and who, in any case, have the right to be confronted with their accuser; but to respectfully submit the general question of lascars crews which has attracted my attention by accumulation of instances for some years past.

It appears that the serangs of the deck and engine-room are responsible to the chief officer and engineer for the good conduct and work of the groups of lascars who have been engaged on their recommendation. There can be no reasonable doubt that the serangs do levy a commission on their men, and so long as this is considered as a fee paid to a friendly agent for engagement, it may be difficult to prevent it.

The danger begins when a lascar cannot or will not pay a fee to the serang; for, if the serang is to maintain the system of fees, he cannot make an exception of one man when the others have paid. Thus, if there is any truth in Nattasen's story, the man is in constant trouble and is badly reported upon to the engineers as lazy and incompetent. In theory, of course, he can go on shore at the practically he is a prisoner on board, it is possible that the man in reviewing the hopelessness of his position may find the only solution in jumping overboard, whether to commit suicide on the high seas or to take his chance of reaching the shore of the Suez Canal.

Very rarely has a single lascar come to the Consulate to complain. It is only when the serang himself is aggrieved that he declares a general strike on deck or in the stoke-holds, and brings his gang on shore. He acts as their representative, and in spite of him; and in either case it may not be to the interest of the men to differ from him. They are sentenced and discharged *en bloc* and are sent back to India.

As there can be no doubt of the control and influence exercised by the serangs, is it possible to hold these native officers responsible for neglect in the matter of suicide among lascars?

* Not received. Annexed is a list* of 15 cases which have been reported by me to the Registrar General during the last two years. It can be added to the statistics at the disposal of the Board of Trade from other ports. The only suggestion I can submit is that the printed Forms B. and D. 3 and 5 should contain an order to the Consul to summon the master and European officer of the deck and engineer and serang and all the lascars of the watch on duty when the incident occurred, so that the attendance of all these persons shall be compulsory, and that the inquest shall be as lengthy and formal as it would be for a similar case on shore. The delay of the ship and the compulsory attendance of a large number of persons may conduce to a better watch being kept and to timely warning being given to the master that a lascar is showing signs of melancholia. Indeed, as soon as it is generally impressed upon the serang class as a whole that it is against their interests for a lascar to disappear overboard, the incident will be of rarer occurrence.

No. R. & S.-2962.—28th December 1904.

From—SIR HORACE WALPOLE, Assistant Under Secretary of
State for India,

To—The Assistant Secretary, Marine Department, Board of
Trade.

In reply to your letter No. M. 22299, of 12th December 1904, I am directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to say that the Government of India will be consulted as to the possibility of their taking action, by addressing a circular to shipowners who employ lascars, or to the agents in India of such shipowners, or in any other manner with the view of preventing the exaction of commissions from lascars by the serangs of ships.

From Chamber, to Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY).

No. 731-1905.—CALCUTTA, 29th April 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter Nos. 157-165 of 17th February, forwarding copies of official correspondence with the Secretary of State for India on the subject of exactions from lascars, which has been read with much attention.

2. The Committee have considered this matter in consultation with the representatives of the principal lines of steamers carrying lascars crews and, while they do not dispute the fact that a certain amount of hardship may exist under the ghaut-serang system in regard to the exaction of commission from lascars, they do not think that legislation is either necessary or desirable, and they agree with the Government of India that the system, if carefully worked,

affords as much protection to the lascars as could be obtained under any other system of recruitment.

3. The payment of commission in all kinds of transactions in this country, and especially in those where labour on the gang system is concerned is so universal, that the Committee feel that any attempt to put an end to it in connection with lascar recruitment would be hopeless and that if stopped in one direction it would only be paid through a different channel. From enquiries they have made, however, they believe that lascars as a rule are fairly well satisfied with existing conditions, and that when they have complaints to make, these are investigated and their grievances remedied by the steamer Companies.

STATUS OF EURASIANS AS SEAMEN.

From Chamber, to all Members.

CIR. No. 255-1905.—CALCUTTA, 19th June 1905.

MEMO.—The following correspondence is published for the information of members of the Chamber—

From Government of Bengal (MARINE), to Chamber.

No. 282-MNE.—CALCUTTA, 17th February 1904.

In the Resolution of the Government of India No. ^{S. N.} 10333 of 29th March 1901, that Government expressed an opinion that the words "Native Seamen," as used in Section 29 of Act V of 1833, should not be held to include "Statutory Natives," but should be read in the ordinary meaning of the word Native as referring to the indigenous as opposed to the European or Eurasian inhabitants of India, and that the law did not preclude the apprenticing of Eurasians to sea service or prevent their being shipped as seamen on merchant vessels on the same terms as Europeans. In accordance with this interpretation of the law, Eurasians have been shipped as seamen under European articles, one of the conditions of employment being that they are liable to be discharged on completion of the voyage without the right of being returned to India.

The Secretary of State has now brought to the notice of the Government of India that applications for relief and repatriation have, in many cases, been received from Eurasians, who, having been engaged at Indian or other Eastern ports, not under special agreements which make the employer liable for their return to their Native country, but under the ordinary articles applying to British Sailors, have been discharged in the United Kingdom or at Foreign ports. When discharged at Foreign ports they have been sent to the United Kingdom by British Consuls, or by the owners of the ships from which they have been discharged, or have found their way to a British port by working their passage or by paying for it. Expenses thus incurred for relief or repatriation have been claimed by the India Office under the provisions of Section 185 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, from the owners of the vessels in which the men were employed. Some of the owners have, however, protested against this charge, and it is necessary, therefore, to reconsider the question of the conditions under which Eurasians may be shipped as seamen. I am, therefore, to request that you will favour this Government with an expression of the opinion of the Chamber as to the desirability of securing the application of Sections 125 and 185 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1894 to seamen of the Eurasian class.

RESOLUTION.—By the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department.

No. 1735-M. S. R.—CALCUTTA, 29th March 1901.

READ—

Letter in the Finance and Commerce Department, No. 5472-S. R., dated the 30th October 1900, with enclosure.

READ ALSO—

Letter from the Government of Bengal, No. 2311 (Marine), dated the 30th November 1900.

Letter from the Government of Burma, No. 409-4 S.—41, dated the 14th December 1900.

Letter from the Government of Madras, No. 23 (Marine), dated the 11th January 1901.

Letter from the Government of Bombay, No. 13-G, dated the 17th January 1901.

Observations.—In the letter in the Finance and Commerce Department above cited, Maritime Local Governments were asked how the law on the subject of apprenticing Eurasians to sea service has been interpreted in practice and whether, as a matter of fact, Eurasians have been refused apprenticeship.

The replies show that very few Eurasians have presented themselves for apprenticeship in past years, but the law on the subject is differently interpreted in different provinces. In Calcutta the provision made in Section 29 of the Indian Merchant Shipping Act (V of 1883) for the employment of native seamen is understood to be applicable to Eurasians, and they are not allowed to be shipped as seamen without a stipulation providing for their return to British India.

The Government of India are of opinion that the words "Native Seamen," as used in the section above mentioned, should not be held to include "Statutory Natives," but should be read in the ordinary meaning of the word Native, as referring to the indigenous, as opposed to the European or Eurasian, inhabitants of India. The law, as it at present stands, does not preclude the apprenticing of Eurasians to sea service, or prevent their being shipped as seamen on merchant vessels on the same terms as Europeans, and there is no legal bar to their being so employed.

Resolution.—His Excellency the Governor-General in Council considers it undesirable that any restrictions should be imposed by the executive orders of Local Governments on the employment of Eurasians on merchant vessels, and any instructions on the subject which it may be thought advisable to issue to Port Officers should be reported for the previous approval of the Government of India.

Order.—Ordered, that this Resolution be communicated to the Governments of Madras, Bombay, Bengal and Burma.

R. A. MANT,

Offg. Under Secy. to the Govt. of India.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (MARINE).

No. 613-1904.—CALCUTTA, 13th April 1904.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 282 Marine, of 17th February 1904, dealing with the conditions under which Eurasians are at present shipped as seamen from Indian Ports.

2. You state that in consequence of the many applications for relief and repatriation which have been received by the Secretary of State for India from Eurasians who have been shipped at Eastern Ports under the ordinary articles applying to British sailors, it has become necessary to reconsider the question of the conditions under which Eurasians may be shipped as seamen, and you ask the Committee for an expression of opinion as to the desirability of securing the application of sections 125 and 185 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1894, to seamen of the Eurasian class. The Committee note that the sections referred to apply to agreements with and the relief and repatriation of lascars or other natives of India.

3. The Committee have before them copy of the Resolution of the Government of India No. ^{S.E.} 108 M. of 29th March 1901, in which the opinion is given that the words "native seamen" as used in section 29 of the Indian Merchant Shipping Act. V of 1883, should not be held to include "Statutory Natives" but should be read in the ordinary meaning of the word Native as referring to the indigenous as opposed to the European or Eurasian inhabitants of India. Under the terms of this resolution the law as it at present stands does not preclude the apprenticing of Eurasians to sea service or prevent their being shipped as seamen on Merchant vessels on the same terms as Europeans. In accordance with this interpretation of the law Eurasians have been shipped as seamen under European articles and have consequently come under European conditions of employment which do not include the right of being repatriated or returned to India. Since the receipt of your letter, the Committee have been in communication with those members of the Chamber directly interested in shipping, among whom there is a general consensus of opinion against any restrictions being placed on the employment of Eurasians as seamen or apprentices and consequently against any alteration in the interpretation of the law as it at present stands.

4. The Committee themselves are strongly opposed to the proposal to secure the application of sections 125 and 185 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1894 to seamen of the Eurasian class. The difficulties referred to in your letter appear to have arisen in consequence of the Secretary of State interpreting the law in a different manner to that in which it has been interpreted by the Government of India, and if the home interpretation could be brought into line with that on this side, and acted upon accordingly, these difficulties would probably disappear. There is no reason, in the view of the Committee why an Eurasian shipped under European articles should claim repatriation any more than an European, and the Committee cannot but think that the trouble has arisen from the action of only a small fraction of those shipped. The Committee do not think that any

case has been made out for an alteration in the law and the only result of any such alteration as it is now proposed to make would be to close the mercantile marine as an avenue of employment for Eurasians generally, as not only would they not ship, but as the Committee have good reasons for stating they would not be taken by ship owners if they had to be repatriated. At the same time there might be genuine cases of distress which might be dealt with in the manner in which *distressed* British seamen are dealt with at this and other ports, *viz.*, by being sent home at the expense of the Board of Trade. In like manner the cost of sending similar cases back to India might be borne by the Government of India, although in no case could it be claimed as a right.

From Government of Bengal (MARINE) to Chamber.

No. 56-T.M.NE.—DARJEELING, 10th May 1905.

With reference to correspondence ending with your letter No. 613 of 13th April 1904, I am directed to inform you that the Secretary of State for India has decided, for the present, to deal with destitute Eurasian seamen who have been brought to the United Kingdom under British articles, as if the provisions of Section 185 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, clearly applied to them, so far as the obligation placed by that Section on the Secretary of State for India is concerned. No steps will therefore be taken to interfere with the existing practice, under which persons of mixed race may engage either under European Articles or in the special form prescribed for lascars.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (MARINE).

No. 931-1905.—CALCUTTA, 30th May 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 56-T Marine, of 10th May 1905, in which you intimate that the Secretary of State for India has decided for the present to deal with destitute Eurasian seamen who have been brought to the United Kingdom under British Articles, as if the provisions of Section 185 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1894 clearly applied to them so far as the obligation placed by that Section on the Secretary of State for India, is concerned. You further intimate that no steps will therefore be taken to interfere with the existing practice under which persons of mixed race may engage either under European articles, or in the special form prescribed for lascars.

(2) The Committee are not quite clear what is the exact meaning of the words "So far as the obligation placed by that Section on the Secretary of State for India is concerned." The latter part of paragraph 3, Section 185 of the Merchant Shipping Act reads as follows:—

"Any money so paid by the Secretary of State shall be a joint and several debt due to the Secretary of State from the Master or Owner, &c., &c."

If they are correct in assuming that it is not intended that this portion of the Section is to be made to apply they have no objection to offer to the proposed action of the Secretary of State.

From Government of Bengal, to Chamber.

No. 157-T.M.NE.—DARJEELING, 5th June 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 931-1905 of 30th May, regarding the treatment of destitute Eurasian Seamen, and in reply to state that while admitting the obligation imposed by Section 185 of the English Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, the Secretary of State has intimated that he will not seek to enforce claims for payment against Masters and Owners of vessels so long as the cases are not numerous.

From Imperial Anglo-Indian Association, to Chamber.

No. 505.—CALCUTTA, 1st July 1905.

I am desired by the Council of the Imperial Anglo-Indian Association to offer to the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce their sincere thanks for the valuable help given by the Chamber in securing the position of the members of the domiciled community who might sign articles as British seamen on British vessels leaving Calcutta for foreign ports.

The Chamber have of course only done what they have thought to be right, but the community will, nevertheless, keenly appreciate the service rendered them in a difficulty which might have ended otherwise but for the interposition of the Chamber.

PLAGUE REGULATIONS AT PENANG AND SINGAPORE.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (MUNICIPAL).

No. 2068-1905.—CALCUTTA, 15th December 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to address you with an urgent representation on the extraordinary and perplexing action which has recently been taken by the authorities of the Straits Settlements in declaring quarantine against vessels arriving from Calcutta and Rangoon. For this action there would appear, so far as the Committee can ascertain, to be no sufficient reason, and it is causing considerable and quite unnecessary hindrance to the course of trade between Calcutta and the Far East.

2. The Committee are informed that on the 28th November the Managing Agents of the British India Steam Navigation Co., Ltd., at Calcutta, and also the representatives of the two lines of steamers running direct to China, received telegrams from Penang to the effect that a strict quarantine had been enforced, and that cargo could not be discharged before 10 days had expired from the departure of vessels either from Calcutta or Rangoon. On the 30th November telegrams were received from Penang that quarantine had been withdrawn, but on the 5th December telegraphic advices announced that 10 days quarantine had been imposed at Singapore against Calcutta.

3. It is difficult to understand what reasons are actuating the authorities of the Straits Settlements in issuing these apparently ill-considered and harassing orders. Penang is the first port of call from Calcutta and Rangoon. Singapore is 36 hours steam from Penang. The quarantine has been withdrawn from Penang and imposed at Singapore.

4. Such methods and also the imposition of strict quarantine are so calculated to dislocate all trade in connection with cargo and passengers, that the Committee respectfully submit that the matter calls for the urgent attention of Government. Plague at present is practically only sporadic in both Calcutta and Rangoon, and for this reason it would seem unnecessary that any plague restrictions should be enforced at Penang and Singapore; if, however, such restrictions are considered necessary by the Straits authorities the Committee consider they should be based on some intelligible and well-defined principle calculated to cause the least amount of inconvenience to trade. The voyage from Calcutta to Penang under ordinary circumstances would occupy 5 to 6 days; that to Singapore 8 days. The voyage from Rangoon to Penang would occupy approximately 3 days and to Singapore five days. Under these circumstances it is almost unnecessary to emphasize the serious detention which would be caused to a large fleet of steamers if ten days' quarantine were imposed.

5. The Committee trust that the Government of Bengal will represent to the Government of India the necessity for immediate

action being taken with the object of inducing the Straits authorities to fall into line with other Ports and to accept the rules of the recent Paris Convention with regard to Plague quarantine.

6. While writing on this matter the Committee venture to express the opinion that the time has come when the whole system of Plague Regulations requires the careful attention of Government. It is quite evident, that plague is no longer epidemic in either Calcutta or Rangoon, and it seems extremely doubtful if the large cities of India, with their great populations, will ever be entirely free from sporadic cases. The Committee have reason to believe that, there is a very strong medical opinion in favour of relaxation of the plague rules, and the experience gained during the 11 years plague has been in existence in India and the Crown Colonies, might now be put into some tangible shape by formulating a set of plague rules to be uniformly applied, with due regard to local conditions, at all British Ports East of Suez, discarding all methods and practices which experience has shown to be purposeless and of no practical value.

7. It is almost unnecessary to point out to Government that when extreme alarm prevails needlessly stringent measures are adopted for the public safety, but it cannot be said that there is any reason for extreme alarm at the present moment in the Straits Settlements, so far as any rate as the Ports of Calcutta and Rangoon are concerned. The Committee would therefore respectfully submit that whatever the scientific opinion of Medical Officers at different British Ports may be, full consideration is absolutely necessary of the point, as to whether the gain by adopting extreme measures is commensurate with the loss to British commercial interests. The Committee have no doubt that the whole subject now under reference, will receive the most careful attention not only of the Government of Bengal but also of the Government of India.

From Government of Bengal (MUNICIPAL), to Chamber.

No. 160 ~~M~~ — CALCUTTA, 22nd February 1906.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 2068, dated 15th December 1905, in which the Chamber draw attention to the action of the Government of the Straits Settlements in declaring ten days' quarantine against vessels arriving from Calcutta and Rangoon.

2. In reply I am to forward for the information of the Chamber copies of the letters from the Government of India in the Home Department, noted in the margin, from which it will be seen that the Colonial Government has refused to become a party to the Paris Sanitary Convention, and has expressed its unwillingness to reduce the period of quarantine below ten days.

No. 1695, dated 5th October 1905 and enclosures.

No. 145, dated 27th January 1906 and enclosure.

No. 1695.—SIMLA, 5th October 1905.

From—J. C. FERGUSSON, ESQ., Under-Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department,
To—The Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Marine Department.

In continuation of the Home Department letter No. 1386, dated the 18th August 1905, I am directed to forward for the information of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of the Province a copy of the correspondence noted on the margin, regarding the imposition of ten days' quarantine at Penang against deck passengers from Calcutta and Rangoon.

1. Telegram to the Secretary of State No. 1347 dated the 14th August 1905.
2. Telegram from the Secretary of State, dated the 6th September 1905.
3. Letter from the India Office No. 2265 R. & S. dated the 7th September 1905 and enclosure.

TELEGRAM NO. 1347.—SIMLA, 14th August 1905.

From—His Excellency the Viceroy,
To—The Secretary of State for India, London.

The Straits Settlements Administration have issued orders directing quarantine at Penang of deck passengers from Calcutta and Rangoon to complete ten days from date of departure from India. Steamer owners at Calcutta protest against inconvenience caused thereby. We trust that Colonial office will obtain modification of this regulation which conflicts with article 23 of Paris Convention.

TELEGRAM.—LONDON, 6th September 1905.

From—The Secretary of State for India,
To—His Excellency the Viceroy, Simla.

Your telegram dated 14th August—Colonial Secretary states that in view of local opinion he would not be justified in requesting withdrawal of quarantine at Penang, but he will consult Governor of the Straits Settlements regarding modification. Government of the Straits Settlements refuses to be a party to Paris Sanitary Convention. Correspondence will follow by next mail.

No. R. & S. 2265.—LONDON, 7th September 1905.

From—The Assistant Secretary, Revenue and Statistics Department, India Office,
To—The Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department.

With reference to the Viceroy's telegram of the 14th August last and the Secretary of State's reply of 6th September, I

forward, for information, copy of the papers noted in the margin, on the subject of quarantine at Penang. Copy of the correspondence referred to in the enclosed letters was forwarded to India by the Revenue despatches No. 51 of 29th March 1900 and No. 8 of 18th January 1901.

No. R. & S. 2141.—INDIA OFFICE, LONDON, 19th August 1905.

From—The Under-Secretary of State for India,
To—The Secretary, Colonial Office.

I am directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to forward, for submission to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, a copy of a telegram from the Government of India regarding orders which are stated to have been issued by the Straits Settlements Administration for the imposition of quarantine at Penang on deck passengers arriving in ships from Calcutta and Rangoon.

I am to point out that such a measure appears to go beyond the precaution of "surveillance" recommended in the Venice Convention (Titre VIII, section 4) in respect of the treatment of crews and passengers of ships free from disease on arrival from infected ports, and that it is still more at variance with the provisions of the Paris Convention of 1903, which, though not yet actually in force, embodies the general consensus of well-informed opinion as to the maximum of precaution and restriction necessary and expedient for preventing the spread of disease.

I am desired to draw Mr. Secretary Lyttelton's attention to the correspondence noted in the margin which took place with reference to somewhat similar action of the Straits Settlements Administration on a previous occasion. It appears to Mr. Secretary Brodick that the considerations advanced in the letters from this office of 26th June and 27th September 1900, and in the Government of India's letter of 23rd August 1900, apply generally to the present case, and he trusts that Mr. Lyttelton will take steps to secure the early withdrawal or modification of the orders now in question.

No. 29898-1905.—LONDON, 25th August 1905.

From—The Secretary, Colonial Office,
To—The Under-Secretary of State for India.

I am directed by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th instant (R. & S. 2141) with regard to the imposition in Penang of quarantine on deck passengers from Calcutta and Rangoon.

2. In reply, I am to request you to invite the attention of Mr. Secretary Brodrick to the letter from this Department of the 8th of March 1906, and its enclosures, which deal with the impracticability of "surveillance" in the case of native passengers in the East. I am to add that in a despatch dated July 29th 1904, the Government of the Straits Settlements refused to become a party to the Paris Convention and again expressed the opinion that surveillance of native passengers was impossible. That Government has also repeatedly expressed the view that a reduction of the period of quarantine below ten days is inadvisable.

3. In these circumstances, Mr. Lyttelton regrets that he cannot feel justified in ignoring local opinion and requesting the Colonial Government to rescind the regulation to which the Government of India takes exception. He will, however, ask the Governor whether he considers that it can safely be modified in any way.

No. 165.—CALCUTTA, 27th January 1906.

From—J. C. FERGUSSON, ESQ., Under-Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department,

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

I am directed to refer to your letter No. 809-Med. P. dated the 22nd December 1905, regarding the imposition by the Government of the Straits Settlements of quarantine for a period of ten days from the date of departure from India against vessels arriving from Calcutta and Rangoon.

2. I am to invite attention to the Home Department letter No. 1695, dated the 5th October last, and to the enclosed copy of a letter from the Governor of the Straits Settlements to the Colonial Office, dated the 5th October 1905, that the Colonial Government has refused to become a party to the Paris Sanitary Convention and has recently expressed its unwillingness to reduce the period of quarantine below ten days, the Government of India are not prepared at present to make a further representation on the subject to His Majesty's Secretary of State.

3. I am to add, for the information of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, that the question of the possibility of framing a set of uniform rules for the treatment of vessels departing from or arriving at ports in British India is at present under the consideration of the Government of India.

No. 428.—SINGAPORE, 5th October 1905.

From—The Governor of the Straits Settlements,

To—The Secretary, Colonial Office, London.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch No. 245 of the 25th August last, transmitting copies of correspondence with the India Office, on the subject of the imposition at

Penang of quarantine on deck passengers from Calcutta and Rangoon.

2. The question whether the existing regulations could with safety be modified to meet the wishes of the Government of India has received the careful consideration of this Government, and I am advised that it would be in the last degree dangerous to relax the regulations, in view of the difficulty of supervising effectively the large numbers of deck passengers who arrive at Penang from the ports mentioned above and are forthwith scattered not only in the Straits Settlements but also over the whole of the Malay Peninsula.

3. Since writing to you my despatch No. 252 of the 29th July 1904, cases of plague have occurred on three separate vessels within ten days of leaving an infected Indian Port. On the first two cases developed nine days after leaving Calcutta, on the second one case occurred seven days after leaving Bombay, while the third ship was infected with plague on the sixth day after sailing from Bombay.

4. I would point out that the quarantine period of ten days is only imposed on vessels arriving from those Indian ports which are infected with plague.

5. In the circumstances I cannot recommend a modification of regulations which are considered a very valuable protection to the Colony against the introduction of plague.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (MUNICIPAL).

No. 476-1906.—CALCUTTA, 8th March 1906.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 160 Medical P. of 22nd February 1906, with enclosures, in reply to my letter No. 2068 of 15th December 1905, drawing attention to the action of the Straits Settlements Administration in declaring ten days' quarantine against vessels arriving from Calcutta and Rangoon.

2. I am instructed by the Committee to convey to you your best thanks for placing copies of the despatches in connection with this matter at their disposal, and to express their regret that the representation made by the Secretary of State for India through the Colonial Office has not met with a more satisfactory response.

ACCOMMODATION FOR JUTE CARRYING STEAMERS.

From Calcutta Baled Jute Association, to Chamber.

No. 269-T.—CALCUTTA, 12th July 1905.

Accommodation for Jute Carrying Steamers above the Hooghly Bridge.

I am directed by the Committee of the Calcutta Baled Jute Association to forward, for the consideration of the Committee of the Chamber, a copy of their circular No. 248-T., dated 4th instant, upon this subject.

2. The scheme outlined in the circular has been favourably approved of by the members of this Association, and it also has the approval of the Liners' Conference and Agents of outside steamers. But before approaching the Port Commissioners with a request to provide the desired accommodation, the Committee would be glad to be favoured with an expression of the opinion of the Committee of the Chamber upon the proposals.

3 The favour of an early reply is solicited.

CIRCULAR NO. 248-T.—CALCUTTA, 4th July 1905.

From—The Calcutta Baled Jute Association,
To—All its Members.

Accommodation in the Port for Jute Carrying Steamers.

You will no doubt recollect that towards the close of last year the Committee submitted to members a scheme for the provision of additional loading accommodation for jute carrying steamers. Stated briefly the scheme was one whereby one or two new moorings would be laid down, and two new jetties constructed above the Howrah Bridge at or near Cossipore. It was estimated that the cost of these new works would be about 16 lakhs of rupees. And to meet the interest charges on this capital expenditure, the rates payable by the trade were to be higher than those levied at Kidderpore, or for overside delivery in the stream.

2. Certain objections were raised to the scheme, mainly by reason of this suggested increase in the rates; and it was not proceeded with by the Committee. They have now, however, again been in communication with the Vice-Chairman of the Port Commissioners respecting it. On reconsideration Mr. Dumayne has informed them that he now sees his way to recommend the Commissioners to construct the jetties, and to lay down the moorings, without the imposition of any additional charges. That is to say the rate for exporting jute over the jetties would be the same as that now levied at Kidderpore, *viz.*, 10 annas a ton or 2 annas a bale. Bales shipped by boats from Presses not at present served by the Port Commissioners' Railway would be exempted from this charge. Of course the river due of 4 annas per ton, would be levied on all exports as at present.

3. In these circumstances it seems to the Committee that the scheme might well be again considered by the trade. They have accordingly directed me to invite you to state your views concerning it. Should the trade generally favour it, the Committee will formally ask the Port Commissioners to proceed with it; and they have every reason to hope that such a request would be acceded to.

4. It will facilitate matters if you will kindly fill up and return to me the annexed form, erasing the words which do not apply.

From Chamber, to Liners' Conference.

No. 1280-1905.—CALCUTTA, 28th July 1905.

Accommodation for Jute Carrying Steamers.

The Committee of the Chamber have been recently approached by the Calcutta Baled Jute Association, on the subject of a scheme for providing jetties and moorings for jute steamers at Cossipore.

2. The Association has asked for an expression of the Committee's opinion upon this project. Before coming to any conclusion the Committee consulted Mr. F. G. Dumayne, Vice-Chairman of the Port Commissioners, who has furnished them with a note upon it. I am to forward a copy of this note for the information of the Conference, and to ask if they desire to offer any remarks upon the Association's proposals, which are dealt with in it.

3. The return of the plans which accompany the note is requested.

From Liners' Conference, to Chamber.

CALCUTTA, 1st August 1905.

Jetties at Cossipore.

I beg to own receipt and thank you for your favour No. 1280-1905, of 28th ultimo, which has been circulated among the members of the Conference, and was considered at to-day's meeting.

I am directed to return herewith the two plans enclosed with your letter, and to inform you that the Conference are not prepared to reply immediately as there are arguments for and against either plan. I hope, however, to address you further at an early date, after the members of the Conference have had time to further enquire into and consider the merits of the two proposals.

From Liners' Conference, to Chamber.

CALCUTTA, 8th August 1905.

Jetties at Cossipore.

With reference to your favour No. 1280-1905 of 28th ultimo, acknowledged in my letter of 1st instant, I am now directed to inform you that the members of the Conference have made further enquiries regarding the merits of the proposal of the Calcutta

Baled Jute Association, and the counter proposal put forward by Mr. F. G. Dumayne, Vice-Chairman of the Port Commissioners, for the construction of additional loading berths at No. 2 Dock, and are of opinion, that the latter scheme is more to be recommended.

But seeing that considerable inconvenience is already experienced owing to the inadequacy of the Port Trust Railway to deal with the goods traffic to and from the Docks, and also owing to the insufficient facilities for the ingress and egress of cargo boats at present existing, the members of the Conference think it very important, that the necessary improvements in the Railway and the Docks be taken in hand before increasing the existing number of loading berths.

From Chamber, to Calcutta Baled Jute Association.

No. 1396-1905.—CALCUTTA, 19th August 1905.

Proposed additional accommodation for Jute Carrying Steamers.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 269-T, dated, 12th July 1905.

2. With the letter you forwarded copies of a circular in which a scheme for the provision of Jetties and moorings at a point above the Hooghly Bridge was outlined. These jetties and moorings were designed, you said, for the export of baled jute. You added that, before approaching the Port Commissioners regarding the scheme, the Association desired to obtain the views of the Committee of the Chamber upon it.

3. In reply I am to say that the Committee have attentively examined the project, and have consulted Mr. Dumayne, the Vice-Chairman of the Port Commissioners, and also the Liners' Conference respecting it. From the information placed before them by Mr. Dumayne, the Committee gather that the proposed jetties and moorings would cost about 16 lakhs of rupees; and the question naturally arises as to whether the return that might be expected from them would be sufficient to justify this expenditure. It seems to be clear, that the jetties would have to depend for their revenue entirely on the baled jute shipped from the Presses on the left bank of the river. Possibly many consignments, even from these Presses, would be banded and shipped; and should boat hire at any time happen to be lower than the jetty charges, there would seem to be a risk of further consignments going by boat. No traffic other than jute would, the Committee apprehend, use the jetties, which would be consequently idle for about eight months in the year. And when it is remembered that the jetties would require a separate establishment, and a separate hydraulic installation, it would appear to be doubtful if the revenue derivable from them would be sufficient to cover not only interest, depreciation, repairs and taxes, but establishment and working expenses. There are also objections to the more frequent openings of the bridge which

would be necessary when the Jetties were in use. These objections may it is true be overcome by the improved lighting arrangements which are now proposed, but at present it does not seem to be certain that, even with the new arrangements, large steamers will be able to go through at night. Further, it has to be remembered that the Commissioners have spent nearly four crores of rupees at the Kidderpore Docks, apart from their line of railway. It is, therefore, a matter for consideration whether the proposed expenditure at Cossipore should be incurred until the Dock scheme is completed.

4. After a careful examination of the whole question, the Committee have come to the conclusion that the Association might usefully consider an alternative proposal for the construction of additional berths at Dock No. 2. It would be certainly less expensive to meet the needs of the trade in this way, and the new accommodation would be more expeditiously provided as the Docks Committee have already decided on the construction of four new berths. Simultaneously with the provision of these berths, the Commissioners are improving their lines of railway, for which purpose they are acquiring land from the Government. These improvements will provide for the rapid despatch of trains to and from the Docks, so as to obviate delays in the transit of jute; and more wagons will also be obtained. The ingress and egress of cargo boats is likewise being now greatly facilitated, as the 80 feet entrance to the Dock has been opened. The charges for shipping jute by the Commissioners' line will be no higher than the charge for the proposed jetties; and the present delays in despatching being removed, the jetties would offer no advantage as regards time. On the other hand the financial results to the Commissioners would certainly be better from the utilisation of the Docks than from the proposed new scheme. For the berths at the Docks, unlike the jetties, would be in use all the year round, while the fixed charges would be lower.

5. The Liners' Conference have expressed their preference for the alternative scheme, although they emphasise the need for improving the facilities of the Railway and for expediting the passage of cargo boats into and out of the Dock. And the Committee of the Chamber trust that your Association, after fully discussing the scheme, will likewise come to the conclusion, that it will meet the needs of the trade as completely and satisfactorily as the original project.

From Calcutta Baled Jute Association, to Chamber.

No. 338-T.—CALCUTTA, 28th August 1905.

Proposed additional accommodation for the Jute Carrying Steamers.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1396-1905, dated the 19th August, in answer to my letter No. 269-T, of 12th July upon this subject.

2. In reply I am to say that the Committee have carefully noted the objections raised to the expenditure of the large sum required for the construction of Jetties with their appurtenances. They have also noted the information regarding the extension of berthing accommodation at the Kidderpore Docks, and the other improvements contemplated.

3. In deference to the main objection of the Committee of the Chamber, *viz.*, the sinking of so large a sum of money, in view of the improvements contemplated at Kidderpore, the Committee are willing to abandon for the present, the idea of having jetties, and would only press for the laying down of two sets of moorings. This could be done at a nominal cost, and it would then be seen how the scheme would work for overside loading.

4. In regard to the difficulties feared by the Committee of the Chamber respecting the passage of vessels through the Bridge at night, the Committee, I am to say, have the assurance of Captain E. W. Patley, the Deputy-Conservator, that, with efficient lighting arrangements, no difficulties need be apprehended. And it would not be necessary to open the bridge oftener, during the day-time, than at present.

5. The Committee respectfully solicit the assistance of the Committee of the Chamber on behalf of the trade, in the direction of recommending the Port Commissioners to lay down two sets of moorings as an experimental measure.

From Chamber, to Vice-Chairman Port Commissioners.

No. 1449-1905.—CALCUTTA, 31st August 1905.

Proposed additional Accommodation for Jute Carrying Steamers.

I am directed to hand you copies of the marginally noted correspondence upon this question.

(1) No. 1595, dated 19th August from the Chamber of Commerce to the Calcutta Baled Jute Association.
(2) No. 238-T, dated 28th August, from the Calcutta Baled Jute Association to the Chamber of Commerce.

2. In so doing I am to ask if you will be so good as to inform the Committee of the cost of laying down two sets of moorings as proposed by the Baled Jute Association. Should you wish to offer any other remarks upon the question, such will of course receive the attentive consideration of the Committee.

From Port Commissioners, to Chamber.

No.—4191.—19th September 1905.

Moorings for Jute Steamers.

With reference to your letter No. 1449-1905, dated 31st August, I beg to say that it has taken some time to ascertain what material we had in stock, and from the information I have received, it appears that the Commissioners, in pursuance of arrangements recently approved, are under the necessity of making considerable alterations in the Esplanade moorings in order to adapt them for the longer steamers that now require to be moored there. There is sufficient

material in hand to commence this re-arrangement but if used for it, there will be none available for the proposed moorings for jute steamers above the bridge, and the question as to which should get the preference would have to be submitted for the Commissioners' decision.

The cost of new material for such a set of moorings as would be required for the jute steamers above the bridge is estimated at Rs. 56,368 to which freight and other expenses including the cost of laying, have to be added, raising the total to Rs. 63,563.

From Vice-Chairman Port Commissioners, to Chamber.

No. 4222.—CALCUTTA, 20th September 1905.

Moorings for Jute Steamers.

In continuation of my letter No. 4191, dated 19th instant, I have further to state, that the request of the Baled Jute Association is for two sets of moorings and the materials we have are only sufficient for one set, but I have ascertained by cablegram from the London Agent, that he can arrange for the shipment of the chain required for another set of moorings in four week's time. This would mean that setting aside the re-arrangement of the Esplanade moorings and proceeding with the laying of the jute moorings as soon as the tides permitted of our doing so, we could have one set of moorings laid by the middle of November and the second by the middle of December. The cost stated in my letter is for two sets of moorings.

At the interview in my office of Mr. Bleack, Mr. Sinclair and Mr. Dott, with Captain Patley and myself, it was pointed out that the representatives of the Association were understood to say, that they would be able to arrange to pass the vessels up and down on the days on which the bridge is now open so that there would be no question of the traffic across the bridge being obstructed more than it is at present. There should be a clear understanding upon this point because, under existing conditions, any additional opening of the bridge would not be permitted. The Association or the Charterers will, it is understood, arrange which ships should be taken to those moorings.

From Chamber, to Calcutta Baled Jute Association.

No. 1602-1905.—CALCUTTA, 25th September 1905.

Accommodation for Jute Steamers at Cossipore.

With reference to previous correspondence, ending with your

1. Letter No. 4191, dated 19th September, from the Vice-Chairman of the Port Commissioners to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.
2. Letter No. 4222, dated 20th September, from the Vice-Chairman of the Port Commissioners to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

now directed to forward for your information copies of the marginally noted letters from the Vice-Chairman of the Port Trust upon this question.

2. You will observe that the total cost of laying down two sets of moorings will be Rs. 63,563; and that one set can be laid by the middle of November, and the second by the middle of December. Judging from your letter, dated 28th August, it would seem that your Committee anticipate night openings of the bridge. But you will observe from the last paragraph of Mr. Dumayne's letter, dated 20th September, that no more openings can be made than at present. Your Chairman, and the other representative of your Association, who interviewed Mr. Dumayne, have apparently accepted this arrangement; but in view of Mr. Dumayne's expressed wish for a clear understanding regarding it, I am to ask your Committee to be so good as to confirm it.

From Vice-Chairman Port Commissioners, to Chamber.

No. 4423.—26th September 1905.

Moorings for Jute Steamers.

In continuation of my letters Nos. 4191 and 4222, dated 19th and 20th instant, respectively, I beg to state for the information of the Chamber that at the meeting yesterday the Commissioners sanctioned plans and estimates for the construction of four berths for the shipment of jute and other produce in Dock No. 2, and this work will be taken in hand as soon as the plans and estimates have been sanctioned by the Government of India, and as soon as the Salt Golabs have been removed that occupy a part of the site.

The berths are unlikely to be available for use until after the jute season of 1906. The moorings above the Bridge will, it is understood, greatly facilitate the shipment of jute in the meantime, and there are these arguments in favour of the moorings being laid namely:—

- (1) That as the jute trade contributes a considerable sum to the expenses of the Port in the River due upon jute, it has a special claim for consideration in respect to any facility that it may require.
- (2) That to lay moorings will, as previously intimated by me, involve an expenditure of Rs. 63,563, but this is no more than the expenditure that the Commissioners have been called on to incur in laying trial moorings at Luff Point.
- (3) That the materials will not be lost if the moorings should be abandoned as they will be used up elsewhere in laying fresh moorings or in making renewals.
- (4) That rent will be paid for the moorings while they are in use by jute steamers.

From Chamber, to Calcutta Baled Jute Association.

No. 1633-1905.—CALCUTTA, 29th September 1905.

Accommodation for Jute Steamers.

In continuation of my No. 1602 dated 25th September, I am now instructed to hand you a copy of a further letter No. 4423, dated 26th September, from Mr. F. G. Dumayne, Vice-Chairman of the Port Trust, upon this question.

From Chamber, to Calcutta Baled Jute Association.

No. 1667-1905.—CALCUTTA, 9th October 1905.

Accommodation for Jute Steamers.

I am now directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to address you in continuation of my No. 1602-1905, dated 25th September, upon this question. The Committee have since learnt that Steamer Agents are not willing to send steamers above the bridge, unless guarantees are given that no risk or delay will be incurred by their so doing. In these circumstances I am to suggest that your Association should again approach the different Steamer Agents interested, and endeavour to arrange this matter.

NATIVE PASSENGER SHIPS' ACT, 1887.

From Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY), to Chamber.

No. 3131-3135-C.—SIMLA, 7th July 1905.

With reference to the correspondence ending with your letter No. 28,* dated the 11th January 1905, addressed to the Finance Department, I am directed to forward, for the information of the Chamber, a copy of a letter, No. 3127-3130-C., dated 7th July 1905, and its enclosure, which has been forwarded to the Maritime Local Governments.

Nos. 3127-3130-C.—SIMLA, 7th July 1905.

From—J. CAMPBELL, ESQ., I.C.S., Under Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Commerce and Industry.

To—The Secretary to the Govt. of Madras, Marine Dept.
The Secretary to the Govt. of Bombay, General Dept.
The Secretary to the Govt. of Bengal, Marine Dept.
The Secretary to the Govt. of Burma, Commerce Dept.

I am directed to refer to correspondence ending with your letter No. 15 C, dated the 25th Feby, 1905, addressed to the Finance and
63 Marine, dated the 10th March 1905,
117-48-2, dated the 27th Feby, 1905.

Commerce Department, on the subject of the precautions to be observed in the case of vessels plying under the Native Passenger Ships' Act, 1887 (X of 1887), which carry cargoes of petroleum during the season when passenger traffic is unremunerative, and subsequently engage in passenger traffic while still in a dangerous condition owing to the presence of petroleum or petroleum vapour in their between decks and holds.

2. The Government of India are of opinion that it is necessary, in the interests of the public safety, to examine such vessels in order to determine whether they are in a fit state to carry passengers and they consider that this can be attained, with the minimum of disturbance to the shipping interest, by the adoption of the procedure prescribed in the accompanying executive instructions which have been drawn up in consultation with the Chief Inspector of Explosives. I am accordingly to request that, with the permission of the Local Govt., these instructions may be communicated to the officers authorised to grant certificates under the Native Passenger Ships' Act, for their guidance.

* Vide page 277 of Chamber Report for 1904, Vol. II.

3. It is not anticipated that any practical difficulty will be experienced in giving effect to these instructions, as it may be presumed that shipowners, masters, and agents will, in their own interests, give sufficient notice to the surveyors in cases, where it is proposed to re-employ a vessel which has been engaged in carrying cargoes of petroleum, for passenger traffic.

EXECUTIVE INSTRUCTIONS.

When a vessel which has been carrying petroleum as cargo, without having passengers on board, is about to be used for the passenger trade, the surveying officer should, under section 15 (2) of the Native Passenger Ships' Act, 1887 (X of 1887) refuse to grant a B certificate in respect of that vessel until he is satisfied that the safety of the passengers is not imperilled owing to the presence of petroleum or petroleum vapour in the ship.

2. He should make a thorough examination of all parts of the vessel in which petroleum may have been stored, or in which petroleum or petroleum vapour may have collected.

3. If he should see any petroleum lying about on the deck or in the holds, or notice any pronounced smell of petroleum, he should order any petroleum which may be in sight to be mopped up with cloth, tow or other suitable material, and should insist on the whole vessel, its holds and between decks, being thoroughly ventilated by such practicable means as are at his disposal on the vessel, *viz.*, by opening ports, hatches and doorways, by wind sails, or by steam jets or rotary fans, where these are available.

From Chamber, to Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY).

No. 1281-1905.—CALCUTTA, 28th July 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 3131, dated 7th July 1905.

2. With the letter you forward a copy of a communication which you have addressed to the Maritime Local Governments on the subject of the precautions to be observed in the case of certain vessels plying under the Native Passenger Ships' Act, 1887. These vessels carry cargoes of petroleum during the season when passenger traffic is unremunerative, and subsequently engage in passenger traffic while still in a dangerous condition, owing to the presence of petroleum or petroleum vapour in their between decks and holds. The communication in question conveyed certain executive instructions to be observed by Local Governments in respect of such vessels. These instructions have been considered by the Committee, who have no remarks to offer concerning them.

PARIS INTERNATIONAL SANITARY CONFERENCE, 1908

From Government of Bengal (MUNICIPAL) to Chamber.

No. 337-T.P.—20th July 1905.

I am directed to forward a copy of a letter from the Government of India No. 996, dated the 17th June 1905, together with a copy of a translation of the Convention, framed at the International Sanitary Conference held at Paris in 1903, for the purpose of considering measures to prevent the spread of plague and cholera.

2. I am to invite special attention to paragraph 6 of the letter from the Government of India, and to request that the Chamber will favour the Lieutenant-Governor with an expression of their opinion on the two points therein referred to *viz.*—(1) whether rats should be destroyed on vessels arriving at ports in Bengal, and (2) whether apparatus should be provided for destroying rats on out-going vessels.

No. 996.—SIMLA, 17th June 1905.

From—J. C. FERGUSSON, Esq., Under-Secretary to the Government of India,

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

I am directed to forward, for the information of the Government of Bengal a copy of a provisional translation of the Convention framed at the International Sanitary Conference, held at Paris, in 1903, for the purpose of considering measures to prevent the spread of plague and cholera.

2. The Convention deals with both diseases in a single document, and is mainly an amalgamation of the Conventions of Dresden (1893) and Paris (1894), both of which dealt with cholera, and the Venice Convention (1897), which dealt with plague.

3. The Government of India have determined not to subscribe to those provisions which relate to cholera. As regards measures for the prevention of plague, it will be observed that a considerable advance has been made, in the direction of British views on the prophylaxis of the disease. The following are the most important points, in which the Convention differs from the Venice Convention of 1897:—

- (i) The adoption of an incubation period for plague of five instead of ten days has led to important modifications in many parts of the earlier Convention; and these modifications everywhere result in gains in the way of reducing delays and obstacles to shipping and the movement of passengers. As examples may be cited the reduction from twelve to seven days of the date of the last case in the definitions of 'infected'

and 'suspected' ships respectively (art. 20), and the reduction in the periods of 'observation' and 'surveillance' on all classes of ships (arts. 21, 22 and 23). It further follows from the view of the term of incubation, which is now accepted, that exports from infected areas are more liberally treated (art. 8) and that five days' freedom from plague, together with the adoption of measures against rats, is sufficient to entitle an infected area to be considered healthy (art. 9).

- (ii) The recognition that no class of goods is in itself susceptible of carrying infection has led to a reduction in the list of goods which may be disinfected or excluded from a country (arts. 11 to 13).
- (iii) The notification of a first case of plague, even when indigenous, does not necessitate the application by other states of protective measures (chapter 11) against the territorial area where the case occurs (art. 7).
- (iv) When effective isolation has been carried out, the five days' period which entitles an area to be deemed healthy is to count from such isolation instead of from the death or cure of the last patient [art. 9 (f)].
- (v) The abandonment of the provisions of the Venice Convention for pumping out bilge water and the substitution of good drinking water for the water stored on board.
- (vi) The acceptance of the medical visit at night for ships passing through the Suez Canal and the permission under certain conditions to make that visit on board (art. 56).
- (vii) The permission accorded to passengers and mails from the East to cross Egypt by rail under certain conditions (art. 78 and Appendix 1).

4. On the side of increased stringency the only provisions to which exception could be taken are those relating to the destruction of rats. The chief provisions of the Convention dealing with the subject are the following:—

- (i) Art. 2 provides that when human plague is notified, rat plague, if it exists, is also to be notified;
- (ii) Art. 4 requires that the weekly reports on the progress of an epidemic shall state the measures taken against rats; and
- (iii) Art. 21 (b) makes the destruction of rats compulsory on the infected ships, art. 22 recommends it on suspected ships and art. 23 (3) permits it, at the discretion of the local sanitary authorities, on healthy ships.

At first sight these provisions seem a formidable addition to the measures which may be applied to vessels arriving in a foreign port from an infected area, but it has been pointed out by the British delegates that the science of the older Conventions in this

matter was construed by many countries as giving them a free hand to impose any conditions, which they thought fit, and, as a matter of fact, the Governments of Turkey and France adopted extremely stringent measures. The present Convention defines precisely (arts. 21 to 25) what may be done in the way of rat destruction, lays down that the cargo, the engines and the vessel itself must not be damaged, that the process must not last longer than 48 hours in some cases and 24 hours in others, that in the case of healthy ships it is not to be resorted to as a general rule, that it is not to interfere with the movements of the passengers and the crew, and that it is not to be repeated needlessly. It is further provided (arts. 15 and 25) that damages caused by the destruction of rats shall be paid for, and that the charges shall be on a fixed scale, so calculated as not to form a source of profit. The Government of India consider that on the whole the provisions relating to rats are not such as should deter them from accepting the Convention, but they will explain to His Majesty's Secretary of State that owing to the religious and caste prejudices of the people of India they cannot undertake to introduce effective measures for the destruction of rats either in sea-port towns or in the interior of the country. As, however, importance is attached to the notification of plague among rats, I am to ask that when the Government of ^{Modes} etc. reports to the Government of India the extension of plague to any ports whence vessels sail for Europe, it may be stated whether any plague or unusual mortality among rats has been observed.

5. Chapter II—section III deals with the measures to be taken at ports and on sea frontiers. The consideration of the uniform rules for the treatment under the plague regulations of vessels departing from, or arriving at, ports in British India was held over by the Government of India to be examined in the light of the conclusions of the present Convention. The rules for inward-bound vessels, whether made by Local Governments or by the Government of India, will be revised in accordance with the section ~~and~~ a separate communication on the subject will be sent to you in due course.

6. The most important practical question which arises in this connection is the provision of apparatus for destroying rats. The Government of India are of opinion that the question as to what action should be taken for the destruction of rats on board ships should be considered with reference both to arrivals [art. 21 (6)] and departures. In the case of vessels leaving Indian ports, the acceptance of the Convention renders it necessary that steps should be taken under art. 47 (2) for preventing the ingress of rats on board ships. I am to refer to the letter from the Government of Bengal, noted on the margin, regarding the adoption in the port of Calcutta of precautions to prevent the ingress or egress of plague-infected rats to and from ships. In view of the simplicity of the apparatus and of the inexpensiveness of the procedure, the Government of India have suggested for the consider-

No. 1078, Medical-P., dated the 11th December 1903, and enclosures.

ation of the other Maritime or Local Governments the advisability of providing the requisite apparatus in case vessels wish to use it. They would be glad to be favoured with the opinion of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor upon the following points:—

- (i) whether rats should be destroyed on vessels arriving at ports in British India; and
- (ii) whether apparatus should be provided for destroying rats on departing vessels.

7. Part II—section III-A, deals with measures to be taken with regard to ordinary vessels which arrive at the Red Sea ports, or are proceeding towards the Mediterranean. This section contains various concessions which will be of value in the rare events of plague cases occurring on homeward-bound boats. The principal modifications are—

- (i) the reduction of the period of observation from ten to five days;
- (ii) in the case of mail boats free pratique can be given if the last case of plague dates further back than seven instead of fourteen days; and
- (iii) the reduction from ten to five days of the period of observation at Moses' Wells in the case of suspected vessels.

8. Section VI deals with the arrangements in the Persian Gulf. The attention of the Government of India has recently been called to the vexatious nature of the quarantine imposed by the Turkish Government as well as of the various hindrances which British Indian commerce experiences in the Turkish ports of the Persian Gulf; and they have obtained a report from the political officers concerned with a view to addressing the Secretary of State officers concerned with the Convention, this section, like its predecessors, is likely to remain a dead-letter. The Governments of Turkey and Persia have not agreed regarding the control of the sanitary station at Ormuz, and Great Britain has refused to accept it until the Sanitary Board of Health at Constantinople is reconstituted—a proposal which the Turkish Government has so far declined to discuss.

9. The main changes in part III (apart from merely verbal alterations) are those in arts. 104 (2), 106, 109 and the provisions as regards rats in arts. 126, 127 and 128. The remainder of the Convention does not call for special notice.

10. The reserves under which Great Britain has accepted the Convention had regard to—

- (1) the improved utility of the proposed International Health Bureau;
- (2) the proposed sanitary station at the entrance to the Persian Gulf. There were three reserves on this point:—
- (a) that the consent of His Majesty's Government to the reunion of the mixed commission for the revision

of the Turkish sanitary tariff (one object of which would be to authorize the advance of funds for that station) is subject to the condition that the commission shall put in a prominent position in its programme the possibility of reducing the sanitary dues in Turkish ports :

- (b) that the decisions of that commission, when voting funds for this purpose, must be unanimous ;
 (c) that no steps shall be taken for the construction of the station in question until the Constantinople Board of Health shall have been reorganized in the manner agreed upon by the present Conference :

(3) the British delegation further supported the expressed hope of the German delegation that when rat destruction is carried out by a company or an individual, the charge made to the ship shall not be excessive.

11. A separate communication will be addressed to you on the subject of the application of part III of the Convention to the pilgrim traffic from India to the Hedjaz.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (MUNICIPAL).

NO. 1376-1905.—CALCUTTA, 15th August 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt your letter No. 337-T. P., dated 20th July 1905, with which you forwarded a copy of a letter from the Government of India (No. 995 dated 17th June 1905), together with a copy of a translation of the Convention framed at the International Sanitary Conference, held at Paris in 1903, for the purpose of considering measures to prevent the spread of plague and cholera.

2. You invite special attention to paragraph 6 of the Government of India letter, and ask for an expression of opinion upon the two following points referred to therein—(a) whether rats should be destroyed on vessels arriving at ports in Bengal; and (b) whether apparatus should be provided for destroying rats on out-going vessels. In reply I am to say that the Committee have examined the Convention, and have also attentively considered the letter from the Government of India. They gather from the Convention that the destruction of rats, except as regards infected ships—art. 21 (6)—is not compulsory either with respect to arrivals or departures. This being so the Committee would be disposed to reply to your first enquiry in the negative. Seeing that the vessels arriving in Indian ports do not come generally from infected areas, the question if much good would result from destroying the rats before the cargo is discharged. On the other hand it is practically certain that the necessary operations would involve considerable detention to the vessel.

3. The Committee take a similar view as regards vessels leaving Indian ports. As they understand the Convention, its requirements will be met if precautions are taken to prevent rats

entering and leaving the ship; and they are not disposed to suggest that more comprehensive measures should be attempted.

4. To return to the proposed destruction of rats on vessels before the discharge of cargo or after loading, I am to say that the Committee are somewhat doubtful as to whether any such attempts, as might be possible, would be effectual in destroying both rats and fleas. The destruction of the latter is clearly of great importance, seeing that they are now generally recognised as the agency by which infection is spread. The Committee are not, it is true, quite clear as to the particular method which would be proposed for adoption. But it is, they think, questionable if fumigation would be successful. In the case of the Clayton fumigator, the fumes have no effect they believe upon white ants, because they cannot penetrate the holes in the wood in which the ants bury themselves. If this be correct, it naturally becomes a question whether the fumes will penetrate through the cargo in sufficient volume to destroy the rats; and even if they do, whether they will also destroy the fleas. Should there be any doubt as to the destruction of the fleas, the Committee think the safer course would be not to attempt any measures of this description. If the rats are not plague-infected there is, they understand, no danger, and if they are plague-infected, to destroy them and to liberate the fleas in the cargo, would seem to be a certain way of spreading infection.

From Hong-Kong General Chamber, to Chamber.

HONG-KONG, 4th August 1905.

My Committee are considering the question of Hong-Kong joining the Paris Sanitary Convention, and I have been directed to write to ascertain your views as to the probability of your port becoming a party to the Convention.

The Committee of this Chamber are more or less in favour of the Convention, but Hong-Kong being principally a Shipping Port it is absolutely necessary that the Quarantine measures obtained at the principal ports East of Aden should be as uniform as possible.

An early reply will be esteemed.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (MUNICIPAL).

NO. 1563-1905.—CALCUTTA, 18th September 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to refer to previous correspondence, ending with my No. 1376, dated 15th August, 1905, on the subject of the Paris Sanitary Convention, 1903.

2. An enquiry has reached the Committee from the Hong-Kong General Chamber of Commerce as to the probability of the port of Calcutta, becoming a party to the Convention. At present the Committee are unable to reply to this enquiry; and they

have instructed me to ask if you will favour them with the information which will enable them to do so.

From Government of Bengal (MUNICIPAL), to Chamber,

No. 724-T. P.—DARJEELING, 17th October 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1561, dated the 18th September, 1905, in which at the instance of the Hong-Kong General Chamber of Commerce enquiry is made whether the port of Calcutta will become a party to the Paris Sanitary Convention, 1903.

2. In reply I am to invite attention to the letter from the Government of India No. 996, dated the 17th June, 1905, a copy of which was forwarded to you with my letter No. 337-T. P. of the 20th July, 1905. In paragraph 3 of the above letter it is intimated that the Government of India have determined not to subscribe to those provisions of the Convention which relate to cholera, while in paragraph 4 it is said that they are prepared to accept it so far as plague is concerned.

From Chamber, to Hong-Kong Chamber.

No. 1821-1905.—CALCUTTA, 7th November 1905.

Paris Sanitary Convention.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 4th August, enquiring as to the probability of this Port becoming a party to the Convention.

I have ascertained from the Government of Bengal that the Government of India have determined not to subscribe to those provisions of the Convention which relate to Cholera, while they are prepared to accept it so far as Plague is concerned.

THE PILOT SERVICE—PERIODIC EXAMINATION OF SENIOR PILOTS.

From Government of Bengal (MARINE), to Chamber.

No. 98-T/MNE.—DARJEELING, 29th May 1905.

I am directed to forward herewith a copy of the letters, marginally noted, on the subject of a suggested periodic examination of Senior Pilots as to their sight and physical fitness, and to request that you will be so good as to favour this Government with the views of the Chamber on the proposal made by the Port Officer.

No. 4032.—5th October, 1904.

From—The Port Officer of Calcutta,

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

I have the honour to submit the following report for the consideration and orders of Government.

2. I learn from the reports of the unfortunate total loss of the P. & O. Company's S. S. "Australia" on the rocks at Point Nepean while making for Melbourne, that the pilotage system of that Port is far from satisfactory, for it is stated with apparent authority that the pilot in charge of the vessel was both shortsighted and affected with heart disease.

3. To what extent these grave physical imperfections of the pilot contributed to the loss of the Steamer cannot yet be judged, as no report of an enquiry has yet reached this country, but it is quite within reason to assume the fact had much bearing on the lamentable issue. A vessel in charge of a man so deficient can scarcely claim to be seaworthy, for notwithstanding the fact that the Master is on the bridge, he naturally gives way to one possessed of a superior knowledge of local conditions and dangers.

4. The Master being held responsible for the vessel's safety is on deck continuously, but unless a very palpable error is being perpetrated in the vessel's navigation when in a fully qualified and compulsory pilot's hands, or some totally unnecessary or dangerous manoeuvre is being carried out, he does not usually interfere with the pilot's operations.

5. The loss of the S. S. "Australia" will, I feel confident, arouse pilotage authorities throughout the world to look into the conditions of service and make it compulsory for all men who, under the sanction of Government or responsible bodies, pilot vessels to prove their physical fitness to act as Pilots.

6. A pilot should be in that condition of healthfulness which is the best safeguard against accidents; but in the event of such, to minimise their evil effects by prompt, resolute and courageous action.

7. It is all important that a pilot's sight should be good to enable him to promptly and correctly distinguish lights, buoys crossing marks and judge distances, and further, that he should be physically fit and have all his organs sound and his nerves in such a healthy condition as will not be readily shattered under a heavy strain.

8. I will now describe the rules in force for the enlistment of mentally and physically fit young Officers from the Mercantile Marine for the Bengal Pilot Service.

(a). A candidate for the Pilot Service has to possess a 2nd Mate's Certificate, this ensures his having passed the color and vision tests under the Board of Trade Regulations.

(b). On being nominated to the Pilot Service, he has to pass the Medical Board at the India Office, London, as to his physical fitness for the Pilot Service.

(c). After arrival in this country there is no further examination for physical fitness, but each Officer has his sight tested under the Board of Trade rules when passing for Mate, Master and Branch Pilot after which no examination for sight test takes place.

9. It will thus be seen the system for procuring suitable Officers is excellent, and the sight tests at the different examinations is satisfactory, but the want of examination as to fitness and sight after a Pilot has passed the Branch Pilot's examination, is most unsatisfactory, as proved by the following cases which are on record:—

11. The above instances are sufficient to prove our system, with regard to the physical fitness of our Senior Pilots, is defective, in that, after a Pilot has passed his Branch Pilot's examination when he is about 32 years of age and has had 13 years service, no further test for sight or physical fitness is applied, though it is possible for him under the present conditions of the service to remain on until he is 60 years of age.

12. It must be remembered that the life of a Hughli Pilot is an exceptionally hard one, the work itself is very trying to body and mind, and the climatic conditions make it more so, especially from May to October, when they have to stand on a bridge the whole of a long Indian summer day exposed to the powerful sun and glare, trying their sight and constitutions.

Then again as often happens with increasing years comes increasing weight with decreased strength, making the act of climbing out of a boat in a seaway on to a Jacob's ladder and up 30 feet of a ballast vessel's side an excessively arduous undertaking.

THE PILOT SERVICE—PERIODIC EXAMINATION OF SENIOR PILOTS. 249

very likely to affect and incapacitate a pilot suffering from heart or pulmonary disease from the proper performance of his Pilotage duties.

13. In the interests of the reputation of the Bengal Pilot Service, Ocean travellers, Shipowners, Underwriters and Seamen generally, I am of opinion every effort should now be made to remedy the defects pointed out and in future maintain an unquestionable standard of physical efficiency in the Senior Members of the valuable service of Pilots who conduct vessels to and from Calcutta on the waters of one of the most treacherous rivers in the world. To effectually do this, I recommend:—

(1) All pilots now holding Branch Pilots Certificates and every pilot after passing his Branch Pilot's examination and while under 55 years of age must be examined every three years by the Marine Surgeon as to his sight and physical fitness.

(2) Pilots serving after 55 years of age must be examined every year as to his sight and physical fitness.

I enclose a D. O. letter dated to-day which I have received from Lt.-Col. J. Lewtas, M.D.M.S. Marine Surgeon, on the point of sight test.

TRINITY HOUSE.—LONDON, 17th April 1905.

From—The Trinity House,

To—The Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Marine Department,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd ultimo (535 Marine) requesting to be furnished with the particulars respecting the examination, if any, that the Pilots licensed by this Corporation undergo on the renewal of their Licenses, and I am to acquaint you that all Licenses expire on the 31st January in each year, and, during that month, before the Licenses are renewed, each Pilot undergoes an examination, as to his bodily health, sight and hearing, and should any doubt arise on these points, he is medically examined by an officer appointed for the purpose. The Pilot is also tested as to his acquaintance, with the Rules and Bye Laws affecting the Service, and any changes that may have taken place in the District for which he is licensed.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (MARINE).

No. 1164-1905.—CALCUTTA, 10th July 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 98-T-1, dated 29th May, forwarding a copy of the marginally noted letters on the subject of a sug-

(1) Letter No. 4032 of 9th October 1904, from the Port Officer, Calcutta, to the Government of Bengal.

(2) Letter dated 17th April 1905, from Trinity House, London.

gested periodic examination of Senior Hooghly Pilots, as to their sight and physical fitness for the service.

2. The Committee have fully considered these papers, and have consulted Steamer Agents, with reference to them. From the Port Officer's letter it appears that, under existing arrangements, each pilot has his sight tested according to the Board of Trade Regulations when passing for Mate, Master and Branch Pilot. After the latter examination, no further sight test is, however, held, and to remedy this defect Captain Beaumont proposes:—

(1) that all pilots now holding Branch Pilot certificates and every pilot after passing his Branch Pilot's examination, and while 55 years of age, shall be examined every three years by the Marine Surgeon as to his sight and physical fitness; and

(2) that pilots serving after 55 years age shall be examined every year as to sight and physical fitness.

3. With this proposal the Committee are in cordial agreement, believing as they do, that it will tend to maintain the efficiency of the Hooghly Pilot Service. They would add that Steamer Agents in Calcutta are of the same opinion; and they trust, therefore, that the proposal will be given effect to, in due course by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor.

THE PILOT SERVICE—ADMISSION OF LOCAL CANDIDATES.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (MARINE).

No. 1573-1905.—CALCUTTA, 19th September 1905.

The attention of the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce has been recently drawn to the question of the appointment of local candidates to the Bengal Pilot Service.

2. It was, the Committee believe, in the year 1885, when the Government determined to admit local candidates to the service. The first appointment was made in 1887; and with the exception of the years 1889 and 1895, examinations have since been held annually. During the nine years 1887-1895, eleven appointments were offered. For these seventeen candidates presented themselves; and ten appointments were made. During the ten years 1896-1905 twelve appointments were offered. No candidates appeared at the examinations in 1896, 1897, and 1898. In the remaining years, seven candidates presented themselves, and were all appointed.

3. The Government Regulations contemplate, the Committee notice, a competitive examination. But from these figures it is evident, that the examination has never been of such a nature as really to justify that title. In fact, at none of the examinations have more than two candidates appeared; and at the examinations held in 1899, 1902, 1903, 1904 and 1905, one candidate only was examined. Such a condition of things does not, on the face of it, appear to be altogether satisfactory; and steamer owners have lately expressed doubts as to whether the indefinite continuance of such a system will be to the ultimate advantage of the Pilot Service. The absolute necessity of recruiting the service from the very best available material, whether in the United Kingdom or in India, is too obvious to need to be emphasised. The conditions of the examinations held in England are, the Committee believe, such as to fulfil this requirement. But they are not sure, looking to the facts which they have stated, that the same can be said of the examinations held in India. It is therefore, they think, desirable that an enquiry into the general question of the appointment of local candidates should be made; and they venture to express a hope, that the Government of Bengal will be disposed to institute such an enquiry, and to take such action upon the result of it as may be deemed desirable.

From Government of Bengal (MARINE), to Chamber.

No. 1766-MNE.—CALCUTTA, 4th November, 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1573, dated the 19th September last, on the question of the appointment of local candidates into the Bengal Pilot Service.

2. In reply, I am directed to forward, for the information of the Chamber, the accompanying extracts (paras : 1, 2 and 3) from a letter from the Port Officer of Calcutta, No. 4124, dated the 24th ultimo, together with a copy of a statement of the services of the officers of the Bengal Pilot Service, who have been appointed locally which has been compiled by the Port Officer. I am to observe that, so far as can be judged from present experience of the officers who have been locally appointed, there is nothing, in the opinion of the Lieutenant-Governor, which may be held to indicate, that these officers are not as efficient and reliable as the pilots who have been nominated by the Secretary of State.

Extracts (paras : 1, 2 and 3) from a letter No. 4124, dated the 24th October 1905 from the Port Officer, Calcutta, to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Marine Department.

In compliance with the request contained in your letter No. 227-T-Mne, dated the 9th instant with enclosure, I have the honor to submit a statement showing the names of the officers of the Bengal Pilot Service who have been appointed locally with other particulars as required by Government.

2. I beg to point out that the Acting Secretary, Bengal Chamber of Commerce, is under the impression that examinations are held in England for the entry of Leadsman Apprentices into the Pilot Service, but such is not the case, the appointments are the patronage of the India Office and they are now made without examination and irrespective of the applicants position on the examination lists of the Training vessels. The applicants in England and India are required to have the same practical sea experience, and both must hold 2d Mate's Certificate of Competency before appointment. It will therefore be seen, the local candidate has to pass an additional test examination, though it may not in all instances be strictly competitive, to satisfy this Government that he has the necessary seaman's education and knowledge required to make him a successful pilot.

3. A comparison of the pilotage work done by Pilots appointed in England and in India, in no way proves the latter to be in any way inferior to the former as a Pilot.

From Chamber, to Calcutta Liners' Conference.

No. 1850-1905.—CALCUTTA, 11th November 1905.

Admission of Local Candidates to the Pilot Service.

With reference to your letter of 30th August, on the above subject, I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to forward for your information, copy of letter No. 1766-Marine, from the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Marine Department, enclosing copy of, a memorandum by the Port

Officer, with accompanying statement, giving the names of Officers of the Bengal Pilot Service who have been appointed locally, with particulars as to their service.

2. You will see from the Hon. Mr. Inglis's letter that so far as can be judged from present experience of the Officers locally appointed, there is nothing, in the opinion of H. H. the Lieutenant-Governor, which may be held to indicate that these Officers are not as efficient and reliable as the Pilots who have been nominated by the Secretary of State.

From Calcutta Liners' Conference, to Chamber.

CALCUTTA, 14th November 1905.

Admission of Local Candidates to the Pilot Service.

I am instructed to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 1850-1905 of the 11th instant in the above connection, together with its enclosures, and to state that the members of the Calcutta Liners' Conference adhere to the opinion which they have already expressed, that the interests of the Bengal Pilot Service are opposed to its being recruited locally.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (MARINE).

No. 2069-1905.—CALCUTTA, 15th December 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your No. 1766-Marine of 4th November 1905, on the question of the mode of appointment of local candidates to the Bengal Pilot Service.

2. Under cover of this letter you were good enough to forward, for the information of the Chamber, extracts from a letter dated 24th October, from the Port Officer Calcutta, together with copy of a statement of the Officers of the Bengal Pilot Service, who have been appointed locally since 1887. You further intimate that so far as can be judged from present experience of the Officers locally appointed there is nothing, in the opinion of H. H. the Lieutenant-Governor, which may be held to indicate that these Officers are not as efficient and reliable as the Pilots nominated by the Secretary of State.

3. The Committee note from the letter of 24th October from the Port Officer, referred to above, the conditions under which Leadsman Apprentices are admitted to the Bengal Pilot Service in England, and that the local candidate here has to pass an additional test examination, though not in all instances a strictly competitive one.

4. Without wishing to cast any reflection whatever, on the Officers named in the list referred to—many of whom are now seniors in the service and are doubtless reliable and trustworthy men—the Committee cannot but feel aware that there is a want of confidence in the examinations, as at present conducted and that

while the responsibility of Pilots is greatly increasing, owing to the increasing size of the vessels they have to handle, there is not, under the present system, a sufficient guarantee that really good and efficient men are being appointed locally. In view of the great responsibility attaching to the handling of vessels in a dangerous river like the Hooghly, and to the fact, that life and valuable property are at stake, the Committee would suggest for the consideration of Government a revision of the present system of examination of candidates for the service. In their opinion the Examining Board should be so constituted as to include the Commander of a vessel, in port at the time (preferably an ocean-going vessel), and also a Senior Pilot.

ACCOMMODATION AT THE JETTIES.

From Liners' Conference, to Chamber.

CALCUTTA, 13th September 1905.

I am instructed to address you in regard to the most satisfactory state of matters now existing as to discharging accommodation for steamers.

In April last the Port Commissioners were obliged to close No. 2 Jetty owing to its unsafe condition, and since then there have been only five jetty berths available, two of which are not able to accommodate some of the larger vessels now trading regularly to this port. No. 14 Berth at the Docks was to be used as a discharging berth to relieve the pressure at the jetties, but there are great difficulties in the way of discharging a large cargo there and raiiling up the Jetty cargo from Kidderpore to the jetties, and consequently no attempt has been made to handle a steamer at that berth with a full outward cargo from Liverpool and or Glasgow.

The Port Commissioners were to take in hand the reconstruction of No. 2 Jetty Berth, and the construction of two new Jetties to the south of the existing Jetties with as little delay as possible, but up to the present time scarcely anything has been actually done in the way of an inception of these most important and most urgently needed works.

The steamers of the Liners' Conference are frequently obliged to wait in the stream for several days before they can obtain a discharging berth, and it is in fact an exceptional circumstance when a steamer gets a berth on arrival without having to wait.

It is needless to dwell upon the serious loss of time and money, the inconvenience and disorganisation of sailing arrangements that these delays are causing the owners of steamers, but the Conference venture to think that a representation to the Government of India on the subject from the Chamber would be fully justified, and might have some effect in hastening on the reconstruction of No. 2 Jetty and of the two additional Jetties, Nos. 7 and 8.

From Chamber, to Vice-Chairman Port Commissioners.

No. 1604-1905—CALCUTTA, 25th September 1905.

The Jetties.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have received from the Liners' Conference a representation with reference to No. 2 Jetty.

2. The Conference point out that the Jetty was closed in April last because it had become unsafe. Since then there have been, they go on to say, only five Jetty berths available, two of which are not able to accommodate some of the larger vessels now trading regularly to the port. Further, they mention that No. 14

berth at the Dock was to be used as a discharging berth to relieve the pressure at the Jetties. But there are, they say, great difficulties in the way of discharging heavy cargo there and railing it up there a large steamer with a full general cargo.

3. The Committee have given their earnest attention to this representation, recognising as they do the great importance of the subject with which it deals. They are also acquainted with the action which the Commissioners have taken to remedy the difficulty as quickly as possible. They understand that plans for reconstructing the Jetty have now been finally passed by the Commissioners and the expenditure sanctioned by Government; that tenders have been invited and were to be returned on the 19th September; that a special Engineer to control the operations has been appointed and that the order to proceed with the work will be given on the 25th September, on which date the Commissioners will decide as to the particular tender to be accepted.

4. This being the present position, the Committee admitting the difficulties which beset the matter, do not propose to comment on the past action of the Commissioners, except to express regret, that so little progress should have been made in the two years which have elapsed subsequent to March 1903, when plans for the reconstruction of No. 4 Jetty were postponed pending the proposal of its extension scheme. Now, however, that the work is practically in hand, it will be, the Committee hope, pushed forward to completion with the greatest expedition possible. It is, as the Commissioners will readily admit, a most serious matter for steamship owners to have their vessels delayed for some days on arrival, for want of jetty accommodation. In all such cases, the direct and contingent losses incurred must be very heavy; and in one case, it is stated that the loss represented, as much as £100 per diem. No further argument is needed to show that the work of reconstructing the Jetty should be carried forward with the very greatest possible speed. Indeed, the Committee are inclined to go so far as to suggest that not only should the Contractor be fined for every day by which he exceeds his contract time, but that he should, in the present special case, be given a bonus for every day by which he reduces it. This system is not, they believe, new to India, and its application to this particular case might have the effect of materially expediting the work.

5. In considering the representation from the Liners' Conference, the Committee have also discussed the larger question of whether sufficient attention is being paid to the future requirements of the port. They are fully alive to the difficulties which, must of necessity, surround any large scheme for increasing the port facilities. But it appears to be evident that, trade is increasing, and there is no reason to believe, that any contraction will take place. Steamers are growing both in size and in number. Indeed, the Committee notice that during the last fifteen years the tonnage entered at the port for the foreign trade has increased, from 830,277 tons in 1890-91 to 1,752,120 tons in 1904-05; while the tonnage

entered for the coasting trade has likewise risen from 951,062 tons in 1890-91 to 1,890,027 tons in 1904-05. If it is likely that this rate of increase will be maintained—and it does not seem unlikely—the question arises as to whether the Commissioners would not be well-advised in giving early consideration to the prospective requirements of the port, seeing that much time must, of necessity, elapse between the initiation and the completion of all important construction works. The Committee fully admit the need for the utmost caution in any steps which may be decided upon. But they feel that Calcutta should be so equipped that no trade can possibly be diverted to other ports, because it cannot be dealt with satisfactorily here. They have particularly in mind the movement in which they have lately participated in connection with Railway rates. Should this movement eventuate in a large accession of new traffic to Calcutta, it is absolutely essential that the facilities of the port should be such as to enable that traffic to be dealt with as expeditiously as at the western ports and, moreover, without any incidental delays to the traffic which now offers.

From Chamber, to Liners' Conference.

No. 1607-1905.—CALCUTTA, 25th September 1905.

Accommodation at the Jetties.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 13th September, with reference to this question. After fully considering the question the Committee of the Chamber decided to address the Vice-Chairman of the Port Commissioners respecting it; and I enclose a copy of their letter for your information.

From Liners' Conference, to Chamber.

CALCUTTA, 4th October 1905.

Accommodation at the Jetties.

I beg to own receipt of your favour No. 1607-1905 of 25th ultimo, enclosing copy of a letter addressed by the Chamber to the Vice-Chairman of the Port Commissioners, and am instructed to thank the Committee for the attention they have given to the representations of the Conference, and for urging on the reconstruction of No. 2 Jetty, as also the improvement of the facilities of the port, in view of the probable expansion of its trade in the future.

From Vice-Chairman Port Commissioners, to Chamber.

No. 4895.—CALCUTTA, 16th October 1905.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1604 dated 25th September, and to express the hope that on the information that will now be laid before them, the Committee will be satisfied that the Commissioners have made good progress in providing facilities at the port, and that the schemes which they

have prepared make ample provision for the requirements of the trade of the future. Further reference will be made to the works that have been completed or are in course of construction, but it may be stated that the sum expended on them during the last 4 years has amounted to more than a crore of rupees and, so far from the expenditure adding anything to the burden on the port in the matter of rates, the Commissioners have simultaneously reduced the rates to the extent of at least 9 lakhs per annum. The reductions in favour of the shipping alone, amount to Rs. 2½ lakhs per annum and out of this sum the reductions in favour of the shipping accommodated at the Jetties and the Docks in night work and other charges are estimated to amount to Rs. 1¼ lakhs per annum.

2. The Commissioners consider the re-construction of the Jetties on a plan that will bring the accommodation up to date as one of the most important of the works to be carried out by them. Some time was taken in the re-organisation of the Engineering Department with an entirely new Staff of Officers, the former officers having all retired and not only had the work of re-constructing the Jetties to be taken in hand but also a great variety of other works affecting the coal, wheat and seeds, hite, tea and inland vessels traffic. In the financial year 1902-03, however, plans (the third scheme that had been prepared) were approved with the intention of commencing with Jetty No. 4 and sanctioned by the Government, but the space on the Jetties was so cramped for the import trade requiring accommodation, that after ordering some of the material it was decided that it was inadvisable to put any part of the Jetties out of use until other accommodation had been provided. It being impracticable, for reasons known to the Committee, to transfer any part of the import trade permanently to the Docks it, therefore, became necessary for the Commissioners, before dismantling any one of the Jetties for the purposes of reconstruction, to consider what should be done for the temporary accommodation of the trade that would be disturbed.

3. The proposal which appeared to offer the prospect of the least inconvenience to the trade was to use berth No. 14 in the Tidal Basin which was then being equipped with sheds, sidings etc. as a place to which some of the import trade might be temporarily transferred. In the construction of the shed at No. 14 berth in the Tidal Basin the Commissioners decided to build the quay side wall on wells deeply founded in order to strengthen that wall and thus allow of the water level being lowered when required further than was previously considered safe, with the object of facilitating the docking and undocking of vessels through both the entrances. The sinking of the wells necessarily took some time and when in May 1904, the berth became available, the export trade required the whole of the accommodation. It was then decided to proceed with the extension of the Jetties which also involves a considerable disturbance of the trade in a very congested place, but this was the only possible way of commencing the re-construction of the accommodation for the benefit of the trade generally, and there was no intention of disturbing

the trade at the old Jetties until at least one berth of the new Jetties was in working order. The plans for the extension were approved by Government in May 1905. In the meantime (April 1905) Jetty No. 2 became so unsafe that there was no option but to start the re-construction of it with the resulting inconvenience to the trade which the Commissioners had tried to avoid in the arrangements proposed by them.

4. To the information that the Committee already have on the subject of re-constructing Jetty No. 2, I have only to add that the contract has been let on the condition that the work will be completed in 32 weeks.* The contract for the extension of the Jetties has also been let, but as this work

is much larger and can only be carried out in sections, as one section is to be made ready for the trade before the other is taken in hand, the time for completion is 69 weeks.

5. As regards the provision of further accommodation, I would invite the attention of the Committee to the recent proceedings of the Commissioners from which they will see that plans and estimates have been sanctioned by them for four more berths for produce, other than coal, in Kidderpore Dock No. 2 which is equal to an increase of 30 per cent. on the existing accommodation, and two more berths for coal which is equal to an increase of 25 per cent. and they are considering the question of now installing mechanical coal loading appliances if, after consultation with Mr. Peter Whyte an expert on this subject, the time should now appear to have arrived when it would be expedient for them to do so. Besides these 6 additional berths there is space available in Dock No. 2 for another 8, the construction of which will be taken in hand in advance of the demand whenever this may prove to be necessary. The Commissioners, however, have not been content in having this accommodation in reserve, which will probably be sufficient for the requirements of some years to come, but are also acquiring more space with good river frontage where berths for the largest steamers may be easily constructed, in order to be ready for the further expansion of the trade.

6. The new works that are in progress, or sanctioned, for the benefit of all the sections of the trade of the port—

- (1) On a property acquired only two years ago on the riverside near the Dock entrances, two large upper-storied sheds with bridges and pontoons have already been completed for the handling of direct shipment teas, also jute by the vessels of the Inland Steam Navigation Companies and at the same place a four-storied sale tea warehouse, in size largely exceeding the existing tea warehouse at Armenian Ghat, will be completed by the commencement of the tea season of 1906, the purpose of these works being to provide the tea trade with accommodation so situated in regard to the Inland Vessels on the one hand and the ocean-going steamers on the other, that the trade

* Note.—A bonus is to be given for earlier completion.

- may be carried on under the most favourable conditions.
- (2) At Kantapur, a depot for the wheat and seed trade has been established with a covered space of no less than 750,000 square feet.
 - (3) For the hide trade large premises have already been constructed and these are now being more than doubled for the firms shifting from the town.
 - (4) At the Import Jetties a large upper-storied warehouse has recently been opened for import goods, and on the transfer of the tea trade to the Docks the existing sale tea warehouse will be made available for import goods also.
 - (5) At Armenian Ghat the sheds, bridges and pontoons are being re-constructed at a cost of Rs. 3,24,387.
 - (6) At the Chandpal Ghat a large passenger stage for ocean-going steamers will shortly be completed at a cost of Rs. 2,61,204.
 - (7) A second 30 ton crane for the benefit of the foreign import trade will also soon be available for use, costing Rs. 2,09,210.
 - (8) At Ramkrishnapore considerable reclamations have been made with silt from the river by means of the "Lindon Bates" much of which is already occupied by rice merchants, and a station for rail-borne produce *vide* the East Indian and the Bengal Nagpur Railways will be completed there in the course of a month or two.
 - (9) At Shalimar the bunker coal depot has been extended sufficient for the shipment of another 200,000 tons per annum, and at other places at this bank of the river reclamations have been made improving the property of the Trust and its income and providing space for trade purposes.
 - (10) On the Seebore Sands accommodation is being prepared to which the timber trade may be transferred, when other trade expands over the space now occupied by it.
 - (11) A scheme has been prepared for the construction immediately north of the bridge, of very extensive accommodation in sheds and sidings for both rail-borne and water-borne cargo. Besides, other improvements on this part of the Commissioners' line of railway in that locality so as to facilitate the transport of goods coming in from the north from the Jute presses and also the transport and delivery of traffic *vide* the Eastern Bengal State Railway. This scheme is waiting the transfer to them by the Government of India of a considerable part of the Mint premises.

- (12) The establishment of the River Survey Department has been increased, and the equipment has been improved by replacing all the old vessels with new and better ones, with the result that the operations of the Department have been very largely expanded to the benefit of the navigation of the river. After considerable time taken in determining the class of vessel that would be best suited for the work to be done in improving the navigable channels of this river, tenders have just been received by Mr. Anthony S. Lyster, Chief Engineer of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, who has been specially engaged by the Commissioners to revise the specification and supervise the building of the vessels, and it is hoped that the tender recommended by him may be accepted at a meeting this month.
7. Other works have also been completed or are in hand too numerous to mention, but most of which (that is, those chargeable to capital) are included in the statement extracted from a letter to the Government which is hereto attached.
- P.S.*—Another very important work that I might have specially mentioned is the scheme for the remodelling of the Budge Budge depot at a cost of 16 lakhs.

From Chamber, to Vice-Chairman Port Commissioners.

No. 1761-1905.—CALCUTTA, 27th October, 1905.

Accommodation at the Jetties.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to convey to you their best thanks for your letter No. 4895 of 16th October 1905, giving full information as to the progress being made in providing facilities both for present and future maritime trade.

From Chamber, to Liners' Conference.

No. 1762-1905.—CALCUTTA, 27th October 1905.

Accommodation at the Jetties.

In continuation of correspondence ending with your letter of 4th October, I am now directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to forward for your information copy of letter No. 4895 of 16th October, from the Vice-Chairman of the Port Commissioners with reference to this question.

From Liners' Conference, to Chamber.

CALCUTTA, 31st October 1905.

Accommodation at the Jetties.

I beg to own receipt, with thanks, of your favour of 27th instant, with copy of letter, from the Vice-Chairman of the Port

Commissioners of 16th idem, which has been circulated among the members of the Conference, and were considered at to-day's meeting.

I am directed to draw your attention to the fact that Mr. Dumayne does not traverse the statements in my letter to you of 13th September, nor does he hold out any prospect of early alleviation of the present most unsatisfactory position of affairs at the Jetties.

Moreover, it does not appear that the Commissioners have before them any scheme for dealing with the import trade beyond the construction of two new Jetty Berths, and the reconstruction of the six old berths. By the time these eight berths are completed it is probable that further accommodation will be required, and it is not clear where and how it is to be provided.

From Chamber, to Port Commissioners.

No. 1930-1905.—CALCUTTA, 25th November 1905.

Accommodation at the Jetties.

In continuation of my letter No. 1761 of 27th October, and with further reference to your letter No. 4895 of 16th October, I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to intimate that they have again been addressed by the Liners' Conference, to whom they sent copy of your letter above referred to.

The Secretary, Liners' Conference, points out that it does not appear from your letter that the Commissioners have before them any scheme for dealing with the import trade, beyond the construction of two new Jetty Berths and the re-construction of the six old ones. The Conference fear that by the time these eight berths are completed it is probable that further accommodation will be required, and it is not clear where and how it is to be provided.

The matter was again discussed at the last meeting of the Committee, when a strong feeling was expressed that if the limit of extension for the Jetties on the river bank had now been reached, the Port Commissioners should approach Government for permission to extend further down the river. It was the general opinion of the Committee that if Calcutta trade was to go on expanding, as it probably would, every inch of the river front would have to be availed of. The inadequacy of the Strand Road, over which the traffic was carried, was also discussed together with various proposals which it was understood had been made to meet this difficulty.

In view of the present state of matters, the Committee have instructed me to press upon the Port Commissioners the necessity of looking ahead and endeavouring to make arrangements for future contingencies. There is no doubt that the trade of the Port will expand and further extensions will therefore be necessary, and if the Port is not provided with proper facilities the trade will eventually be lost. As a first step the Committee consider that the Commissioners should approach Government for permission to use the river front as far down as the exigencies of the Port require.

From Port Commissioners, to Chamber.

No. 6199—1905, 1st December 1905.

Accommodation at the Jetties.

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1930-1905 dated 25th ultimo, and to say that the Vice-Chairman is giving the question raised in your letter his close attention and will shortly submit a full note on the subject to the Commissioners and the views of the Commissioners will in due course be communicated to the Chamber.

From Chamber, to Liners' Conference.

No. 200-1905.—CALCUTTA, 26th January 1906.

Accommodation at the Jetties.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to address you in continuation of previous correspondence, ending with your letter dated 31st October 1905, upon this question.

2. You point out that the Port Commissioners do not appear to have before them any scheme for dealing with the import trade, beyond the construction of the two new Jetty Berths, and the re-construction of the six old berths. You also express the opinion that by the time these eight berths are completed, it is probable that additional accommodation will be needed, and that where such is to be provided is not clear. Further, you state that in the correspondence which you have had with the Vice-Chairman, he does not hold out any prospect of an early alleviation of the present most unsatisfactory position at the Jetties.

3. Since the receipt of your letter the Committee have had the question almost continuously before them. They have been in correspondence regarding it with one of your member; and they have also communicated with the Vice-Chairman of the Port Trust. Their object has been to ascertain whether it is possible for the Commissioners to take any steps which will have the effect of immediately relieving the congestion. For the information of steamship owners they now propose to place on record the conclusions to which their enquiries have led them.

4. But before doing so they wish to refer very briefly to the past history of the Jetties and Docks; and to state the measures which the Commissioners have in view with the object of improving the former. The Docks were awkwardly built with the intention that steamers in the European trade should both discharge and load at them. Had that intention been fulfilled, the Jetties would probably have been reserved for the coasting trade. A step in the direction of carrying it out was taken in 1897, when exports were removed entirely to the docks. This diversion was objected to by a section of the exporting interest; and importers absolutely declined to allow their traffic to go to Kiddepore. It was, however, the hope of the Commissioners at the time, that ultimately both discharging and loading would be carried on at the docks. When the

Port Trust Enquiry Commission, which was appointed by the Government of Bengal, reported in 1901, this policy was modified. The Commission admitted the advantages of a system under which vessels would both discharge and load at one place. But they also recognised the force of the opposition offered by importers; and they expressed themselves as satisfied that the import trade could not be removed "at present." The experience of the past five years has convinced the present Vice-Chairman of the Port Trust—who was a member of the Enquiry Commission—that this conclusion was sound. It is, therefore, now the policy of the Trust to maintain the present system of working. That is to say to keep the import trade at the Jetties, and to keep the export trade at the Docks. With this policy the Committee of the Chamber are entirely in accord. But they quite see that it could hardly be other than productive of difficulties, by reason of the great expansion of the import trade during the past few years. Had it been always the policy of the Commissioners to work imports at the Jetties, naturally the facilities would have been improved and extended, concurrently with the development of the trade. As matters stand, however, the present administration have now to provide these additional facilities and to do so must manifestly take time. And it must be acknowledged with regret that, in the meanwhile, a certain amount of disorder and inconvenience seems to be unavoidable.

5. That this disorder and inconvenience should entail upon steam-ship owners unreasonable delays, resulting in the dislocation of services, and in loss of interest on large sums of locked-up capital is, the Committee admit, at once discouraging and exasperating. But what they would urge is that everything points to the fact that these troubles are due to temporary causes. For it seems to be evident that the Commissioners are thoroughly alive to the need for providing the necessary additional accommodation at the Jetties with the least possible delay. Two new Jetties are being constructed; the reconstruction of the six now in existence is sanctioned; and one of them (No. 2) which recently became unsafe, is rapidly being put again into working order. A third additional Jetty will also be constructed hereafter; and the Quayage shed has been increased from six to nine berths. Sheds giving four times the present space for the storage of goods will also be provided. Twelve of the old cranes have been replaced by others of the most modern and efficient type. The new Jetties will all be provided with similar cranes; and also with new cranes for handling heavy material in the yards, and for loading it into trucks. The tea trade will be transferred from the Jetties to new accommodation at Garden Reach in July next. This will enable the present tea warehouse to be brought into use for the benefit of the import trade at the Jetties; and will add about 150,000 square feet to the shed accommodation. A large four-storied warehouse was opened in August last, also for the import trade. And besides the new transit sheds for the reconstructed Jetties, it is proposed to provide further warehouses for import goods on the Strand Road frontage. The Committee also understand that at the lowest low water, the depth at the new and reconstructed Jetties will be sufficient for the largest vessels.

6. It would seem from what has been stated that sufficient provision is being made for the immediate future of the import trade. But in order that possible developments may be provided for in good time, the Committee have urged the Commissioners to ask Government for permission to extend the Jetties further down the river. As regards the present, the Committee have come to the conclusion that no measures likely to be more immediately effective can be taken by the Commissioners. Time must of necessity elapse before such large reconstruction works as are involved can be completed. The Committee have examined the case very carefully and without any desire to minimise the evils arising from the present situation. But for the reason just stated they feel that shipowners should be enjoined to exercise forbearance until the Commissioners have had a reasonable time in which to overcome their difficulties. They are expending a sum of no less than one million sterling on improving the port and its approaches; and the Committee think that the policy which they are vigorously pursuing will, when fully developed, sufficiently provide for both the import and export trades. In fact it would seem to be, so far as the Committee can judge, of such a nature as to admit in the future of the expansion of the port facilities concurrently with, or slightly in advance of, the expansion of the traffic.

7. In conclusion, the Committee wish to add that they fully recognise the very great enterprise which shipowners have displayed in building well-equipped steamers of the most modern types, and of a steadily increasing size, for the Calcutta trade. And as I have endeavoured to show, the Committee quite understand how important it is that these costly vessels should be discharged and loaded with the greatest promptitude. They will most gladly do everything possible to bring about that result with the least delay, and they would like this expression of their opinion to be brought to the knowledge of owners. They venture, therefore, to suggest that copies of this letter may be forwarded to the head offices of the different lines for information and consideration.

MUNICIPAL.

TOLLY'S NULLAH.

From Amulya Dhan Addy, to Chamber.

ALIPORE, 20th February 1905.

I shall be much obliged if you will kindly move the Chamber of Commerce for taking the necessary steps for the removal of silt from the bed of Tolly's Nullah.

The copy of the petition addressed to the Superintending Engineer, Government of Bengal, signed by some of the leading European rice merchants of Calcutta, for the said purpose, is herewith annexed for your perusal. I beg to submit that a similar petition has also been submitted by the leading native rice merchants of Chetta including myself.

CALCUTTA, — 15th February 1905.

PETITION.

To—The Superintending Engineer, Government of Bengal, Public Works Department.

We, the undersigned, have the honor to submit the following for your favourable consideration :—

1. That Chetta, Tollyganje, Bhowanipore, Orphangunge and Moonsingore, are famous for the trade in rice, paddy and other products of the Districts of the 24-Pergunnahs, Khulna and other neighbouring districts. Suffice it to say that Chetta is the only place for trade in table rice which is exported largely to Europe.
2. That Tolly's Nullah is the only river through which the said products were easily conveyed by means of country-boats of every description.
3. That the water of the Hooghly being turbid, there has been a large deposit of silt at the bed of Tolly's Nullah which is not removed, thus causing great inconvenience to the public in that the river traffic has come to a standstill.
4. That the major portion of the water which enters into Tolly's Nullah being taken away by the Port Commissioners to the Kidderpore "Docks" through the Boat Canal, the portion of Tolly's Nullah south of the Boat Canal has practically been silted up and become quite un navigable.
5. That country-boats (salties) containing even twenty-five maunds of goods cannot now-a-days pass along the said Nullah

for about twenty days in a month, as the depth of water becomes so low as six inches only.

6. That the Port Commissioners have been regularly removing the silt from the bed of their Boat Canal, but the undersigned are much aggrieved to state, that the silt from the bed of Tolly's Nullah has not been removed for some years past though tolls are regularly collected for the maintenance of the said Nullah.

7. That lakhs of rupees have been invested in the construction of godowns on both the sides of Tolly's Nullah for the trade in the said table rice, boiled rice, paddy, etc., but Tolly's Nullah being silted up the said investors have to suffer much.

The undersigned do, therefore, most humbly pray, that you will be kind enough to make the necessary arrangements for the regular removal of silt from the bed of Tolly's Nullah, as it will not only remove the grievances of the public, but is sure to increase the revenue of the Government in the shape of tolls levied.

GLADSTONE, WYLLIE & CO.
MACKINNON, MACKENZIE & CO.
FINLAY, MUIR & CO.
For the Bombay Co., Ltd.
E. J. HAWKE.

Managing Director.

SHRAGER BROTHERS.
GILLANDERS, ARBUTHNOT & CO.
BIRD & CO.
BLACKWOOD, BLACKWOOD & CO.
ANDERSON, WRIGHT & CO.
BECKER, GRAY & CO.

From Chamber, to Babu Amulya Dhan Addy.

No. 301-1905.—CALCUTTA, 27th February 1905.

Tolly's Nullah.

I am in receipt of your letter of 20th instant, forwarding copy of a petition from several of the leading shipping firms to the Superintending Engineer, South-Western Circle, drawing attention to the condition of that portion of Tolly's Nullah south of the Boat Canal which has silted up and become un navigable. You intimate that the leading rice merchants of Chetta have also submitted a similar petition, and you ask for the support of the Chamber to the one of which you have sent me a copy.

I am instructed by the Committee to state that they will have much pleasure in supporting the petition.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (P. W. D).

No 308-1905.—CALCUTTA, 28th February 1905.

The attention of the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce has been drawn to a petition which has been addressed

to you by Messrs Gladstone Wyllie & Co., and a number of other shipping firms in Calcutta, with reference to the present condition of the portion of Tolly's Nullah, south of the Boat Canal, which has practically silted up and become un navigable even for small boats for about twenty days in the month.

2. The present state of matters is an extremely serious one for both European firms engaged in the rice trade and the native rice merchants in Chetta, and is causing a serious obstruction to the trade in rice. The Committee understand that although tolls are levied for the maintenance of Tolly's Nullah nothing has been done for years past with regard to the removal of silt. The policy pursued appears to be a short-sighted one, as it not only interferes with trade but also decreases the revenue which would be obtained by Government from the tolls. The Committee understand that a similar petition has been presented to you by the Chetta rice merchants who are equally interested in the matter, and who state that they are sustaining severe losses through not being able to use the Nullah which is their only outlet to the river. It is understood that these merchants have invested considerable sums of money in the erection of godowns on both sides of the Nullah for the rice trade, and it appears to the Committee that their present grievance should be remedied as early as possible. The Committee are not quite clear whether the Port Commissioners' Boat Canal has any prejudicial effect on the depth of water in Tolly's Nullah, but the whole subject appears to them to require most careful consideration especially in view of the larger proposals which are now before Government for the canalisation of Tolly's Nullah and the consequent shortening of the route to Eastern Bengal and Assam. They desire, therefore, to support the petition strongly.

Copy forwarded to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Public Works Department, Irrigation Branch; Messrs. Kilburn & Co., Managing Agents, India General Navigation and Railway Co., Ltd.; and Messrs. Macneill & Co., Agents, Rivers Steam Navigation Co., Ltd., for information.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE; } W. PARSONS,
Secretary.
Calcutta, 4th March 1905. } Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

From Chamber, to Baboo Amulya Dhan Ady.

No. 572-1905.—CALCUTTA, 3rd April 1905.

Tolly's Nullah.

In continuation of my letter No. 301-1905 of 27th February, and with further reference to your letter of 20th February, I have the pleasure to inform you that, at the meeting of the Bengal Council on Friday last, the 31st March, the Hon'ble Mr. Apar, President of the Chamber, elicited from the Hon'ble Mr. Inglis, representing the Public Works Department, that the estimate,

amounting to about Rs. 22,000 for removing the silt from the bed of Tolly's Nullah, had been prepared and the work would be put in hand at once.

From Chamber, to Signatories of Petition.

No. 573-1905.—CALCUTTA, 3rd April 1905.

Sitting up of Tolly's Nullah.

With reference to the letter of 15th February to the Superintending Engineer, South-Western Circle, signed by yourselves and other firms, I have the pleasure to inform you that, at the meeting of the Bengal Council on Friday last, the 31st March, the Hon'ble Mr. Apar, President of this Chamber, elicited from the Hon'ble Mr. Inglis, representing the Public Works Department, that the estimate, amounting to about Rs. 22,000 for removing the silt from the bed of Tolly's Nullah, had been prepared and the work would be put in hand at once.

From Government of Bengal (IRRIGATION), to Chamber.

No. 556-1.—CALCUTTA, 8th April 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your Memo, dated the 4th March 1905, forwarding copy of your letter No. 308-1905, dated the 28th February 1905, to the Superintending Engineer, South-Western Circle, regarding the present condition of the portion of Tolly's Nullah, south of the Boat Canal, which you state has practically silted up and become un navigable even for small boats for about twenty days in the month.

2. In reply, I am to state for the information of the Chamber, that an estimate has this day been sanctioned for removing silt from the bed of Tolly's Nullah from Chetta to Bansdhanee. I am to attach for information a copy of the report by the Executive Engineer.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (IRRIGATION).

No. 675-1905.—CALCUTTA, 19th April 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 556-1, dated 8th April 1905, with its enclosure, from which the Committee are pleased to note that an estimate has been sanctioned for removing silt from the bed of Tolly's Nullah.

WIDENING OF THE KALIGHAT BRIDGE.

From Chamber, to Chairman of the Corporation.

No. 524-1905.—CALCUTTA, 25th March 1905.

The Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce have addressed by Mr. Amulya Dhan Addy, Municipal Commissioner, on the subject of the congestion of traffic on the Kalighat Bridge owing to the narrowness of the bridge, and have been asked to approach the Government of Bengal on the subject, as the Superintending Engineer has rejected an application for the widening of the bridge.

2. Before taking the action desired, the Committee of the Chamber would be glad to know what is the present position as between the Corporation and the Calcutta Tramways Co. with regard to the matter.

From Corporation of Calcutta, to Chamber.

No. 18729-E.—CALCUTTA, 30th March 1905.

In reply to your letter No. 524-1905 of the 25th instant asking

what is the present position as between the Corporation and the Calcutta Tramways Co., to the Chairman of the Corporation of Calcutta, dated 19th December 1904.

From the Assistant Manager, Calcutta Tramways Co., to the Executive Engineer, Circular and Eastern Canals Division, dated 1st August 1904.

From the Executive Engineer, Circular and Eastern Canals Division, to the Assistant Manager, Calcutta Tramways Co., No. 3512, dated 25th November 1904.

The Chairman has brought the matter to the notice of the Government of Bengal, and the case is now under their consideration.

CALCUTTA, 19th December 1904.

From—The Managing Agent, Calcutta Tramways Co., Ltd.,
To—The Chairman, Corporation of Calcutta.

With reference to the suggested extension of our lines from the Russa Road, through Alipore, to the Diamond Harbour Road, and the necessary sanction for which has recently been granted by the Municipal Commissioners, we are informed, so far as the question of strengthening or altering the Kalighat-Bridge was concerned, that this bridge was under the control of the Government of Bengal, and that the Commissioners could not see their way to doing anything in connection therewith. We, therefore, addressed the Executive Engineer to the Government of Bengal,

Public Works Department, placing the whole situation before him and expressing a hope that Government would see its way to making such alterations and additions which might be found necessary to the bridge, as a matter of public convenience.

I have recently received a reply from the Superintending Engineer, S. W. Circle, to the effect that, for the reasons given therein, this Company should provide their own bridge at Kalighat for laying down their tramway lines.

It will be within your recollection that when this Company first approached the Municipality for permission to construct the extension referred to above, I pointed out that we had gone into the question, in response to several petitions received from the various inhabitants of the locality through which we now propose to run, and that, after very carefully considering the whole question, the Directors had decided to apply for permission to lay these extensions, on the understanding that their expenditure should be limited to the actual laying down of the track and its electrical equipment. If, however, the cost of building a new bridge is added to the absolutely necessary capital expenditure required for the laying down and equipment of the lines, it will be quite impossible for this Company to incur this large additional expense.

As the question of the extension of our lines to Alipore has been definitely settled by the Municipal Commissioners, and there is considerable doubt, in view of the reply received from the Government, as to whether this extension can now be proceeded with, I have to ask whether you can see your way to approaching the Government of Bengal in the matter, asking them to reconsider the decision recently arrived at, as set out in the correspondence referred to above.

To make the present position sufficiently clear, I attach herewith copy of our letter to the Government, setting forth the actual position of affairs, together with a copy of the Superintending Engineer's reply.

1st August 1904.

From—A. J. J. PRYFFER, ESQ., Assistant Manager, Calcutta Tramways Co., Ltd.,

To—The Executive Engineer, Circular and Eastern Canals Division.

I have the honor to address you on the subject of the extension of our Tramways System through Alipore.

Sometime ago, after receiving numerous petitions from the residents of the Southern part of Calcutta, we submitted our application for this extension to the Corporation, which, at a recent meeting, sanctioned the laying of a double track line from the Russa Road, Kalighat, to the Diamond Harbour Road and the Hazra Road, Judge's Court Road, and Alipore Lane, their sanction applying only to that part of the route coming under Municipal jurisdiction.

Since this route in question crosses the bridge over Tolly's Nullah, and as Government exercises control over this portion, I shall be greatly obliged if you will be pleased to ask Government to grant us permission to lay down our lines on and maintain a car service over this bridge and its approaches.

There has been some question of the bridge not being strong enough to bear the weight of our cars, and I would particularly refer you to your letter No. 23318, dated the 24th August 1903, in which you state, that the necessary improvements would entail an expenditure of, approximately, Rs. 15,000. In view of the rapidly increasing ordinary traffic over this route, apart from any question of tramways, Government has probably already contemplated the strengthening and widening of this bridge, or possibly the replacing of same, by a new structure in the near future, and now that this tramway situation tends to bring these considerations to a more acute point, I venture to hope that Government will lend its aid to the carrying out of our project which will, not only be a great boon to the public at present, resident in the Southern district of the city, but also be a factor, in furthering the Calcutta Improvement Scheme, by giving means of inter-communication between the various southern suburbs which at present do not exist.

In view of the heavy expenditure this Company will incur in the construction of the lines and providing all accessories for maintaining a good tramway service over the route in question, we feel that we should not be asked to participate in the cost of the bridge improvements, with which view I hope Government will coincide and see its way clear to making the alterations and additions which will be found necessary, on its own account.

Trusting that the above will meet with the favourable consideration of Government.

*Copy of Bengal Government Irrigation Department, No. 1704-I,
dated the 21st November 1904.*

I am directed to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 5387 dated 5th October 1904, reporting on certain points raised in connection with the laying down of a tramway line over the Kalighat bridge and its approaches. The Company in their representation state that possibly Government, in view of the increasing ordinary traffic over the route and apart from any question of tramways, has probably contemplated the widening and strengthening of the bridge.

In reply, I am to observe that the old Kalighat bridge which was a suspension bridge for foot passengers was taken down in 1891-92 and replaced by the present road bridge. Government has, therefore, no intention of either widening or strengthening the existing bridge. The roadway is about 16 feet in width and if a tramcar service were permitted to run over the bridge, it would certainly cause great inconvenience to ordinary traffic. In these circumstances it

appears to be only fair that the Company should provide their own bridge.

No. 3512.—CALCUTTA, 25th November 1904.

Copy forwarded to the Assistant Manager, Calcutta Tramways Company, for information with reference to his letter 25-10-1904.

P. C. JACOBS,
*Executive Engineer,
Circular and Eastern Canals Division.*

From Chamber, to Chairman of the Corporation.

No. 645-1905.—CALCUTTA, 11th April 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 18729-B, of 30th March, enclosing copy of a letter of 19th December 1904, with enclosures, from the Managing Agent, Calcutta Tramways Co., Ltd., to your address.

I am instructed by the Committee to convey to your best thanks for placing at their disposal these papers, which elucidate the present position as between the Corporation and the Calcutta Tramways Company, with regard to the Kalighat Bridge. The Committee note that you brought the matter to the notice of the Government of Bengal, and that the case is now under their consideration. As the matter is one of urgency, they would feel much indebted if you would press for an early reply on the part of Government.

EXTERMINATION OF RATS IN CONNECTION
WITH PLAGUE.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (MUSICAL).

No. 692-1905.—CALCUTTA, 26th April 1905.

The attention of the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce has been recently drawn to the good effects which followed a systematic extermination of rats, as a means of prevention of plague, notably in Sydney, Australia, and nearer home at the East Indian Railway Company's and the Bengal Coal Company's Collieries at Giridih.

2. The Committee understand, that experimental measures in this direction are about to be instituted in Calcutta by the Special Plague Department under the direction of the Chairman of the Corporation, and they direct me to intimate that the introduction of any such measures would have their strong support. They feel, however, that in order to be of real use in preventing plague epidemics such as those from which the city has suffered severely in times past and is now suffering, the efforts made for the extermination of rats should not only be widespread and cover every district in the city, but should be persistent throughout the year and not merely at the times when plague is prevalent. The Committee believe it is an admitted fact, that an outbreak of plague among rats invariably precedes an outbreak of the same disease among human beings, and it, therefore, follows that if rats could be more or less completely exterminated, plague epidemics would in all probability be prevented.

3. As the Plague Department is under the authority of the Government of Bengal though controlled officially by the Chairman of the Corporation, I am instructed to urge, in the interests both of the city and the port, the necessity of Government dealing with this matter in a comprehensive and determined manner. It appears to the Committee that public funds could not be better employed than in providing the necessary organisation and appliances for the wholesale destruction of rats in the various quarters of the city; and the Committee trust that the subject will receive the urgent and serious attention of Government.

4. I am instructed to enclose copy of a Circular No. 282, issued by the Agent of the East Indian Railway, which details the measures which have been successfully employed at the Giridih Collieries, and the Committee agree that of all the various schemes which have been put into operation for the eradication of plague, the most successful would appear to be those which have, for their object the extermination of rats.

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EAST INDIAN RAILWAY AGENT'S OFFICE.

CIRCULAR No. 282.—CALCUTTA, February 1905.

Precautions against Plague.

Of the various schemes that have been put into operation for the eradication of Plague, the most successful appears to be that which has for its object the extermination of rats, and the introduction of this process at the Company's Collieries at Giridih having been attended with the most gratifying results, I desire that it may be extended elsewhere as an experimental measure at some selected station on each district where Plague is prevalent.

The following is a summary of the measures adopted at Giridih and are those which should be adopted as far as local conditions allow:—

1. The rats are brought in the cages in which they are caught twice a day, morning and evening.
 2. The cages containing the rats are then completely immersed in water and Perchloride of Mercury kept in a wooden cask. This drowns the rats and disinfects the cages. This operation is done near a large fire, a boiler furnace for preference, one being always at hand on the Collieries.
 3. Rough wooden boxes are provided of sufficient size to contain up to 24 rats. One of these boxes is placed on a shovel in front of the fire. A little jute is placed in the box, for the fleas to nestle on, as it has been found that the fleas are more difficult to drown than the rats are, and as they leave the cold body of the drowned rat, and to prevent them hopping on to the persons handling the cages, jute is placed there to attract them.
 4. The cages are then taken out of the Perchloride solution. The door at one end of the cage is opened, and the rats dropped into the wooden box and with as little delay as possible the box containing the dead rats and fleas is thrown into the fire.
 5. The cage is then bated and handed over to be used again.
 6. The cage of the rats is strictly prohibited.
- The main precaution to be observed is to ensure that both rats and their fleas shall be promptly destroyed on their submergence in the Perchloride of Mercury bath, and in carrying out the proposed experiments, the local District Traffic Officers and others concerned, should act in co-operation with the District Medical Officers.

The Controller of Stores will supply the necessary rat traps.

Copy of above letter and enclosure forwarded to the Hon'ble Mr. R. T. GREER, C.S.I., Chairman of the Corporation of Calcutta; the Secretary to the Corporation of Calcutta, and to all Members of the Chamber for information.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta 26th April 1905.

W. PARSONS,
Secretary.

From Indian Mining Association, to Chamber.

No. 223-R.—CALCUTTA, 19th June 1905.

Extermination of Rats.

I am directed by the Committee of the Indian Mining Association to forward for perusal, and for such action as the Committee of the Chamber may feel disposed to take, a copy of a note on the above subject by Mr. Thos. H. Ward, Superintendent, E. I. R. Collieries, Giridih.

GIRIDIH, 2nd June 1905.

From—THOS. H. WARD, ESQ., Colliery Superintendent,
To—H. H. MACLEOD, ESQ., Superintendent, Bengal Coal
Co., Ltd.

1. However many dissentients there may be to the theory that plague is a rat disease, mainly propagated amongst natives by rat-fleas, there can hardly be any who would be bold enough to dispute the proposition that the susceptibility (as we may call it) of a district to plague can be decreased by reducing the number of rats. Japan, Rangoon, and Australian cities are conspicuous examples. Here in Giridih we have ample evidence that this is a fact.

2. It seems also probable that this decreased susceptibility can be gained by the destruction of a comparatively small fraction of these creatures. This may be inferred from the fact that such marked results have followed the method of actually catching each individual destroyed. It is obvious that the difficulty of catching ultimately be reached at which the catch would be balanced by the fecundity of the creature. The fraction which cannot be destroyed may be $\frac{1}{2}$ or it may be $\frac{1}{3}$. It seems probable that it will not be an inconsiderable fraction and obviously sustained effort will be necessary to keep the numbers stationary.

3. The method is, therefore, tedious and requires sustained and enthusiastic effort to make it a success.

4. A much more perfect, and more easily applied method, is, however, available and it seems a strange thing that it has not occurred to any one to suggest its peculiar applicability to the Indian trouble.

5. I refer to the method which the Pasteur Institute in France has brought to such perfection. The method is by no means new. It has, I believe, been applied in Australia and other parts of the world for the extermination of various animals. Its most recent application was in the beginning of this year in the district of Les Charentes in France. This district was overrun by field mice. All the crops and fruit were eaten up and very serious loss was sustained. The Pasteur Institute undertook to exterminate the mice. After making a few individuals, who were of course turned loose, an epidemic was propagated amongst the mice which resulted in the

destruction of 90 per cent. The Institute indeed stated that they could guarantee this result.

6. Such a method is well adapted to Indian conditions. We have a Pasteur Institute—probably all that is required is, to bring out one or two experts—and the Government have, in the Indian Medical Service, an organised body of scientific men, who have under them a large staff of assistant surgeons and native doctors, whose services could be utilised in applying the remedy. In fact the Indian Government would have in their hands a remedy which could be applied in a few weeks to the whole of India.

7. In considering this suggestion it may be objected that the method would at once free large numbers of fleas who would inoculate their human temporary hosts, and perhaps cause the loss of many lives. That would be a possible result only in districts, or towns, where plague was epidemic at the time the method was applied. In such a case—where it would be almost a certainty that a large number of rats would be plague infected—it might be wise to defer the application of the Pasteur method until the epidemic had abated, and in the meantime destroy as many rats as possible by catching them alive. On the other hand it might be argued that, as the plague will not abate until the critical proportion of rats have been destroyed by the plague, or by human agency, it would actually result in a saving of human life to reach this point at the earliest possible stage, and that probably a larger proportion of rats would die in their haunts, where the fleas from their carcasses would not have any opportunity to get at human subjects, than would be the case if more time were given them to associate with human beings.

8. But the most appropriate time, and this it should be remembered is true whatever method of destroying them may be adopted, to exterminate rats in a district is when there is no plague or when only sporadic cases are occurring. All danger to those actually engaged in the operations or living in the area is avoided, and precautions to avoid infection may be relaxed (rendering the operation easier and more rapid) or altogether disregarded.

9. I hope you will use your influence to get the method advocated in this letter brought to notice.

From Chamber, to Indian Mining Association.

No. 1086-1905.—CALCUTTA, 28th June 1905.

Extermination of Rats.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 223 R. of 19th June, forwarding copy of a note on the above subject by Mr. T. H. Ward, Superintendent, East Indian Railway Collieries, Giridih, for which I am instructed to convey to you their best thanks. The question of an organised extermination of rats has been brought before the Government of Bengal by the Committee of the Chamber, but up to the present no reply has been received to their representation.

Mr. Ward's suggestion will be kept in view in the event of action being taken by the Government.

From Government of Bengal (Municipal), to Chamber.

No. 332-T. P.—DARJEELING, 18th July 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 692 dated 20th April 1905, on the subject of the systematic extermination of rats as a means of preventing plague. The Chamber state that the introduction of measures for the destruction of rats would have their strong support but that, if the efforts made are to be of real use, they should not only be extended over the whole of Calcutta but should be continued throughout the year and not merely at the times when plague is prevalent. Attention is drawn to the success which has attended the destruction of rats in the Giridih Collieries.

2. In reply, I am to say that the Lieutenant-Governor agrees with the Chamber in regarding the systematic destruction of rats as an eminently desirable measure in plague-infected localities. There seems to be no longer any doubt as to the connection between rat plague and human plague. The exact method by which the disease is communicated from rats to men, has not yet been clearly established, but if, as seems probable, it is by means of fleas, there is the danger that, so long as plague is present, the indiscriminate destruction of rats may encourage the spread of the disease. It is, therefore, necessary either to confine the crusade against rats to the period when plague is quiescent or to avoid the use of poison and to endeavour to catch the rats alive, taking special steps to ensure the destruction of their fleas.

3. I am to enclose for the information of the Chamber, copies of the correspondence* on this subject which has passed between Government and the Chairman of the Calcutta Corporation, and of a letter † addressed to the Commissioner of the Patna Division.

No. 106-T. P.—DARJEELING, 2nd April 1905.

From—G. RAINY, ESQ., I.C.S., Under Secretary to the Government of Bengal,

To—The Chairman of the Calcutta Corporation.

I am directed to forward a copy of a letter from the Bengal Chamber of Commerce No. 692-1905, dated 20th April 1905, and

EXTERMINATION OF RATS IN CONNECTION WITH PLAGUE. 279

its enclosure, on the subject of a systematic extermination of rats in Calcutta, as a means of prevention of plague.

2. I am to request that you will be so good as to submit a very early report with regard to the recommendations of the Chamber.

No. 1761-H.—CALCUTTA, 10th May 1905.

From—C. F. PAYNE, ESQ., I.C.S., Acting Chairman of the Corporation of Calcutta,

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

With reference to your No. 106-T. P., dated the 2nd instant, I have the honour to report that I am entirely in accord with the views of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce as to the necessity of exterminating rats in Calcutta. With that object in view, a notice was recently issued by the Plague Department, offering a reward of half an anna for every live rat caught in Calcutta and brought to a disinfecting station, where much the same procedure, as that detailed in the circular which is enclosed with the letter of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, was adopted. This offer has now been promulgated for ten days, but so far only one rat has been offered in. I have now raised the reward to one anna a rat and offered to supply rat-traps free of cost to any body who will undertake to catch rats. I will report further on the success of this offer in the course of a fortnight.

No. 2940-H.—CALCUTTA, 9th June 1905.

From—C. F. PAYNE, ESQ., I.C.S., Acting Chairman of the Corporation of Calcutta,

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

In continuation of my No. 1761-H., dated the 10th May 1905, I have the honour to report that up to the 2nd June, the total number of live rats brought to the Entally Disinfecting Station was 104. This figure is not at all satisfactory, and I have no hope that the reward offered will induce people to bring in live rats. I see, however, that a reward of $\frac{1}{4}$ anna per rat offered in Rangoon during that period of plague, a similar reward think that during the quiescent period of plague, as there is very little plague during that period, I do not think any harm is likely to be caused by the rats being brought to us dead instead of alive. I propose to offer this reward as an experimental measure very shortly and will let you know the result as soon as I am able to ascertain it.

No. 331-T. P.—DARJEELING, 15th July 1905.

From—E. A. GAIT, ESQ., I.C.S., Officiating Secretary to the Government of Bengal,

To—The Chairman of the Calcutta Corporation.

I am directed to refer to the correspondence ending with your letter No 2940, dated 9th June 1905, on the subject of the systematic destruction of rats in Calcutta.

2. The result of the measures already taken viz: the offer of rewards and the free distribution of traps is very disappointing, and it is not understood why so few live rats have been brought in. It would probably not be safe to increase the rewards offered, as if this were done the people might take to breeding rats. Now that plague is quiescent, however, there is no reason why poison should not be used and rewards paid for all rats brought in, whether alive or dead. In view of the importance which medical authorities now attach to the connection between rat plague and human plague, every effort should be made to exterminate, or at any rate, to reduce the number of rats in Calcutta.

3. I am to ask that a full account of the measures taken with this object and of their results may in future be included in the monthly Plague Narratives.

No. 330-T. P.—DARJEELING, 15th July 1905.

From—E. A. GAIT, ESQ., I.C.S., Officiating Secretary to the Government of Bengal,

To—The Commissioner of the Patna Division.

I am directed to address you regarding the destruction of rats as a means of preventing Plague.

2. The evidence of the close connection between rat plague and human plague is constantly accumulating. Special attention has recently been directed to the subject by the investigation of Captain Liston, at Bombay, and by the lecture delivered by him at the Bombay Natural History Society in November 1904, which was published in the Indian Medical Gazette for February 1905. Captain Liston is of opinion that plague is a rat disease and that the infection is carried to man by the rat fleas, which, when their host (the rat) is dead, seek the nearest warm blooded mammal. Captain Liston's observations are supported by the fact, that there are now a number of cases, in which the wholesale destruction of rats has been followed by the disappearance of plague.

3. A noticeable instance of this recently occurred in the town of Giridih. Plague broke out in that place and the Railway authorities in conjunction with the Bengal Coal Company, inaugurated an active campaign against rats as described in the note appended to this letter. This measure appears to have been most successful. In the area under the control of the Railway Medical Officer, there were only 17 deaths out of a population of 12,100, whereas the Giridih Municipality with fewer inhabitants suffered much more

severely. The total number of rats and mice caught exceeded 14,000.

4. So long as plague is active, it is essential that the rats should be caught alive. The medium through which infection is communicated to man being apparently the rat flea, the effect of poisoning the rats is to drive the fleas on to human beings. During the quiescent season this danger does not exist, and rats may then be safely poisoned or destroyed in any other way. The opportunity should, therefore, be taken at this period to destroy as large a number as possible.

5. The Lieutenant-Governor considers that an experiment should be made by choosing certain villages in the districts of Patna and Saran, where the disease has been particularly violent, and making a determined effort to exterminate the rats in these villages before next cold weather. During the ensuing plague season the mortality from plague in these villages should be carefully watched and compared with that in the surrounding area. The results of such an experiment, if thoroughly carried out, should give fairly satisfactory data for determining the efficiency of rat destruction as a means of preventing plague. Similar measures may well be undertaken on a wider scale, if they can be arranged for, and it is understood that this is contemplated by you; but the experiment indicated above should in any case be carried out.

6. In order to ensure the complete destruction of rats it is necessary to enlist the active co-operation of the people. The close connection between the spread of plague and the presence of rats should be explained to them and traps and poison should be distributed free of charge. It will also probably be found necessary to offer rewards of two pice, or even an anna, for each rat that is brought in. So long as plague is absent, rewards may be paid for rats either alive or dead, but should there be any reason to suspect that the disease has reappeared in the neighbourhood, no rewards should be given only when the rats are produced alive. No better poison appears to exist than Rough on Rats, the use of which was recommended in paragraph 5 of Government Resolution No. 44-T. P., dated 10th November 1904. The Common Sense Rat Exterminator has been used with good results in the Railway goods sheds at Howrah, but it is somewhat expensive.

NOTE ON RAT DESTRUCTION AT GIRIDIH.

The procedure adopted was as follows:—

(1) The rats and mice were caught alive in cages and brought in the cages twice a day morning and evening to the Central Station.

(2) The cages containing the rats were then completely immersed in water and perchloride of mercury kept in a wooden cask. By this means the rats were drowned and the cages disinfected. This was done near a large fire (in the collieries a boiler furnace was always at hand).

(3) Rough wooden boxes were provided of sufficient size to contain up to 24 rats. One of these boxes was placed on a shovel in front of the fire, a little jute being placed on the box for the rats to nestle on. This was done because it was found that the fleas are more difficult to drown than the rats, and that when the fleas were removed from the perchloride of mercury solution the fleas left the cold body of the rat and, unless the jute was placed to attract them, hopped on to the persons handling the cages.

(4) The cages were then taken out of the perchloride solution; the door at one end of the cage opened and the rats dropped into the wooden box. With as little delay as possible the box containing the dead rats and the fleas was thrown into the fire.

(5) The cage was then baited and handed over to be used again.

(6) Handling of the rats was strictly prohibited throughout.

The important points to notice are:—

- a. That the rats were caught alive.
- b. That every precaution was taken to ensure that the fleas did not survive the destruction of their hosts.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (MUNICIPAL).

No. 1247-1905.—CALCUTTA, 25th July 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge, with thanks, the receipt of your letter No. 332 T. P. dated 18th July, (with enclosures) on the subject of the systematic extermination of rats as a means of preventing plague.

2. The Committee note that the efforts made by the Corporation of Calcutta, on the lines followed at Giridih, did not result in a large number of live rats being brought in. They will be glad to learn in due course the result of the proposal to offer a reward for dead rats. They will also be interested to hear if the experiment, which the Commissioner of the Patna Division has been asked to make in certain villages within his jurisdiction, is successful.

3. In the meantime I am to forward for the consideration of Government a copy of a note dated 2nd June, by Mr T. H. Ward, the East Indian Railway Colliery Superintendent, at Giridih, on the subject of rat extermination. You will observe that Mr Ward suggests the introduction of measures similar to those adopted by the Pasteur Institute for the destruction of field mice in a certain French district.

THE OFFICE OF CORONER OF CALCUTTA.

From Government of Bengal (JUDICIAL), to Chamber.

No. 4718-J.D.—DARJEELING, 20th September 1905.

I am directed to state, for the information of the Chamber, that a question has arisen whether the Office of Coroner of Calcutta need any longer be retained. It appears that in practice the Coroner performs no functions which might not be discharged equally well by the ordinary magistracy; that in Madras the Office has not been in existence since 1899, and that no inconvenience has been experienced there for want of it.

2. I am to request that the Lieutenant-Governor may be favoured with an early expression of the views of the Chamber on the question of the continuance of this Office.

From Chamber, to all Members.

CIRCULAR No. 448-1905.—CALCUTTA, 31st October 1905.

Proposed abolition of the Office of Coroner.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to ask for the views of members of the Chamber on a proposal which has been referred to them by the Government of Bengal, to abolish the Office of Coroner of Calcutta, in view of the fact that in practice the Coroner performs no functions which may not be discharged equally well by the ordinary magistracy; that in Madras the Office has not been in existence since 1889 and that no inconvenience has been experienced there in consequence.

2. The Legal advisers of the Chamber write as follows:—

The abolition of the Coroner's Office, as it at present exists, means of course the abolition of a legal office, and the bringing of that office under executive control; and to this extent is on principle undesirable and objectionable, and in our opinion the Government proposals to abolish the office should not be too readily acquiesced in.

Although, as we thus indicate, our own view inclines against the abolition, mainly on the ground of principle, we are bound to say that we see no grave reason against the local Magistrate being appointed Coroner and ably filling the office, and in the probability (which we presume) that the abolition will also include the abolition of a Coroner's Jury, it will at least be welcomed by Calcutta Merchants.

The Coroner's Bill of 1880 (in England) led to discussion on the subject, though chiefly as to the

nature of the Coroner's qualifications, it being pressed that medical qualifications were essential owing to the ignorance of a legal Coroner regarding poisons and so forth. In Calcutta, however, there is a Police Doctor available to advise in suspicious circumstances, and this objection consequently is here sufficiently met.

A certain degree of sentiment too should perhaps be allowed the subject, due to the great antiquity of the office.

Taking, however, a practical view of the matter, it is difficult to deny with truth that the putting of the Coroner's Office (which after all is not an office of any great importance) on a business basis for economic reasons would be prejudicial to anyone, save of course the Coroner himself, or that his duties could not be sufficiently and effectively carried out by the local Magistrate, and, therefore, there seems no real necessity for maintaining the office.

3. I shall feel much indebted if your reply could reach me not later than Saturday, the 4th November.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (JUDICIAL).

No. 1928-1905.—CALCUTTA, 25th November 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge your letter No. 4718 J.D. of 20th September 1905, asking for the views of the Chamber on the question of maintaining the Office of Coroner of Calcutta. You point out in your letter, that in practice the Coroner performs no functions which might not be discharged equally well by the ordinary Magistracy; that in Madras the Office has not been in existence since 1889, and that no inconvenience has been experienced there in consequence.

After a reference to the members of the Chamber, I am instructed to say that the Committee see no grave reason against one of the local Stipendiary Magistrates performing the duties of Coroner, and they think that the Office, as at present constituted, might therefore be abolished without detriment. The Committee presume that the abolition of the Office of Coroner also carries with it the abolition of the Coroner's jury, which latter, under the present system, is a cause of great inconvenience to the public.

CALCUTTA IMPROVEMENT SCHEME.

From Indian Jute Mills' Association, to Chamber.

No. 92-D.—CALCUTTA, 18th April 1905.

Scheme for Improving Calcutta.

The attention of the Committee has been drawn to a rumour that the Government, with the object of providing funds for the Calcutta Improvement Scheme, contemplate levying an export tax on jute and jute manufactures. They have instructed me to ask if the Committee of the Chamber have any knowledge as to whether this rumour is founded on fact. If they are without information, then I am respectfully to suggest that they should endeavour to ascertain from Government if there is any likelihood of such a tax being seriously proposed.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (MUNICIPAL).

No. 691-1905.—CALCUTTA, 20th April 1905.

The attention of the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce has been drawn to a rumour that a proposal to levy an export tax on jute and jute manufactures, to aid in providing funds for the Calcutta Improvement Scheme, is under the consideration of the Government of Bengal. I am instructed to enquire whether the Government are in a position to indicate when the draft Bill for the improvement of Calcutta is likely to be introduced, and also whether it is in contemplation to impose any such tax as is referred to above. In the latter event, I am to ask that the Chamber be afforded an opportunity of expressing their views on the subject.

From Calcutta Baled Jute Association, to Chamber.

No. 161-T.—CALCUTTA, 3rd May 1905.

Calcutta Improvement Scheme.

The attention of the Committee of this Association has been drawn to a rumour that the Government contemplate levying an export tax on jute and jute manufactures, with the object of providing funds for the Calcutta Improvement Scheme. The Committee would be glad to know whether the Committee of the Chamber have any information on the subject. If not, they would respectfully suggest, that an enquiry be addressed to Government as to the likelihood of such a tax being proposed. The Committee understand that the trade generally is very strongly opposed to any such tax.

From Chamber, to Indian Jute Mills' Association.
No. 752-1905.—CALCUTTA, 4th May 1905.
Calcutta Improvement Scheme.

In reply to the enquiry in your letter No. 92-D, of 18th April, the Committee of the Chamber have no information with regard to the rumour of a proposed export tax on jute and jute manufactures, but they have addressed an enquiry to the Government of India with regard to it.

From Chamber, to Calcutta Baled Jute Association.
No. 753-1905.—CALCUTTA, 4th May 1905.
Calcutta Improvement Scheme.

In reply to the enquiry in your letter No. 161 of 3rd May, the Committee of the Chamber have no information in the matter referred to, but they had, previous to the receipt of your letter, addressed an enquiry to Government with regard to it which has not yet been replied to.

From Government of Bengal (MUNICIPAL), to Chamber.
No. 409-T. M.—DARJEELING, 3rd May 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 591, dated the 20th April, 1905, to the address of the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal, in which you enquire whether Government is in a position to indicate when the draft Bill for the improvement of Calcutta is likely to be introduced, and also whether it is in contemplation to levy an export tax on jute and jute manufactures to aid in providing funds for the scheme.

2. In reply I am to say that Government is not yet in a position to say when the Bill will be introduced in Council and that before this is done an opportunity will certainly be afforded to the Chamber of expressing their views on the subject.

From Chamber, to Indian Jute Mills' Association.

No. 771-1905.—CALCUTTA, 6th May 1905.

Calcutta Improvement Scheme.

In continuation of my letter No. 752 of 4th May, and with further reference to your letter No. 92-D, of 18th April, I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to forward, for your information, copy of letter No. 409-T. M., of 3rd May 1905, from the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Municipal Department.

From Chamber, to Calcutta Baled Jute Association.
No. 772-1905.—CALCUTTA, 6th May 1905.
Calcutta Improvement Scheme.

In continuation of my letter No. 753 of 4th May, 1905, and with further reference to your letter No. 161 of 3rd May, I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to forward for your information, copy of letter No. 409-T. M., of 3rd May, 1905, from the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Municipal Department.

From Chamber, to all Members.

CIR. No. 336-1905.—CALCUTTA, 8th August 1905.
Calcutta Improvement Scheme.

I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to forward, for your consideration, the accompanying copies of correspondence on the subject of the Calcutta Improvement Scheme. The Committee now have the scheme under discussion and they will be glad to be favoured with an expression of your views upon it by the 31st August, to enable them to comply with the request made by the Government of Bengal.

From Government of Bengal (MUNICIPAL), to Chamber.

No. 1844-M.—CALCUTTA, 28th July 1905.

I am directed to forward for the consideration and opinion of the Chamber a copy of a letter from the Government of India, in the Home Department, No. 93 dated 18th July, 1905, and enclosure, on the subject of the Calcutta Improvement Scheme.

2. As stated by the Government of India the scheme, in its present form, is to be regarded as provisional. Any criticism that may be forthcoming will be taken into careful consideration before a final decision is arrived at. At the same time it is not desirable that the final settlement of the matter should be delayed longer than is necessary. I am, therefore, to request that the Lieutenant-Governor may be favoured with the views of the Chamber at a very early date.

No. 93.—SIMLA, 18th July 1905.

From—H. A. STUART, ESQ., C.S.I., Officiating Secretary
to the Government of India, Home Department,
To—The Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Municipal
Department.

I am directed to address you on the action to be taken at the present stage of the discussion on the Calcutta Improvement Scheme.

Constitution of Trust.

2. The Trust will consist of a President and six Trustees, all appointed by the Government. The Chairman of the Corporation will be a Trustee *ex-officio*; two Trustees will be Municipal Commissioners, and one will be a member of the Chamber of Commerce.

Operations of Trust.

3. The primary functions of the Trust will be—
- (1) To construct new roads and improve existing roads.
 - (2) To provide open spaces.
 - (3) To provide accommodation for persons displaced by the foregoing operations, and also for the probable normal growth of population for a generation.
 - (4) To control, by means of building regulations, areas in the neighbourhood of those which have been acquired.

[*Note.*—(i) For the remodelling of the Calcutta *bastis* the Corporation will remain responsible, and this work will not be undertaken by the Trust, except indirectly, where it acquires land in a *basti* for the alignment of a new road or the provision of open spaces

(ii) It is contemplated that the Trust should, as far as possible, limit itself to providing land for sites and not itself undertake the erection of dwelling houses.]

4. The Trust will also—
- (1) Furnish the areas acquired with municipal conveniences, such as water, lighting and communications.
 - (2) Enforce sanitary conditions by requiring structural alterations of individual houses upon the motion of the General Committee of the Corporation followed by an order from a Magistrate.
 - (3) Acquire surplus lands, with a view to recoupment by their subsequent sale or lease.

Duration of Trust.

5. The Trust will be wound up and its assets and liabilities transferred to the Corporation as soon as the scheme of work is completed.

Methods and Scope.

6. (1) No detailed scheme will be prepared beforehand, as such a scheme would only be provisional and would facilitate fictitious claims.
- (2) The general working plan will be—
- (a) as regards roads, to traverse the area selected for operations by a system of roads 60 feet wide, some running north and south and others running east and west, with diagonal connections;

- (b) as regards provision of open spaces, to acquire for this purpose areas of which a larger proportion than one-third is covered by buildings, and to remove buildings to such extent as may be necessary to reduce the proportion to not less than one-third. The unit to be dealt with will be about 40 acres;
- (c) as regards acquisition of land for expansion, to select strips of land in the directions of probable expansion, as far as practicable, within the municipal limits of Calcutta, and otherwise in the adjacent suburban municipalities.
- (3) The amount of work to be done is indicated by the following provisional and tentative figures:—
- (a) roads to be constructed—15 miles;
 - (b) open spaces to be acquired at a probable cost, as mentioned below, of 172 lakhs of rupees;
 - (c) land to be acquired for expansion—2,000 acres, an area estimated to provide for a surplus population of 200,000 or more.

[*Note.*—If inadequacy of funds should necessitate the reduction of this programme, it is contemplated that operations under head (b) would probably be selected for curtailment.]

- (4) Rate of progress—These operations will take the form of separate schemes, each requiring the sanction of Government, which will be given with due regard to the actual and prospective assets of the Trust, as determined by the experience, gained up to the time at which each separate scheme is submitted. If receipts do not come up to anticipations, the programme must be correspondingly curtailed. Otherwise, it is expected to be completed in 20 years.

FINANCE.

Capital and Loan Transactions.

7. These are indicated in the following account:—

Charges.	Receipts.		
	Rs. lakhs.	Rs. lakhs.	
On roads ...	500	Recoupment and recoveries from frontage owners ...	336
On open space ...	172	Government Grant ...	50
On land for expansion ...	100	Loans ...	436
On improvement of this land ...	50		
Total ...	822	Total ...	822

8. *Explanations—*

- (i) The estimated expenditure on roads Rs 33 lakhs per mile is based on the actual results obtained in the case of Harrison Road.
- (ii) The sum allotted for open spaces represents the amount which it is hoped may be available after providing for an adequate scheme of road construction, re-housing and expansion, and subject to the limitation of aggregate expenditure to a sum within the resources of the town.
- (iii) The estimate for acquisition of land (Rs. 5,000 per acre) was adopted after enquiry as to the value of land in selected areas.
- (iv) The estimate for improvement includes the provision of municipal conveniences [*vide* paragraph 4 (i) above].
- (v) The item of Rs. 336 lakhs on the receipt side represents half of the anticipated expenditure on roads and open spaces (Rs. 500+172 lakhs). It is contemplated that the Trust should either (a) recoup itself by taking up excess land and re-selling it at the higher price to be expected for land brought into proximity with a new thoroughfare; or b) that it should follow the methods of the Prussian Street Alignment Law, which dispenses with the procedure of acquisition and resale of excess land and authorizes the recovery of a maximum of half the cost incurred in providing a new road directly from the owners of land adjacent to it. It is claimed for the latter alternative that it tends to eliminate the speculative element, and also enforces the principle that a new street benefits the adjacent owner specially as well as the community generally. It is not necessary that the same method should be adopted throughout the city.

[*Note—*As stated in paragraph 4 (3) above, it will be open to the Trust to lease the excess lands instead of reselling them where the latter course is less advantageous. But for purposes of calculation it is convenient to treat recoupment operations entirely under capital account.]

- (vi) The Government grant of Rs. 50 lakhs has been approved by the Secretary of State, and takes the place in the Calcutta scheme of the substantial assistance given to the Bombay Improvement Trust, by the grant of vacant Government lands and reclamation rights.
- (vii) The loans will be repayable in 60 years and will be guaranteed by the Government of India. This guarantee will be given subject to certain conditions regarding the contributions to be paid by the Corpora-

tion and its ultimate financial responsibility for the Trust which are explained in paragraph 11 below.

9. The revenue account broadly indicated in the following statement:—

Expenditure	(Omitting 000). Rs.	Revenue.	(Omitting 000). Rs.
Annual charge for interest sinking fund ...	2,035	Return from land taken up for housing and expansion ...	300
Cost of management ...	100	Contributions and taxation ...	1,835
Total ...	2,135	Total ...	2,135

Explanations.

- 10 (i) The estimate for interest and sinking fund is based on the assumptions that the loans are floated at 4 per cent. and that the sinking fund is invested at an average rate of 2½ per cent.
- (ii) The item "Cost of management" includes *inter alia* the President's salary which the Conference proposed to place at a maximum of Rs. 3,000 per mensem, supplemented if the Local Government thinks fit, by a house allowance not exceeding Rs. 500 per mensem.
- (iii) The estimate of "Return from land" is based on an assumed return of 2 per cent. on the total cost (Rs. 100 + 50 lakhs) of acquiring and improving land for housing and expansion. It will be open to the Trust to re-sell the land acquired instead of leasing it. (*Cf.* the converse case of recoupment by leases instead of re-sale).
- (iv) The income from "Contributions and taxation" will be made up of (1) Contributions paid by the Corporation, and (2) Special taxation. The general principles under which it is proposed to distribute the burdens involved are (a) that an appreciable share of the immediate financial burdens, and complete financial responsibility in the event of default on the part of the Trust, must devolve upon the Corporation; (b) that as the improvement scheme will not to any important extent relieve the Corporation of its ordinary expenditure on the provision of municipal requirements, it must be financed in a large measure by special taxation; and (c) that the burden of taxation should be distributed as evenly as possible among the different classes benefitted.

Contributions by Corporation.

11. The Corporation may contribute to the revenues of the Trust (a) from the normal growth of municipal revenues; (b) by the allocation to the Trust of revenue set free from time to time by the discharge of existing municipal loans; (c) by raising existing municipal taxes; and (d) from new taxation.

As regards (a), it is proposed that the Corporation should undertake to contribute 1½ per cent. on the rateable value of lands and buildings estimated yield Rs. 360,000.

As regards (b) two alternative proposals have been considered by the Government of India. The first is, that the following amounts which become available by the liquidation of loans on the dates mentioned against each should be diverted to the purposes of the Trust. The second is that the first item only should be so diverted:—

(i)	Rs. 4,64,000 available on 31st December 1908.	
(ii)	" 45,500 "	1st August 1908.
(iii)	" 65,020 "	1st May 1909.
(iv)	" 1,26,890 "	1st December 1910.
(v)	" 1,60,000 "	1st December 1911.
Total ...	" 8,62,310	

For the reasons indicated under clause (iv) b of paragraph 10, the Government of India prefer the second proposal.

As regards (c), there has been much discussion. The consolidated rate is now assessed at 19½ per cent. on rateable value; the present legal maximum is 23 per cent. It has been represented that the margin between present and maximum rates must be regarded as hypothecated to drainage and water works schemes already contemplated. The Government of India are disposed to agree that the rates should not be made the mainstay of the improvement scheme, and with the possible exception* to be explained below they do not propose to call for any immediate addition to the rates now levied or for any increase in the legal maximum.

As regards (d) the Government of India are disposed to question whether the Corporation can meet the first of these demands (the 1½ per cent. contribution) as well as set aside so large a sum (Rs. 4,64,000) from loan payments unless new sources of revenue are placed at its disposal. They think it preferable, however, subject to the exception* already referred to, that the additional resources should be obtained from new taxation rather than from an addition to the consolidated rate. They, accordingly, propose that taxes should be imposed on petroleum† and also upon transfers‡ of immovable property. The proceeds of these taxes will be credited to the Corporation.

The payment of the municipal contribution of 1½ per cent. on rateable value will also be secured in the manner provided in section 72 of the City of Bombay Improvement Act, 1898.

Further, in the event of default on the part of the Trust, in respect of loan instalments or sinking fund investments, the Corporation will be liable for the default in the manner prescribed by sections 80—82 of the Bombay Act, under which the amount in default may be withdrawn from the municipal fund and set aside for the service of the loan, and a special tax may then be imposed to repay the sum withdrawn from the municipal fund.

* See para 17, "Special owner's rate"

† See para. 13 below.

‡ Vide Appendix A to this memorandum.

12. The foregoing proposals may be thus summarised:—

- (i) The Corporation will contribute a fixed amount (Rs. 4,64,000), plus a fluctuating amount (1½ per cent. on rateable value, now calculated to yield Rs. 3,50,000) to the revenues of the Trust.
- (ii) The revenues of the Corporation itself will be supplemented by new taxes on petroleum and on transfers on immovable property, to enable it to meet the second of these charges.
- (iii) The contribution of 1½ per cent. will be further secured as explained above on the consolidated rates.
- (iv) The Corporation will be liable for default on the part of the Trust.

13. The following information is added regarding the two municipal taxes above proposed:—

Transfer Duty.—A duty on transfers was first suggested as an adjunct to the succession duty (vide paragraph 18 below) and to prevent evasion of the latter. As a tax standing by itself, it appears to be free from the objections which are held to make a succession duty impracticable. Being a tax on immovable property, it is a suitable alternative to the enhancement of the rates which would otherwise become necessary if the Corporation were at any time unable to maintain its contributions. It is proposed to levy the tax at the rate of 1 per cent. on sales, gifts and usufructuary mortgages. The estimate of yield based on the recorded figures of gifts and sales only is Rs. 2,60,000. Separate statistics of usufructuary mortgages are not readily obtainable. The details generally require to be further worked out.

The Government of India would be prepared to consider whether the tax should not be levied at 2 per cent., the additional 1 per cent. being substituted for the owners' rate suggested in paragraph 17 below. But they are inclined to prefer the latter tax, as the yield would be less liable to fluctuations.

Petroleum Tax.—The Conference considered a proposal to impose a tax on petroleum. At the rate of 4 annas per 10 gallons it was estimated to yield Rs. 1½ lakhs. This article is already taxed for imperial purposes at a high rate (15 to 20 per cent. *ad valorem*). Further objections are that the yield would be uncertain; the tax would be somewhat difficult to collect; and it would press with special weight on the poor. The Conference rejected it largely on the last ground. If it is decided to adopt the railway terminal tax (vide paragraph 19 below) by which the poor would be effectively reached, the Government of India would prefer not to impose a tax on petroleum, and it would probably be possible also to reduce the contribution to be demanded from the Corporation. Otherwise the Government of India would prefer to impose a tax on petroleum, and it would probably be possible also to reduce the contribution to be demanded from the Corporation. Otherwise they consider that the petroleum tax is required. Such a tax was approved by the Secretary of State at an earlier stage of the discussion and provision for such taxation already exists in the Calcutta Municipal Act.

Proposals for Special Taxation.

14. Under the above scheme the Corporation will provide Rs. 8,24,000 out of the total sum (Rs. 18,35,000) required from contributions and taxation. The remainder (Rs. 10,11,000) must be obtained from the proceeds of special taxation on behalf of Trust funds. The following suggestions for special taxation have at one time or another been put forward.

15. *Jute Tax.*—The Conference of February 1904 approved a proposal to levy an export duty of 1 per cent. on the value of jute shipped from Calcutta, coupled with an excise on jute locally purchased (estimated yield Rs. 5,00,000). To prevent evasion a similar tax must be imposed on jute shipped from Cuttack, the proceeds of which will go to that port. This proposal has been minutely scrutinized. It has been criticised as a tax which will be paid by consumers of jute abroad and all over India, and which is, therefore, more suited for imperial than for local purposes. On the other hand it is contended that Calcutta is the financial and administrative head-quarters of the jute trade, both in respect of the raw material and of the manufactured product; that though the jute mills and presses being situated for the most part just outside Calcutta municipal limits escape municipal taxation on the metropolitan scale, the Companies have their head-quarters and are managed and financed in Calcutta itself; that they employ some 97,000 operatives who with their dependents enjoy the municipal conveniences of the town and contribute largely to its congestion, but practically pay no municipal taxes.

The tax is too small to influence the trade. It can be shown for example that the increase of 45 per cent. in the price of raw jute which occurred between 1898 and 1900 did not affect the exports. The fibre is in fact a *quasi* monopoly and a small duty is not likely appreciably to accelerate the discovery of a substitute. It is also to be noted that of the total export of jute only one-twentieth is consumed in India and about one-third only goes to the United Kingdom.

The Government of India appreciate the wider issues which the imposition of such a tax opens up, but they are satisfied that its net advantages exceed those of any alternative forms of taxation which could be proposed. They have accordingly recommended its adoption to the Secretary of State, and it has been provisionally approved by him.

It has been suggested that, in imposing the tax, the Government should take power to fix tariff values or to convert the *ad valorem* into an appropriate specific duty.

16. *Additional Income Tax.*—Following continental precedents, the Conference recommended the addition for the purposes of the Trust of half a pie per rupee to the existing income-tax which is levied at the rate of 4 and 5 pies per rupee of income as the case may be. The yield is estimated at Rs. 2 lakhs. The tax possesses the merit of reaching classes who profit greatly by the business facilities of Calcutta, but are not easily reached by other forms of taxation.

The tax has been provisionally approved by the Secretary of State. It is not intended to levy it on the interest on Government securities. The details remain to be worked out, and certain practical difficulties will require consideration by the Local Government, e.g., the case of persons residing in Calcutta for a part only of the year, and the case of firms assessed in Calcutta on the income of branches in other places.

17. *Special Owners' Rate.*—The Local Government has proposed a special rate of 1 per cent. on rateable value to be assessed exclusively on owners. The Government of India agree, that some share of the special taxation which the scheme involves should be of a kind which falls directly on owners, who will benefit by the improvement of the town. On the other hand, it is argued, that its ultimate incidence like that of the consolidated rates (assessed half on owners and half on occupiers) will be really determined by the conditions of supply of and demand for houses in each locality; and that, therefore, it would be preferable to add 1 per cent. to the consolidated rates to which the people are accustomed. The Government of India think that, in the probable event of the succession duty being abandoned, one of these alternatives should be adopted. The yield in either case should be about Rs. 2,40,000.

18. *Succession Duty.*—The Conference proposed a succession duty on immovable property in Calcutta, on a graduated scale working out to a mean rate of 5 per cent. on market value; and took credit in their scheme of finance for a revenue of Rs. 6,50,000 from this source and from a duty on transfers. The proposal was further examined in February 1905 by an informal Committee of legal experts (the Hon'ble the Advocate-General presiding), who report that the proposal was beset by grave practical difficulties, the chief being those of dealing with the joint-family system and with Corporations. In view of these objections the Government of India are disposed to think that the special owner's rate referred to in paragraph 17 is preferable.

19. *Railway Terminal Tax.*—The Conference recommended the imposition of a terminal tax on Railway passengers arriving at or leaving the Calcutta stations, including Howrah. They estimated the number of passengers at over 10,000,000 per annum, and calculated that a tax of one-half anna per head with a substantial reduction for daily passengers would yield Rs. 2½ lakhs. The tax would fall to a large extent on the poor whom it is in fact desirable to reach by one or other of the special taxes to be imposed. It is argued that the taxation of suburban transportation is opposed to the essential principle of a scheme of city improvement, a main object of which is to encourage the dispersion of the population from the centre to new or existing suburbs. On the other hand, there are precedents for such taxation both in India and elsewhere, and in a scheme in which the best must require heavy and conscious sacrifices, from which at the best must require heavy and conscious sacrifices, from which the tax-payer the advantages of a tax, which is easily collected and not severely felt, are not lightly to be set aside. On the whole, the Government of India are disposed to reserve their opinion till the

Guarantee for fulfilment of Liabilities.

80. In the event of any default being made by the Board in any payment of interest due by the Board under sections 52 and 54, or in any payment due by the Board under section 67 to the Secretary of State for India in Council or to the Corporation, respectively, or in the event of the Board failing to pay or to set aside and invest any sum as required under section 55, the Accountant-General duties of the office of the said Accountant-General, shall make such payment, or set aside and invest such sum as may be required to be paid or to be set aside and invested as aforesaid, and the Commissioner shall forthwith pay, from the Municipal Fund to the said Accountant-General, the amount of such payment made or the sum so set aside and invested by the said Accountant-General as aforesaid, and thereupon the Corporation may levy any such special tax as may be approved by Government in this behalf, and as may be sufficient to repay to the Municipal Fund the amount withdrawn by the Commissioner as aforesaid.

Bombay of 1885. III Such special tax shall be in addition to the taxes from time to time leviable under the Municipal Act.

81. (1) If the Commissioner fails to make payment as required in sections 72, 73, or the last preceding section, Government may attach the Municipal Fund or any tax leviable by the Corporation, and thereupon the Provisions of sub-sections (2) and (3) of section 99 of the Municipal Act shall, with all necessary modifications, be deemed to apply to such attachment, and Government may further require the Corporation to levy a special tax as provided in the last preceding section.

Bombay of 1885. III Procedure in event of Commissioner failing to make payment as required by last preceding section.

(2). Any moneys paid by the Commissioner, under the last preceding section or payable under the said section and levied under this section, shall constitute a charge upon the property of the Board prior to any division of profits.

82.—In the event of the Board making any default in payment, or failing to set aside and re-invest as aforesaid as contemplated in section 80, Government may attach the rents and other income of the Board, and thereupon the provisions of sub-sections (2) and (3) of section 99 of the Municipal Act shall, with all necessary modifications, be deemed to apply to such attachment.

Bombay of 1885. III Government to have power in the event of default in payment of liabilities.

From Chamber, to Bombay, Baroda & Central India Railway.

No. 1549-1905.—CALCUTTA, 15th September 1905.

Scheme for the Improvement of Calcutta.

The proposals of Government in this connection are now under the consideration of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce. With reference to them, I have been instructed to ask whether cheap train fares are provided by your Railway to enable the working-classes to live at a distance from their work in the city. You will understand that I allude to fares by trains similar to those known as workmen's trains in the United Kingdom, by which workmen are enabled to live at a distance from the great centres, such as London, and to travel backwards and forwards at nominal fares. I should feel greatly indebted for any information with which you may be able to favour me on the subject.

From Chamber, to Bombay Improvement Trust.

No. 1550-1905.—CALCUTTA, 15th September 1905.

Scheme for the Improvement of Calcutta.

The proposals of Government in this connection are now under the consideration of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce. With reference to them, I have been instructed to ask whether any steps are being or have been taken in Bombay to assist the extension of the city by the provision of cheap tram and train fares for the working-classes. The Chamber Sub-Committee, appointed to consider the Calcutta scheme, would feel greatly indebted for any information which you may be able to afford them regarding this matter.

From Chamber, to Assessor Corporation of Calcutta.

No. 1551-1905.—CALCUTTA, 15th September 1905.

Scheme for the Improvement of Calcutta.

I am directed by the Sub-Committee of the Chamber appointed to consider this scheme, to ask if you will kindly favour them with a statement showing upon what system, and at what rates, vacant lands (both agricultural and other), and unoccupied houses, within the limits of the Municipality of Calcutta, are assessed to Municipal taxation.

From Assessor Corporation of Calcutta, to Chamber.

No. 2844.—CALCUTTA, 21st September 1905.

Referring to your letter No. 1551, dated the 15th September, 1905, in which, you ask for a statement shewing upon what system and at what rates vacant lands and unoccupied houses within the limits

of the Calcutta Municipality are assessed to Municipal taxation, I beg to say that rates are levied on all lands and buildings at a percentage on the annual value, the full rate being levied on occupied properties, and a remission of $\frac{1}{4}$ th of the rate being allowed for the period of vacancy. The procedure under the Municipal Act is as follows:—

Annual Value. 1. The annual value of land and the annual value of buildings erected for letting purposes or ordinarily let, is the gross annual rent, less an allowance of 10% in the case of buildings, for repairs etc.—Vide section 151 (a) of Act III B. C. of 1899.

2. The annual value of buildings not erected for letting purposes and not ordinarily let, is deemed to be 5% on the sum obtained by adding the estimated present cost of erecting the building, less a reasonable amount to be deducted on account of depreciation, if any, to the estimated value of the land valued with the building as part of the same premises. Vide section 151 (b).

Rates. The percentage of rate to be levied on the annual value of land and buildings assessed in terms of section 151, is fixed by the Corporation for the year, under section 124, but may be reconsidered under special circumstances at any time during the year, under section 127.

The Corporation is empowered to levy—

- (a) a general rate not exceeding 13% on the annual valuation.
- (b) a water rate not exceeding 6% on the annual valuation.
- (c) a lighting rate not exceeding 2% on the annual valuation.
- (d) a sewage rate not exceeding 2% on the annual valuation.

Consolidated rate. Thus the total consolidated rate is not to exceed 23% on the annual valuation. The consolidated rate for the current year is 19 $\frac{1}{2}$ % on the annual valuation. Vide section 147.

The amount of the consolidated rate representing a percentage on the annual value is payable, one half by the owner and the other half by the occupier. Vide section 171.

Remission of rate. When lands and buildings are unoccupied and unproductive of rent, only $\frac{1}{4}$ th of the consolidated rate is realisable. The whole of the occupier's share and half the owner's share is remitted. Vide sections 173 & 174.

From Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway, to Chamber.

No. 11977-T.—BOMBAY, 21st September 1905.

I am in receipt of your letter dated 15th September 1905, and in reply I beg to inform you that while we have a large suburban traffic, we do not run any "Workmen's trains" such as you describe.

Some 18 months ago the desirability of running such trains was mooted, as it was proposed to establish segregation camps for workmen in the suburbs, but after taking into consider-

ation the extra engines and rolling stock required, the extra siding accommodation required to stabling empty rakes, and the fact that rolling stock built for this special purpose would only be used during the early hours of the morning and for a short time after dark, we came to the conclusion that even if we ran "Workmen's trains" we could not reduce our present season ticket rates, which are already very low. I may mention that the majority of workmen live in the vicinity of the mills &c. in which they are employed, and there is really no demand for special trains for workpeople, as our existing local train service is quite sufficient to carry the relatively small number of workmen who use the railway.

I forward by book post a copy of this Company's Coaching Tariff; pages 19, 20, 21 will show you the season tickets rates charged on this Company's system and the table at the end of the book will show you the distances between stations.

From Bombay Improvement Trust, to Chamber.

No. 6859.—BOMBAY, 12th October 1905.

In reply to your No. 1550 dated 15th September, 1905, enquiring whether any steps are being or have been taken in Bombay to assist the extension of the City by the provision of cheap tram and train fares for the working classes, I am directed to say that no steps have as yet been taken in this direction.

The only direction in which expansion in Bombay is possible is towards the North, and the Improvement Trust are just submitting to Government for sanction two suburban Schemes for the purpose of opening up the areas North of Dadur within the Island. They also have under preparation a further Scheme of a still more extensive character with the same object. A very large proportion of the area referred to is at present low-lying swampy land unsuitable for building purposes, and the Schemes provide for the necessary filling to ensure proper drainage and by the systematic laying out of the areas, with suitable building plots by the construction of roads.

The Island is served by the G. I. P. and B. B. & C. I. Railways. The 3rd class season-ticket rates on the former line between Victoria Terminus and Sion Station are:—

per month	...	Rs. 2 15 0
per quarter	...	" 7 6 0
per half-year	...	" 14 0 0

On the B. B. & C. I. Railway, between Church Gate Station and Mahim, the 3rd class season rates are:—

per month	...	Rs. 3 0 0
per quarter	...	" 7 8 0
per half-year	...	" 14 4 0

and a good service of trains is provided by both these lines.

Students under 18 years of age and attending recognised Schools and Colleges, and children between 3 and 12 years are charged half rates.

It is hoped that the system of Electric Tramways which is to be established will be extended to the North of the Island due course as the lands in that direction are developed.

4. It has not been overlooked that some special arrangement, as regards workmen's trains may have to be come to in the future, but for the present, the idea is either to locate the working classes in the neighbourhood of their work and encourage the classes who are better off to migrate to the suburbs, thus rendering available the quarters they now occupy in the crowded city and inducing a gradual 'moving up' of the poorer classes.

5. The Mills in Bombay employ about 100,000 persons the vast majority of whom walk considerable distances to and from the centre of the City daily. Among the amendments to the City Improvement Trust Act, which are shortly to be introduced into the Legislative Council, are provisions which will enable the Trust to grant facilities to the employers of labour for the construction of dwellings for their employes, and it is hoped that this may be the means of getting the low-lying lands, surrounding the mills, developed into sites for dwellings for the mill-hands which would greatly relieve the congestion in the City.

6. It will be seen then that the conditions in Bombay do not yet require the provision of special workmen's trains, and that facilities already exist for rapid transit to the suburbs, the benefit of which will be more apparent when the Trust Schemes for the development of the North of the Island have been carried out; which affect more the better-to-do classes of the community, the poor and working classes receiving, however, some indirect relief, in that better accommodation in the City is thus rendered available.

From Sub-Committee Calcutta Improvement Scheme, to President and Committee of the Chamber.

CALCUTTA, 10th November 1905.

We, the undersigned, having been appointed a Sub-Committee to examine the scheme formulated by the Government of India for the improvement of Calcutta, beg to submit the following report.

2. The scheme is contained in a letter, dated 18th July 1905, from the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, to the Government of Bengal. We have examined it in detail, for we are conscious

of the very great importance of the question with which it deals. It is a scheme for the constitution, by the Government of Bengal, of an Improvement Trust. The primary functions of the Trust will be to construct new roads, to improve existing roads, to provide open spaces, to provide accommodation for persons displaced by these operations, to provide for the normal growth of the population, and to control, by means of building regulations, areas in the neighbourhood of those which have been acquired. It is estimated that the cost of these operations will

amount to Rs. 822 lakhs. Of this sum, Rs. 356 lakhs will, it is estimated, be recovered from frontage owners; Rs. 50 lakhs will be given by Government; and Rs. 416 lakhs will be raised by 4 per cent. Government guaranteed loans. The annual charge for interest and sinking fund on the loans is given as Rs. 20,35,000; and the cost of management as Rs. 1,00,000. Of the revenue to meet this expenditure, a sum of Rs. 18,35,000 is to be raised by contributions from the Corporation of Calcutta and by taxation; and a sum of Rs. 3 lakhs from the rents of the lands taken up. The contributions by the Corporation are (a) a fixed sum of Rs. 4,64,000, and (b) a sum of Rs. 3,60,000, being the estimated yield of a charge of 1½ per cent. on the rateable value. The balance of the revenue is to be derived from special taxes.

3. With the main features of the scheme, apart from the financial proposals, we are in agreement. We recognise that

task which lies before the Trust is one which cannot be successfully undertaken except by a body specially constituted for the purpose. The Trust is, we observe, to consist, of a President and six Trustees, who will be all appointed by the local Government. Of the Trustees, one is to be the Chairman of the Corporation of Calcutta, two are to be Municipal Commissioners, and one is to be nominated by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce. We agree that six Trustees will be sufficient. Indeed we would deprecate any proposal to increase the number. But we notice that there is no guarantee that the rate-payers of the city will be adequately represented. Commercial interests should also, we think, be more largely in evidence. Seeing that a considerable portion of the revenue of the Trust is to be derived from the taxation of jute, it is only reasonable that the business community should be well represented. It is our opinion, therefore, that, of the six Trustees, one should be the Chairman of the Corporation, two should be Municipal Commissioners, two should be nominated by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, and one by the Calcutta Trades Association. We feel also that the need of selecting the very best man available, for the post of President, should be emphasized. Fitness for the post should be the only criterion. The selection should not be restricted to the Indian Civil Service, or to any other service or profession. It should be made from the possible candidates, solely with a view to the efficient management of the undertaking. There will be also great need for continuity of policy; and this should be borne in mind in the appointment of the President and of the Trustees. Those men only should be appointed who will be likely to continue in office for some years without intermission.

4. It will be a part of the business of the Trust to acquire lands for expansion, either within the Municipal limits or in the adjacent suburban Municipalities. Upon the areas thus acquired, the people to be displaced by the improvements within the city are expected to settle. It is we think of the utmost importance that the Trust should begin operations on these lands, before they proceed to displace the inhabitants of the congested areas. To

our mind the success of the whole scheme hinges very largely upon this feature of it. Cheap and efficient means of transit between the city and the newly acquired districts will also be absolutely essential. For without such, it is conceivable that the effect of the improvements will be to intensify rather than to relieve congestion. Under existing conditions the working-classes live, we presume, as near as possible to their work. It will consequently be necessary to afford them transport at nominal rates, if they are to travel daily backwards and forwards from the suburbs to the city. No scheme for Municipal Tramways can be projected until the expiration of the present agreement with the Calcutta Tramways Co. That being the case, we think the Company should be approached with a view to new extensions and lower fares. If necessary, a guarantee of interest on the capital required for the extensions might perhaps be offered to the Company.

5. We gather from the scheme—clause 10 (iii)—that it will be open to the Trust to re-sell the land acquired for housing and Land. Municipal Ownership of expansion instead of leasing it. In our opinion it would be a mistake to sell the sites thus acquired. To do so would mean that the profits, which will naturally follow the growth of population, would be made over to individuals instead of being retained for the public. We see no reason why the Trust should not embark on a comprehensive scheme of Municipal ownership of land, if not of house property also. If such a policy were steadily pursued, it might ultimately enable the Municipal authorities to control the future of the city, so far as lands and buildings and their value are concerned. This being our view we think that the excess lands (clause 8 (v) note) should preferably be leased rather than re-sold.

6. We would be disposed to suggest that for the purpose of enabling the Trust to acquire the lands, a special Land Acquisition Land Acquisition Act. Act should be passed by Government. A competent Court, whose decisions should be speedy and final, should be constituted to administer the Act. The delays and difficulties which surround the working of the existing law would thus be avoided.

7. We observe from the Note to clause 6 (3) that if inadequate of funds should necessitate the reduction of the programme of work, the operations in connection with open Open Spaces. spaces would be selected first for curtailment. To this proposal we take exception. Open spaces seem to us to be quite as urgently needed as new roads; and their provision should, we think, form a very important feature of the scheme.

8. According to clause 5, the Trust is to be wound up and its assets and liabilities transferred to the Corporation as soon as the scheme of work is completed. And in clause 6 (4) a period of twenty years is mentioned as the probable limit of its operations. We are inclined to doubt the wisdom of this provision.

Duration of Trust and of Taxation Scheme.

It seems to us that the object of the existence of the Trust will be not only to improve the city, but to prevent in the future any recurrence of those evils which it is now sought to remedy. Taking this view it would appear to be very advisable that the Trust should be a permanent body. It would be the authority entrusted with what may be termed the constructive work of the city; while the Corporation would be the maintaining authority, so to speak. The two authorities would not be in antagonism, but in co-operation, each with the other. In making this suggestion, we do not wish it to be understood that we are seeking to impose permanent special taxes. On the contrary, we are in favour of quinquennial revisions of the scheme of taxation. To impose for an extended period a tax on Jute, or on any other article of commerce, would be, we consider, unwise. Moreover, we are of opinion that the Trust should aim at becoming a self-supporting body. It is with this end in view that we suggest the leasing, rather than the selling, of the acquired lands. For it seems to us that by the adoption of this policy, a source of revenue will be provided which may ultimately enable the Trust to dispense with special taxation.

9. In clause 7 of the scheme a statement of the estimated capital and loan transactions of the Trust is given. It shows charges amounting to Rs. 822 lakhs, and the following

receipts:—	Rs. lakhs.
Recoupment and recoveries from front- age owners	336
Government grant	50
Loans	430
Total	822

The sum of Rs. 436 lakhs is to be raised by loans repayable in 60 years, and guaranteed by the Government of India. It is estimated—clause 9—that the annual charge for interest and sinking fund will amount to Rs. 20,35,000. This sum is calculated on the basis of the loans being floated at a per cent., and the sinking fund invested at an average rate of 2½ per cent. In addition to this charge for interest and sinking fund, a sum of Rs. 1,00,000 is set aside for cost of management. The total annual expenditure is therefore estimated at Rs. 21,35,000. Of this Rs. 18,35,000 are to be raised by contributions and taxation; and the balance, Rs. 3,00,000 from the rents of the lands taken up for housing and expansion.

10. Before commenting on these proposals we wish to record our emphatic opinion that a sum of Rs. 50 lakhs is an altogether inadequate contribution from the Government of India. Nor do we consider it to be advisable that Government should pay their grant, whatever it may be, in a lump sum. We submit that it should not only be very much larger, but that it should take the form of a percentage of the amount to be provided, and that its payment should be

extended over a long period. In view of the fact that Calcutta is the metropolis of India, the seat of Government, the principal Indian port, and the greatest centre of trade, we do not think it is unreasonable to propose that the Supreme Government should contribute 25 per cent. of the amount—Rs. 486 lakhs—to be raised. This would be equivalent to, say, Rs. 120 lakhs, and it would materially reduce the difficulties in connection with the revenue of the Trust, which might otherwise prove to be a serious obstacle. The Bombay Improvement Trust have been, we understand, assisted by Government with grants of land and with reclamation rights valued at Rs. 100 lakhs. A grant of Rs. 120 lakhs to Calcutta would not therefore be excessive; in fact, it would be only proportionate to the aid extended to the western city.

11. If the sum of Rs. 120 lakhs be contributed by Government, the total amount to be raised by loan will be Rs. 366 lakhs. The annual charge for interest and sinking fund should be, in our opinion, diminished by extending the currency of the loans from 60 to 90 years. The sinking fund might also be invested, we think, at a higher average rate than 2½ per cent. Calculating on a basis of 90 years, at 4 per cent. for the loans and 3½ per cent. for the investment of the sinking fund, the annual charge for interest and sinking fund will be (on Rs. 366 lakhs) approximately Rs. 15½ lakhs. If to this be added Rs. 1 lakh—the cost of management—the total annual cost of maintaining the Trust will be Rs. 16½ lakhs, against Rs. 21,35,000 under the Government scheme.

12. We have now to consider how this amount can best be raised. As regards the Government proposals, we will say at once that we are altogether opposed to any addition being made to the income tax; and that we do not favour an enhancement of the consolidated rate. We take exception to a tax on petroleum, as that article is in our opinion already sufficiently burdened. But should petroleum be further taxed, electricity should likewise be laid under contribution. Taxes on timber and firewood and slaughtered animals are also objectionable. The amount to be derived from them would not be large; and they would be costly to collect. Moreover, they would fall ultimately, as would the petroleum tax, upon the poor. A special owners' rate, although designed to fall upon landlords would, we fear, mean in practice an additional burden upon tenants. Our own feeling is that Calcutta landlords, whose properties have immensely increased in value as the city has developed, should be made primarily liable for the cost of improvement. As a city becomes congested the value of landed property rapidly enhances. And the limited enquiries which we have been able to make go to show, that Calcutta landlords have been very great gainers by the existence and growth of those conditions which it is the object of the Improvement Trust to remedy. In such circumstances it would be clearly equitable that the cost of the proposed operations should be largely borne by owners. But we are not prepared to formulate any scheme under which the incidence of taxation could be made to fall upon them.

The graduated succession duty on immovable property, which is mentioned in clause 18 of the Government scheme, would no doubt meet the case, and we support the proposal. But it is apparently beset with grave practical difficulties, although these may not, on further investigation, prove to be insurmountable. The taxation of land values has also been suggested, and we are in favour of it. To put it into practical operation in Calcutta would be, however, a task of much difficulty, which would involve prolonged consideration and discussion. On the other hand the work to be undertaken by the trust is urgent. It has been delayed far too long. The money must now be provided as quickly as possible. And it should be raised in that particular way which is calculated to excite the least opposition, and consequently to involve the least delay. To least extent, the suggested enhancement of the transfer duty on immovable property meets our views as regards the taxation of the landed interest. But obviously it would not fall equally upon all those who have benefited by the unearned increment. Nor do we approve of the Railway terminal tax. Both might perhaps be resorted to if no other means of raising revenue can be devised. But we think that, should the Railway tax be unavoidable, it should take the shape of a fixed contribution from each of the Railways, and each of the Inland Steamer Companies serving Calcutta. Such an impost would certainly be preferable to any direct tax on passengers.

Contribution by Corporation.—The Government proposals provide for a contribution by the Corporation of Calcutta of a fixed sum of Rs. 4,64,000 annually, plus a fluctuating amount equivalent to 1½ per cent. on the rateable value. This amount is estimated at Rs. 3,60,000, making a total contribution of Rs. 8,24,000. This is in our opinion much too heavy a charge to exact from the Corporation. For that body should not be asked to contribute to such an extent as may tend to retard municipal progress in other directions. A fixed contribution of Rs. 5 lakhs per annum we suggest as an equitable arrangement.

The Jute Tax.—We do not favour the principle of taxing commodities for municipal improvements. But in the exigent circumstances of Calcutta, it seems that a tax on jute is practically unavoidable. It should be levied at a certain rate per ton of raw jute and jute fabrics exported by sea from Indian ports, and should be payable by the shipper. An average rate of between 6 annas and 7 annas, on raw jute and jute fabrics exported from Calcutta, would produce the amount required, *viz.*, Rs. 5 lakhs. We would deprecate any proposal to burden the trade with a larger sum than Rs. 5 lakhs.

In this connection we feel that we ought to point out the errors contained in the Government scheme with reference to the Calcutta Jute Mills. It is suggested that the Mills will benefit from the improvement of Calcutta. This conclusion is surely due to a mis-

understanding of the facts. With two or three exceptions, the Jute Mills are situated at a distance of some miles from Calcutta, where they will be in no way affected by the operations of the Trust. Moreover it must not be forgotten that, instead of enjoying the municipal conveniences of the town of Calcutta, many mill-owners have expended, or are expending large sums of money, with the object of improving the Municipal areas within which their property is situated. As regards the monopoly argument, it may be true that jute is an Indian monopoly. But to tax it is to invite competition in order to break down the monopoly. Our attitude towards the jute tax is that its imposition affords an easy way of raising money; and that it is unlikely to inflict any immediate injury upon the trade. But we are very clearly of opinion that it should be withdrawn as soon as any scheme for taxing the landed interest—by means of a succession duty or other charge on immovable property—is found on further investigation to be feasible. In any case it should certainly be reconsidered at the end of five years. A corresponding tax will be of course levied at Chittagong. And the Madras Government should, we consider, be approached with a view to the taxation of the fibre grown in Vizagapatam, and other districts in the Madras Presidency.

Excise Revenue.—In place of the special taxes to which we have referred, we would suggest that the Government of Bengal permit the diversion to the Trust of a share of the excise revenue of the city. A precedent exists in the case of Bombay, where the Corporation receives yearly a certain percentage of the excise revenue in lieu of the power to levy liquor license fees. We suggest that this precedent be followed in Calcutta, and that a grant of Rs. 5 lakhs be made annually to the Trust from the excise revenue. So far as we can see the only possible alternatives to such a grant are the railway tax, and an addition to the duty on transfers. There are, however, objections to both, and we would most strongly urge that an excise contribution be substituted for them.

13. The annual return from land taken up for housing and expansion is calculated at Rs. 3 lakhs. The different sources of revenue briefly stated will be therefore:—

	Rs.
Corporation of Calcutta	5 lakhs.
The Jute tax	5 "
Excise revenue	5 "
Rents	3 "
	Rs. ... 18 lakhs.

14. We would urge that this scheme be most strongly pressed by the Chamber of Commerce upon the Government of India. There would seem to be no sufficient reason why it should not be adopted. It restricts the special taxation to an impost on jute, and even that can be reduced by 1½ lakhs, or thereabouts; for the estimated charges do not exceed Rs. 1,67½ lakhs, while the revenue stands at Rs. 18 lakhs. We do not overlook the fact that the scheme is based upon two contingencies: (a) that the Government of India will contribute Rs. 120 lakhs; and (b) that the Government of Bengal will grant a share of the excise revenue. But it is, we think, reasonable to anticipate that both these proposals will be accepted. If the whole sum of Rs. 435 lakhs has to be raised on loan, as is proposed by Government, and if the excise contribution be not forthcoming, other special taxes in addition to the jute tax would be unavoidable. By extending the term of the loans to 90 years, and calculating 3½ per cent. as the average rate for the investment of the sinking fund, the annual charges for interest and sinking fund on Rs. 435 lakhs would be reduced from Rs. 20,35,000 to Rs. 18,16,280. To this amount the cost of management (Rs. 1 lakh) would have to be added. In order to provide Rs. 19,16,280, the Railway tax would have to be imposed; and an addition of something more than 1 per cent. but not perhaps so much as 2 per cent. would have to be made to the transfer duty. The account would stand thus:—

Charges.

	Rs.
Interest and Sinking Fund	18,16,280
Management	1,00,000
	Rs. ... 19,16,280

Revenue.

	Rs.
Corporation of Calcutta	5,00,000
*The Jute tax	5,00,000
The Railway tax	2,50,000
*Transfer duty @ 2 per cent.	4,80,000
Rents	3,00,000
	Rs. ... 20,30,000

15. Lastly we would remark upon the proposal—clause 11 of the Government scheme—that the Corporation shall be ultimately responsible for the financial stability of the Trust. The Trustees will be appointed by the Local Government, and will act entirely independently of the Corporation, to whose control they will be in no way subject. This being so, it is clearly inequitable that the city of Calcutta should be made financially responsible for all their actions. We submit that this proposal should be entirely

(* One or the other of these items might be reduced.)

withdrawn; that the Government guarantee of the loans should be made effective; and that the financial responsibility of the Corporation should be strictly limited and defined in proportion to its share in the management of the undertaking.

J. D. NIMMO, (*Chairman*),
J. R. BERTRAM,
E. CABLE,
J. NICOLL,
SHIRLEY TREMBARNE.

W. PARSONS,
Secretary.

MR. C. W. N. GRAHAM, being absent from Calcutta, is unable to sign the report.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (Municipal).

No. 2139-1905—CALCUTTA, 25th December 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 184-M, dated 28th July 1905, on the subject of the Calcutta Improvement Scheme.

2. You invited an expression of the views of the Chamber upon the scheme as embodied in a communication from the Government of India, of which you forwarded a copy. In order that the scheme might have the fullest consideration of the commercial community, the Committee submitted it to the members of the Chamber. They also discussed it themselves with much interest and attention; and they further appointed a special Sub-Committee to examine it and to report upon it. A copy of the report of the Sub-Committee is appended to this letter for the information of Government.

3. The report analyses the scheme at length, and makes numerous recommendations. With all of these recommendations the Committee of the Chamber find themselves in complete accord. They consequently endorse the report in all respects, and they now submit it to Government as the expression of the considered opinion of the Chamber. At the same time, there are certain points with regard to which they wish to supplement the report by remarks of their own. In particular they desire to emphasise the recommendation that the Government of India grant should be increased. The reasons set forth by the Sub-Committee in support of their request for a grant of at least Rs. 120 lakhs from the Imperial revenues are sound and should be sufficient. But they can be reinforced by an even more cogent argument, which does not seem to have been so far insisted upon. It is that the real underlying object of the whole scheme is to check the progress of epidemic disease—in other words to stay the advance of the plague. Regarded from this standpoint the national importance of the project becomes at once apparent; for there can be no doubt that to rid the capital of India of the scourge of a virulent epidemic disease is an imperial question of no small magnitude. The Committee have not, therefore, the least

hesitation in affirming their conviction of the justice of the demand of Calcutta, for a contribution from the Supreme Government of at least one-fourth of the proposed capital outlay.

4. The recommendation that the Government grant should be thus increased, forms an integral part of the financial proposals made in the report. These proposals are alternative to those formulated by Government, and they have the merit of obviating the necessity for the imposition of small, and what would appear to be vexatious special taxes. The comments which the Sub-Committee offer upon these suggested taxes seem to be eminently sound and reasonable. Of course, it is just that the cost of the scheme should be fairly distributed among those who will be benefited by it. But if this principle, in its practical application, necessarily involves the levying of charges on timber, firewood, slaughtered animals and petroleum, then the Committee think it may be safely departed from. For all these taxes would be costly to collect, and would yield but small proceeds. The simpler financial proposals which are set out in the report are very greatly preferred by the Committee. They involve the imposition of only one new tax—that upon jute; and they exact but a moderate contribution from the Corporation. As regards the jute tax, the views expressed in the report precisely reflect those held by the Committee, who would, however, emphasise the need for a reconsideration of the tax at the end of each quinquennium. It seems also to the Committee that no wrothier object could be found for the appropriation of a portion of the excise revenue of Calcutta than a scheme of improvement. Indeed, this particular proposal of the Sub-Committee they support as strongly as they do the recommendation for an increase in the Government of India grant. For the one represents the measure of the aid which in their opinion ought to be given by the Imperial Government, and the other that which is plainly the duty of the local Government to afford. The heavy burdens, hitherto imposed upon the Government of Bengal, have been or are being materially lightened by recent administrative changes. Those changes have not, of course, increased the revenues. But one of the advantageous results of them will be that the Government will be able to devote more time and closer attention to the great work of developing to the fullest extent the commercial, the industrial, and the financial interests of the port and city of Calcutta. And the Committee can conceive of no movement which is so likely to promote those interests as a carefully planned and thoroughly well executed project of sanitary and municipal improvement. Such a modest contribution from provincial revenues as that which is suggested in the report should be, therefore, they maintain, unhesitatingly afforded, as should be, and as they believe will be, every other possible form of assistance which it is open to the local Government to give.

5. I am now to refer to another important point as regards finance, which is not touched upon in the report. I allude to the anticipation of the framers of the Government scheme, that a sum of Rs 336 lakhs will be forthcoming from what may be briefly defined as "betterment." Appended to this letter will be found a reprint of a series of articles by Mr. J. Row Fogo, of Edinburgh.

These articles have been kindly placed by Sir Patric Playfair, Kt., C.L.E., at the disposal of the Committee, who, without supporting all the criticisms offered in them, submit them to Government for information. Mr. Fogo deals at some length with the point to which I have referred; and the doubts which he expresses are certainly shared by the Committee. The greatest possible caution, united to the most efficient and business like methods, will clearly have to be exercised by the Trust as regards land operations in the congested areas. The proposal is for the Trust to buy buildings, as well as lands, in these areas. The buildings will be demolished; a portion of the land will be utilised for widening the street, and the balance will be sold. Now whether the capital value of these excess lands will give back the money expended on the lands and houses, seems to the Committee to be a question requiring a very complete investigation. If outright sales are made immediately the area under improvement is ripe for building, the profit from any subsequent rise in the value of the land will go to the purchaser, while the Corporation will reap the benefit of enhanced assessments. The Trust, having parted with its property, will gain nothing. It would be a wiser plan, the Committee are inclined to think, for the Trust to adopt the recommendation made in the report, and to lease the lands, rather than to sell them. While dealing with this subject, the Committee wish also to direct attention to Mr. Fogo's remarks on the suggested alternative to acquiring and selling, namely, the recovery from frontage owners of half the cost to be incurred in laying out an improved street. This is the procedure prescribed by what is termed the Prussian Street Alignment Law. Mr. Fogo observes that this law, which was "passed a generation ago has remained a dead letter," so far as Prussia is concerned. The Committee offer no opinion upon the accuracy of this statement, as they are without information respecting the law. But they note that Mr. Fogo quotes his authority, and they consider, therefore, that the Government should make further enquiries before proposing to enact a similar law for Calcutta.

6. There is one further matter to which the Committee have instructed me to refer. It is that dealt with in the concluding paragraphs of the report. The Committee most strongly endorse the opinion that the ultimate financial responsibility for the scheme should not rest on the Corporation—that is to say upon the rate-payers—of Calcutta. The Trust is to be an agency which will not be appointed by, and will not be in any way subordinate to, the rate-payers. It will be in such a position as will enable it, if it so desires, both to disregard their counsels, and to decline their aid. It may, in fact, be fairly described as a Government organisation, formed in a special way for a special purpose; and although the taxpayers should, and will contribute to its cost, the ultimate liability for its operations should not rest with them. Holding this view, the Committee altogether disapprove of the proposal for the adoption of clauses 30 to 32 of the City of Bombay Improvement Act; and they support the recommendation of their Sub-Committee that the proposal should be entirely withdrawn, and that the Government guarantee should be made effective.

7. In conclusion I am to say that, although they have criticised the scheme at length, the Committees are in cordial agreement with its main features, apart from those relating to finance. They sincerely hope that, subject to such modifications as they have suggested, it will be vigorously, but at the same time prudently, proceeded with, and that it will be eventually carried to a successful issue. They would also like to take this opportunity of assuring the Government that all possible assistance which the commercial community of Calcutta can give, in furtherance of that end, will be most gladly and willingly rendered.

THE FINANCIAL ASPECTS
OF
THE CALCUTTA IMPROVEMENT SCHEME.

I.

The financial aspects of a large improvement scheme are always complicated, but they are a matter on which it is most necessary to obtain clear ideas, for ways and means should always be one of the leading considerations in estimating the desirability or the reverse of an undertaking which involves the spending of large sums of money. Caution in this respect is particularly demanded where the expenditure cannot be determined beforehand with precision, but where our balancing of *pros* and *cons* is based on estimates involving necessarily many doubtful points. This latter consideration applies with particular force if the annual charges of the undertaking are to be met by new taxes, as is proposed in the case of the scheme presently mooted in Calcutta. New taxes are always difficult to impose, and experience shews that the temptation to facilitate their introduction by minimising their amount is irresistible. There are few valid arguments in favour of any tax, but let it once be shewn that the impost is paltry, that it is really neither here nor there, then moral indignation is reduced to absurdity, and the victims submit. On general grounds, therefore, as well as owing to the particular circumstances of the case, the first thing needful in discussing the new Improvement scheme is to examine the estimate of its cost. Until this is done, the rest of the discussion can proceed only on vague and unproved assumptions.

What then is to be the cost of the scheme? In the first place 672 lakhs are to be spent on Roads and Open Spaces. One-half of this sum (336 lakhs) is to be recovered from owners of property along the lines of the new thoroughfares, and will not have to be borne by the public. The other half is to be borrowed and repaid by instalments spread over sixty years. Interest on this debt and sinking fund constitute, along with one lakh annually for management, the estimated burden on the tax-payer. The cost to the public thus depends on how much has to be borrowed, and this in its turn depends on how much money can be recovered from the owners of property. The first crucial point we meet with is, therefore, the estimate that these payments from owners will be 336 lakhs. On this figure the whole scheme hinges.

Judging by the importance of this point we should have expected that full information would have been supplied as to the facts on which the promoters of the scheme base their estimate. But on turning to the official documents we meet with complete disappointment. Far from furnishing materials with which the intended tax-payers might form conclusions as to the likelihood of being relieved to the extent of one-half of the outlay, the published memorandum contents itself with the bare assertion, coupled with reference to a law existing in Prussia! The passage is as follows:—

"It is contemplated that the Trust should either recon-
" itself by taking up excess land and re-selling it at the

"higher price to be expected from land brought into
" proximity with a new thoroughfare; or that it should
" follow the methods of the Prussian Street Alignment
" Law, which dispenses with the procedure of acquisition
" and resale, and authorises the recovery of a maximum
" of half the cost incurred in providing a new road direct-
" ly from the owners of land adjacent to it."

Turning first to the passage dealing with Prussia, it may readily be admitted that the Government of that country is one of the most enlightened in Europe, especially in military policy, but at the same time it will hardly be denied that its example may possibly not be authoritative when cited in support of municipal finance in Calcutta. At any rate when a Prussian statute is invoked, the proposal founded thereon should be based on accurate knowledge, for this reason, if for no other, that the facts are inaccessible and by the majority have to be taken on trust. This most requisite knowledge the framers of the memorandum evidently did not possess. It is true the statute in question exists; it authorises Municipalities—if they see fit—to assess owners in respect of a portion of the outlay incurred in making new streets; and it limits the portion which they may so assess to a maximum of one-half of the cost. All this is written in the Prussian statute book. But surely it is a common experience that optional powers conferred on local authorities are not always used, at least that the performance has at times been known to lag behind the maximum expectations of the legislature. In the interests of ordinary prudence, was it not incumbent on the framers of the memorandum to continue their researches in view of this possible difficulty? Had they done so, they would have found that this well-meaning enactment, passed a generation ago, has remained a dead letter. The statistics of local finance in Prussia shew that the contributions which it has been possible to levy from owners as a set-off to alleged improvements to their property are altogether negligible, while in Berlin, which, since the rise of wealth in Germany has almost been rebuilt, these contributions have even been *nil*. (For the most up-to-date information on this subject see M. Meiling, "Reform des kommunalen Finanzwesens," Konrads Jahrbücher, 1905.) It was in any circumstances imprudent to take the very highest limit of assessment authorized in a foreign country and make that the basis of an estimate.

What are we to say of this estimate which invites the public on the faith of its representations to incur a liability of 672 lakhs? The Prussian example proves that nothing can with confidence be expected from owners in respect of improvements. Possibly Berlin is no guide for Calcutta, but the onus of proof lies with those who have raised the question. They have appealed to Caesar, and the appeal shews that a cautious man will count on the whole 672 lakhs as falling to be borrowed, and afterwards repaid by taxation. On its own reasoning, therefore, the estimate, on one head alone, understates the cost of the scheme by one-half.

II.

"Betterment" assessments have for many years been the object of earnest search by urban authorities. But all hopes of compulsory contributions from owners of property which is supposed to have been increased in value by a municipal undertaking have hitherto proved illusory. The framers of the estimate for Calcutta Improvement Scheme took a Prussian law for their guidance, and it was shewn in the preceding article that their figures were founded on a misapprehension. English examples are no more encouraging. An influential and learned Commission recently inquired into the possibility of introducing "Betterment Rates" into English law, and after long and careful consideration the Commission reported unfavourably. With reluctance the idea was dropped. Compulsory contributions are only equitable if it can be proved that the property to be assessed has risen in value proportionately to, and in consequence of, the public expenditure. This proof has not been brought either in England or Prussia, and consequently in these countries there are no betterment rates—in England none in law, in Prussia none in practice.

There is an alternative to compulsory contributions if a municipality is bent on trying its fortune. Those in charge of the Improvement Scheme may buy the land which they think will rise in value owing to their operations and afterwards re-sell it. This is the method followed by Municipalities in England if they wish to make the attempt to realise the supposed increment resulting from their improvement undertakings. But their experience is eminently discouraging, as witness, for instance, the recent land purchases of the London County Council. Nor is this really surprising. Municipal improvements, unlike the improvements of private owners, are not undertaken for the sole purpose of enhancing the value of property. Indeed the first step is wholesale destruction of property for all the buildings purchased are pulled down to make way for the new streets. These buildings have been acquired at enormous cost, and their demolition is, of course, dead loss. It seems, however, that inexperienced people fasten on the mere word "improvement" and run away with the idea that where there is an improvement there must be a rise in value. In truth "improvement," used in this sense is a misnomer. A Municipality takes public health, or outlets for traffic as its prime objects in what it calls "improvements," and if in addition, a monetary advantage accrues, it is a kind of by-product and is purely accidental. By-products, unfortunately, are usually comparatively valueless. There are notable exceptions. It is true, but only in cases where the article finds a ready sale and can be marketed at moderate cost. Let us consider the case of this municipal by-product.

To obtain control of the property supposed to be enhanced in value an enormous additional capital will be required, for the land must be bought up in the vicinity of two street frontages together 30 miles long, apart from open spaces. These purchases will be conducted under most unfavourable circumstances. It is one thing to buy land which comes up for sale in ordinary course. The

owner is anxious to part with it and knows that the purchaser will not come to terms unless he on his part can make a good bargain. It is a very different matter to enter the market as a public authority wishing to make a profit out of its sanitary improvements. Prices have been asked and paid in like circumstances which are scandalous, but even if Calcutta escapes these dangers and manages its affairs with unparalleled success, no one can expect that the land will be bought at its cheapest. When the streets are finished, the public authority comes into the market as a seller, but again its position is unfavourable, for circumstances compel it to sell and that is not the time to realize a top price. The trust may, of course, again borrow more capital and become its own builder, but that would probably be ruinous. Is it worth while, then, to run a great risk in pursuit of the chimerical profit to be obtained from the sale of land in the naive quarter, land which has been bought dear and has to be sold cheap?

It seems, therefore, that the by-product of Calcutta's sanitary improvement scheme is illusory, and in these circumstances the people who are to be called upon to pay the taxes involved by the undertaking should make their own estimates, unaffected by the dreams of wealth held out by official enthusiasm. Indeed, it is time that the scheme received a new and more appropriate designation. At first sight it might appear as an undertaking of truly Oriental dimensions designed primarily for the benefit of Calcutta. Vistas are to be cut, further than the eye can reach, to which open spaces are to lend diversity and beauty. No town has transformed itself on this scale since Napoleon rebuilt Paris. The length of street constructed recently in London sinks into the shade beside this example of Eastern magnificence. But viewed in its proper light the scheme is no splendid municipal phantasia. It is simply a measure dictated by stern medical necessity for combating the plague. Let the word "Improvement" be dropped, for the matter has no parallel in New London, or in the Boulevards. Let also the word "Calcutta" be dropped, for a wider area is affected. With the name "Bengal Anti-plague Scheme" much would be made clear. The prospect of a profit of 336 lakhs would be discounted to its true value. The certainty that the undertaking involves frightful expense must become patent. Most necessary of all, the true National Import of the expenditure might perhaps be brought home to a Government which appears to imagine that 50 lakhs fitly represents its interest in the affair.

III.

The certainty that the proposals for creating new roads and open spaces in the native quarter will cost taxpayers very much more than has been estimated is a most serious consideration. So far only the promised recoupment from property owners has been examined, but on looking into the published figures it will be seen that each single item depends on estimates, for the reliability of which we have nothing to trust but the official hope that the forecasts of the Government will be realized. If this hope has

been engendered by the same optimism as led to the expectation of receiving the enormous sum of 335 lakhs in respect of enhanced value of property adjoining the new works, then the outlook for tax-payers is desperate indeed. But enquiry on these points must be left to those who possess private information as to the current price of land and buildings in districts to be traversed by the new roads and as to the conditions likely to govern contracts for building these roads. Another no less important question demands our consideration. Every one must have noticed the omission in the estimates of any allowance for upkeep only: (1) Cost of debt service, that is to say the annual interest on the loans with which the scheme is to be financed, and payments for sinking fund; (2) Cost of administering the Trust which is to take charge of the new works till they are completed and handed over to the Municipality. But these two items are of course, only a part, perhaps only a small part, of the expense involved by the scheme. No reference at all is made in the official memorandum to "upkeep," so we do not know who is intended to take charge of this matter; the Trust which for twenty years is to take control of the works, or the Municipality which is to look on and silently prepare for taking over all the liabilities at the end of the period. But whether by Trust or by Municipality, the work of upkeep will have to be done and paid for. The cost is not included in the estimates, so it has to be added. How much taxpayers should calculate on having to pay under this head, it would be difficult to say, except that the expense is bound to be heavy. Every one knows that 672 lakhs worth of property cannot be kept up for nothing, especially with short-lived property as street-improvements in what are intended to be busy thoroughfares. It is said that the upkeep of streets in Calcutta is large, but sufficient has been said to shew that although the official estimate ignores the matter, cost of upkeep is not an item which prudent tax-payers should treat with indifference.

One part of the "Improvement Scheme" has not been referred to, nor is it intended to do except in passing. This is the proposal that 2,000 acres of land should be acquired in districts where the town is likely to expand. The land is to be either within the Municipal boundaries, or in the suburbs and the object of the operation is euphemistically stated as being "with a view to recoupment by subsequent sale or lease." Except in as far as some provision may have to be made for housing the people displaced by the first demolitions of buildings before private enterprise has provided for the altering conditions, this project has nothing to do with the new streets. Indeed the official memorandum states that the intention is to reap the rise in land-values to be expected from "the probable normal growth of population for a generation." Speculation in land on this gigantic scale falls into the domain of Municipal trading and cannot be discussed here. 'It is sufficient to remark that the project has nothing to do with the improvement Scheme proper.

We must now leave this part of the subject. The official estimate has been placed before the public and on its basis proposals

have been made for new taxes. To smooth the way for these imposts we have been told that their amount will be trifling. The errors involved in this assertion have been exposed, and we now proceed to deal with the taxes themselves.

The guiding principles by which the financial burdens of the scheme are to be distributed are carefully explained in the memorandum:—

- (a) That an appreciable share of the immediate financial burdens, and complete financial responsibility in the event of default on the part of the Trust, must devolve upon the Corporation;
- (b) That the resources of the Corporation must be supplemented by special taxes;
- (c) that the burden of taxation should be distributed as evenly as possible among the different classes benefited.

Propositions (a) and (b) are obvious. Financial responsibility for the scheme can ultimately rest nowhere unless on the Municipality of Calcutta. The constitution of a Trust which for twenty years is to supersede the Corporation in one of the departments of its legitimate activity may be necessary, but it is unquestionably objectionable. Ultimately the town must regain mastery in its own house, otherwise the whole theory of Municipal self-government comes to an end. Further no one will deny that the Corporation should bear a certain share of the cost of the scheme. As for proposition (b) it also is self-evident. Special taxes are needed for the very cogent reason that the new public works are not a Municipal improvement in the ordinary sense. Streets as a rule, are made for traffic, but were this the consideration, no one for a moment would dream of embarking on the present colossal enterprise. There is no Municipal demand for streets on this scale and therefore it would altogether be unfair to charge the expense on ordinary Municipal revenues. The third guiding principle which the Government lays down for itself in framing its scheme of taxation must equally command our assent: "the burden should be distributed as evenly as possible among the different classes benefited."

If we ask who the classes are which are benefited, the generally accepted answer seems to be, that to some extent Calcutta is specially benefited. Should plague break out in the native quarter, the town of Calcutta would feel it first, and as to the streets, though as streets, no one needs them, they will be there for those who chose to use them. For the rest the whole of Lower Bengal will be benefited. Does the Government scheme then conform to the guiding principle, that the burden of taxation should be equally distributed over those who derive advantage from the new works?

IV.

Originally it was intended, to defray the whole cost of the Improvement Scheme by a tax on Jute, but subsequently the

Government was persuaded to adopt the guiding principles quoted in last article *viz.* :—

- (a) That the Municipality of Calcutta should bear an appreciable part of the burden, and
- (b) That the rest should be distributed as equally as possible among the different classes benefited.

A plan has accordingly been put forward which professes to conform to this standard.

Little can be said about the contribution due from the Corporation because, as already observed, cost of upkeep which in the end may be very heavy is omitted from the estimates. Now as the new streets are not demanded for municipal traffic, but are being pressed on the Corporation for reasons which affect the whole province, it would be obviously unfair to expect the municipal taxpayers to bear an undue proportion of the upkeep of the "Bengal Anti-plague Scheme." Until this matter is settled, further discussion of the Municipal contribution proceeds on unascertained data.

The equal distribution among those interested—the provision that is to say, for the part of the scheme not borne by the Corporation—may be attained in various ways. In the first instance the Government has promised a contribution out of Imperial Funds. The sum mentioned in the meantime is extremely small, *viz.*, 50 lakhs, towards a capital expenditure of 667 lakhs, and it almost looks as if the proposal were not intended seriously. It savours too much of the story of a celebrated bean who with infinite grace offered his principal creditor a five-pound note to account. Of course the contribution need not be made in capital. It may be made in revenue by means of taxes levied outside the Municipal area and allocated to the Trust, or Corporation.

In the scheme of new taxes the duty on jute, in spite of the parade of other imposts, still holds principal place. The more we look into the matter, the more clearly we see that the other taxes introduced in order to produce an arrangement which shall conform to the guiding principle of equality, are very unreliable, besides being levied in a restricted area. The published documents themselves class these duties under the not very hopeful designation of "unsettled problems." It is openly admitted "that the railway terminal tax may prove impracticable"; the abandonment of the succession duty is described as "probable"; the yield of the tax on slaughtered animals has not yet even been estimated; nor has the tax on timber and fire-wood; the additional income tax, finally, is said to follow Continental precedents and to present many difficulties. Such a budget fails to inspire confidence. We find everything vague and professedly unsettled—everything except the jute tax.

To this impost we therefore direct our attention, premising merely that a scheme in which one tax of this nature is the mainstay cannot possibly profess to follow the guiding principle of equality so loudly heralded in the official documents.

In the first reference to the new impost which we find in the memorandum it is described straight-off as "a tax on the consumers

of jute." Later on doubts on this point are admitted, but the first is evidently the view which the officials would feign see generally accepted. This is very natural. Should consumers pay the duty, who bear it? Besides the whole world will be laid under contribution. But it is far from certain that this happy consummation will be achieved, indeed of the several possibilities, payment by the consumer is on the whole the least likely position to result. This is a problem which is usually considered complicated, but really it is quite simple. Whether the jute tax will be paid by consumers or producers depends on two sets of facts, and on these only :—

- (1) Whether jute can be grown elsewhere than in Bengal;
- (2) Whether the duty will increase the price of the article.

Now as to the first point, Bengal has at present, no doubt, a monopoly in growing this fibre, and foreign consignees must therefore take the article at the exporters' price, or leave it. But this proposition demands the most careful consideration, for what its true nature now may have changed sixty years hence. The improvement debt runs for sixty years, and that is a long period in the world's trade. Calcutta Municipality makes itself liable for an enormous debt, and should one single untoward event intervene, the rate-payers will have to make up the deficiency. The Municipality would fall most flagrantly in its duty if it did not consider the revenues assigned to the scheme in every possible light. The question is therefore: will Bengal have its monopoly of jute for the next sixty years, in other words, is the revenue from the jute tax secure? Now it is known that America has long cherished the hope of making itself independent of Indian jute, while in Africa the attempts to grow the fibre have already taken practical shape. The Indian export duty by raising the price of jute in international markets, will stimulate these efforts, and considering that we are dealing with a period of sixty years, he would be a bold man who would profess that these efforts will not meet with success. When Bengal loses its monopoly, what will happen? The duty will have to be repealed, for no country can tax exports of raw material without holding a monopoly, and then Calcutta Municipality will be on evil days. Sound finance demands foresight above everything. It is already a very grave risk to assume responsibility for the liabilities of a scheme in which almost exclusive reliance is placed on one single source of revenue. But when we find that the permanence of this revenue is exposed to the vicissitudes of international trade competition, then the grave risk becomes financial folly. The Municipality owes a duty to itself as guardians of the rate-payers. It should demand as a right to have revenues assigned to it in this matter which offer most complete security in return for the vast liabilities it assumes.

The next question, whether the duty will raise the price of jute, will be considered in the next and last article of this series.

V.

The prime consideration in discussing the effect of the proposed jute tax is the question whether the new duty will increase the price of the fibre. If it does increase the price, the consumer pays; if it does not, then the producer bears the burden. In the first place a brief reference may be made to the question of monopoly because it has been suggested that the production of jute falls under this category. The peculiarity of a monopoly is the circumstance that prices are not fixed by competition, but are regulated by the monopolist to suit his own convenience. He must not charge too high a price, else the demand will be restricted, and his turn-over will suffer. But he will naturally select the highest price which will carry off his maximum production. The imposition of a duty cannot of itself affect these circumstances. If the market would bear a higher price, why did the monopolist not exact it before? Should jute be a monopoly, the proposed tax will in no way affect the price, and the whole burden will fall on the producer. This question, however, has only been introduced on account of the popular talk of monopoly. In practice monopolies are almost non-existent, and we must assume that the market for jute follows the ordinary laws of demand and supply.

It is a well-established fact that a rise in the price of an article decreases the quantity demanded. The producers of jute will, of course, endeavour to add the duty to their present prices but circumstances will probably make this impossible. The producers must sell their supplies, and if the higher price reduces demand, they must let their things go at a lower price, that is to say, they must put up with the loss. This proposition is axiomatic, and it is futile to attempt to contradict it. The Government may declare that they have in their possession statistics "capable of proving" that a rise in price of 45 per cent. in the two years 1898-1900 did not reduce the demand for the fibre, but figures of this kind cover far too short a period to establish the general truth of so remarkable a phenomenon. Market fluctuations there will, of course, always be, but none the less the principle stands firm that a rise in price lessens demand, and that a falling off in demand ultimately compels producers to lower prices. Only one expedient there is by which the producer can maintain high prices in spite of a shrinkage in demand, and that is by not selling more than will go off at the higher price. But the Indian jute-trade is an expanding and not a shrinking industry, and a restriction of supply in the present circumstances would only throw further loss on the producer.

How comes it then, that there is such a widely prevalent opinion that a duty on an article of consumption falls on the consumer? It arises from an error, which is almost invariably made by those who are imperfectly acquainted with the conditions of commerce, and who also are only superficial students of the Political Economy whose "laws" they quote so glibly. This error is to confuse long periods in commerce with short periods. The general principle that a duty on an article of consumption will fall on the consumer is deduced from the following "law" of Political Economy: In the long run no trade can make exceptional profits, or exceptional losses.

The truth of this statement is obvious. If a trade is exceptionally profitable, new capital will be attracted, and the increased competition will bring profits to the normal level. Conversely new capital will be repelled from an unprofitable trade, and the gradual decline of competition will enable those who remain to once more earn normal returns on their money. If, therefore, a duty is imposed, it must ultimately fall on the consumer, because no trade can remain permanently unprofitable. But mark the reasoning by which this conclusion is reached! It applies to an old-established tax, and to an industry which has had time to settle down to a new level of prices. How many of those who confidently quote some sentence which they have snatched from its context in a work on Economics, realise how restricted is the application of the "law" that duties on articles of consumption are paid by the consumer? A *new* duty is paid by the producer, as explained in the previous paragraph. An *old* duty only comes to be paid by consumers after the check to consumption has had time to work out its effect and restrict the dimensions of the industry in question. When that period is reached, the producers will be strong enough to raise their prices and shift the tax.

Are producers strong enough at present, or will they be strong enough in the near future to raise their prices? The answer must be in the negative. The experiment of making Calcutta not only the grower of raw material, but, also, a centre for the manufacture of jute products, has been splendidly successful. New capital has flowed in, existing mills have been extended, till now people are asking themselves whether the movement has not been overdone, and whether overproduction will not result. These are not the conditions under which taxes are shifted. For that purpose you need the very opposite state of trade; a strong market and a slackening off among the competitors who supply it. There can be no hesitation about declaring that a duty now imposed on jute will fall on the producer, not only for the moment, but for many years to come. Considering, how much the country has benefited by the growth of this industry, it is surely both unfair and impolitic to treat it as the authorities propose to do.

The position taken up by those responsible for the introduction of the proposed impost, cannot be regarded as altogether satisfactory. At one moment they put a bold face on the matter, and refer straight-off to "the proposed tax on the consumers of jute." But soon they admit difficulties, and, when they come to sum up the arguments in support of their scheme, they quote opinions that apply to several distinct alternatives and of which, therefore, one includes the other. We read how proper it is that consumers of jute should help to pay for the Calcutta Improvement Scheme, and while we yet wonder, we find ourselves in the middle of a dissertation on the equity of mulcting the jute merchant "in respect of his office, and the operatives at the mills in respect of—it is not clear what. On this last point a word must be said, there is no space for more. As one of the justifications for the tax on jute, we are told that the 97,000 workmen contribute to the congestion of the town without paying its taxes. How this is possible is not explained,

but let that pass. What we have to realise is that the operatives can feel the tax in one way, and in one way only, namely, in a reduction of wages. Their employers, the mill-owners, will be forced to cut down the wage-bill, on account of the new duty. By this loss of wages, however, the Corporation is not one penny the richer. The loss of wages is "injury" pure and simple done by the tax. To regard with approval the handicapping of an industry, because, forsooth, the workmen suffer, did distracted financiers, in search of an argument ever bolster up his case, with a plea more infelicitous?

If now we sum up these remarks on the financial aspects of Calcutta Improvement Scheme, the following conclusions seem to have been reached:

- (1). The cost has been grossly under-estimated, and the necessary taxes will be far heavier than the figures put before the public;
- (2). The portion of the expense allocated to the town of Calcutta itself must be governed by the provision to be made for upkeep of the new work; as yet this item does not seem to have occurred to the proposers of the scheme;
- (3). The proposers have failed to fulfil the expectations naturally arising from their undertaking to make equality of distribution the guiding principle in allocating the new taxes. The jute-tax is still the main-stay of the scheme, and as a tax which will necessarily fall on one single trade, it is an unjust, as well as in the circumstances, an impolitic tax.

Finally it is not a tax in reliance on which a Municipality would be justified in accepting heavy financial liabilities.

The intention of the scheme is excellent, and the guiding principles laid down for regulating the new taxes must command universal adherence. With accurate estimates and financial expedients which followed these principles, the proposals would bear a very different complexion.

J. ROW FOGO.

*Extract from Mr. J. Row Fogo's letter of 13th November 1905 to
Sir Patrick Playfair.*

I have looked up the Parliamentary Papers relating to London finance and have abstracted the enclosed figures.

You will notice that the various London local authorities have debts outstanding in 1903, for objects kindred to those embraced, in Calcutta Improvement Scheme, amounting to 22½ million pounds. London County Council alone has since that date made capital outlay on the same objects to the tune of 33½ million pounds. The sums recovered are practically negligible, a few thousand pounds, as you see.

Calcutta proposed to supply water to the new streets. To procure the corresponding figures for London would be a very complicated undertaking, nor does it seem necessary.

I hope this is the sort of information you wanted. I shall be very glad to go further into the matter in any way you wish.

STATISTICS RELATING TO STREET IMPROVEMENTS.

LONDON.

The last published figures are those given in the Local Taxation Returns (Parliamentary Papers) for the year ending March 1903. The outstanding debts are as follows:—

<i>London County Council:—</i>	£	
Street Improvements	...	13,747,600
As Calcutta proposes also to supply Open Spaces this debt may be added, for comparison. It stands at	...	1,098,645
Main Drainage (although only one item of the "municipal conveniences" referred to in the Calcutta Scheme) stands at	...	4,241,958
<i>London Corporation:—</i>		
Date of Return not quite identical with above, being to 31st December 1902.		
Street Improvements	...	1,403,972
<i>Metropolitan Borough Councils:—</i>		
(Date of Returns same as for London County Council.)		
Street Improvements	...	2,011,302
<i>Since Publication of the complete statistics for London, separate returns relating to London County Council only have been issued, and these shew the following additional capital expenditure for that body:—</i>		
<i>During year to 31st March 1904:—</i>	£	
Street Improvements	...	1,053,529
Main Drainage	...	173,160
Open Spaces, &c.	...	70,422
Thames Embankment	...	140,166
Joint Expenditure with other London bodies:—		
On Streets	...	369,555
Drainage	...	1,961
Parks and Open Spaces	...	3,015
Thames Embankment	...	902
		1,813,310
Carried over	...	24,316,717

During year to 31st March 1905:—

	£	£
Brought forward ...	.....	24,316,717
Street Improvements ...	897,075	
Main Drainage ...	379,710	
Open Spaces ...	52,834	
Thames Embankment ...	360,813	
Joint Expenditure ...	231,495	
	<u>1,941,927</u>	
		<u>26,258,644</u>

Sums recovered:

The Returns for *London County Council* give particulars showing what has been received for Sales of Property (*i.e.*, the method of English Local Authorities must adopt if they wish to recoup themselves for outlay on new streets, &c. In England, there are no Betterment Assessments). These figures are:—

	£
Year to 31st March 1899 ...	22,069
" " 1900 ...	7,196
" " 1901 ...	4,268
" " 1902 ...	33,129
" " 1903 ...	14,684

Later figures are not available. It must be noted that "Sales of Property" covers all kinds of sales made, including Sales of Old Materials. This last item is probably considerable in the case of a town like London.

London Corporation:—

Here I have only one year, *viz.*, to 31st March 1903.

The "Sales of Property" amount to ... £ 1,257

No details are given as to how this sum is made up

Municipal Boroughs:—

Here also I have only one year, the same as the last. No sums were received in respect of the item under consideration.

TELEGRAPHS.

METEOROLOGICAL WEATHER WARNINGS BY MEANS OF WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY.

From Government of Bengal (REVENUE), to Chamber.

No. 4914.—CALCUTTA, 22nd December 1904.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1753-1904, dated the 3rd December 1904, in which you enquire how far the question of establishing Wireless Telegraphic communication between the Andamans and the mainland and between Saugor Island and the Channel light ships or pilot brigs has progressed, and whether there is any reasonable probability of the communication being established at an early date.

2. In reply, I am directed to forward herewith a copy of the report (the return of which is requested) on the wireless telegraphy experiments which were carried on in the Bay of Bengal from March to May 1904, and to say that the latest information received, from the Director General of Telegraphs, was to the effect that the experiments would be resumed in November 1904.

I am to add, that the Government of India has lately been requested, by this Government, to sanction the erection of a Marconi installation between the Pilot Cruiser and Saugor Island for experimental purposes.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (REVENUE).

No. 143-1905.—CALCUTTA, 31st January 1905.

I am directed, by the Committees of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 4914 of 22nd December 1904, and to thank you for the information given with regard to the wireless telegraphic experiments which have been carried on under the orders of Government in 1904. The Committee note with much satisfaction, that the Government of India have lately been requested to sanction the erection of a Marconi installation between the Pilot Cruisers and Saugor Island for experimental purposes. The Committee would now urge that similar action should be taken to secure the connection of Diamond Island with Port Blair, which, they understand, the Marconi Co. offered to undertake some two years ago. It appears to the Committee, in view of what this Company has achieved in connection with wireless telegraphy on the Atlantic, it is so far the only working system which has given satisfactory results on a large scale throughout the year; but notwithstanding, it appears, so far to have been excluded from consideration by Government in the enquiry

experiments which have recently been made with the view of securing an efficient system of wireless telegraphy in the Bay of Bengal. (Report returned as requested).

From Government of Bengal (REVENUE), to Chamber.

No. 731.—CALCUTTA, 13th February 1905.

With reference to your letter No. 148-1905, dated the 31st January 1905, I am directed to say that the Government of India have informed this Government that, in view of the many questions and interests involved, they are unable at present to grant permission for the erection of an installation of wireless telegraphy between Saugor Island and the Steam Pilot Cruiser.

From Chamber, to all Members.

No. 433-1905.—CALCUTTA, 23rd October 1905.

Wireless Telegraphy.

As members of the Chamber are aware, the Committee have for a considerable time been urging upon the Government of Bengal the introduction of an official system of wireless telegraphy in the Bay of Bengal, mainly with the view of securing early and reliable storm warnings, and also establishing communication between Saugor Island and the Pilot Cruisers. I am instructed by the Committee to circulate, for the information of members, copies of the latest correspondence which has passed upon the subject. I also subjoin extract from the Administration Report of the Indian Telegraph Department for 1904-1905, just published, with reference to the communication which has been established by means of wireless telegraphy between Diamond Island and Port Blair.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (REVENUE).

No. 1373-1905.—CALCUTTA, 14th August 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to refer to previous correspondence ending with your No. 731, dated 13th February 1905, on the subject of the wireless telegraphy experiments being carried on in the Bay of Bengal.

2. The Committee observed with much regret from the letter quoted, that the Government of India had refused to permit the erection of an installation of wireless telegraphy between Saugor Island and the Steam Pilot Cruiser. As six months have elapsed since your letter was written, I am to ask if the Committee can now be favoured with further information as to what progress is being made with the experiments which have now been carried on for a considerable period.

From Government of Bengal (REVENUE), to Chamber.

No. 3759-T. R.—DARJEELING, 3rd October 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1373, dated the 14th August 1905, in which you request to be favoured with further information as to what progress is being made with the experiments in regard to wireless telegraphy in the Bay of Bengal.

2 In reply, I am to state for the information of the Committee of the Chamber, that wireless telegraphy is likely to be established soon between Saugor Island and the steam Pilot Cruiser.

Extract, page 13, from the Administration Report of the Indian Telegraph Department for 1904-1905.

ELECTRICAL—WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY.

36. Work in connection with the establishment of communication, by means of wireless telegraphy, between Diamond Island and Port Blair was begun in October 1904. The first two months were spent in erecting 150 feet masts and installing the oil engines and dynamos at Diamond Island, Slipper Island and Port Blair, and communication was successfully established between Diamond Island and Port Blair—distance approximately 300 miles—on the 10th February 1905, since which date communication between those places was maintained regularly, with a few brief interruptions, to the end of the year. This installation is now working perfectly, and much credit is due to Mr. M. G. Simpson, Superintendent of Telegraphs (who assisted in the later stages of the work), for the very satisfactory results attained.

From Port Officer Calcutta, to Chamber.

No. 4412.—CALCUTTA, 11th November 1905.

Copy of the following forwarded for information. This refers to communication between the Pilot Station (Sandheads) and Saugor Island—

TELEGRAM.—Dated 11th November 1905.

From—Huntly, Pilot Cruiser, "Fraser,"

To—Port Officer, Calcutta.

"Wireless telegraph communication with Saugor, established November 2nd and in continuance from that date."

From Chamber, to Port Officer Calcutta.

No. 1910-1905.—CALCUTTA, 22nd November 1905.

I am directed, by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, to convey to you their best thanks for placing at

their disposal a copy of the telegram, dated 11th November, from the Commander, Pilot Cruiser "Fraser", intimating that wireless telegraph communication had been established on the 2nd November, and was in continuance from that date. The Committee noted this with much satisfaction.

From Chamber, to Director-General of Telegraphs.

No. 1911-1905.—CALCUTTA, 22nd November 1905.

The Committee were favoured a few days ago, by the Port Officer of Calcutta, with copy of a telegram, dated 11th November, which he had received from the Commander of the Pilot Cruiser "Fraser" at the Sandheads, intimating that wireless telegraph communication with Saugor had been established from the 2nd November, and was in continuance from that date.

2. The Committee noted this with much satisfaction and instructed me to address you with the suggestion that the information received at Saugor by wireless telegraphy, with regard to vessels lying at the Sandheads, should be given to the public in the daily *Telegraph Gazette* under a separate heading, as such information will be of considerable importance to firms interested in shipping.

From Director-General of Telegraphs, to Chamber.

No. 10377-T.—CALCUTTA, 6th December 1905.

With reference to your letter No. 1911-1905, dated the 22nd of November, 1905, I am directed to inform you that Wireless Telegraph communication between the Pilot Vessel "Fraser" at the Sandheads and Saugor Island was thrown open to the public from the 13th November 1905, and that the shipping reports were telegraphed and included in the *Telegraph Gazette* with effect from the 22nd November 1905.

TYPE-WRITING OF TELEGRAMS.

From Chamber, to Director-General of Telegraphs.

No. 704-1905.—CALCUTTA, 26th April 1905.

I have the honor to draw your attention to correspondence ending with your letter No. 8420 T, of 16th December, 1904, in which you intimated that the subject of typewritten telegrams, referred to in my letter No. 1752 of 3rd December, 1904, was under consideration and that a further communication would follow.

From Offg. Director-General of Telegraphs, to Chamber.

No. 4237-T.—SIMLA, 10th May 1905.

With reference to correspondence ending with your letter No. 704-1905, dated the 26th of April, 1905, I have the honour to inform you that if messages were typewritten after being taken down at a telegraph instrument it would only introduce another source of error and cause delay in delivery.

2. We are, however, taking up the matter with a view to introducing an instrument which will type-write a message straight off, and are making enquiries and having instruments sent out from England, which are shortly expected, to see what can be done in this direction.

3. The Chamber of Commerce may rest assured that this matter is receiving every attention.

From Chamber, to Offg. Director-General of Telegraphs.

No. 861-1905.—CALCUTTA, 20th May 1905.

I am directed, by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 4237 T, of 10th May, from which the Committee are glad to note that you are hoping soon to be able to introduce an instrument which will type-write messages direct from the transmitters.

From Chamber, to Calcutta Import Trade Association.

No. 862-1905.—CALCUTTA, 20th May 1905.

Suggestion for the Type-writing of Telegrams.

In continuation of my letter No. 1738 of 1st December, 1904, and with further reference to your letter No. 47 M, of 26th November, 1904, I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, to hand you copy of letter of 10th May, from the Offg. Director-General of Telegraphs, which the Committee think may be considered satisfactory.

REUTER'S SERVICE OF COMMERCIAL TELEGRAMS.

From Bombay Chamber, to Chamber.

BOMBAY, 3rd August 1905.

On the 6th July 1904, my Committee addressed the Bengal Chamber of Commerce on the question of the reduction of telegraphic rates between India and Europe. With reference to the above, and in view of the reduction made on ordinary telegrams to Europe from the first of the current month, I am instructed to ask whether your Committee are prepared to make a fresh effort to obtain a corresponding reduction from Reuter's Company in their rates for daily trade messages?

My Committee propose, in the event of your joining in a representation to the Company, to apply for a reduction of 25 per cent, thus making Rs 375 the annual subscription-for all commercial telegrams in future. An early expression of your Chamber's views on this question would be greatly valued, as it is felt that, if a representation is to be effective, it should be made at the present moment, while the subject of the recent reduction on ordinary telegrams is still before the public.

From Chamber, to Bombay Chamber.

No. 1361-1905.—CALCUTTA, 12th August 1905.

Reuter's Telegraphic Service.

I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 3rd August, with reference to this service. You enquire if the Committee will support a representation to the Company for a reduction of 25 per cent in the annual subscription. This reduction would mean that the subscription for all commercial telegrams would be Rs. 375 in future. The application would, the Committee understand, be based on the ground that the rates for ordinary telegrams between Europe and India have now been further reduced.

2. In reply, I am to say that the Committee are in agreement with the proposal and that they will be prepared to join your Committee in pressing it upon the Telegram Co. They will await a further communication from you before taking any action.

From Bombay Chamber, to Chamber.

BOMBAY, 31st August 1905.

Reuter's Commercial Telegraphic Service.

In continuation of my letter of 3rd August 1905, I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to forward you the accompanying draft of a representation it is proposed to make to Reuter's Telegram Co. on the above mentioned subject. I

may add that the Madras Chamber is also in agreement with our proposals for a reduction, and I am, therefore, forwarding them a similar draft for their consideration and opinion.

My Committee have decided to submit their representation to the Company on the 15th of September, and they suggest that the three Chambers might simultaneously apply on the same date.

An early expression of your Committee's opinion will, therefore, much oblige.

From—The Secretary, Bombay Chamber of Commerce,
To—The General Manager, Reuter's Telegram Co., Ltd.

As a sequence to last year's correspondence, I am directed by the Committee of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce to approach your Company again on the question of a reduced subscription for your daily commercial messages. It will perhaps not be out of place to recapitulate here the substance of the negotiations on that occasion. On the 9th March 1904, a Special Meeting of my Committee was held at which you, and representatives of the Bombay Cotton Trade Association, Ltd, were present, and it was decided in view of a recent reduction in telegraphic rates from 4 shillings to 2 shillings and 6 pence per word, to suggest to your Company that the annual charge should be lowered; and to contribute to this end it was pointed out that many items of information hitherto supplied might be dispensed with in future. A revised list from which all unnecessary subjects had been deleted, was later on this submitted for your consideration, with a recommendation that this new service should be introduced from the 1st July 1904, and that the cost to subscribers should thenceforth not exceed Rs. 300 per annum.

In reply, the Committee were informed that only recently the Cotton items from both New York and Liverpool had largely been increased, and that the deletions would be objected to by subscribers out of Bombay, and were not sufficient in themselves to justify the proposed reduction. My Committee then proposed that you might submit for their consideration a scheme for a modified service, which could, with due regard to the interest of the Port, be worked within the limit of the reduced subscription. On the 21st June 1904, a reply was received embodying the views of your principals in London, stating that while it was possible to omit altogether two or three of the items the Chamber was in favour of suppressing, it was not thought that the balance could be withdrawn without raising complaints from subscribers in other centres than Bombay; and that it was the pecuniary support afforded by such outside subscribers that enabled your Company to give the Bombay subscribers so much larger a service than their contributions would themselves admit of.

It will be observed from the above correspondence that the Chamber's previous contention was a reduction of the annual subscription, based on the reduced telegraphic rate combined with a shorter service. Owing, however, to the recent further curtailment

of the cable rate to two shillings a word, my Committee are of opinion that the time is opportune for a reconsideration of the question solely from this particular point of view. While acknowledging that the fifty per cent. reduction in the tariff, since March 1902, has not necessarily lessened the Company's outgoings in anything like the same proportion (as standing expenses no doubt remain the same), it is obvious that the reduction must place the Company in a better financial position. Without, therefore, in any way wishing to encroach on the legitimate profits of the Company, my Committee feel that with the present change of tariff to two shillings per word, they are not making an excessive request in proposing that the annual subscription should henceforth be reduced 25 per cent. thus making it Rs. 375 per annum instead of Rs. 500 as heretofore. To render this proposition more feasible they are further prepared, if it should be necessary, to consider any practical scheme for a reduced service.

In conclusion, my Committee trust that their proposal will now be favourably received by your principals at home, as the concession asked for will, it is believed, in no way be detrimental to your Company, while it will appreciably benefit the trading community and facilitate commercial interests in general.

From Chamber, to Reuter's Telegram Co., Ltd., Bombay.

No. 1526-1905.—CALCUTTA, 12th September 1905.

Reuter's Commercial Telegraphic Service.

The Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce have been favoured by the Bombay Chamber with a copy of a letter, which is being addressed to you, regarding a proposal for a reduced subscription for your daily commercial messages. The proposal is that the annual subscription should be henceforth reduced by 25%, thus making it Rs. 375 instead of Rs. 500 as at present. I am to say that the Committee of the Bengal Chamber are in accord with the opinions expressed in the Bombay letter. They consider that, in view of the recent lowering of telegraph rates, the commercial community are justified in asking your Company to make a reduction; and further that the reduction proposed is not in any way excessive. They trust that the proposal will receive the favourable consideration of your Directors.

From Chamber, to Bombay Chamber.

No. 1527-1905.—CALCUTTA, 12th September 1905.

Reuter's Commercial Telegraphic Service.

With reference to your letter dated 3rd August, I am directed to forward, for your information, a copy of the marginally noted

letter, which the Committee have addressed to Reuter's Telegram Co., Bombay, upon this question. You will observe that the Committee are in accord

with the views which you have expressed, and which they have much pleasure in supporting.

From Reuter's Telegram Co., Ltd., Bombay, to Chamber.

BOMBAY, 15th September 1905.

Your letter of the 12th instant, has been duly received.

I regret that I am unable to deal with it off hand, as matters of such importance naturally have to be referred to our Managing Director first for an expression of opinion.

On hearing from him, I shall then communicate with you again on the matter.

From Reuter's Telegram Co., Ltd., Bombay, to Chamber.

BOMBAY, 1st December.

I beg to enclose copy of a letter which has been addressed to the Bombay Chamber of Commerce by us, and which, more or less, holds good in your case.

I would, however, beg to point out in addition, that we have continued to give the matter of a reduction in subscription our serious attention, with a view to determine whether it would be feasible to give effect to your suggestions, but the more that we examine the position, the more do we feel that the concession asked for would involve, if granted, a hardship for the Company.

We venture to think, that the relief demanded could and should be secured nearer home, since, as a matter of fact, that portion of the commercial community which supports the service is in reality saddled with the charge for the benefit of the remainder, who make no scruple to profit by the news, and yet contribute nothing to its cost. We understand that there are at least as many of the mercantile community, who make no scruple to obtain communication of our quotations, and work on them, without a moment's thought of the injustice, not merely to our Company, but to their fellow merchants, who have the public spirit to pay for what they require and use. We venture to think that before we should be asked to make any concession, which would involve, in our opinion, quite an unmerited sacrifice, in view of the efforts and expenses we have freely devoted to bringing the service up to its present efficient level, no stone should be left unturned by the Bengal Chamber, or the individual merchants, acting more or less collectively, to force these outsiders who are enjoying gratuitous communication of our telegrams, to pay their quota. If this step were undertaken, and led to the result it ought to entail, all parties would be satisfied, and, what is more, the justice of the case would be met in the way it should.

Further, I would beg to point out that for some time past, we have arranged, in deference to numerous requests to this effect, to split up our Commercial service, so that merchants can subscribe to fractions thereof, and pay a proportionate subscription instead

of, as heretofore, having to take the whole supply and subscribe to the full amount. In adopting this course, we have naturally assumed some risk, but we cheerfully met the case out of regard for our subscribers, to whom we wished to show the utmost consideration. We think, therefore, that having regard to these conditions, your Chamber will see that in preferring their demand, they have possibly overlooked essential points, which we are bound to bear in mind, but which if brought before your notice, you will, we feel sure, be not indisposed to take into account, and consider adequate justification for the maintenance of the *status quo*, so far as we are concerned.

BOMBAY, 1st December 1905.

From—Reuter's Telegram Co., Ltd.,

To—The Secretary, Chamber of Commerce Bombay.

I regret that owing to unavoidable circumstances I have not been able to give you a reply earlier on the subject of the rate of subscription to "Reuter's" Commercial telegraphic service.

Your letter of the 15th September, was duly forwarded to our Managing Director, and has been carefully gone into by him, as well as by the Company's Chief Accountant, to whom the matter was submitted.

The latter, after an exhaustive discussion, expresses his opinion that our acceptance of your Chamber's demands for a reduction of 25 per cent on the subscription would involve a loss of revenue to the Company, of at least £1,250 per annum.

It must be borne in mind.—

(*Firstly*).—That the present rate of subscription was fixed by us many years ago when the Rupee was still worth two shillings, instead of one shilling and fourpence.

(*Secondly*).—That the reduction of the tariff by 50 per cent. is by no means equivalent to a corresponding reduction in the total telegraph expenses, incumbent upon the Company, because the information supplied has been greatly augmented.

(*Thirdly*).—In consequence of the reduced cable rates, there is a growing tendency on the part of merchants to have the market reports required by them, cabled specially, so as to produce an adverse effect on our subscription list.

(*Fourthly*).—By reason of the expansion of the commercial services, the expense of collecting, sifting and distributing the news has been correspondingly increased.

It will thus be seen from the point of view of rates, the saving to the Company, is by no means so considerable as your Chamber seems to infer. Moreover, our service had been subjected to constant improvements and developments, to meet the requirements of various subscribers in Bombay, and elsewhere, not necessarily all members of a Chamber, and this makes our position much more difficult, whereas if we had to deal with a single body like a

Chamber of Commerce, there would be a definite category of news to be sent, which would be only modified at the expense of some other portion of the service, which had been found to be of diminished interest.

We see no chance of an increased *clientele*, by offering a reduced rate of subscription, since, as a matter of fact, that portion of the commercial community, which supports our service, is in reality saddled with the charge for the benefits of the remainder, who make no scruple to profit by the news, and yet contribute nothing to the cost.

We venture to think that before we should be asked to make any concession which would involve, in our opinion, quite an unmerited sacrifice, in view of the efforts and expenses we have freely devoted to bringing the service up to its present efficient level, the same should be left undisturbed by your Chamber, or the individual merchants, acting more or less collectively, to force those outsiders who are enjoying gratuitous communications of our telegrams, to pay their share. If this step were undertaken, and led to the result it ought to entail, all parties would be satisfied, and, what is more, the justice of the case would be met in the way it should.

P.S.—Copies of the above have been sent to the Bengal and Madras Chambers.

From Chamber, to Reuter's Telegram Co., Ltd., Bombay.

No. 2121-1905.—CALCUTTA, 22nd December 1905.

Reuter's Commercial Telegraph Service.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 1st December, enclosing copy of a further letter of same date, addressed to the Secretary, Bombay Chamber of Commerce, with reference to the representation recently made by the two Chambers, in favour of the reduction of the annual subscription to your daily commercial messages.

Before considering this matter further, I am instructed by the Committee to ask you, if you will kindly furnish them with more detailed information as to the partial rates of subscription referred to on page 3 of your letter, of the existence of which they were not previously aware. If you could favour them with a schedule of the different fractional rates of subscription they would feel much obliged.

From Chamber, to Bombay Chamber.

No. 2122-1905.—CALCUTTA, 22nd December 1905.

Reuter's Commercial Telegraph Service.

In continuation of correspondence ending with my letter No. 1527 of 12th September, I am now directed to intimate that the Committee of this Chamber have been favoured with copy of a letter

lay the matter before the Committee of the Chamber without delay and address you officially later.

From Chamber, to Exchange Banks Association.

No. 1089-1905.—CALCUTTA, 28th June 1905.

Treatment of Light Coin.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, to forward for the consideration of the members of your Association, copy of letter of 21st instant, from the Comptroller-General, intimating that the Finance Minister has expressed a wish that a Conference on the above question between the Government of India and the banking and mercantile community as suggested at the Conference of Indian Chambers, should take place. Mr. Cox has been deputed to represent the Government of India at the Conference, and the Committee will be glad to have the views of your Association as to the composition of the Conference, when and where it should be held, and by whom it should be called.

From Exchange Banks Association, to Chamber.

CALCUTTA, 29th June 1905.

Treatment of Light Coin.

Yours of yesterday.

The Exchange Bank Managers beg to suggest that the Conference might consist in addition to Mr. Cox of,
The Secretary and Treasurer, of the Bank of Bengal,
An Exchange Bank Manager,

and
A Merchant,
that it be called by the Chamber of Commerce and held at the Chamber offices as early as possible.

From Chamber, to Comptroller-General.

No. 1153-1905.—CALCUTTA, 8th July 1905.

Treatment of Light Coin.

In continuation of Mr. Parsons' D. O letter No 1060, dated 22nd June, I have now to say that the Committee of the Chamber have considered your proposal for a Conference upon this question. They are quite in accord with the proposal; and they think that the members of the Conference, in addition to yourself, might be:—

- (a) The Secretary and Treasurer of the Bank of Bengal.
- (b) A Merchant, and
- (c) The Manager of an Exchange Bank.

2. Mr. Cruickshank has kindly consented to act, and Mr C. G. Giro, of Messrs. Ralli Brothers, and Mr. T. Fraser, Manager of the Chartered Bank, have agreed to represent the merchants and the Exchange Banks, respectively. In these circumstances, I am to enquire as to when you would like the Conference to meet. Possibly Friday next, the 14th July, at 3 p. m., might be suitable; and should you wish to hold a meeting on that date, perhaps you will kindly communicate with me. The meeting can be held at this office if convenient to you.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,

ROYAL EXCHANGE BUILDING,

Calcutta, 14th July 1905.

LIGHT WEIGHT COIN.

PROCEEDINGS OF A CONFERENCE held this day at the Office of the Comptroller-General, to discuss the Question of the Treatment of Light Weight Coin.

PRESENT:

MR. W. D. CRUICKSHANK, C.I.E., in the Chair.
" T. FRASER ... *Manager, Chartered Bank of India, Australia & China.*
" C. G. GIRO ... *Messrs. Ralli Brothers.*
" A. F. COX, I.C.S., C.S.I. ... *Comptroller-General.*

ORIGIN OF CONFERENCE.

By a Resolution No. 1404 A, dated 24th March 1899, the Government of India fixed a minimum allowance of 64 per cent. for light weight rupees. If the loss did not exceed that limit, the existence of fraud was not presumed by Government. But any loss in excess of it was taken to indicate with certainty that the coin had been fraudulently reduced. By a previous notification—dated 13th February 1891—silver coins which had lost more than 2 per cent were paid for at their full nominal value, but were immediately cut. And by the same notification, silver coin reduced in weight otherwise than by reasonable wear, had to be cut and the pieces returned to the tenderer. But in order to minimise the loss which would thus be sustained by innocent holders, the Government of India, by the Resolution of 24th March 1899, ruled:—

- " That Officers who are authorized to cut coin shall, if the tenderer prefers it, instead of returning the cut coin, pay for it at the following rates:—
" Rupees and half rupees weighing not less than $\frac{1}{16}$ ths. of their proper weight shall be accepted at their nominal value
" and withdrawn from circulation at Government cost ;

"those weighing between $\frac{1}{16}$ and $\frac{1}{8}$ shall be accepted, respectively, at 14 annas and 7 annas each; those between $\frac{1}{8}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$ at 13 annas and $\frac{1}{2}$ annas each; those between $\frac{1}{4}$ and those between $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ at 12 annas and 6 annas each, respectively."

On the 12th September, 1904, the Finance Department stated that a proposal to reduce the maximum allowance from 64 per cent. to 4 per cent. was under the consideration of the Government of India. Statistics based upon an examination of 1835 and 1840 coins—which are being withdrawn from circulation—showed that a very small proportion (considerably less than one per cent.) of the coins examined had lost more than 4 per cent. by reasonable wear. In these circumstances it was thought that coins which had not lost more than 4 per cent. in weight, and had not undergone patent maltreatment, might be received at their full nominal value. Coins which had lost more than 4 per cent. but not more than 10 per cent. in weight should be received at the rate of 14 annas per rupee, and coins which had lost more than 10 per cent. would be cut and returned to the tenderer.

Against the adoption of this proposal a resolution had been passed by the Conference of Indian & Ceylon Chambers of Commerce in January 1905. Such a proposal would, the Conference thought be ill-advised and detrimental to the interests of the trade of the country. At the same time the Conference suggested that the Government of India should consult with the banks and the mercantile community, with the object of concerting measures whereby light coin could most easily and quietly be withdrawn from circulation. The banks and merchants would, the resolution proceeded, heartily and warmly co-operate with the Government in this task.

After consideration of this Resolution, the Hon. the Finance Minister had suggested that a meeting should be held; and had desired the Comptroller-General to represent the Government of India at it. Mr. Cox had accordingly approached the Committee of the Chamber; and as a result it was agreed that there should be present at the meeting the gentlemen named in the opening paragraph of these proceedings.

Mr. W. D. CRUICKSHANK was unanimously voted to the chair.

The subject first discussed was the difficulty experienced in separating light coin from that which was of full current weight.

MR. GIRDLEBERRY said that, from enquiries which he had made in his own office, he had ascertained that there would be no objection on the part of the cashier to cut all counterfeit coin. But to cut light genuine coin was regarded as being impossible. It would mean weighing. That would be so great a hindrance to business, and would result in so much dissatisfaction among the firm's constituents, as to be quite out of the question.

MR. FRASER expressed similar views as regards the Banks. The orders of Government that counterfeit coin should be cut by the Banks were, he said, carried out. But in practice it was quite impossible to reject all light weight coins. To do so would be so productive of friction as to result in a loss of business.

THE CHAIRMAN was also of the same opinion.

MR. COX admitted that even in Currency Offices the shroffing of light rupees was very badly done. The work had recently been tested at the Mists where automaton balances were used, and the result showed that the Currency Shroffs failed to discover more than a very small proportion of the rupees which, according to law, ought to be cut and mutilated. An automaton balance dealt with about twenty coins in a minute, and cost £300.

It was the opinion of the Conference that the Currency Offices should be provided with a sufficient number of automaton balances to deal expeditiously with the coin tendered at each office. There would be then practically no doubt that when once a light weight rupee got into the Currency Office, it would never be reissued. For it was, Mr. FRASER pointed out, quite clear that so long as diminished coins are re-issued by the Currency Offices and Treasuries, as is done at present, no remedial measures can possibly be effective.

The question of the withdrawal of 1835 and 1840 coins was next touched upon. In reply to an enquiry, MR. COX said that a very large proportion (17½ crores) of these issued had been now withdrawn. That being the case, MR. FRASER suggested that the 1862 issue should next be dealt with. From his experience a large proportion of the 1862 coins was light. In fact he had lately taken a number at random and had found that they were more or less light. The loss varied from 2 per cent., to 4½ per cent.

MR. COX was inclined to doubt if the 1862 coins were so bad as MR. FRASER thought. He did not believe that the proportion of light rupees among them was so very great.

The 1862 issue was in an entirely different category to the issues of 1835 and 1840. To withdraw all of the 1862 coins would mean a very considerable expense in re-minting; and he did not think that the state of issue warranted that expense.

After some further discussion MR. COX mentioned that experiments made in 1896 by Col. Baird, Mint Master, Calcutta, showed that rupees on an average lost 2 grains after 15 years' use. And that at that time upwards of two crores annually passed from current to uncurrent coin. Until the withdrawal of 1835 and 1840 rupees began, so much as two crores a year were never withdrawn, and the number of light coins therefore greatly increased. But bearing in mind the fact, that the rupee is a token coin, MR. COX was not sure that there was an absolutely urgent necessity to be so particular as to its weight. Its value as a piece of silver was about 10½d. and a loss of 2 per cent. in weight meant a very small

fraction of $10\frac{1}{4}d.$ That being so, was it, he asked, worth while to go to the expense and trouble of reminting for such a small deficiency. Although he put this view to the Conference, Mr. Cox explained that it was not considered by the Government of India.

MR. FRASER dissented altogether from the views put forward by MR. COX. Nor did he accept the theory that the rupee is absolutely a token coin. That it is such to a large extent he conceded. But seeing its stability as the fifteenth part of a sovereign largely depends upon the existence of a gold reserve it was not, he held, merely a token coin. It was something more than that, and being such it should be rigorously kept up to its full weight. He was himself very strongly of opinion that the Government should be urged to face the situation boldly, and to take upon themselves the sole responsibility and liability for the purity of the currency. The public should not be asked to bear any part of the cost of keeping the currency in good order. In the United Kingdom, in France, and in the United States the whole cost was borne by the Government. In the United States every silver coin, no matter how greatly it is worn, so long as it is recognisable is, he said, received by Government and paid for at its nominal value. Moreover, in India a special obligation rested upon the Government. For they had a monopoly of the coinage, since private individuals are no longer permitted to take silver to the mints, and to have it coined into rupees. The profits derived from the monopoly were heavy, and they were, he quite recognised, rightly devoted to the building up of the Special Gold Reserve. But he thought that the maintenance of the currency at full weight was a legitimate charge against these profits. The balance—which would still be a very large sum—might be devoted to the Gold Reserve. MR. FRASER further suggested that the law against counterfeit coining and sweating should be made more stringent.

THE CHAIRMAN and MR. GHO concurred with MR. FRASER'S remarks; and it was agreed to record as one of the conclusions of the conference:—

That the duty of maintaining the currency at full weight should be undertaken by the Government of India; and that the cost of such measures as may be necessary should be deducted from the profits derived from coining silver.

The question was then discussed as to the limit at which loss of weight should debar a coin from being legal tender. Ultimately it was decided to record as a conclusion:—

That no change should be made in the law regarding least current weight:

and

That the existing rules in regard to the withdrawal of light weight coin from circulation should be maintained.

The existing rules are that no coin which has lost more than 2 per cent. shall be re-issued, and that coins which are deficient to

a greater extent are accepted by Government (as an act of grace) at the rates quoted on p. 1 of these proceedings. (See pages 343 & 344 of this report).

The discussion then turned upon the point as to what measures should be adopted to ensure the detection of all light coins at the Currency Offices and Treasuries. As regards the Currency Offices it was thought that the introduction of automaton balances would suffice. But as regards the Treasuries, Mr. Cox said it was impossible. It would not be, he said, an easy matter to prevent the Treasuries re-issuing light coin.

It seemed to the Conference that if each Local Government arranged to appoint a sufficient number of highly paid European Treasury Inspectors considerable improvement might be hoped for. Such Inspectors should visit the Treasuries periodically, without previous intimation, and examine the stock of rupees. They should also be empowered, the Conference thought, to cut light weight coins. Their reports would be forwarded to the Local Governments who would thus be enabled to keep a sharp check on the state of the currency.

The question of counterfeit coin was also discussed by the Conference. The opinion was unanimously held that the most stringent measures possible should be taken to ensure the detection of counterfeit coin. All banks and merchants would, the Conference was confident, willingly co-operate to that end; and it was agreed to record as a conclusion:—

That the power now vested in certain officers of Government and in the Banks to cut counterfeit coin, might be usefully extended to influential mercantile firms, but that such extension should only be made at the discretion of Government.

These were all the points touched upon by the Conference and the conclusions come to may be summarised as follows:—

- (1) That the duty of maintaining the currency at full weight should be undertaken by the Government of India; and that the cost of such measures as may be necessary should be deducted from the profits derived from coining silver.
- (2) That no change should be made in the law regarding least current weight.
- (3) That the existing rules in regard to the withdrawal of light coin from circulation should be maintained.
- (4) That each of the Currency Offices should be provided with a sufficient number of automaton balances to ensure the detection of all light weight coin tendered.

- (5) That Local Governments be recommended to appoint highly paid European Inspectors of Treasuries with the object of ensuring the greatest possible vigilance, in respect of light coin, on the part of Treasury Officers.
- (6) That the power now vested in certain officers of Government and in the Banks, to cut counterfeit coin, might be usefully extended to influential firms, but that such extension should only be made at the discretion of Government.

W. D. CRUIKSHANK,
Chairman.

INVESTMENT OF TRUST FUNDS IN DEBENTURES OR OTHER SECURITIES OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES.

From Government of Bengal (Municipal), to Chamber.

No. 2785-T. M.—DARJEELING, 28th September 1905.

I am directed to enclose a copy of a letter from the Government of India, in the Home Department, No. 125, dated the 29th August 1905, on the subject of the investment of Trust Funds in debentures or other securities of local authorities.

2. In paragraph 3 of the letter, the Government of India invite opinions as to the authority under whose sanction the stock of local bodies should be admitted to the list of Trustee investments; and in paragraph 4, they enquire whether any condition precedent to the grant of such sanction should be imposed. It is suggested, as an instance, that it would be inexpedient to permit the investment of trust funds in stock issued by District Boards unless the guarantee offered included real property, as in the case of debentures issued for railway construction. I am to ask that the Lieutenant-Governor may be favoured with an expression of the opinion of the Chamber of Commerce on both points.

3. In paragraph 5, the Government of India put forward a very important suggestion. It is proposed that the local laws of India should be supplemented by a provision of the Indian Legislature to the effect that where any Municipality or District Board, or other local authority, has raised, or proposes to raise, a loan under the provisions of any enactment applicable to it, it shall be lawful for the local authority, notwithstanding any limitation prescribed by any local law, as to the maximum rate at which any tax may be levied therein, to levy any or all such taxes at such higher rate as may be necessary for the service of the loan, *i.e.*, to provide for the due payment of interest and sinking fund. It is explained that such higher rate would only be leviable to the extent required for that purpose, and for so long as any part of the loan might remain unpaid, and the proceeds would be solely applicable to the service of the loan. It would also be laid down that the provision would only have effect when the local authority concerned has asked for its application. I am to invite an expression of the opinion of the Chamber with regard to this proposal.

4. With reference to paragraph 6 of the letter from the Government of India, I am to ask that the Lieutenant-Governor may be informed whether, in the opinion of the Chamber, the stock of any, and if so of what, local bodies in Bengal should be declared suitable for the investment of trust funds.

No. 125.—SILLA, 29th August 1905.

From—H. G. STOKES, ESQ., Under-Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department,

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

I am directed to refer to the correspondence ending with your letter No. 749-M, dated the 16th February 1905, on the subject of the amendment of section 20 (d) of the Indian Trusts Act, 1882 (II of 1882), so as to permit the investment of Trust Funds in debentures or other securities of any local authority instead of merely in those of Municipalities.

2. After carefully considering this question, the Government of India have, in communication with the Secretary of State, decided that the unconditional investment of Trust Funds cannot be permitted, save in the stock of the Corporations of the Presidency towns and Rangoon, and of the Port or City Improvement Trusts at those places. As regards the securities of other local bodies, the Government of India have been constrained to conclude that these must either (a) be excluded altogether from the list of trustee investments, or (b) admitted to such lists only with express sanction, and subject to specified conditions whether of an executive or a statutory nature.

3. But before considering the question further, the Government of India are anxious to avail themselves of the advice of Local Governments. If it is thought undesirable to limit the discretion of trustees in making investments to the securities specially mentioned above, I am to inquire what is the authority under whose sanction it is considered that the stock of other local bodies can most suitably be admitted to the list of trustee investments. It appears to the Government of India that such authority must be either that of the Legislature itself, or of the High Courts, or of the Government of India, acting in their executive capacity on the advice of Local Governments. I am to ask that the Government of Bengal will favour the Governor-General in Council with its advice upon each of these alternatives. It may be said that the High Courts already possess discretionary powers under section 20 (f) of the Indian Trusts Act; but I am to explain, that what is now contemplated is, the issue by a High Court of a general order that such securities of any local body are suitable for trust investment, as opposed to the orders on particular cases which such a Court would ordinarily make under that section. In advising the Government of India as to this alternative, the Government of Bengal will no doubt think it desirable to seek the opinion of the High Court. I am to ask that the Government of India may also be informed, as to the actual practice hitherto adopted by the courts in the exercise of their powers under the section quoted.

4. A further matter for consideration, as indicated above, is whether in the event of the sanction of the Executive Government or the Judicial authorities being required, any conditions precedent to the grant of such sanction should be imposed. It has, for instance,

been suggested that it would be inexpedient to permit the investment of Trust Funds in stocks issued by District Boards unless the guarantee offered includes real property, as in the case of debentures issued for railway construction. The Government of India would be glad to have the opinion of the Lieutenant-Governor as to the desirability or the necessity for this restriction.

5. It has also been urged that, if the Government were to assume the responsibility of pronouncing the stock of a local body to be a safe investment their imprimatur would come to be regarded by investing trustees as a guarantee. Any possible inconvenience that might be apprehended from this cause would, the Government of India believe, be obviated if the powers of taxation enjoyed by local bodies were enhanced so as to enable them to provide additional resources earmarked for the service of loans raised by them. With this object, it has been suggested that the local laws of India should be supplemented by a provision of the Indian Legislature to the effect that, where any Municipality or District Board or other local authority has raised (or proposes to raise) a loan under the provisions of any enactment applicable to it, it shall be lawful for the local authority notwithstanding any limitation prescribed by any local law, as to the maximum rate at which any tax may be levied therein, to levy any or all of such taxes at such higher rate as may be necessary for the service of the loan, i.e., to provide for the due payment of interest and sinking fund. Such higher rate should only be leviable to the extent required for that purpose, and for so long as any part of the loan may remain unpaid; and the proceeds should be solely applicable to the service of the loan. It should also be laid down that this provision shall only have effect in the case of any local authority when that authority has asked for its application, and may be rescinded, on the application of the local authority, provided that no part of any loan raised with reference thereto is then outstanding.

I am to invite an expression of the opinion of the Lieutenant-Governor on this suggestion.

6. Finally, I am to add that it would materially assist the Government of India in deciding the matters dealt with in this letter if you will, when replying, specify the principal local bodies whose stock might, in the opinion of the Local Government, be declared suitable for the investment of Trust Funds.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (Municipal).

No. 2000-1905.—CALCUTTA, 8th December 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your No. 2785-T.M., dated Dujesling, 28th September 1905, under cover of which you enclose a letter from the Government of India, in the Home Department, of 29th August 1905, on the subject of the investment of Trust Funds in debentures or other securities of local authorities, and you ask for the opinion of the Chamber on various points raised in paragraphs 3, 4, 5 and 6 of this letter.

2. Briefly summarised, the Chamber is asked to express an opinion on the following points:—

- (a) As to the authority under whose sanction the stocks of local bodies should be admitted to the list of trust investments.
- (b) Whether any condition precedent to the grant of such sanction should be imposed.
- (c) As to the proposal, notwithstanding any limitation prescribed by any local law as to the maximum rate at which taxes may be levied, to levy taxes at such higher rate as may be necessary for the service of the loan.
- (d) Whether the stocks of any, and if so of what, local bodies in Bengal should be declared suitable for the investment of Trust Funds.

3. The Committee instruct me to reply to these four points *seriatim* as follows:—

- (a) It would appear that the High Courts would be the proper and most convenient authorities to decide whether Trust Funds should be invested in any loan to be raised by a local body. Each application would be considered on its merits and the necessary evidence for or against would be carefully considered.
- (b) It appears to the Committee from a perusal of the letter from the Government of India that Government are somewhat doubtful as to the expediency of permitting Trust Funds to be invested in the loans of District Boards. The Committee are inclined to think that such loans would not be suitable investments unless the guarantee offered included real property.
- (c) If a local body were granted power to borrow, and trustees were permitted to invest funds in such a loan, it would of course be necessary to give local authorities power to levy taxes temporarily, beyond any maximum rate previously fixed, in order to meet the liabilities created by the loan; it would appear, however, that if such previously fixed maximum rate were not sufficient to meet the interest and sinking fund, the loan would hardly be one which the constituted authorities would sanction as a trust investment. Any additional levy of taxation would no doubt be subject to the approval of Government, as it might be distinctly inadvisable to give Local Boards too free a hand.
- (d) The Committee have not sufficient information before them as to what stocks of local bodies in Bengal might be considered suitable for the investment of Trust Funds; they consider, however, that such investment should, as far as possible, be restricted to loans of local authorities at commercial or industrial centres.

REDUCTION OF COMMISSION ON INLAND MONEY ORDERS.

From Chamber, to United Planters' Association of Southern India.

No. 1962-1905.—CALCUTTA, 1st December 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 9th November, enclosing a copy of your letter of same date to the Director-General of the Post Office in India, communicating to him the following Resolution passed at the last Annual Meeting of your Association:—

"That this Association address the Director-General of the Post Office in India, asking him to reduce the money-order commission to 2 annas for Rs. 25; 8 annas for Rs. 100; and 4 annas for each additional Rs. 100, and that the Chambers of Commerce and Trades Associations be asked to support this request."

You invite the Committee of this Chamber to support the representation you have made to the Director-General of the Post Office, and I am instructed to say, that they will have much pleasure in doing so.

From United Planters' Association, of Southern India, to Chamber.

BANGALORE.—9th November 1905.

At the last Annual Meeting of the U. P. A. S. I. it was resolved:—

"That this Association address the Director-General of the Post Office in India, asking him to reduce the money order commission to 2 annas for Rs. 25; 8 annas for Rs. 100; and 4 annas for each additional Rs. 100, and that the Chambers of Commerce and Trades Associations be asked to support this request."

By this post I forward you a copy of the Association's Book of Proceedings. If you will kindly refer to pages 82, 83, 84 and 85, you will find a report of the discussion that preceded the adoption of the Resolution.

I am directed to express the hope, that the members of your Chamber will see their way to give prompt support to the representation that has been made to the Director-General of the Post Office by this Association. A copy is enclosed for your information.

BANGALORE, 9th November 1905.

From—The United Planters' Association of Southern India,
To—The Director-General of Post Office, in India.

I have the honour to inform you that at the last Annual Meeting of the U. P. A. S. I., the following Resolution was carried unanimously:—

"That this Association address the Director-General of the Post Office in India, asking him to reduce the money order commission to 2 annas for Rs. 25; 8 annas for Rs. 100; and 4 annas for each additional Rs. 100, and that the Chambers of Commerce and Trades Associations be asked to support this request."

In submitting this to your notice, I am directed to point out that at some of the planting centres all money required by planters has to be got by Money Order, so that a heavy charge for commission falls with special weight upon them. Comparing English charges with India, it may be observed that the largest sum that can be sent by Money Order is the same in both cases—£40 or Rs. 600. The English P. O. charges 10d. for this; the Indian, Rs. 6, or nearly ten times as much.

I am further directed to point out that the introduction of British Postal Orders into India, has made the charge for Indian Money Orders more anomalous than ever.

Rs. 157-8 can now be sent by Postal Orders from India to the remotest parts of the Empire (or to any Indian Post Office), for annas 15. But the charge for a money order for the same amount sent from, say Bangalore to Mysore, is Rs. 1-10.

The usual argument against reduction of this commission is that the cost of getting rupees to out-of-the-way Post Offices is very heavy. The reply is that if any one chose to get the same weight by parcel post, *viz.*, 600 tolas or 15 lbs., the Post Office would only charge Rs. 2 for the service.

Commending the above resolution to your favourable consideration,

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

No. 1987-1905.—CALCUTTA, 6th December 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to address you with reference to the present rate of Commission on Money Orders in this country. The Committee have been favoured by the Secretary of the United Planters' Association of Southern India, Bangalore, with copy of a letter of 9th November addressed to you, communicating the following Resolution passed unanimously at the last Annual Meeting of the Association:—

"That this Association address the Director-General of the Post Office in India, asking him to reduce the money order commission to 2 as. for Rs. 25; 8 annas for

"Rs. 100; and 4 annas for each additional Rs. 100, and that the Chambers of Commerce and Trades Associations be asked to support this request."

I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber to intimate that they support this above resolution, as they are in sympathy with the desire to bring about a substantial modification in the scale of Commission chargeable on Inland Money Orders.

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

No. 736-D.—CALCUTTA, 2nd May 1906.

With reference to your letter No. 1987-1905 dated 6th December 1905, I am directed to forward for favour of information a copy of this office letter No. 68-T1 dated the 14th April, 1906, to the address of the Secretary, United Planters' Association of Southern India, Bangalore.

No. 68-T1.—Dated 14th April 1906.

From—The Director-General of the Post Office in India,
To—The Secretary, United Planters' Association of Southern India, Bangalore.

I am directed by the Director-General to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 9th November 1905, forwarding for his consideration a copy of a resolution passed at the Annual Meeting of your Association, advocating a reduction in the scale of fees charged on Inland Money Orders.

2. In forwarding the resolution you observe that the existing scale of fees for money orders is much higher than that on Postal Orders in the United Kingdom, and that it is anomalous as money can be sent more cheaply by means of British postal orders or by parcel post.

3. In reply, I am to observe that it is presumed that you do not intend to make any serious comparison of the rates charged in the United Kingdom with its small area and its highly-developed network of railways and financial arrangements, with those charged in India. But I am to point out further, that a comparison cannot fairly be made between the fees charged for Indian Inland Money Orders and those charged for British Postal Orders sold in India for payment in this country. In the case of a remittance by Money Order, the money is carried to and paid at the door of the payee, and an acknowledgment of receipt of the money by the payee is procured and is carried free to the remitter. The remitter of a Money Order has also the further advantage of using the coupon portion of the money order form as a means of communicating instructions to the payee. The purchaser of a British Postal Order on the other hand has to send the Postal Order to the payee in a cover on which he has to pay postage, and possibly the registration fee also, whilst the payee has to call at or send a messenger

to the post office to receive payment; while, if an acknowledgment of its payment is sent to the remitter, a further charge on account of postage has to be met. Money can now be transmitted in India by Postal Order under practically the same conditions as in the United Kingdom, and if the public in this country prefers to employ the Money Order system, this must be taken as a practical proof that the very great additional advantages attached to it are worth the additional cost. As regards the transmission of cash by means of parcels, I am to point out that the cost of sending Rs. 600 by parcel post would be at least Rs. 4-14-0, exclusive

Weight of parcel containing 600 rupees with packing would be between 600 and 600 lbs.			of packing charges, and not Rs. 2 as stated by you. This will be seen from the details given in the margin. Such a parcel, too, would not (see clause 126 of the Indian Postal Guide) be delivered at the addressee's house.
Charge would be	Rs. 4 0 0		
Registration fee (as registration is compulsory)	" 0 2 0		
Insurance fee (as insurance is compulsory)	" 9 12 0		
	Rs. 4 14 0		

The addressee would have to take delivery at a post office.

4. I am to add that it must not be understood, that the Director-General is averse to any reduction in the existing rates for Inland Money Orders which may, in the future, become feasible, with reference to the actual cost of the service to Government. But the Post Office is a commercial department, and cannot be expected to perform this or any other service at a loss.

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

No. 841-1906.—CALCUTTA, 3rd May 1906.

I have the honour to acknowledge, with thanks, receipt of your letter No. 736, of 2nd May 1906, enclosing copy of your letter of 14th April to the address of the Secretary, United Planters' Association of Southern India, Bangalore, on the subject of the scale of fees charged on Inland Money Orders.

RAILWAYS.

THE RAILWAY BOARD

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
ROYAL EXCHANGE BUILDING,

Calcutta, 15th March 1905.

A SPECIAL MEETING of the Committee was held this day, to meet the Members of the Railway Board for the discussion of Railway matters, generally, in relation to the trade of Calcutta.

PRESENT :

HON. MR. A. A. APCAR ... *President*.
MR. J. R. BERTRAM.
" G. G. GIRO.
" C. W. N. GRAHAM.

The following gentlemen were present by invitation :—

MR. F. R. UPCOTT, C.S.I. } *Chairman and Members*
" W. H. WOOD. } *of the*
" T. R. WYNNE, C.I.E. } *Railway Board.*
" F. NOEL-PATON ... *Director of Commercial Intelligence.*

HON. MR. E. CABLE.
MR. A. FORSTH.
" HAROLD MARTIN.
" J. M. G. PROPHIT.
" G. H. SUTHERLAND.
" JAMES TURNER.
" W. BLEEK,
Chairman, Calcutta Baled Jute Association.
" J. NICOLL,
Chairman, Indian Jute Mills' Association.
" J. GILLESPIE,
Chairman, Engineering and Iron Trades Association.
" A. C. PATERSON,
Chairman, Calcutta Wheat and Seed Trade Association.

Letters of apology for non-attendance had been received from Mr. D. C. Blair, and Mr. Lockhart Smith, Chairman of the Indian Tea Association.

At the invitation of the President, the Chairman of the Railway Board (Mr. F. R. Upcott) said:—

MR. PRESIDENT,

As Chairman of the Railway Board, I desire to thank you and your Chamber for so kindly inviting myself and my colleagues on the Board to attend this Special Meeting of your Chamber. I would take the opportunity of saying to you and to others, how desirous the Railway Board are to help, as far as is practicable, every one who is affected by the Railways, either as passengers or as interested in commerce, agriculture, and otherwise. As you know, the Board have only recently been created and this is the first public opportunity I have had of making known the wishes and intentions of the Board to be at all times accessible. It is the duty and earnest desire of the Board, to fully consider, in a helpful spirit, suggestions made to it by the various public bodies and others throughout India. Whether such suggestions be made in writing or by personal interview, I promise they shall receive the fullest consideration. You will, therefore, see that the Board desire to be a live body, and we hope that all interested will reciprocate this feeling, and communicate with and help the Board all they can, to be really useful in the general interests.

The PRESIDENT then said: I think, I ought to say that we have not called a meeting of the members of the Chamber. It is a meeting of the Committee with the Chairmen of the different Associations recognised by the Chamber, and a few other gentlemen more or less intimately interested in railway matters. We thought that, having you Mr. Upcott and your colleagues here, the Chairmen of these Associations might, each in his own Department, put forward any suggestions which they might have to make, and might state what their requirements are, and how they might be met or partially met. I think the best procedure will be to invite these gentlemen to put forward what they wish to bring to the Board's special notice, and I would first call on Mr. Nicoll, if he is prepared, as Chairman of the Jute Mills' Association, to say anything or to make any suggestion to the Board.

MR. NICOLL—I have only to deal with one or two matters of detail, but there may be others here who wish to raise general principles concerning railway policy and administration. And, if so, it might be advantageous that they should precede me.

The PRESIDENT then called upon Mr. Bleack, who said that there was not very much to complain of as regards the wheat and seed trade except the old difficulty of the scarcity of wagons.

The HON. MR. CABLE enquired if the Board would be prepared to make any announcement as to what their policy would be in regard to the construction of railways in the future. He thought that the mercantile community ought to know whether, in the future, railways would be constructed by private enterprise or whether they proposed to enter the London money market and borrow freely and to continue the development of the country by State Railways. There was, he thought, a growing feeling that either one policy or the other must be pursued. Either the development of railways must proceed entirely on private lines, or the

Government must take up the task. If the members of the Railway Board would state their views upon these questions, it would, he thought, be of great advantage.

MR. UPCOTT said in reply, that the question raised by Mr. Cable, of course involved very careful consideration. Generally he might say that, as regards private or guaranteed enterprise, the Secretary of State had laid down that, in all cases when the capital subscribed was Sterling and the domicile of the Company was in England, the negotiations would be carried out in England by the Secretary of State. But when rupee capital was in question, and when the domicile was in India, the whole of the negotiations were vested in the Government of India without reference to the Secretary of State. Private enterprise was an exceedingly difficult thing to define. There was no doubt that the recent alteration of the fiscal relations between the Supreme Government and the Local Governments might give a certain impetus to the construction of local lines subsidised by the Local Governments. The publication of the budget in a few days would, he hoped, to some extent, show that lines were being or might be classed as private enterprise.

The PRESIDENT then drew Mr. Upcott's attention to the scarcity of wagons. Formerly the scarcity was, he said, experienced only during the grain season. But during the current year there had been practically no cessation of it. It was impossible to get wagons to bring down the coal. He understood that Government had indentured for more wagons, but he would suggest that indents should be made in advance. They did not appear to be sent home until the scarcity was being very badly felt, and then, of course, the wagons could not be delivered for many months.

MR. UPCOTT explained that the Government was dependent for indents coming in from the different Railways. They did not indent until the Agents of the different lines sent in their requirements. The East Indian Railway were, he believed, fully alive to the necessity for increasing their stock. It was only quite recently that the latter was asking for a large addition to the rolling stock which would be on the line during the present or the next financial year. What the Board would aim at would be, to increase the ratio of the load which the wagons carry to the weight of the wagons themselves. In India, Railways were somewhat behind hand in this respect. He hoped that, in future, they would be always able to get wagons capable of carrying a load of two and a half times their own weight, on the broad gauge, and three times their own weight on the metre gauge. The supply of rolling stock to open lines was always the first item in the programme of expenditure. So that, without promising too much, he hoped that they would be able to lessen the difficulty in future. The new sheds at Howrah, would, he thought, tend to an improvement: wagons would be unloaded and turned round more quickly.

The PRESIDENT then drew attention to the defective accommodation at railway stations. He instanced Howrah as being without a refreshment room, and with only very inadequate waiting rooms.

He then read a letter, dated 7th February, from Messrs. Barry & Co., dealing with the need for improved facilities on the Eastern Bengal State Railway; and he asked Mr. Upcott to give the letter careful attention.

MR. NICOLL then said that the traffic facilities for sending goods by the Eastern Bengal State Railway from Mills to the Kidderpur Docks needed attention. Under existing arrangements wagons could be had, but it was impossible to say when the Mills would get them. Mill contracts had to be fulfilled by a specified date. Consequently, if they could not get wagons from the Railway they failed to complete their contracts within shipment time. The result was that Mills never thought of sending goods by rail to the Docks. Another point on which he thought Messrs. Barry & Co. laid stress in their letter was the giving of free passes to traders travelling on the Railway. In the time of the Company, passes were, he believed, freely given. But after the Railway came under Government control the small concession was withdrawn. The existing facilities for issuing and checking tickets at Sealdah were also inadequate. That was a point to which attention had been drawn by Mr. Robertson in his report.

Regarding the matter of detail to which he had previously alluded, Mr. Nicoll went on to say that the Mills' Association were negotiating freights for the carriage of jute from the growing districts to the Mills. For fifteen years they had been under agreement with the Inland Steamer Companies at certain rates of freight. The Companies had now intimated that there was to be no further agreement; and that the rates of freight were to be enhanced. Some Mills regarded the enhancement as being equivalent to 25 per cent. because they did not see their way to earn certain rebates which were offered. The rebates, if earned on the maximum basis, would bring them back to the rates previously charged or at least nearly to it. The matter of the Steamer Companies was no concern of that meeting. But the Eastern Bengal State Railway had announced at the same time that they were to increase their rates for the carriage of jute by what is called the combined service. That was a certain portion of the journey by river and the other portion—from Goalundo—by rail. No information was available as to how the increase was to be apportioned as between the Steamer Companies and the Railway. But the Mills' Association were going to urge upon the Chamber and the Railway Board, that it was wrong in principle for the Eastern Bengal State Railway to join hands with trading Companies, such as the Steamer Companies, with the object of enhancing rates. In the consideration of the question it had also been discovered, that a very great preference in the matter of railway freights on jute was given to Chittagong as compared with Calcutta. The Assam Bengal Railway carried jute from Narainganje to Chittagong at a cost of Rs. 5-15 pie. That journey included 35 miles of river from Narainganje to Chaudpur, and 112 miles of rail from the latter place to Chittagong. The route from Narainganje to Calcutta was to Goalundo by river 100 miles, and from Goalundo to Calcutta 155 miles. And the rates that it was proposed to charge for next season varied

according to the period of the season. From 1st August to 31st October it would be 5 as. 7½ pie per maund; from 1st November to 31st December 4 as. 10½ pie; and from 1st January to 31st July 3 as. 9 pies. In other words Calcutta would have to pay double the rate of freight paid by Chittagong. Then, another point was that the route from Narainganje to Calcutta was unnecessarily long. The route *via* Khulna would be shorter, and he suggested it to the Railway Board. In any case the Mills' Association strongly protested against the preference shown to the Railway was evidently a paying rate, for the Manager of the line had denied that he was carrying at non-paying rates. He (Mr. Nicoll) thought, therefore, that they were amply justified in asking the Railway Board to see that Calcutta was put on the same basis and that the through rates from Serajganje and Narainganje to Calcutta be treated alike. That was a position very strongly taken up by the Chamber in connection with the proposed partition of Bengal. They held that Chittagong should not be placed at any undue advantage over Calcutta.

MR. SUTHERLAND said that, while they were on the subject of the Eastern Bengal State Railway, there was one matter which he would like to mention. He did not quite understand why sidings to jute Mills should be so costly in connection with that Railway. Until quite lately, they had had to pay an interest charge of 10 per cent on the permanent way in addition to buying the land and to pay for the whole cost up to sub-grade. He understood that the East Indian Railway and the Bengal Nagpur Railway put in sidings without making any such charges. The Mills with which he was connected had put in a siding at a total cost of Rs. 65,000, and had paid 10 per cent interest for eight years. He considered that after such a rate of payment had been continued for ten years the Mill ought to be excused from further payment, for in that time they would have repaid the principal. The freight brought to the Railway in the case of jute was particularly good, although it was not much in the case of coal as the lead was so short. But if the traffic were there waiting to be moved, he believed that in any other country the Railway Company itself would build the line to take it.

MR. UPCOTT said that the Board would be very glad to take up the matter if they were addressed respecting it.

MR. BERTRAM said that he wished to draw attention to certain questions relating to railway finance. The Government of India raised loans without any provision for a Sinking Fund.

MR. UPCOTT said that those were matters beyond the scope of the Railway Board.

MR. BERTRAM said that the mercantile community wanted the Board to assist them; otherwise there was no reason for the existence of the Board. He considered that as regards State Railways, the State was not justified in taking more from the constituents of the Railways than the actual cost of the line plus interest and sinking fund. State Railways should be so worked as to give the fullest benefit to trade and commerce coupled with the

condition that the general taxpayer should not be put to any loss. If lines could be built and worked cheaply, that is with low rates of freight, competition with the United States and with the Argentine would be possible. New trades would be created; the resources of the country would be quickly developed; and the general prosperity would be improved.

With regard to the composition of the Railway Board, Mr. Bertram suggested that unpaid non-official members should be associated with it. If the Board were thus extended, its influence and usefulness would, he believed, be greatly increased.

MR. CABLE supported Mr. Bertram in his remarks respecting Railway Finance.

MR. FORSYTH said that he thought the question of responsibility under Railway Risk Notes might be considered by the Board, more specially as regards the Petroleum Traffic. Under existing circumstances the constituents of the Railway were without information as to what the responsibility was.

MR. UPCOTT replied that the question was already before the Board.

After some further conversation, MR. GILLESPIE drew attention to certain recent Departmental orders circulated by Government in which the restrictions on the purchase of local material and on the manufacture in India of iron work for railways were emphasised. In 1896, the Engineering & Iron Trades' Association asked His Excellency the Viceroy that certain restrictions against the manufacture of articles in India should be removed. After considerable agitation that request was granted; and in 1898, a list was published of articles which Government Offices might order in India. Included in the list were a great number of articles for Railways. The result was, that merchants held much larger stocks, and manufacturers laid down machinery, and placed themselves in a much better position to supply those articles than they had previously been. In the list there were a number of girders up to 80ft. that could be purchased in India. That was a great advance, and had kept the workshops fairly busy. But recently only a mere fraction were being ordered in India. Spans also might be purchased in this country. Rolling stock for Railways was also being successfully built in India; and he thought that Government might reserve a few thousands for manufacturers here. An argument which had been used against the placing of these orders with Indian houses was that there was no system of inspection here, and that Government had no officers to do inspection work. The consequence was that men who did inspection work did it in addition to their other duties. It was tiresome work and naturally officers who had to do it preferred to get their material from England. He suggested that an efficient staff of trained Inspectors should be maintained in India. There was also the question of quality. They had been told that they did not keep the high qualities obtained from home. But how could they be expected to do so when Government always accepted the lowest tender? All that they wanted was to be allowed to compete on an equal footing with the English manu-

facturers: the same price; the same quality; and the same conditions. He hoped the Board would be able to assist them in this respect as regards Railways. The Association was considering the advisability of addressing a memorial to the Hon. Mr. Hewett upon the general question.

MR. UPCOTT said that it was a matter, he thought, more for the Department of Commerce & Industry than for the Board as it touched other Departments besides Railways. He would, however, give any assistance which might be possible.

MR. NICOLL then drew attention to the frequent transfers of the Managers of the Eastern Bengal State Railway.

In response, MR. UPCOTT said that it had been arranged for Mr. Burt to succeed Mr. Manson, who was going to the Bengal Nagpur Railway. Mr. Burt had held the post previously and it was hoped that he would remain in it for some time.

After further discussion the proceedings terminated, the President having thanked the Chairman and members of the Board for their attendance.

A. A. APCAR,
President.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY.

NOTIFICATIONS.

Calcutta, the 24th March 1905.

No. 801.—In exercise of the powers conferred by section 2 of the Indian Railway Board Act, 1905 (IV of 1905), as in force in British India and as locally applied by Foreign Department Notification No. 1097-F. of this date, the Governor-General in Council is pleased—

- (1) to invest the Railway Board with all the powers or functions of the Governor-General in Council under sections 4, 5, 7, 9, 11 to 14 (both inclusive), 16 to 19 (both inclusive) and 22 to 25 (both inclusive), section 47, sub-sections (3) and (4), sections 48, 52 to 55 (both inclusive), 62 and 63 section 83, clause (d), section 84, section 85, section 97, sub-section (3), section 143 and schedule II, clause (8) of the Indian Railways Act, 1890 (IX of 1890), with respect to all railways, subject to the following conditions, namely:—
 - (a) that the Railway Board shall, in the exercise of any of the said powers or functions, be subject to the control of the Governor-General in Council;
 - (b) that the exercise of powers or functions under section 7, section 9 or section 11 shall not entail any expenditure in excess of the general powers of sanction exercisable by the Railway Board; and

- (c) that the Railway Board shall exercise the power conferred by section 143, sub-section (2), or sub-section (3), in respect only of (i) rules made by themselves and (ii) rules made by the Governor-General in Council before the date of this notification in exercise of any power with which the Board is invested by this notification; and
- (2) to invest the Railway Board with the power of the officer referred to in section 47 of the said Indian Railway Act, 1890, to make general rules for railways administered by the Government.

No. 802.—In exercise of the power conferred by section 130 of the Indian Railways Act, 1890 (IX of 1890), as in force in British India and as locally applied the Governor-General in Council is pleased to authorise the Secretary to the Railway Board to sign all documents containing any notice, determination, direction, requisition, appurtenant, or expression of opinion, approval or sanction given or signified on the part of the Governor-General in Council for any of the purposes of, or in relation to, the said Act or any of the powers or provisions therein contained.

RESOLUTION.

The 24th March 1905.

No. 803—865.—The Resolution No. 256-G., dated the 18th February 1905, in the Public Works Department (Railway Branch) of the Government of India, announced the establishment of the Railway Board and promised that separate orders should issue investing the Board with certain of the functions of the Governor-General in Council under the Indian Railways Act (IX of 1890) so soon as necessary legislation had been carried out. The Act to amend the Indian Railways Act (IV of 1905) has now been passed into law, and in exercise of the power conferred in it, a notification, No. 801 of this day's date, has issued delegating, subject to certain specified conditions, the greater portion of the powers and functions exercised by the Governor-General in Council under the Indian Railways Act of 1890. The powers vested in the Governor-General in Council which have not been delegated to the Board are those relating to—

- the appointment of Railway Commissions (Chapter V of the Act);
- the power to make agreements with certain railway companies for the construction or lease of rolling stock (section 49);
- the power to enter into working agreement with certain railway companies (section 50);
- the power to sanction the establishment by certain railway companies of ferries and roadways for the accommodation of traffic (section 51);

- the power to approve a form of risk note [section 72 (2) (b)];
- the power to institute suits against railway companies [section 97 (2)];
- the power to declare railway administrations liable to local taxation (section 135);
- the power to give sanction to the execution of decrees or orders against railway property (section 136);
- the power to extend the Railways Act to tramways worked by steam or other mechanical power (section 140) and
- the power to exempt any railway from the provisions of the Act (section 147).

All communications in respect of these matters, as well as those which the Board are empowered to dispose of finally themselves, should be forwarded, in the first instance, to the Railway Board who will transmit them with their recommendations to the Department of Commerce and Industry.

ORDER.—Ordered that this Resolution be communicated to all the De-

The Governments of Madras and Bombay, Public Works Department, General and Railway Branches.

The Governments of Bengal, the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, and the Punjab, Public Works Department.

The Government of Burma, Public Works Department, General and Railway Branches.

The Honourable the Chief Commissioners of the Central Provinces and Assam.

The Chief Commissioner of Coorg.

The Honourable the Resident at Hyderabad.

The Honourable the Agents to the Governor-General for Central India, Rajputana and Baluchistan.

The Honourable the Agent to the Governor-General and Chief Commissioner, North West Frontier Province.

The Accountant-General, Public Works Department.

The Director-General, Military Works.

The Consulting Engineers to the Government of India for Railways, Calcutta, Lucknow and Assam.

The Managers, North-Western, Oudh and Rohilkhand, and Eastern Bengal State Railways.

The Engineers in Chief, Ganges Bridge and Agra-Delhi Chord Railway.

The Engineer-in-Chief, Murshidabad Branch, Eastern Bengal State Railway.

The Engineer-in-Chief, Nagda-Mutra Railway Survey.

W. L. HARVEY,
Secretary to the Government of India.

From Railway Board, to Chamber.

No. R. T.-52.—SIMLA, 10th June 1905.

With reference to your letter No. 577 dated 3rd April 1905, with which you forwarded for the information of the Railway Board copy of the Proceedings of the Special Meeting of the Committee of the Chamber with the Members of the Railway Board, held

on the 15th March 1905, I am directed to make the following remarks:—

2. In regard to the policy that will be followed by the Railway Board in the construction of railways in the future, I am to refer you to the Chairman's reply to the question which is embodied in the proceedings, and to add that the revision of the terms on which offers will be considered for the construction, by the agency of private companies, of branch lines is under the consideration of the Railway Board.

3. With reference to the complaint of scarcity of wagons, the measures to be adopted to lessen the difficulty in the future were explained by the Chairman at the meeting, and I am to add, that a further addition of rooo wagons to the stock of the East Indian Railway has recently been sanctioned, and that it is proposed to discuss the question with the Agent during the Board's tour in July next.

4. As regards the question of defective accommodation at Howrah, and the need for improved traffic facilities for sending goods by the Eastern Bengal State Railway from Mills to the Kidderpore Docks, and in improving the existing arrangements for issuing and checking tickets at Sealdah, I am to say the difficulties at Howrah will be remedied as soon as the new station is completed and that the complaint about Sealdah is receiving attention.

5. In regard to the grant of free passes to traders travelling on the Eastern Bengal State Railway, the Railway Board regret that the rules on the subject do not permit of the issue of such passes.

6. With reference to the question of freights for the carriage of jute to the mills, I am to refer you to letter No. T-1368-M, dated 3rd May 1905, from the Manager, Eastern Bengal State Railway, to your address which deals fully with this question.

7. As regards the revision of the terms for the construction of mills and assisted sidings, the Manager, Eastern Bengal State Railway, has been requested to relinquish, with effect from 1st July 1905, his annual charge for interest, maintenance and depreciation on permanent-way, &c., made under existing agreements with all companies, and I am to add that general orders on the subject will shortly issue to the other State Railways, and that the revision of the terms of risk note forms B. and H. is under consideration.

From Chamber, to Railway Board.

No. 1065-1905.—CALCUTTA, 23rd June 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. R.T-52 of 10th June, in which you refer to the proceedings of the Special Meeting of the Committee of the Chamber with the members of the Railway Board held on the 15th March 1905.

2. I am instructed to ask you to convey to the members of the Railway Board the best thanks of the Committee for the careful attention which has been paid to the representations made at the meeting, and for the valuable information now given as to the action taken on the various points put before the Board. Copy of your letter will be passed on to the various interests represented at the meeting.

3. With regard to the question of the Railway rates for jute, the Committee are addressing a further letter to the Board which I hope to be able to forward in the course of a few days.

From Railway Board, to Chamber.

No. R. T. ²²/₁₀.—SIMLA, 28th September 1905.

With reference to the remarks made by Mr. Nicoll at the Special Meeting of the Committee of the Chamber with the members of the Railway Board, held on the 15th March 1905, in connection with the need for improved traffic facilities for sending goods by the Eastern Bengal State Railway from Mills to the Kidderpore Docks, and to the correspondence ending with your letter No. 1065-1905, dated 23rd June 1905, I am directed to forward for the information of the Chamber, a copy of a letter No. 213 D, dated 29th July 1905, from the Indian Jute Mills' Association to the address of the Vice-Chairman of the Port Commissioners, Calcutta, on the subject.

No. 213-D.—Dated 29th July 1905.

From—The Acting Assistant Secretary, Indian Jute Mills' Association,

To—The Vice-Chairman, Port Commissioners.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter to Mr. J. Nicoll, No. 2128, dated 30th June, asking for an expression of opinion upon certain proposals put forward by the Eastern Bengal State Railway in connection with the carriage of Gunnies to the Kidderpore Docks.

2. The proposals have been submitted for consideration to the various Mills interested, and I am directed to acquaint you with the substance of their replies, as follows:—

Samnugger Jute Mills Titaghur " "	The Railway rate, plus shipping charges, would not suit and the mills are not well equipped and could not extend their Railway siding accommodation for more traffic.
Anglo-India " "	The rates given would be considerably more than the cost of bringing down bales by boats.

second upper deck will no doubt require a much greater headway. In addition, therefore, to the above "navigation span" it will be necessary to have—

2. An *Opening* span of 100 feet. If a "lift span" is adopted it should be capable of being raised at least 12 feet, so as to give a headway of 45 feet when necessary. Although the American type of steamer we are contemplating building may not require more than 38 or 40 feet headway, there is little doubt if this type of vessel is the success here that it has been in America, larger vessels requiring a higher headway will be built. The opening span need not be in the main channel. When it has to be opened there will of course be sufficient depth of water in any part of the main river.

According to the Laws of the United States governing the construction of bridges across the Ohio River (vide copy marked thus E page 9) passed in 1883, each bridge over that river must have a span of at least 500 feet with a headway of 40 feet above highest flood level. Below Cincinnati each bridge must, in addition, have a "pivot draw" with 160 feet clear on either side when open. Failing a "pivot draw" the height of the bridge must be raised to 53 feet.

The importance, however, of looking well ahead in these matters is illustrated by the recent action of the U. S. War Department, who have charge of the rivers, having prepared for Congress a list of Ohio bridges said to constitute obstructions to navigation. The alterations to the 12 bridges will cost an average \$ 600,000 each or over 2 Crores of Rupees altogether.

It has been pointed out that the Steamer Companies have of recent years used the Bhagirathi very little. The Calcutta Steam Navigation Company however use this river every year as long as there is sufficient water in the channels. Neither the previous neglect of the larger Steamer Companies to use this route, when open, nor the neglect of the Government to keep the channels open should, we think, have any influence on the decision as to the span or headway that may be required for future inland transport on this river. It is our intention to use the Bhagirathi more thoroughly in future as will be seen from the following extract of a letter dated 31st October 1902, addressed by us to the Chief Engineer and Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Iritigation.—

"Our Boards of Directors in England have sanctioned the construction of a fleet of specially designed Sternwheeler Steamers for service on the Bhagirathi river between Calcutta and the North West Provinces.

"The Fleets of Steamers now sanctioned are estimated at Rs. 19,00,000 to Rs. 22,00,000 and their construction will be gone on with at once."

Out of the 12 Sternwheelers ordered, 8 are already running, 2 more will be ready next month, while the balance will be completed before the end of May.

According to the information we have collected directly and indirectly from the highest authorities in America and Europe on the subject during the last two years it would seem to be perfectly feasible to keep the Bhagirathi open all the year round and at a reasonable cost.

From Government of Bengal (RAILWAY), to Chamber.

No. 337-R.—CALCUTTA, 15th March 1905.

With reference to the joint letter ^{No. 1000} of No. 371^a, dated the 21st February 1905, from the Managing Agents, India General Navigation and Railway Company Limited, and the Agents, Rivers Steam Navigation Company, Limited, to your address, regarding the span and headway proposed to be provided for the bridge over the Bhagirathi river at Azimgunge, I am directed to forward herewith copy of a letter No. 5823* dated the 3rd November 1904, from the Superintending Engineer, South-Western Circle, and of its enclosures, also a copy of letter No. 179-G. R.,* dated 22nd November 1904, from the Commissioner, Presidency Division, with enclosure, and to ask that the Government of Bengal may be favoured with the opinion of the Chamber on the provision for navigation which appears to be requisite under all the circumstances of the case.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (RAILWAY).

No. 845-1905.—CALCUTTA, 18th May 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 337-R. of 15th March, in which you refer to the joint letter ^{No. 1000} of 21st February, from the Managing Agents, India General Navigation and Railway Company Limited and the Agents, Rivers Steam Navigation Company Limited, to my address, with regard to the span and headway proposed to be provided for the bridge over the Bhagirathi river at Azimgunge.

2. You enclose in your letter under reply copy of a letter No. 5823 of 3rd November 1904, with enclosures, from the Superintending Engineer, South-Western Circle, and also copy of a letter No. 179 G. R., of 22nd November 1904, with enclosures, from the Commissioner of the Presidency Division, and you ask that the Government of Bengal may be furnished with the opinion of the Chamber on the provision for navigation which appears to be requisite under all the circumstances of the case.

3. The Committee have considered this important reference with great care and attention in consultation with the Inland Transport Sub-Committee of the Chamber, and I am now directed to intimate that "the provision for navigation which appears to be requisite under all the circumstances of the case" is met by the proposals

* Not printed.

of the Inland Steamer Companies as contained in their joint letter to my address above referred to.

4. I am directed to summarise briefly the reasons, the consideration of which have guided the Committee in arriving at their decision as follows—

- (1) The proposal of the Steamer Companies will enable rail traffic and the bulk of the river traffic to be carried on independently of each other.
- (2) The objections to a bridge with low fixed headway and large opening spans are:—(a) the difficulty of timing steamers' arrival so as to set the times of opening the bridge; (b) the length of time required to pass flats through; and (c) the risk of damage in the passage of country boats carrying sails.
- (3) The possibility that rail traffic over the bridge would increase with time, making frequent openings more and more inconvenient, and that river traffic on the Bhagirathi would also expand.
- (4) That if a bridge is to be built, it should be constructed not merely to meet past and present requirements, but with due regard to the potentialities of rail and river traffic in the future.

From Chamber, to I. G. N. & Ry. Co. Ltd., and
R. S. N. Co., Ltd.

No. 846-1905.—CALCUTTA, 18th May 1905.

Proposed Railway Bridge over the Bhagirathi at Azimgunge.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your joint letter ^{No. 1095} _{C.No. 3713} of 21st February, with regard to the span and headway proposed to be provided for the bridge over the Bhagirathi river at Azimgunge.

This important matter has been dealt with by the Committee in consultation with the Inland Transport Sub-Committee of the Chamber with great care and attention, and its consideration has involved a considerable amount of time. The Committee had also before them a letter dated 15th March, from the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Railway Department, dealing with the matter from the point of view of the railway, and I am now directed to enclose for your information copy of my reply to the Government of Bengal which the Committee trust will be satisfactory to you.

The Committee desire me to point out that the opening statement in your letter to the effect, that an arrangement had been made that the Committee of the Chamber should settle directly with the Government the question of the height and width of the spans of the proposed bridge is hardly borne out by Mr. Horn's letter of 21st October to your address, in which he simply states that his

letter of 29th September may be referred to the Committee of the Chamber for an expression of their opinion, and in the Hon. Mr. Inglis's official letter to me of the 15th March, all that is asked for is an expression of opinion on the part of the Chamber on the provision for navigation which appears to be requisite under all the circumstances of the case.

From I. G. N. & Ry. Co., Ltd., and Rivers S. N. Co., Ltd.,
to Chamber.

^{No. 1095} _{C.No. 3713}—CALCUTTA, 7th November 1905.

Proposed Railway Bridge over the Bhagirathi at Azimgunge.

With reference to the correspondence on the above subject, ending with our letter of 22nd May 1905, we beg to inform you that the Secretary of State for India has intimated to the Board of Directors of the India General Navigation & Railway Company, that the proposal to construct a Railway Bridge across the Bhagirathi at Azimgunge has been indefinitely deferred.

It will probably be of interest to the members of the General Committee to know that our large Despatch steamers have made 270 trips through the Bhagirathi during the time (15th July to 13th October 1905) that river was open this year. It may be remembered (vide copy of Government of Bengal Railway Department's letter No. 348 T-R of 29th September 1904 to ourselves, forwarded to you 21st February 1905) that the Government of Bengal thought that the low headway proposed by the Government of India, and objected to by us, was sufficient for the requirements of inland navigation, as the Government statistics showed that only an average of 2½ large steamers per annum, in either direction, had in recent years passed through the Bhagirathi.

From Chamber, to I. G. N. & Ry. Co., Ltd.,
and Rivers S. N. Ry. Co., Ltd.,

No. 2032-1905.—CALCUTTA, 9th December 1905.

Proposed Railway Bridge over the Bhagirathi at Azimgunge.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your joint letter ^{No. 1095} _{C.No. 3713} of 7th November, stating that the Secretary of State for India has intimated to the Board of Directors of the India General Navigation and Railway Co. Ltd., that the proposal to construct a Railway bridge across the Bhagirathi at Azimgunge has been indefinitely deferred.

The Committee are much indebted to you for placing this information at their disposal.

RAILWAY RATES FOR JUTE.

From Chamber, to Railway Board.

NO. 1129-1905.—CALCUTTA, 7th July 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to submit, for the consideration of the Railway Board, the accompanying copies of the marginally noted papers, with reference to the carriage of jute to Calcutta.

(1) No. S.D., dated 28th March 1905 from the Indian Jute Mills' Association to Chamber.

(2) No. 73758-M, dated 2nd May from the Manager, Eastern Bengal State Railway, to Chamber.

(3) No. 115-D, dated 22nd May from the Indian Jute Mills' Association to Chamber.

the railway rates of freight charged for the carriage of jute to Calcutta.

2. The question at issue is exhaustively discussed in the papers. There is consequently no need for the Committee to state the details. But a brief review of the leading facts may be, they think, of service. The position, as they understand it, is that there are two principal services by which jute may be sent from the eastern growing districts to Calcutta. By one service—with which the Committee are not concerned—the jute is brought all the way by river; and by the other it is brought part of the way by river and the remainder by rail. Leaving out Northern Bengal, there are three principal centres from which jute is forwarded; and there are two carrying Railways, each with a despatching station. The centres are Naraingunge, Chandpur and Serajunge: the Railways are the Eastern Bengal State Railway, and the Bengal Central Railway; and the despatching station for the former is Goalundo, and for the latter Khoolna. On the river the jute is transported by two Inland Steamer Companies, who, under through-booking arrangements made with the Railways, deliver it at Goalundo or Has been regarded as the sphere of supply for the Eastern Bengal State Railway. Consequently jute from the Naraingunge district, and from Serajunge also, is despatched *via* Goalundo. Chandpur, on the other hand, has been considered as the sphere of supply for the Bengal Central Railway; and Chandpur jute is, therefore, despatched *via* Khoolna. The two Railways are now to be brought under the same management; and these artificial boundaries will presumably cease to exist.

3. Full particulars of the distances between the different centres and Calcutta, and likewise of the existing and the new rates are given in the letter dated 28th March from the Indian Jute Mills Association. An examination of them will show that the combined service rates *via* Goalundo are to be materially enhanced. From the figures given in the third paragraph of Mr. Mills' letter, it appears that the Steamer Companies will be the chief gainers by the enhancement; the Railway benefiting to a very slight extent only. In these circumstances it may be objected that the jute trade has

no grievance against the Railway. But this objection will not, the Committee think, bear examination. Mr. Mills states, in his fourth paragraph, that there is an agreement between the Railway and the Steamer Companies, according to which the latter are permitted to quote a rate, for their direct service, of one anna less than that quoted for the combined service. As is shown in the letter, dated 22nd May, from the Association, this agreement is now evidently disregarded, as the margin of one anna no longer exists. Mr. Mills goes on to say that the Steamer Companies "of course fix their own portion of the through rate." All that the

"Railway can do is to fix the portion of the rate for carrying the traffic over its line." It is the deliberate opinion of the Committee that a State Railway should never have entered into an agreement of this description. In practice it means, as the circumstances now under discussion show, that the position is dominated by the Steamer Companies, since the Railway is, and has been for some years past, without a fleet of its own. This is indeed admitted by Mr. Mills when he says, "that the power to reduce the rate does not rest with the Railway." That the Manager of a great Railway should have to make such an admission seems to the Committee to be sufficiently unfortunate. But it is not the worst feature of the situation. For in addition it would appear from the Tariff that the rate derived by the Railway in through booking with particular Steamer Companies is less than that charged to the general public tendering jute at Goalundo for despatch to Calcutta. The comparison is worked out in the fourth paragraph of the Association's letter dated 22nd May. It is conclusive evidence that undue preference is given by the Railway to the Steamer Companies, with the result that competition for the water carriage is directly discouraged. Against the continuance of this state of affairs the Committee feel bound to enter an emphatic protest. They fully recognise that private trading concerns are at liberty to combine their resources, and if they so choose, enhance rates. Private traders naturally and rightly seek to earn the best possible return upon their capital; and if competition assists them to that end they are, broadly speaking, justified in adopting it. But what is a legitimate proceeding on the part of private enterprise, may be absolutely indefensible in a State Railway. The latter exists, not for the benefit of stockholders or other proprietors, but for the benefit of aiding and fostering the commercial and industrial development of the country. Manifestly, therefore, a State Railway should never be allowed to enter into such relations as now exist between the Eastern Bengal State Railway and the Steamer Companies. For, as is shown in the correspondence, those relations are of such a nature as to be distinctly detrimental to the interests of an important section of the trade of the province.

4. It now remains for the Committee to discuss the remedies for the grievance complained of. Obviously the first step should be the termination of the inequality mentioned in the preceding paragraph. No preference should be shown to any Steamer Company, so that competition for the river section of the combined

service might be encouraged. With such competition actively at work, the Railway would be no longer in its present anomalous position. But this is not the only remedial measure which might be adopted for the benefit of the jute trade. The Association is strongly of opinion that the shortest route from the growing districts to Calcutta should be adopted; and with this proposal the Committee are in accord. It has been already mentioned that the two Railways are about to be brought under the same management. The question of spheres of supply for competing systems will consequently disappear, and with it the main objection to the proposal advanced by the Association. The proposal means, in a word, that Khulna should be substituted for Goalundo as the principal despatching station. It may be useful to recapitulate the advantages which the former station possesses over the latter. In the first place the distance by rail from Khulna to Calcutta is 115 miles, as compared with 165 miles from Goalundo. And even this mileage might be reduced, to mills served by the Jubilee Bridge, by the construction of the Habra-Naihati connection, for which it is understood estimates have been already prepared. In the second place the banks of the river at Khulna are said to be more stable and less liable to erosion than at Goalundo. The great expense of temporary stations, which has to be incurred at the latter place, and which, as Mr. Mills points out, partly accounts for the present high rates, would thus be largely if not entirely avoided. In the third place towage to Khulna is down stream, while it is up stream to Goalundo. It is true that the river journey from Naraingunge to Khulna is nearly twice as long as to Goalundo. But by the adoption of the route through the Madaripur Bhill, the distance is reduced to 130 miles down stream, as compared with 100 miles up stream to Goalundo. In these circumstances a difference of thirty miles is not, the Committee believe, of material importance; and they are, therefore, disposed strongly to support the suggestion of the Association that the Bhill route should be adopted. The route has been made navigable at a considerable expense of public funds; and it should now, the Committee think, be utilised to the greatest possible extent in the interests of the trade of the province.

5. The Association, in suggesting Khulna, have of course lower rates in view. They instance the Assam Bengal Railway, which carries jute in 5 md. bales from Naraingunge to Chittagong at a rate of rather more than 2 annas per maund. On the other hand the average charge by the Eastern Bengal State Railway, on the basis of actual quantities transported from Naraingunge to Calcutta during the past five years, would be 4 annas 8 1/4 pies per md., at the proposed discounted rates referred to in para. 5 of Mr. Mills' letter. The Railway mileage is of much greater importance in determining the rate than the river mileage; and from Chandpur to Chittagong the distance (112 miles) is practically the same as the distance (115 miles) from Khulna to Calcutta. For bales of 3 1/2 mds.—*i. e.*, *cutcher*-pressed bales, which do not go to Chittagong—rates should be somewhat higher than for *pucca*-pressed 5 md. bales. But the Association contend that for the

former an average rate of 4 annas per maund from Naraingunge to Calcutta should be feasible; and this would presumably entail a correspondingly lower rate for five maund bales. There is, the Committee think, much force in the contention, and they trust that it will be favourably considered by the Railway Board.

Letter No. 497, dated 19th March 1914, to the Government of Bengal, Judicial Department, with reference to the proposed partition of Bengal.

Board. In a recent communication to the Government of Bengal, they publicly recorded their conviction that any attempt to force trade in the direction of Chittagong, by the expenditure of State revenues in creating and maintaining unfair competition between the Assam Bengal Railway and the existing means of communication from the jute and tea districts to Calcutta, was to be deprecated. The present is a fitting occasion to endorse these views, lest it might be thought that the Committee while objecting to low rates on one State line, are urging that such rates should be charged by another. Needless to say nothing is further from their intention. To begin with, the Eastern Bengal Railway is in an entirely different financial position to the Assam Bengal Railway. It is a firmly established and highly remunerative undertaking. It has made a speciality of the jute trade; and on its broad gauge section it employs very large wagons for the carriage of jute. Railway practice all over the world shows that large wagons mean lower cost of haulage, and ultimately lower rates to the public. And if the Agent of the Assam Bengal Railway is correct when he says—as he has said—that his rates are not unremunerative, it ought surely to be possible for the Eastern Bengal State Railway, with their many substantial advantages, to quote rates relatively as low, without any risk of that expenditure of State revenues which the Committee deprecate.

6. The Committee agree with the Association that the comparison which Mr. Mills makes between jute and cotton is beside the point. It is, they consider, unfair to compare an expensive article such as cotton with a cheap commodity like jute. Naturally higher rates are charged for the former, because, by reason of its value, greater care in handling it has to be exercised. Nor do the Committee think that Mr. Mills is right when he suggests, in his seventh paragraph, that because the jute trade is suffering from the burden of railway rates, the revision of the latter is unnecessary. It is, the Committee understand, an accepted principle of Railway management to charge what the traffic will bear. But they seriously question if this principle ought to be unreservedly applied in the case of a State Railway. On the contrary, it seems to them that State Railway rates should be fixed as low as is consistent with a moderate return on the capital cost.

7. In connection with the request of the Association for a general reduction of rates, the Committee feel that attention should be directed to the rates from Northern Bengal. It is, they believe, a fact that the imports of jute into Calcutta from Northern Bengal are steadily increasing. In other words that the jute-growing districts of that part of the province are developing. The importance of the traffic is being recognised by the Railway

authorities, who will shortly have jute wagons with a carrying capacity of eighteen tons running on their metre-gauge system. But they do not, the Committee believe, propose a reduction of rates. To particularise these rates is unnecessary, but from Mr. Mills' letter it will be observed that from Haldibari the mileage rate is 0'32 pie per maund as against 0'25 pie per maund from Nyaninganga. Mr. Mills explains that the double transhipment at the Ganges has affected the rate; and this the Committee quite recognise. But with the recent introduction of the wagon ferry at Sara one transhipment only—from wagon to wagon—is presumably necessary; and on that account alone a reduction might be fairly asked for. The Railway materially assisted tea proprietors last year by arranging to charge tea freights on the net instead of on the gross weight of packages. As jute is not packed in cases or boxes, a precisely similar reduction may not be possible. An equivalent concession on the jute rates might however be granted with much advantage to the trade; and the suggestion will, the Committee trust, be favourably considered by the Railway Board.

8. In conclusion, I am briefly to summarise the recommendations which the Committee venture to make, and which will they trust meet with the approval of, and be acted upon by, the Railway Board. They are:—

- (a) That the anomalous relations at present subsisting between the Eastern Bengal State Railway and Inland Steamer Companies should be revised, in order that competition for the water carriage may be encouraged;
- (b) That the shortest route from the jute districts to Calcutta should be adopted;
- (c) That an average rate of 4 annas per md. for 3½ md. bales should be introduced for jute transported by that route; and
- (d) That the rates charged for the carriage of jute on the Northern section of the E. B. S. Railway should be reduced.

From Indian Jute Mills' Association, to Chamber.

No. 81-D.—CALCUTTA, 28th March 1905.

Railway Rates for Jute.

I am directed to invite your attention to the following Resolution, which was adopted at the Annual General Meeting of the Indian Jute Mills' Association held on the 27th February 1905, viz:—

"Whereas this Association endorses the views expressed by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce that no undue preference in Railway rates should be granted in favour of Chittagong over Calcutta,

"And whereas the Railway rates from Eastern Bengal Jute Stations are more favourable to Chittagong than to Calcutta,

"It is Resolved that the Bengal Chamber of Commerce be invited to address the Railway Board, or to take such other steps as may be deemed necessary, to obtain a reduction in the rates of the Eastern Bengal State Railway to the level of those of the Assam Bengal Railway.

2. In submitting this Resolution for the consideration of the Committee of the Chamber, I am to offer a few observations on the subject of which it treats. The local Mills have, as you are probably aware, the choice between three services for transporting jute from the growing districts to Calcutta. The first service is that provided by the Inland Steamer Companies, whose steamers and flats bring the jute by river. The second is generally known as the combined service. Under it jute is carried by the Steamer Companies to the railway termini of Goalundo or Khulna, whence it is forwarded by rail to Calcutta. Some years ago the Eastern Bengal State Railway owned steamers and flats for the carriage of jute from such centres as Serajgang and Naraingang to Goalundo. But in course of time these vessels were withdrawn, and the Railway entered into an arrangement with the Steamer Companies to do the necessary carrying from the stations to Goalundo. The third service is by native-owned boats of native design. A large quantity of jute is carried in these boats from the growing districts to Goalundo and Khulna, and also to Calcutta.

3. It has been, the Committee understand, the policy of Government to regard the Naraingang jute centre as the sphere of supply to the E. B. S. Railway at Goalundo; and the Chandpur jute centre as the sphere of supply to the Bengal Central Railway at Khoolna. The Serajgang jute centre is also a natural sphere of supply to Goalundo.

4. The distance and routes from the chief centres to Calcutta are as follows:—

SERAJGANG TO CALCUTTA.

	Miles.
(a) By river route—Inland Steamer Companies' service	546
(b) By combined service: steamer and flat to Goalundo	62
Goalundo to Calcutta by E. B. S. Railway	155
	217

NARAINGANG TO CALCUTTA.

(c) By river route—Inland Steamer Companies' service	480
(d) By combined service: steamer and flat to Goalundo	100
Goalundo to Calcutta by E. B. S. Railway	155
	255
(e) By Steamer and flat to Khulna	197
Khulna to Calcutta by B. C. Railway	115
	312

The Madaripur Bhill route is understood to be quite navigable for traffic during the greater part of the jute season; and it will shortly, the Committee think, be made navigable all the year round. By it the steamer distance to Ktcoola is reduced from 197 miles to 130 miles, and the total distance from 312 miles to 245 miles.

5. It should be noted here that the actual consumption of jute by the members of this Association—i. e. all the Jute Mills in and near Calcutta—from 1st August 1903 to 31st July 1904, was 14,462,337 maunds. The estimated consumption from 1st August 1904 to 31st July 1905, is 15,787,866 maunds; and for the following year a considerable advance is anticipated. The greater portion of this jute is imported by routes C. and D. Route B. is also used to a certain extent.

6. The rates of freight which have been hitherto and still are in force are:—

BY STEAMER SERVICE C.
BY AGREEMENT TO ANY MILL.—
15th August to 14th December.

Drums, As. P.		Bales of 3½ mds. As. P.
6 0 per md.		6 0
	Less 25% Net	... 1 6 ... 4 6 per md.

15th December to 14th August.

4 0 per md.		4 0
	Less 25% Net	... 1 0 ... 3 0 per md.

Provision for rebates for quick discharge.

BY COMBINED SERVICE D.
15th August to 14th December.

Drums, As. P.		Bales of 8½ mds. As. P.
7 0 per md.		7 0
	Less 25% Net	... 1 9 ... 5 3 per md.

15th December to 14th August.

5 0 per md.		5 0
	Less 25% Net	... 1 3 ... 3 9 per md.

No rebate for quick discharge allowed. (The general Calcutta rate and not the individual mill rate has been quoted).

7. For the past fifteen years agreements have subsisted between the Mills and two of the Steamer Companies (the I. G. N. & R. and R. S. N. Cos.), and for part of the current season with the B. A. S. S. Co. also. According to the provisions of these contracts the Mills restrict the carriage of their jute to the

Companies' fleets, in consideration of the special rates indicated in the preceding paragraph. But each Mill has the option of despatching half the quantity named in its agreement, from Goalundo by the E. B. S. Railway Combined Service D. The existing agreement with the Steamer Companies expires on the 14th August 1905; and the Companies have intimated that it will not be renewed. They have also announced that the rates of freight will be enhanced. Their reasons for this latter step are that their flats are unduly detained at Mill jetties; and that the existing rates are unremunerative. Further, they urge that the marketing and transport of jute is being compressed into a shorter period than formerly; and that, in consequence, they require to maintain an increased fleet of steamers and flats which cannot be profitably employed at other periods of the year. Of these reasons the Mills are not prepared to admit the correctness of the first and second. As regards the detention of flats, they contend that the delays complained of are as much attributable to the Steamer Companies as to themselves. And the suggestion that the traffic is unremunerative, is not supported by the published accounts of the Steamer Companies.

8. Nevertheless, the latter adhere to their decision to enhance the rates materially. The E. B. S. Railway authorities have also re-arranged, and really enhanced, their rates so as to bring them into line with those now quoted by the Steamer Companies. The proposals which have been put before the Mills are:—

BY COMBINED RIVER & RAIL SERVICE D.

1st August to 31st December.

Drums, As. P.		Bales of 3½ mds. As. P.
7 6 per md.		7 6
	Less 25% Net	... 1 10½ ... 5 7½ per md.

1st November to 31st December.

6 6 per md.		6 6
	Less 25% Net	... 1 7½ ... 4 10½ per md.

1st January to 31st July.

5 0 per md.		5 0
	Less 25% Net	... 1 3 ... 3 9 per md.

(No rebates for quick discharge.)

BY STEAMER SERVICE C.

1st August to 31st October.

Drums, As. P.		Bales of 3½ mds. As. P.
7 6		7 6
	Less 25% Net	... 1 10½ ... 5 7½ per md.

Drums.	1st November to 31st December.	Bales of 34 mds.
As. P.		As. P.
6 6 per md.	Let 25% ...	6 6
	Net ...	1 7½
		4 10½ per md.
	1st January to 31st July.	
5 0 per md.	Let 25% ...	5 0
	Net ...	1 3
		3 9 per md.

(Rebates for quick discharge.)

9. In the preceding paragraph it is stated that the E. B. S. Railway have really enhanced their rates. It is true that if the combined rate for the two periods 1st August to 31st October, and 1st November to 31st December be averaged, the result is the former rate of 5 annas 3 pies net. But the greater quantity of Mill jute is carried during the period ending 31st October, when the higher rate is charged. Consequently, the E. B. S. Railway cannot fail to benefit by the new division of the year into three instead of two periods; and this is to all intents and purposes an enhancement of their rates. The enhancement on the combined service rate is really equivalent to 7 per cent.

10. With reference to the Steamer service, it should be mentioned that the rebates offered by the Steamer Companies are nominal rather than real; inasmuch as the Mills allege that they cannot be earned. They may, therefore, be disregarded in calculating the enhancement which it is proposed to make, and which is equal to 25 per cent. for the period 1st August to 31st October; 8½ per cent. 1st November-31st December; 25 per cent. 1st January-31st July. But having regard to the probability of the larger portion of the crop being shipped during the first period the enhancement would be, in practice, 25 per cent. At the same time the Mills admit that this is a matter of private trading between the Steamer Companies and themselves. I am not, therefore, to ask the assistance of the Chamber of Commerce in regard to it.

11. But the Mills contend that the E. B. S. Railway is on an altogether different footing. It is a State line, owned and managed by the State. And being such it surely ought not to be permitted to combine with private Carrying Companies to the detriment of traders and manufacturers and the general interests of the port of Calcutta. This point will, the Mills hope, be strongly urged by the Committee of the Chamber in any representation which they may be disposed to make to the Railway Board, in compliance with the request preferred in the resolution. In support of it a contrast may be usefully drawn between the action of the E. B. S. Railway and that of another State-aided line, the Assam Bengal Railway. The latter carries jute from Naraingunge to Chittagong on a much lower freight basis; and an increasing share of the produce of Bengal and Assam is now being exported from Chittagong to the loss of the revenues of the port of Calcutta. In the year ending 31st March 1905, 10 per cent. of the jute, and 22 per cent. of the

tea, exported from Bengal and Assam, passed through Chittagong; against 8 per cent. and 14 per cent., respectively, for the preceding year. The more advantageous railway rates enjoyed by Chittagong are, the Mills feel convinced, mainly responsible for this diversion of the traffic. With tea they are not of course concerned. But as regards jute they would emphasise the fact that Calcutta is not merely a distributing port; it is also a great consuming centre. Consequently the Mills watch with apprehension any movement which may detract from the importance of Calcutta as a jute mart. And they feel strongly that the Chamber of Commerce should endeavour to obtain an equalisation of the railway rates between the two ports. They propose to show briefly how this might be effected.

12. From Naraingunge to Chittagong the rate for <i>pucca</i> bales of 46½ lbs. gross or say 49½ mds. are:—	
Naraingunge to Chandpur by steamer and flat	35 mds 4 annas per bale.
Chandpur to Chittagong by A. B. Railway	112 mds 8 annas per bale.

147 12

This is equivalent to about two annas 5½ pie per maund throughout the whole jute season. On the other hand the proposed rates on the E. B. S. Railway from Naraingunge to Goolundo, by steamer and flat, (100 miles) and Goolundo to Calcutta, by rail, (155 miles), or 255 miles in all are:—

	Bales of 34 mds.
As. P.	
1st August to 31st October	... 5 7½ per md.
1st November to 31st December	... 4 10½ "
1st January to 31st July	... 3 9 "

Nothing further is needed to show conclusively that an excessive and altogether unreasonable handicap against Calcutta is to be introduced. It may be urged that the greater distance from Goolundo to Calcutta, as compared with that from Chandpur to Chittagong, is a sufficient reason for the difference in the rate. But the Mills would most strongly press for the adoption of the shorter route *via* Khulna. Hitherto, for State reasons, the Goolundo route has been fixed as the route from Naraingunge in preference to the Khulna route. But whatever may have been the grounds for this decision they will presumably lose their force on the 1st July next, when the Bengal Central Railway will pass under the control of the E. B. S. Railway. The distance from Khulna to Calcutta is 115 miles, or practically the same as the distance (112 miles) from Chandpur to Chittagong. If over the latter distance the Assam Bengal Railway—a metre gauge line—can carry jute at 2 annas a maund, or thereabouts, the E. B. S. Railway—a broad gauge line with enormous wagons specially built for jute—should certainly experience no difficulty in quoting a lower rate. The assertion has been made that the rates charged by the A. B. Railway for the carriage of tea—

which are relatively as low as those charged for jute—are unremunerative. But the Agent of the line has emphatically contradicted the report. It is presumed that his position is the same in regard to the jute traffic. The Khulna route might be further shortened by the construction of the proposed connection between Bahra on the B. C. Railway and Naihati on the E. B. S. Railway. This project was advanced by the Agent of the first named Railway about seven years ago, and the Committee think that it should now be revived and supported. It would materially shorten the distance to the Mills for all traffic coming *via* Khulna.

13. In conclusion I am to summarise the points which the Mills hope the Committee of the Chamber will urge upon the Railway Board. These are:—

- (a) That the shortest route from the jute districts to Calcutta should be adopted. The shortest route would appear to be that from Naraingang *via* the Madaripur Bhil to Khulna (130 miles); and thence to Calcutta by B. C. Railway (115 miles), or 245 miles in all.
- (b) That the rates by the combined service Naraingang and Chandpur to Calcutta should be reduced to the basis of the rates charged by the A. B. Railway. In the opinion of the Committee a rate of 4 annas per maund should suffice. (It may here be stated that from Chandpur to Khulna the distance is 162 miles, making a total of 277 miles to Calcutta. If the Madaripur Bhil route be adopted, the distance would be reduced to 210 miles.)
- (c) That all disadvantages in freights operating against Calcutta and in favour of Chittagong should be removed.
- (d) That the Serajgang-Calcutta route by combined service should be placed on the same footing as the Naraingang-Calcutta route. At present the rates from Serajgang are as for Combined Service D (page 380 of this report); and the proposed rates are as for Combined Service D (page 381 ditto).
- (e) That rates from all jute centres or districts served by the Railway only, should be revised and reduced.

14. It is perhaps hardly necessary for the Mills to invite the Committee of the Chamber to bear in mind the advantages accruing from the improvement of the waterways in Bengal. The example of the Madaripur Bhil has been already cited, and that distances have been shortened by the opening of that route has been made clear. No opportunity should be lost, the Mills consider, of urging upon the Government of Bengal the need for continuing and extending such work as that of which the Madaripur Bhil route is the outcome. They trust, therefore, that the Committee of the Chamber, in their consideration of the question raised in this letter, will regard it in its broader aspect, as a question affecting not the Railways

only, but the general development of the transport facilities of the province, and particularly of those rail and river routes converging upon Calcutta.

From Eastern Bengal State Railway, to Chamber.

No. T.-1368-M.—SEALDAH, 3rd May 1905.

Railway Rates for Jute.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 644-1905, dated 11th April 1905, forwarding copy of letter No. 81-D, dated 28th March 1905, from the Secretary, Jute Mills' Association, for my remarks, and in reply beg to thank the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce for giving me the opportunity of making the following observations:—

2. The chief complaint of the Jute Mills' Association is that the through rail and steamer rates from Narainganj to Calcutta have been enhanced, and that the Eastern Bengal State Railway will benefit by the enhancement. I will offer some remarks on this point first, and then on the other points summarized in paragraph 13 of their letter.

3. The Secretary, Jute Mills' Association, in paragraphs 5 to 8 of his letter, has quoted the total through rates for 3½ maund bales both by the "Combined" or rail and steamer service, and by the "Direct" or all steamer service, from Narainganj to Calcutta at present, and as proposed for the coming season.

I give below a statement showing how the net receipts from these total rates are divided between the Eastern Bengal State Railway and the Steamer Companies:—

Discounted rates per maund for 3½ maund bales of Jute by "Combined" service from Narainganj to Calcutta.

PERIOD.	AT PRESENT.			AS PROPOSED.		
	Railway.	Steamer.	Total.	Railway.	Steamer.	Total.
	As. P.	As. P.	As. P.	As. P.	As. P.	As. P.
1st August to 14th August	2 5½	1 3½	3 9	3 4½	2 3½	5 7½
15th August to 31st October ...	3 4½	1 10½	5 3	3 4½	2 3½	5 7½
1st November to 15th December ...	3 4½	1 10½	5 3	3 4½	1 6½	4 10½
16th December to 31st December ...	2 5½	1 3½	3 9	3 4½	1 6½	4 10½
1st January to 31st July	3 5½	1 3½	3 9	2 5½	1 3½	3 9

It will be seen from the above that the Railway portion of the rate is the same under the present and proposed scales for the greater part of the year, including that in which by far the largest quantity of jute is shipped, and that only during two periods of 15 days each does the Railway gain any advantage under the new scale.

The busy season of late years has been found to commence at an earlier date than formerly, and the busy season rate has, consequently, been brought into force from 1st August or 15 days earlier, to accord more nearly with the actual season.

The busy season rate has also been extended to the last 15 days in December, to accord with the wish of the Steamer Companies to divide the year into three periods instead of two. As but a very small quantity of jute is despatched during this period, the extra receipts will be unimportant.

4. In order to secure traffic by the river route from Narainganj to Calcutta, in spite of the longer time occupied in transit, the Steamer Companies, by agreement with the Railway, have for many years past quoted a rate which is one anna less than that by the combined service, and this margin is preserved in the proposed new rates, in that rebates are offered by the "Direct" service, but not by the "Combined" service. As the Steamer Companies also carry jute in connection with the combined service, they of course fix their own portion of the through rate by that service. It will, therefore, be understood that the combined service rate follows automatically as soon as the direct service rate is fixed, and the latter really governs the former.

All that the Railway can do is to fix the portion of the rate for carrying the traffic over its lines, but it is unable to reduce the through combined rate. If the Railway reduces its portion of the freight, the Steamer Companies take the difference, and the total rate remains the same.

Referring now to paragraphs 13 (a) and 13 (b) of the letter under reference, in which the Jute Mills' Association ask that the "Combined" service rate from Narainganj and Chandpur to Calcutta should be reduced to about 4 annas per maund, it will be understood that the power to reduce the rate does not rest with the Railway. Nor will the shortening of the route affect the through rate, as the latter is based on the direct service rate and has no reference to the actual distance the jute is carried.

5. With reference to paragraph 13 (c), and taking it in connection with paragraphs 11 and 12, the Association point out that a very low mileage rate is quoted on the Assam-Bengal Railway and that this is drawing traffic from the Calcutta route, and ask for a similar mileage rate over the Eastern Bengal State Railway.

Before commenting on these points I would remark that the comparison given in paragraph 12 should be with 5 maund bales over the Eastern Bengal State Railway instead of with 3½ maund bales.

The proposed discounted rates for 5 maund bales are as follows:—

	As. P.
1st August to 31st October ...	5 3
1st November to 31st December ...	4 6½
1st January to 31st July ...	3 6

I have explained above why a reduction in the mileage rate over the Railway would not affect the "Combined" service rate, and will pass on to the comparison made between Railway rates. In comparing rates on different Railways, it is necessary to have some regard to the conditions under which each Railway is working. Some of the considerations affecting the rate on this Railway are as follows.—All jute *vide* Goalundo has to be transhipped on the very unstable banks of the Brahmaputra in the flood season, and the temporary transhipment stations, which have to be moved about from time to time to suit the river, are very expensive. For the next jute season complete new ghats have to be made at a cost of nearly Rs. 2,00,000. Again, the terminal accommodation which the Railway has provided for this trade at Chitpore represents a very large investment, which is only remunerative during the short busy season. Having regard to these points the rate of ¼ pic per maund per mile does not appear unduly high.

6. With reference to paragraph 13 (d), the remarks which apply to the "Combined" service rates from Narainganj also apply to Serajganj, as the "direct" service rate from both places is the same.

7. In paragraph 13 (e), the Jute Mills' Association ask for all jute rates to be reduced.

The Cotton industry on the Bombay side of India is in many respects a counterpart of the Jute industry on this side. In both cases a similar bulky staple is brought long distances by train to a sea-port, for manufacture in India, or for export. The rates by rail, therefore, afford an interesting comparison. The mileage rates for 3½ maund bales of jute on the Eastern Bengal State Railway are as follows:—

Discounted rates for 3½ maund bales of Jute.

Narainganj to Calcutta, 250 miles ...	0.25 pic per maund per mile.
Haldibari to Calcutta, 292 miles ...	0.32 " " "

Some rates for ¾ pressed cotton are as follows:—

Rates for ¾ pressed Cotton.

Itarsi to Bombay, 464 miles ...	0.73 pic per maund per mile.
Agra to Bombay, 848 miles ...	0.60 " " "

To make the comparison an accurate one, it would of course be necessary to make many allowances, as for instance for the price of coal on the Bombay side, &c. But on the face of the matter, it does not appear that the jute rates compare unfavourably with those of cotton.

In paragraph 5, some of the conditions affecting the rate *vide* Goalundo have been given. Similarly, *vide* Sara, jute has to be

transhipped twice in crossing the Ganges. Double stock has to be kept up on the different gauges, and double trains have to be marshalled and run. Transhipment stations have to be continually moved or altered to suit the river. Such difficulties necessarily make working very expensive.

Apart from these considerations, however, this administration has to consider the incidence of rate not on one commodity only, but on all commodities carried, and in the general interests of trade, as a whole, to adjust rates as fairly as possible. I am in favour of reducing rates on any commodity which shows signs of being unable to bear the existing rates, or in which a larger traffic might be induced by reduced rates. How do these considerations apply to jute? Can it be shown that the jute industry is suffering from the burden of Railway rates? It seems to me this is the crux of the whole matter. Although I have discussed the question with those interested many times during the last few years, I have never found any one to seriously contend that jute is unable to bear existing rates, nor do I find any arguments advanced under this head in the letter under reference. On the contrary, under the influence of these rates the quantity of the raw material carried by the Railway is steadily increasing, and the jute trade is in an extremely flourishing state, and large profits are being made. Indeed, proposals have been made that further taxes might be imposed, for other purposes, without injury to the industry.

I, therefore, do not think a case has been made out for a general reduction of rates.

8. I fully recognize that the interests of those concerned in the jute industry are largely identical with those of the Railway, and I should have been glad if I could have met the wishes of the Jute Mills' Association by a reduction in rates. But I trust that the explanations now given of some of the difficulties, under which the Railway has to work, will enable the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to understand more fully the Railway side of the case and to agree that the rates over which the Railway have control are not unreasonable.

From Indian Jute Mills' Association, to Chamber.

No. 115-D.—CALCUTTA, 22nd May 1905.

Railway Rates for Jute.

"I am directed by the Committee of the Indian Jute Mills' Association to acknowledge the receipt of your No. 802-1905, dated 11th May 1905, with reference to this question. You ask to be furnished with any comments which the Committee may wish to offer on a letter, dated 3rd May from the Manager of the E. B. S. Railway, a copy of which you forward.

2. The letter is a reply to the representation which the Committee made to the Chamber of Commerce on the 28th March last. It states, in para 3, the apportionment between the E. B. S. Railway and the Inland Steamer Companies of the "combined" service

rate for the carriage of jute from Naraingunge to Calcutta. The share falling to the Railway remains as before, except for a slight difference caused by the division of the year into three instead of two periods.

3. The next paragraph of the letter discloses the fact that the Railway and the Steamer Companies are working in combination to maintain, and, as they have done, to enhance the rates of freight. In fact, Mr. Mills clearly states that in the matter of rates for jute the Railway is dominated by the Steamer Companies. The latter, he says, fix their own portion of the through rate by the combined service. "It will, therefore," he continues, "be understood that the combined service rate follows automatically as soon as the direct service rate is fixed, and the latter really governs the former. All that the Railway can do is to fix the portion of the rate for carrying the traffic over its lines, but it is unable to reduce the through combined rate. If the Railway reduces its portion of the freight, the Steamer Companies take the difference, and the total rate remains the same. * * * It will be understood that the power to reduce the rate does not rest with the Railway. Nor will the shortening of the route affect the through rate, as the latter is based on the direct service rate and has no reference to the actual distance the jute is carried."

4. It is evident, therefore, that the combined service rate is entirely under the control of the Steamer Companies, whose decision regarding it are apparently binding on the Railway. It is against this policy which the Committee desire the Chamber to enter an emphatic protest. As they remarked in their previous letter, a State Railway should not be permitted to combine with private Carrying Companies to the detriment of traders and manufacturers, and the general interests of the port of Calcutta. That the combination now complained of is distinctly detrimental to jute traders is very clearly evidenced by the following comparison of rates. For the carriage, from Goolando to Calcutta, of jute derived from sources other than the flats of the Inland Steamer Companies, the Railway rates are, for bales of 3½ mds.—Busy Season 4 annas 3 pies per maund net. Slack Season 3 annas 9 pies per maund net. Now Mr. Mills, in his third paragraph, states that the Railway proportions of the new combined service rate are:—Busy Season 3 annas 4½ pies. Slack Season 2 annas 5½ pies. Nothing further is needed to show that the agreement between the Railway and the Steamer Companies is unfair to the trade. So long as such an inequality is permitted to continue, so long must the Steamer Companies dominate the position. Were the rates equalized by the reduction of those first quoted, competition for the water carriage would be possible, not merely for other steamers, but for country boats. Under the existing arrangement, however, no encouragement, but the reverse, is given to competition of this kind.

5. Before leaving para 4 of Mr. Mills' letter the Committee would like to draw attention to the following statement which it contains:—"The Steamer Companies, by agreement with the Railway, have for many years past quoted a rate which is one anna less than that by the combined service, and this margin is preserved

"in the proposed new rates in that rebates are offered by the "direct service, and not by the 'combined' service." The Committee cannot help remarking that this is a somewhat misleading statement. According to the new proposals of the Steamer Companies the rates for the combined and the direct services are identical. But those Mills who are in a position to earn the rebates granted for quick discharges can effect a reduction. Under the existing schedule the direct service rate is lower by 9 pies than the combined service rate; and Mills able to earn rebates can make a further reduction in addition to the 9 pies. As the rebates have not been materially modified under the new proposals, it is not correct to say that by their operation the margin is preserved.

6. In the fifth paragraph of the letter some considerations which affect the determining of the jute rates on the Railway are set forth. They are: (1) expensive working of the Goalunda terminus, by reason of the instability of the banks of the Brahmaputra; and (2) the heavy cost of the terminal accommodation at Chitpore. It is not of course disputed that the physical difficulties at Goalunda do necessitate heavy expenditure. And this fact, will, the Committee trust, influence the Railway Board in favour of Khulna, where the difficulties are fewer, and the expenditure consequently less. As regards Chitpore it may be incidentally remarked that that terminus is used mainly by the export jute trade. Mill jute is not dealt there in large quantities.

7. The comparison of the jute rates with the rates charged for cotton, which Mr. Mills makes in his seventh paragraph, does not seem to the Committee to be applicable. Their contention is that the rates for jute by the different Railways carrying it should be equalised as nearly as possible. Whether cotton is, or is not, carried at higher rates is quite an immaterial consideration. Similarly, Mr. Mills' remarks upon the rates in relation to the profits on the jute trade, appear to the Committee to be beside the point. Jute Mill owners and Jute importers naturally expect, as do the Railways, a reasonable profit on their undertakings. Moreover, jute values have risen and are likely to remain at a higher level than formerly. The trade is consequently compelled to insist on freights being kept down to a minimum, and to press for an equalisation of rates on the different Railway systems.

8. In conclusion, I am to suggest that the Chamber of Commerce should now approach the Railway Board on the whole question. The points of importance are summarised in my previous letter. But it is, the Committee think, desirable that greater stress should be laid on the fact that the Railway is acting in conjunction with, and for the advantage of, the Steamer Companies, to the disadvantage of the jute trade. "This is," as has been shown, brought out clearly in Mr. Mills' letter which, on the whole, tends to strengthen the request of the Association.

9. It is assumed that the reference which Mr. Mills makes to further cases on the jute trade is not authoritative. But I am to suggest that he should be asked if he is speaking with authority or not.

From I. G. N. & Ry. Co., Ltd., and Rivers S. N. Co., Ltd., to Chamber.

No. 1005
C. No. 1005.—CALCUTTA, 17th October 1905.

With reference to the remarks that "the (Madaripur) Bhil has been made navigable at a considerable expense of public funds, &c.," which appeared at the end of paragraph No. 4 of your letter No. 1129, dated 7th July 1905, to the Secretary of the Railway Board, we have been requested by our Directors to point out that the Government are doing no more than advancing the money necessary for the improvement of the Bhil, upon which expenditure the Steamer Companies and the Boats, using the Bhil, have paid such a return as permitted the Government twice to reduce their scale of tolls within the last 2 or 3 years. The toll receipts exceeded the amount required to meet the cost of maintenance and interest. It is also probable that a further reduction in the scale of tolls will be shortly possible. It can, therefore, hardly be said in strict fairness to inland navigation that the improvement of the Bhil has been made at "a considerable expense of public funds." This, we think, might be made clear to the Railway Board, as it is just possible that the development of inland waterways might be adversely affected if the remark is allowed to remain on official record without some qualification.

From Chamber, to Railway Board.

No. 1824-1905.—CALCUTTA, 7th November 1905.

With reference to my letter No. 1129 of 7th July 1905, on the subject of the Railway Rates of freight charged for the carriage of jute to Calcutta, I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to enclose for your information copy of a letter of 17th October, from the Managing Agents of the India General Navigation and Railway Company, Ltd., and the Agents of the Rivers Steam Navigation Company, Ltd., commenting on a statement made in para 4 of my letter above referred to.

2. The point raised in the letter from the Inland Steamer Companies will no doubt receive your careful consideration.

INADEQUATE SUPPLY OF WAGONS ON THE
EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

From Chamber, to Railway Board.

No. 896-1905.—CALCUTTA, 26th May 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to address you on the subject of the inadequate supply of wagons for the traffic carried by the East Indian Railway. As the Chairman of the Railway Board is well aware, this important matter has formed the subject of voluminous correspondence between the Chamber and the Government of India, for the last seven or eight years. The complaints in connection with it have come, for the most part, from the representatives of the coal industry, one of the most important branches of trade with which the East Indian Railway has to deal. But it would be a mistake to suppose that the insufficient supply of rolling stock is one which affects the coal trade only. On the contrary, complaints and dissatisfaction have often been expressed by the representatives of the wheat and seed trade in the busy season for produce, at the frequent blocks which have taken place, and the difficulty, and often the impossibility, of getting their goods promptly down to the sea-board for shipment. At the same time the disastrous effects of an insufficient wagon supply have been felt by the coal mining industry perhaps more severely than by any other branch of trade. In support of this statement the Committee need only refer you to the memorial which was addressed to His Excellency the Governor-General, by the Indian Mining Association, on the 19th June 1901, in which the whole position as affecting the coal industry was fully and clearly set forth. The Committee would also refer you to the proceedings of a Conference held on the 27th March 1900, when the Hon. Sir A. E. Trevor, K.C.S.I., the then Member of Council in charge of the Public Works Department, was asked to consider the question of the short supply of wagons on Indian railways. The Chairman of the Board was present at this Conference in his capacity as Secretary to the Government of India. Public Works Department, Railways, and Sir Arthur Trevor said that Government were fully alive to the importance of the question, and that they would do all that was possible to facilitate the removal of the difficulties which were complained of. Sir Arthur expressed the opinion that the difficulty at that time had arisen partly out of the abnormal demands for famine traffic added to those of the busy season, and partly from the impossibility of getting orders for rolling stock promptly executed, but he expressed the hope that when the large number of wagons on order were put on the line, the state of things of which reasonable complaint was made would cease to recur.

2. The Committee have from time to time made various suggestions to Government with the view of solving this important

question, or at any rate mitigating the difficulties under which the various branches of trade labour in connection with it. The last of these suggestions was made in my letter No. 183 of 1st December 1903, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Public Works Department, in which the Committee expressed their opinion that a remedy would be found in the provision of a general reserve stock of wagons managed by a joint Committee of the different railways. In reply to this letter the Committee were informed that the Government of India did not consider that a general reserve stock of wagons was required, or that it would prove a profitable investment for capital, and it was pointed out that in the five years ended December 1902 the number of wagons in use on the East Indian Railway had increased by 57 per cent, while the goods traffic had increased by only 26 per cent; and that since the revision of the demurrage rules the absence of serious congestion in the two busy seasons which had ensued was most marked. This the Committee are prepared to admit, but unfortunately in November and December last, complaints again became general, and since that period it has become increasingly evident that the railway is again unable to deal efficiently with the coal traffic offering.

3. The Committee are not in a position to offer an explanation of the comparative freedom from wagon difficulties which the coal trade enjoyed during the period referred to. Whether the full supplies were due to more efficient traffic management or to the smaller amount of general traffic apart from the coal, they are unable to say; nor can they suggest a reason for the sudden recurrence of the deficiency, except that last year witnessed a considerable expansion of the coal trade, but they view the present position with grave apprehension. For it must be remembered that hitherto the short-ages has always occurred at the height of the busy export season, while on this occasion it manifested itself in November and still continues. The grain traffic from Northern India has not yet commenced, or at most is only just commencing and it may be anticipated that if large quantities of wheat and seeds begin to be moved, the difficulties at present experienced by the Collieries will be greatly accentuated. For if in the absence of grain traffic the scarcity has become acute, the supply of wagons for coal will be manifestly far less satisfactory if large numbers have to be diverted to Northern India.

4. It may be urged that to remedy the grievance during the present season is practically impossible, and the Committee do not deny the force of this contention; but what they desire to point out is that the position will be in no way improved next year unless some measure of reform is now set on foot. The Committee are aware of the difficulties which have confronted the authorities of the East Indian Railway on more than one occasion in getting the speedy sanction of the Government of India to their indents for the wagons they consider necessary. In this connection the Chamber has always been prepared to give, and has at times actually given the Railway its strong support; for it has always appeared to the Committee to be a mistake to bear in mind current needs only, and not to forecast future traffic developments. The traffic has been

waited for before the rolling stock has been provided, and the result is that an expansion of traffic, such as has recently occurred in the case of coal, cannot be adequately dealt with. The rolling stock of a well equipped and well managed line should always, in the opinion of the Committee, be somewhat ahead of immediate requirements, so that when a trade shows a tendency to expand, it may be encouraged to the greatest extent possible. Such would at least seem to be the right policy for State Railways which have been avowedly built to assist the development of the resources of the country. But so far as the East Indian Railway is concerned this policy has been apparently lost sight of, and improvements are only effected if their necessity has been urgently represented from outside. The Committee do not for one moment suggest that the deficient supply of wagons is due in any way to defective traffic management, although they are aware that it has been attributed by railway experts partly to that cause. They are assured, and they believe the assurance, that wagons cannot be turned round more expeditiously than at present, and they are, therefore, writing on the assumption that the sole, or at least the chief reason for the trouble is, that the number of wagons available for the trade generally is insufficient to deal with the constantly recurring weight of traffic offering. The solution of this difficulty appears, therefore, to lie more with the Railway Board than with the authorities of the East Indian Railway.

5. Influenced by these considerations, the Committee of the Chamber instruct me to ask that the Railway Board will give their most careful attention to the whole question, not merely with the object of providing a temporary remedy, but with the view of preventing a future recurrence of wagon difficulties. One of the reasons for the creation of the Board is understood to have been the need for the improvement of railway facilities, and it appears to the Committee that the question is eminently one for their attention. The Committee are desirous of seeing the provision of wagons sufficient to meet any reasonable or probable expansion of traffic fully assured, and made a part of Government railway policy. The policy of waiting for traffic before providing stock to meet it has been too long persisted in, and an endeavour should now be made to forecast possible expansions and to arrange for a supply of rolling stock accordingly. The Committee understand that about 2,200 additional coal wagons have been asked for by the Railway administration. But even if these are on the line by the end of the year it is quite certain that there will be no margin for expansion. They would suggest the provision of at least 3,000 additional wagons before the beginning of next year. And, in the event of Indian and English builders not being able to fulfil such a large order, the wagons should be obtained from the United States, the Continent of Europe, or wherever they may be readily available.

6. In connection with this matter the Indian Mining Association have again pressed on the attention of the Committee of the Chamber the desirability of an early commencement being made with the construction of the proposed Bishenpur-Calcutta Chord Railway. The Association contend that this alternative route to

Calcutta would probably prove of great assistance in expediting the passage of coal trains and the return of empty wagons to the collieries. The Chamber has always advocated the construction of an independent line, from the North-West to Calcutta by the most direct route, as being that which alone would fully supply the demands of the increasing trade in Bengal, and the Committee have always strongly supported the construction of this particular line. So far back as June 1901, they urged that it should be taken in hand without any delay, and so recently as the 31st September 1904 they again reiterated their views. The Committee understood that the project was only held in abeyance pending the result of the discussion on the Luff Point Scheme. But they are aware that the construction of the line is closely connected with the project for a second railway bridge over the Hooghly, the site of which, so far as they know, has not yet been decided upon. The Committee attach almost equally as much importance to the construction of this bridge as they do to the construction of the line, and they are inclined to think that it might very fitly come within the scope of the improvements to Calcutta and be included in the Calcutta Improvement Scheme. They have not, however, any information as to whether this is contemplated by Government, and they will be glad to know whether any further developments have taken place with regard to the project for a Central Station in connection with which the proposal for a second bridge was first mooted. The bridge of course will be a necessary adjunct to a Central Station.

From Railway Board, to Chamber.

No. B. T. 18 A.—SIMLA, 8th August 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th May 1905, in which you submit a representation from the Bengal Chamber of Commerce as—

- (1) the inadequacy of the supply of rolling stock on the East Indian Railway, and
- (2) the desirability of an early commencement being made with the construction of the Bishenpur-Calcutta Railway.

2. In reply, I am to say that, as your Chamber is no doubt aware, the Railway Board met the Indian Mining Association in Calcutta, on 15th July 1905, and fully discussed and dealt with the question of the wagon supply, and they have nothing further to add on this question to what was stated at that meeting.

3. In regard to the proposal for the early construction of the Bishenpur-Calcutta Railway, I am to say that this question is not at the present under consideration by the Government of India. There are present under consideration by the Government of India, and under construction the Grand Chord of the East Indian Railway and the Katihar Godagri line, on the completion of which there will be two routes from North-Western India to Calcutta, on the right bank of the Hooghly, one by the East Indian Railway and the other by the Bengal-Nagpur Railway, and a third on the left bank by the

Eastern Bengal State Railway. These will afford sufficient routes to Calcutta for all present traffic and, under the circumstances, I am to say that the Railway Board cannot recommend to the Government of India the construction of the Bishenpur-Calcutta line in the immediate future.

STATUTORY MINIMA MILEAGE RATES.

From Secy. to Agent, E. I. R. Coy., to Chamber.

No. 14572-T.—CALCUTTA, 31st August 1905.

Rates for Transport over the East Indian Railway.

I am desired by the Agent to forward for the information of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce copy of his letter No. 1020-G, dated 26th August 1905, addressed to the Consulting Engineer to the Government of India for Railways, Calcutta, on this subject.

No. 1020-G.—CALCUTTA, 26th August 1905.

From—J. DOUGLAS ESQ., Agent, East Indian Railway Company,

To—The Consulting Engineer, to the Government of India for Railways, Calcutta.

I have the honour to invite attention to the remarks made by the Chairman of this Company at the general meeting of shareholders, held in London on the 28th June last, on the subject of the very favourable circumstances under which the Undertaking is worked; the consequent large surplus profits; and the question which has been asked, whether we can fairly maintain charges which provide such surpluses, without at least endeavouring by lowering them to increase the volume of trade by which the surpluses are contributed and to thus advance the general interests of the country and at the same time benefit doubtless the particular interests concerned as well.

2. As regards the advantages enjoyed by the Undertaking, Sir Richard Strachey remarked—

"The line passes through the richest and most populous districts of British India serving many very important cities, following the great trade route which has existed for centuries, through districts in which the only physical difficulties to be overcome are a few large rivers. Out of a length of 2,242 miles worked, no more than 345 miles have gradients worse than 1-300, and only 63 miles worse than 1-100. Latterly it has had the further advantage of giving the chief means of access to the coal fields of Bengal, and of thus having been able to develop a coal traffic which contributes more than one-fourth part of the whole income of the railway."

In respect to the special advantage which is possessed by the Undertaking in the matter of its relatively cheap coal, our Chairman pointed out that, though valuable, it is far less important than is often supposed; and that if the first cost of our coal were increased from Rs. 2 per ton to Rs. 8, the increased cost of carrying a ton of goods one mile would be only about '16 pie.

3. The position in regard to surplus profits was stated in the following terms:—

"The results of the large traffic and small relative working charges on the East Indian Railway are shown by the fact that in the last five years the Government share of the surplus profits aggregated £5,200,000, the amount received in 1904 having been £1,260,000. This is after having paid interest on the whole Capital outlay incurred since 1880, as well as on the outstanding debenture and other debt of the old Company at that date, together with the whole of the annuity charge, which provides for the total discharge of the original capital outlay with a premium of 25 per cent. paid on the purchase, at the rate of about £450,000 yearly, besides paying in the five years £504,000 to lines worked by the Undertaking, and £626,000 to the Company, representing the deferred annuities, the share reserved to them under the contract of 1899."

4. The enforced minimum charges now ruling on all Indian Railways are as follows:—

	Per maund mile.	Per ton mile.
Ordinary class goods ...	... $\frac{1}{2}$ Pie	4'54 Pies.
Special class goods and minerals ...	... $\frac{1}{10}$ "	2'72 "

5. It is not possible to separate the charges as actually levied for special class goods and for minerals, but we can give separately for the East Indian Railway, firstly, the charges collected on ordinary merchandise, and, secondly, those on coal carried for the public and foreign railways. Since 1900, the charges show a steady constant decrease, as will be clear from an inspection of the following figures, which are in each case for the first or busiest half-year, with the addition of the second half-year of 1904, the latest for which we have returns:—

AVERAGE CHARGE PER TON MILE ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

	1900.	1901.	1902.	1903.	1904 (I).	1904 (II).
	Pies.	Pies.	Pies.	Pies.	Pies.	Pies.
General merchandise ...	5'85	5'83	5'75	5'57	5'38	5'18
Public coal ...	3'50	3'52	3'59	3'21	3'10	3'08

We are now charging an average rate of less than $\frac{1}{2}$ pie per maund per mile for general merchandise, taking together commodities of high and commodities of low value, large and small consignments, carried over short and long distances. For coal, having regard to the fact that for transportation over short leads, the charge per mile should be and is greater than over our long leads, it may be stated generally that we are so near the minimum that every reduction has been given that can be given within our present powers.

The average rate received from merchandise and mineral traffic, taken together, during the second half-year of 1904, was 3'99 pies per ton mile, or, as nearly as possible, $\frac{1}{2}$ pie per maund mile.

6. The restrictions on our freedom of action which are being caused by the present minimum rates have not been found so far to hamper this railway in dealing with short distance traffic. It is when we endeavour to attract consignments and to develop traffic over long leads that our efforts are frustrated. The average rates which have been given in the paragraph immediately preceding are for consignments carried average distances:—

	Miles.
General merchandise ...	... 229
Coal ...	... 202

but we have leads over the system of over 1,100 miles for general merchandise, and of 1,000 miles for coal.

7. It is the practice to charge lower rates for long lead traffic than for that of short lead, but the figures given will probably be accepted as indicating that little or no scope remains for offering encouragement to long distance traffic whether it is internal trade or the import and export trade of Calcutta. As regards the external trade, we have been criticized for standing still, especially as to the minimum rate. In Mr. Priestley's report on the organization and working of Railways in America, Chapter IV, American and Indian goods rates are compared, and it is pointed out (para. 148) that while a great portion of the grain traffic moved in India is for export, and while the cost of transportation in India is for the foreign consumer, little attention is really paid to the effect of railway rates on foreign markets; and, in exemplification, it is shown that the grain rates from Delhi to the ports have not been changed for the past 15 years. So far as concerns the East Indian Railway, we have throughout this period had an unchanged quotation practically down to our minimum. The distance from Delhi to Howrah is 954 miles. The minimum quotation is therefore 0-8-0 annas, while our charge throughout has been Rs. 0-8-0 per maund.

Similarly, as regards grain from the important producing districts served by the northern section of the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway, over the distance from Moghal Serai to Howrah, we have, for many years, been charging at the rate of 1-10th pie per maund per mile.

8. As to the ability of the East Indian Railway management to give reductions for long distance consignments, I would observe that, with an average lead for all traffic of, say, 210 miles the average cost of hauling a ton of goods one mile during the first half of the year 1904, was, as stated in the Analysis of Working contained in the Administration Report of the Railway Board on the Railways in India for the year 1904, 1'44 pies. This figure, it should be noted, covers both the long and the short lead traffic, and the results as to profits have already been referred to. In such conditions there can be no reasonable doubt whatever that long lead traffic at rates considerably lower than now charged would be

the advantages which it can, I submit, reasonably claim in its competition with that of other countries in the markets of the world. I submit that enough has already been said to show that, in present conditions, our transport rates do not admit of that freedom of action in the matter of adjusting charges to meet the circumstances of trade which is desirable, and which, in the case of this Railway, can, I consider, be given with advantage to all the interests concerned; and I hold that, until this freedom of action is given, this Undertaking will not and cannot perform the great part it should and can play in the development of the important and rich country it is privileged to serve, as the main agency for the transport of its produce. How my request is to be met is a matter for consideration. I venture to suggest that the minimum rate chargeable should be fixed in relation to the declared aggregate working cost, which, I submit, would be merely applying to the business of transport the principle adopted in every other known trade and which is recognised in the working of Railways in other countries.

13. I would, further, observe that without assistance in railway charges in order to prevent the diversion of trade, it seems probable that Calcutta will lose its trade with all districts in the upper portion of the Ganges valley. For instance, to take the condition at Cawnpore. Cawnpore is distant from Calcutta 684 miles and from Bombay 839 miles. During the first half-year of 1904, the exports and imports to and from Calcutta and to and from Bombay, for which these two ports are in competition, were as follows:—

	Mds.
To and from Calcutta ...	5,00,000 approximate.
To and from Bombay ...	8,50,000 "

By its advantage in distance, Calcutta can, under the present prescribed minimum, preserve a difference at Cawnpore in railway charges as against Bombay of Re. 0-2-2 per maund on ordinary class goods, and of Re. 0-1-4 per maund for special class goods. But during the first half of 1904, the difference in each case was much greater, still the trade results have been as above stated. I would repeat that the position of Cawnpore, and generally, the districts of the Ganges-Jumna Doab will, unless the East Indian Railway is allowed to extend to Calcutta the benefits of its cheap rail carriage, be that they will cease entirely to deal with Calcutta for the export and import trade. The latest figures available shew that of the merchandise traffic (excluding coal) carried over this Undertaking to and from Calcutta, only 67 per cent. is exchanged with the length of our system above Cawnpore including all the foreign railways having junctions beyond that point.

14. I have thought it best in this letter to confine my remarks as to the ability of the East Indian Railway to further the development of the country, and at the same time to further the development of the country, and at the same time to further the development of the country, if permitted to do so, mainly to considerations directly affecting the rates for railway transport. It is well-known that Calcutta in its import and export trade suffers from important disadvantages as compared with Bombay, such as high sea-freights, particularly to and from the Continent, and difficult and costly navigation of the

Hoogly river. But it seems preferable that the trading interests of Calcutta should speak on this subject for themselves. I may, however, observe that the main factor determining the route which traffic will take is the aggregate charge for its transport from the point of despatch to destination and I submit that, as a set-off to the higher charges on the sea portion of its route to the world's markets, Calcutta may reasonably claim to be given the lower railway transport charges which the East Indian Railway can and is desirous of affording to its trade on the railway length of the route.

I would add that, with the object of endeavouring to secure that the Government may be placed on as early a date as possible in possession of the views on this question of the trading community and others concerned in the matter, a copy of this representation is being forwarded to them.

15. I trust that it will be found possible to give early and favourable consideration to this application.

From Chamber, to Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY).

NO. 1523-1905.—CALCUTTA, 12th September 1905.

The Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce have recently read with much interest and attention the report of certain remarks made by Lieutenant-General Sir Richard Strachey, the Chairman of the East Indian Railway Company, at the last annual meeting of the Proprietors, with reference to the freight charges at present levied by the Undertaking. They have also been favoured by the Agent of the line with a copy of a letter, which he addressed on the 26th August, to the Government Consulting Engineer for Railways, Calcutta, upon the same subject.

2. The question raised in these papers is one which has been before the Committee of the Chamber for many years past. Defined as briefly as possible it is the question of whether Calcutta is or is not to derive the fullest advantage from the superior natural facilities of the eastern as compared with the western trade routes for the transport of the export and import traffic of Upper and Central India to and from the sea-board. So far back as 1881, the Committee of the Chamber said that they deprecated "any interference with the natural course of trade, and while they do not deny that Bombay is fully entitled to all the advantages she is able to derive from her situation, magnificent harbour, and cheaper port charges, they feel that Calcutta ought not to be denied any countervailing benefit which the greater cheapness of her railway communication to the North-West should give her." A short time previously the Government of India had intimated, in response to a representation from the Chamber, that "Calcutta and Bombay will be regulated as far as possible, without partiality to

Letter dated 26th December 1881, to the Agent of the East Indian Railway.

Letter No. 1203-R.T., dated 25th October 1881, from the Government of India to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

"either port, on the principle of fair and equal profits on the lines of Railway which serve them respectively."

3. This ruling on the part of Government was of course prior to the introduction of uniform minimum mileage rates applicable to all Indian Railways. The scheme of maxima and minima rates was brought into operation in July 1891; and it enabled the Railways to carry at a uniform minimum in all provinces, and to all ports of export, irrespective of any physical or other advantages which one line might possess over another. Naturally the system was regarded with considerable interest by the commercial community; and after five years experience of it, the Committee expressed to Government their views upon it. "In their opinion," they said, "the device of an uniform minimum mileage rate for all India ignores the natural advantages of any particular

Letter No. 1266-96, dated 7th September 1896, from the Chamber to the Government of Bengal.

"system of railways, and consequently
"under it the full benefit of the railways
"has not been secured to the various
"provinces. They cannot but perceive
"that the produce of large tracts of wheat-
"growing lands has been deflected from its natural route to the
"sea-board to other routes less convenient and consequently more
"expensive—perhaps not more expensive under these conditions
"to the produce of these particular tracts—but certainly so to the
"country at large. It may be that, at the moment, the suffering
"is greater than it should be, and that it is due to arrangements
"made long since with the railways working to the west; but
"it is not the less the fact that during recent years uniform mini-
"mum mileage rates have led to large surplus money receipts on
"the eastern lines, which surplus has been practically absorbed in
"making up the dividends of the western lines."

4. The arguments thus stated nine years ago were strong then, but they are infinitely stronger now. For the Chairman of the East Indian Railway has made it clear that he considers the constituents of his line are justified in asking for lower charges, in view of the heavy surplus revenue yielded by the Undertaking. And the Agent, in his letter to the Consulting Engineer, proves that the Railway can easily carry long distance traffic at rates considerably below the present statutory minima. In fact Mr. Douglas has gone further, and has shown that, taken as a whole, the Railways serving Calcutta from the North-West work at a cost so far below that of the Bombay lines as to entitle them to a lower minimum scale than is applicable to the latter. The importance of this point cannot, the Committee think, be too strongly emphasised. For it affords conclusive evidence of what they contended in 1896, namely, that uniform minimum mileage rates have entailed needlessly high freight charges on the eastern lines.

5. Before proceeding to consider how the existing conditions affect the import and export trade of Calcutta, the Committee wish to remark upon the reduction which the Railway Board have recently made in the minimum rate for the carriage of coal. The

effect of this reduction will be to enable all Indian Railways to quote for long distance coal traffic at an average of something like 1¹/₄th pice—or even less—per maund per mile. The object of the change is to foster the inland trade in coal; and with this object the Committee are altogether in sympathy. For they fully recognise that, in order to develop the nascent manufacturing industries of India, it is absolutely necessary to reduce the cost of coal of which Low-priced coal is, moreover, a primary factor in the cheap working of railways, and consequently of cheap transport. And the Committee quite understand that one of the effects of the introduction of the lower minimum for coal may be that the cost of carriage of all goods on the railways running to the western Indian ports will be lessened. To this they take no exception, for they believe that coal may be rightly placed in a different category, as regards railway rates, to all other merchandise, because its cheap distribution from all Indian coal fields to all parts of India must be to the ultimate advantage of the country generally. Not only will it assist the development of manufactures; but there is the further consideration that if coal eventually comes to be adopted as fuel for domestic purposes, the agricultural interest will, as is generally admitted, greatly benefit. For these reasons the Committee support the policy of the Board in making the reduced minimum for coal applicable to all railways, as is the existing minimum. But they would dissent from any extension of this principle to those staples which form the bulk of India's export trade, or to imported commodities.

6. It must not be presumed, however, that in thus expressing themselves the Committee are opposed to further reductions in rates. On the contrary, they feel that they cannot too strongly urge the immediate necessity for lower freight charges generally. But the reductions should be based on an equitable principle. The policy of a uniform minimum need not be persisted in, as it clearly presses hardly on ports like Calcutta, which are served by railways working at low cost. It might, the Committee venture to think, be superseded by the introduction of a principle whereby the minimum enforceable on each railway system would bear some relation to the cost of working. From the point of view of Calcutta, the present system cannot be considered as other than unsatisfactory, both as regards the export and the import traffic from and to Upper India. The total cost of transporting an article from the point of despatch to destination is the principal factor in the determination of the route followed. The western ports have the benefit of cheaper sea freights to Europe than Calcutta enjoys; and they are free from the costly difficulties which attend the navigation of a dangerous river. Of these superiorities over Calcutta they are rightly enabled to take the fullest advantage. And they have now the further unfair advantage of uniform railway mileage rates notwithstanding the fact that their railway systems are so much more costly than the lines serving Calcutta. To quote a concrete case, it may be mentioned that sea freight for piece goods from the United Kingdom to Calcutta has been worked out at 925d. per cubic foot. To Bombay on the other hand it is as low as 702d. per cubic foot; and even this is still fur-

ther reduced—by a rebate allowed by the Conference Liners to the Bombay Native Piece Goods' Association—to 5'6d. per cubic ton. If the piece goods, upon which freight at the respective rates has been paid, are sent up-country to Delhi the railway freight is Rs. 2-4-2 per maund, whether they go from Calcutta or from Bombay. No legitimate objection could be raised to this state of affairs—the distances from Calcutta or Bombay to Delhi differing only by 64 miles—if the Calcutta lines were unable to carry at lower rates. For Calcutta merchants would then recognise that they must be prepared to face the disadvantages of their geographical situation. But the position is surely indefensible when it is remembered that the charges on the eastern lines are maintained at a high level in order—as Sir Richard Strachey has so aptly said—to enable the western lines "to show an apparent profit in their accounts which, if correctly set forth, would show a deficit to be made good from the public treasury."

7. If the case is bad as regards piece goods and other imported articles, it is even worse as regards the export grain traffic. For it certainly seems to be a fact that a large proportion of this traffic which, under equitable conditions of working would come to Calcutta, is deflected to Bombay and Karachi. This means not only a loss to Calcutta, but, for the reason given by Sir Richard Strachey, it practically means that the western merchant is flourishing at the expense of his eastern competitor. And when it is remembered that during 1904-05, 35,244,209 cwt. of wheat and wheat flour were exported from the western ports (28,427,721 cwt. from Karachi and 6,816,488 cwt. from Bombay), as compared with 8,783,053 cwt. from Bengal, it will be seen that the position is serious. The Committee do not suggest that the whole of this large quantity would in any circumstances have come to Calcutta. But they believe they are correct in assuming that a considerable proportion of it is derived from areas which ought to be served by the East Indian Railway. If the system of uniform minimum mileage rates were non-existent, and if the eastern and western lines were worked as commercial undertakings upon commercial principles, such an inequality would be impossible. For rates to the east would then be lower than rates to the west, because working expenses are lower; and Calcutta would in consequence be able to enjoy the advantage of being what it really is—the port of the cheapest route.

8. It is not, however, only in the interests of Calcutta that the Committee take the liberty of suggesting a modification of the existing system. There are broader grounds, a consideration of which has induced them to make this representation. Russia, North America and the Argentine Republic are great wheat exporting countries. They compete with India in the markets of the world; and in fixing Indian Railway rates, it is necessary to bear in mind the cost of transportation in these countries. A very small difference in the price of wheat and seeds will determine whether India or another producer supplies a demand. And it is surely, therefore, not unreasonable to assume that, if the staples can be delivered in Calcutta at lower cost than at present, it will be advantageous to the country generally. For it will be assisting the development

of the export trade, which is the common object alike of the Government of India, and of all interested in the commercial prosperity of the Indian Empire.

From Chamber, to Railway Board.

No. 1541-1905.—CALCUTTA, 14th September 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to forward for the information of the Board a copy of the marginally noted letter, upon the subject of railway rates from Upper and Central India to Bombay and Calcutta respectively.

From Government of India, (COMMERCE INDUSTRY), to Chamber.

No. 5072-C. & T.—SIMLA, 16th September 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 1523-1905, dated the 12th September 1905, regarding the effect of the present railway freight rates on the trade of Calcutta. I am to say that your letter will be submitted for the consideration of the Government of India.

From Railway Board, to Chamber.

No. R. T. 228.—SIMLA, 18th October 1905.

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter No. 1541-1905 dated 14th September 1905, regarding the effect of the present railway rates on the trade of Calcutta, and to express my regret for the delay in doing so. Your representation is receiving the attention of the Railway Board and in due course an answer will be sent to it.

EASTERN BENGAL STATE RAILWAY—BLOCK OF JUTE TRAFFIC AT GOALUNDO.

From Chamber, to Eastern Bengal State Railway.

No. 1555-1905.—CALCUTTA, 15th September 1905.

It has been represented to the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce that at Goalundo station, on the E. B. State Railway, there is at present a great block of jute awaiting despatch to Calcutta. It is further asserted that the existence of this block helps to maintain the high prices for jute which are now ruling in Calcutta. The Committee are not in a position to verify the truth of these statements; and they are desirous of ascertaining what the exact state of affairs at Goalundo is. They have accordingly instructed me to ask if you will kindly give them the following particulars, both as regards the steamer and the country boat traffic: a) the estimated quantity of jute awaiting discharge; and (b) the length of time during which it has been kept waiting.

From Eastern Bengal State Railway, to Chamber.

No. T-3027-M.—CALCUTTA, 18th September 1905.

With reference to your enquiry of 15th instant, asking the estimated quantity of jute awaiting discharge at Goalundo, I beg to give the following figures—

	Balances in hand in maunds.	
	In flats.	In country boats.
	(Actuals)	(Estimated).
August 21st ..	Nil.	Nil.
August 22nd ...	...	1,32,000
September 1st ...	Nil.	65,000
September 17th ..	87,900	1,59,000

The Combined Service Traffic has been worked at Belgachi Ghat since the 6th instant, but the work has been much impeded by heavy rain. We have, however, been handling an average of over 20,000 maunds a day. The balance in flats is not large, and now days. Amongst the flats awaiting discharge, one flat arrived on the 10th September carrying 5,600 maunds, all the other flats are of later date.

2. In the case of country boats, it will be noticed that 1,32,000 maunds arrived in one day, August 21st, and that the balance on hand was only 65,000 maunds on 1st September. Last night's balance was estimated personally by the Traffic Superintendent to be 1,50,000 maunds. We generally find the actual quantities are much less than those estimated by boatmen, as they are in the habit of exaggerating in order to get more wagons. The earliest consignment in this balance was registered for despatch on August 27th, so that the longest time any jute has been waiting is 20 days.

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3. No doubt, however, many boat loads have been taken to other stations along the river such as Khankhanapur, Pachuria, &c.

From Chamber, to Eastern Bengal State Railway.

No. 1637-1905.—CALCUTTA, 30th September 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. T-3027 M., dated 18th September, with reference to the block of jute at Goalundo.

The Committee regret to learn that on the 17th September nearly 2½ lakhs of maunds of jute were awaiting despatch. Judging from reports which have reached them matters have not, they fear, greatly improved since. In fact complaints seem to be more general than before. Up-country shippers state that their applications for space by the combined service are being refused by the Steamer Companies. And these statements are confirmed by the Companies themselves, who point out that with a large portion of the combined fleet locked up at Goalundo, and with through booking restricted under the instructions of the Railway, they cannot meet all demands. Country boats are in an even worse position so far as the Committee can judge. They appear to be detained much longer than are the vessels of the allied Companies; and shippers using them are consequently penalised to a still greater extent than shippers by the combined service. And not only are all these difficulties being experienced at Goalundo, but there is, the Committee understand, a general scarcity of Railway wagons throughout the jute districts.

3. The position is in fact most serious. Although the jute crop is estimated to be the largest on record, prices are, and have been for some time past, at a ruinously high level; and the trade is rapidly approaching, if it has not already reached, a state of disorganisation. Buyers in Calcutta are unable to obtain delivery of the jute which they have bought, because the transport agencies are unable to move it. The result is that they are compelled to buy at higher rates, or to default on their contracts. In either case they are involved in heavy losses. And it is not Buyers only who are suffering. Exporters, being unable to obtain their jute by due date, are forced to detain steamers which are being re-let against them, or—in the case of chartered boats—are re-let on demurrage, which amounts to as much as Rs. 500 to Rs. 600 per diem. The local manufacturers are likewise experiencing difficulties in obtaining sufficient jute, and are also harassed by the high range of prices. In these circumstances the Committee of the Chamber feel that they cannot too strongly emphasize the need for prompt and effective action on the part of the Railway administration. Every endeavour should be made, and they trust is being made, to put an end as quickly as possible to the present most unfortunate state of affairs, which is involving the whole jute trade in most serious losses, and may possibly bring ruin to individuals.

4. The Committee fully appreciate the difficulties with which the Railway administration is confronted at Goalundo. They are also aware that the recent floods necessitated for a time the practical suspension of work. But such difficulties must be of course anticipated at stations so situated. It becomes, therefore, a question of how best to avoid their evil effects. The Committee have no desire to make any proposals which may be considered to be beyond their province. But it has occurred to them that possibly the problem might be solved by the provision of stations alternative to Goalundo. The Railway has already other stations along the river which, judging from your letter, are presumably worked to a small extent. But it seems to the Committee that if the line had access to the river at one or two points alternative to Goalundo, it might not be necessary to stop all traffic when the later place becomes unworkable. In making this proposal—which would of course entail expense—the Committee have not overlooked their previous suggestion that the jute trade should be to a large extent transferred to Khulna. But Goalundo will always have a large jute traffic and is, they conceive, a station of importance even apart from jute; and in the general interests it is desirable that, when any important station is liable to be blocked owing to flooding or other similar causes, there should be an alternative means of despatching the traffic to destination.

5. But whatever measures may be feasible in this direction, it is evident that the present block furnishes the strongest possible argument in favour of the Committee's previous suggestion, that a large proportion of the jute traffic should be diverted to Khulna. To divide the traffic between Khulna and Goalundo in the manner which they previously suggested, and to strengthen the latter station in some such way as they now indicate, will be, they believe, the best method of preventing the recurrence of the disorganisation which is now complained of. It is true, the Committee quite recognise that difficulties in working at Khulna are experienced. They understand in fact that even at the present time the traffic is being delayed there. But these troubles are mainly due, they are informed, to the fact that the Railway lines to the Ghat are laid in such a manner as to make expeditious working almost impossible. The remodelling of the station is understood to be absolutely necessary for the efficient handling of heavy traffic; and the Committee will be glad to learn what steps the Railway administration propose to take or are taking in this connection.

P. S.—Since writing the foregoing the Committee have received information that no less than 20,000 mds. of jute were discharged from flats at Goalundo on the 29th September, although more than 1½ lakhs of maunds were lying in flats awaiting discharge.

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From Eastern Bengal State Railway to Chamber.

No. T-3235-M., CALCUTTA, 4th October 1906.

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1637-1905, dated 30th September 1905, regarding the block of jute traffic at Goalundo.

2. As regards the general scarcity of goods wagons throughout the jute districts, I send herewith a copy of my letter No. T-3219 M., dated 2nd instant, to the Secretary, Calcutta Baled Jute Association, on this subject from which you will see that the delays which have occurred to traffic at the jute despatching stations are not due to any deficiency of rolling stock, but are due principally to the floods and other causes mentioned in my letter. Of the other causes of delay to stock I would specially draw your attention to para. 2 (2) of my letter.

The Mills in their own interests should endeavour to unload the boats more promptly and thus release a large number of wagons now delayed at the Ghats for boats.

3. The question of having ghats alternative to Goalundo so that traffic should not be stopped in case of the latter becoming unworkable has been fully considered for many seasons and we have not been able to find any place more suitable than Belgachi Ghat.

This Ghat, however, is not capable of being worked anything like to the full extent of the Goalundo Ghats and it is owing to our having kept the lines to this Ghat in readiness as an alternative to Goalundo, that there has not been an even more serious block of jute traffic at the latter place.

4. Owing to the Bengal Central Railway having been handed over to us so late in the season there has not been time to improve the yard at Khulna for this season's jute traffic, and, therefore, it was impossible to divert the Goalundo traffic by this route. The question of the remodelling of this station, however, so as to admit of our dealing with a much larger jute traffic than it is capable of at present is receiving my attention. It is in urgent need of re-organization and I hope to have it completely remodelled before the next jute season.

5. In conclusion, I would add that the Railway administration is fully alive to the importance of giving the quickest possible despatch to the jute traffic, and every endeavour is being made to overcome the difficulties we have had to contend with.

No. T-3219-M., CALCUTTA, 2nd October 1905.

From—The Manager, Eastern Bengal State Railway, Calcutta,
To—The Secretary, Calcutta Baled Jute Association.

With reference to your letter No. 373-T., dated 27th September 1905, regarding the supply of railway wagons to the Jute despatching Stations of this railway, I beg to say that the principal cause of the temporary shortage of rolling stock is due to the excessive floods at Goalundo.

To meet the present season's Jute traffic a new Ghat was made at Goalundo, during the past summer, with sufficient lines to enable us to deal expeditiously with as much traffic as would offer. These lines were laid well above the highest flood level ever recorded at that Station, but unfortunately the floods this year have beaten the record and consequently our banks have suffered severely and our work has been seriously hampered by frequent derailments which has caused delay in placing and removing wagons. With a few days of dry weather the banks can be put in order and this difficulty will be removed.

2. Delay to stock has also been caused by the following—

- (1) An outbreak of cholera at Goalundo, which caused the labour to run away.
- (2) Failure of the Mills served by River delivery to release the boats of that service, thereby causing the detention to a large number of wagons at Chittpore Ghat, and Shammnagar Ghat.
- (3) Want of better facilities on the Port Commissioners Railway for delivery of Jute to the Bazaar, owing to which 200 to 300 wagons are unnecessarily locked up daily.
3. As regards para. 2 of your letter under reply, it is true that we have returned the E. I. Railway wagons, but they have been replaced by a similar number borrowed from the O. & R. Railway, and the delay in clearing the jute traffic at certain stations is not, therefore, due to a deficient supply of wagons.

4. Your Committee would appear to have been misinformed about wagons being used to house coolies owing to the cholera scare.

A number of wagons were cut off by the floods and a few of them were given to the Railway staff, whose houses were under water for a few days until the breaches in the line were repaired. They were not used to house any coolies and have been released immediately on through communication being restored.

5. In conclusion, I would state that our staff are working night and day, to repair the damages caused by the floods, and I hope pressure for stock. It is noticeable that traffic is already moving down more freely and every endeavour will be made to meet the requirements of the Jute merchants.

From Chamber, to Railway Board.

No. 1666-1905.—CALCUTTA, 9th October 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to forward, for the information of the Railway Board, a copy of a letter, No. 1637, dated 30th September, which they have addressed to the Manager of the Eastern Bengal State Railway with reference to the block of jute traffic at Goalundo.

From Railway Board, to Chamber.

No. R. T. 306.—SIMLA, 13th October 1905.

With reference to your letter No. 1637-1905, addressed to Manager of the Eastern Bengal State Railway, dated 30th September 1905, the Railway Board are pleased to observe that your Chamber recognise that the late congestion arose from the abnormal floods recently experienced. The Railway Board desire me to say that they are in communication with the Manager of the Railway and propose later to personally investigate the most desirable course to be pursued to, if possible, prevent in the future any similar congestion as that now complained of.

From Chamber, to Eastern Bengal State Railway.

No. 1737-1905.—CALCUTTA, 25th October 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. T-3236 M, dated 4th October 1905, regarding the block of jute traffic at Goalundo.

2. The Committee have carefully read the letter, and also the accompanying copy of a communication which you have made to the Calcutta Baled Jute Association. They note the causes which you enumerate as responsible for the block; and also your remarks in regard to the general scarcity of wagons. That serious difficulties were entailed by the floods and by the outbreak of cholera they readily acknowledge. But they are not disposed to admit that the other difficulties which you detail could not have been surmounted by the Railway Administration. They refer to: (a) the failure of the mills served by river delivery to release the boats, thereby causing a detention of wagons at Chittpore and Shammnagar Ghats; and (b) the absence of adequate facilities on the Port Trust Railway for the delivery of jute to the bazaar. As regards (a) it is, the Committee believe, a fact that the demurrage rules of the Railway are stringently enforced in the case of East Indian Railway wagons loaded with coal. If that be so, it is difficult to understand why the same stringency should not be observed in regard to the boats engaged in the river delivery service. Consignees would then raise the importance of promptly releasing boats, and an improvement in working would result. The difficulty in fact does not appear to the Committee to be one which should be put forward as a reason for delays to stock. On the contrary, its existence would seem merely to indicate the need for greater strictness in the management of the traffic. A somewhat similar remark might be made with reference to (b) also. For if the facilities of the Port Trust Railway are insufficient, that insufficiency ought surely to be represented to the Port Commissioners, with a view to the prompt introduction of remedial measures.

3. Since making their previous representation, the Committee have received a communication from a number of jute merchants at Kushter. These merchants complain that, as a result of the efforts which are being made to clear Goalundo, the intermediate jute despatching stations are being deprived of their supplies of wagons. It would be a matter of regret to the Committee if any action on their part should have contributed to this result. For their desire was of course to benefit the jute trade as a whole, and not a section only. But the complaint seems to point to the accuracy of the prevailing impression, that either the wagon supply of the Railway is deficient, or that the wagons are not being hauled so expeditiously as is necessary. The sources of delay which have been alluded to above may be of course responsible. But it was not only the Eastern section which the Committee had in mind, when they ventured to state that there appeared to be a general scarcity of wagons throughout the jute districts. On the Dacca-Mymensingh-Jagannathganj line there is understood to be a serious shortage, accompanied by a block at Jagannathganj. It is possible that this block is due to that at Goalundo; the delays to flats and boats at the latter station preventing the prompt discharge of wagons at Jagannathganj. But this argument has no force as regards the Northern Bengal section, the traffic from which comes *via* Sara. Yet at the principal jute stations on that line—notably Haldibari—the wagon difficulty is being most acutely felt. The jute merchants are, in consequence, being put to great expense and inconvenience. Many Commission Agents, being unable to despatch their jute, are hampered in the matter of finance. And, in common with those whose operations are not limited by financial considerations, they have to pay the very heavy fire insurance charges, which storage in ill-equipped mofussil stations entails.

4. It is of course recognised by the Committee that the tendency to despatch the bulk of the jute crop to market within a few months of the year, must strain the resources of the Railway. And on the Eastern Section the attempt which has been made to counteract this tendency by the offer of lower rates during the slack season has, they believe, met with some success. Properly equipped storage accommodation up-country has at any rate increased; and the introduction of a similar system on the Northern Bengal line might be attended with like results. Merchants and mills would no doubt be willing to build proper accommodation, if they were compensated for the additional cost by lower freight charges during the off season. The suggestion is one which might, the Committee think, be usefully considered by the Railway Administration. It is not a new departure, and would be a step in the direction of a more equal distribution of the traffic throughout the year.

5. In conclusion, I am to say that the Committee are glad to know that you are in agreement with them as to the urgent need for the reorganisation of the Khulna station. They quite understand that a work of this magnitude could not be completed in time for the present jute season. But they trust that it will be pushed forward with the greatest expedition, so that by next season Khulna

will be able to take a large share of the jute traffic. There will then be, the Committee hope, a reasonable prospect that the difficulties which are now so much in evidence will not be likely to recur.

From Chamber, to Railway Board.

No. 1784-1905.—CALCUTTA, 31st October 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. R. T.-300-3 of 13th October 1905, commenting on my letter No. 1637 of 30th September to the Manager of the Eastern Bengal State Railway, with reference to the recent block at Goalundo.

The Committee are glad to note that the Railway Board are in communication with the Manager of the Railway, and that the Board purpose later to make a thorough personal investigation of the matter, so as to prevent in future any similar congestion to that under reference.

I am instructed by the Committee to hand you copy of further correspondence which has taken place with the Manager of the Railway, *viz* :—

- (1) Copy letter, with enclosure, No. T-2236-M of 4th October 1905 from the Manager, Eastern Bengal State Railway.
- (2) Copy letter, No. 1737 of 25th October 1905, to the Manager, Eastern Bengal State Railway.

The Committee trust that the further information given and suggestions made in my letter to the Manager, Eastern Bengal State Railway, will prove of assistance to the members of the Board in the investigation which they propose.

I am desired to reiterate the opinion of the Committee, which was expressed at the meeting of the members of the Railway Board held on the 15th March, that the frequent changes in the personnel of the management of the Eastern Bengal State Railway System are inimical to the satisfactory working of the line.

From Railway Board, to Chamber.

No. R. T. 300 A.—SIMLA, 8th November 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No 1784, dated the 31st October 1905, and in reply to say that it will be placed before the Railway Board.

**EAST INDIAN RAILWAY—PROPOSED BARHARWA-
AZINGUNGE EXTENSION.**

From Indian Jute Mills' Association, to Chamber.
No 258 D—CALCUTTA, 5th September 1905.

Proposed Barharwa-Azingunge-Katwa-Hooghly Railway.

I am directed by the Committee of the Indian Jute Mills' Association to address you in connection with the above project, which, it is understood, is under consideration by the Railway Board.

2. The line shewn in red on the accompanying map, is a section, 11 miles long, of the proposed extension of the East Indian Railway from Barharwa, through Azingunge, to Hooghly, a length of about 162 miles. At the Barharwa end of the line is a place called Dhulian which is becoming of importance as a jute centre. The Committee have been given to understand that it has every prospect of great development, owing to the largely increased area being put under jute cultivation in the surrounding districts. The outturn of jute from this part of the country during the current season will, it is expected, be double that of last year, but the difficulty is that the means of transport are very unsatisfactory. At present, jute is carried from Dhulian to Rajmahal, a distance of 50 miles by river, by steamer and flats. But, owing to the strong current prevalent during the rainy season, the rate of progress is extremely slow, and this so handicaps the small flotilla working, that it cannot cope with the traffic. It seems clear that, if an all rail route were provided, *via* Barharwa, Dhulian would soon become an important centre of supply for the Calcutta jute market.

3. The Committee beg respectfully to solicit the valuable assistance of the Committee of the Chamber in the direction of their addressing a strong recommendation to the Railway Board, in favour of an early commencement upon the construction of the Barharwa-Dhulian section of the line.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (RAILWAY).

No. 1603-1905—CALCUTTA, 25th September 1905.

The attention of the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce has been drawn to a projected extension of the East Indian Railway from Barharwa through Azingunge to Hooghly, a distance of about 162 miles.

2. It has been pointed out to the Committee by the Indian Jute Mills' Association that the early construction of a section of this line would be of advantage to the jute interest. For at no Dhulian, which is becoming of importance as a jute centre. The area under jute cultivation in the vicinity of this place has largely

increased of late; and it is expected that the outturn during the current season will be double that of last year. At present, however, the transport arrangements are very unsatisfactory. For it is about fifty miles to Rajmahal whence the jute has to be conveyed by river; but owing to the strong current prevalent during the rainy season, the rate of progress is extremely slow. If an all rail route *via* Barharwa were provided there is every reason to believe that Dhulian would soon become an important centre of supply for the Calcutta jute market.

3. The Committee would take this opportunity of pointing out that the demand for jute is rapidly overtaking the supply. This fact is evidenced by the exceptionally high prices which are ruling during the current season. It is doubtless true, that a high range of prices tends to expand the area under cultivation; and it is satisfactory to observe that the latest available crop figures indicate an increased outturn as compared with last year. But nevertheless there is urgent need for the development of all promising jute growing areas; and one of the most practical ways of aiding development is to improve transport facilities. Dhulian is an area which bids fair to yield suitable fibre, and Dhulian jute is already becoming known in the market. The Committee, therefore, support the construction of the proposed line which would, as they have shown, facilitate the carriage of jute from the new district to Calcutta. They trust that the Government of Bengal will agree with this view, realising how important it is that an extensive manufacturing industry, employing so large a labour force, should not run any risk of being harassed by an insufficiency of raw material. And the Committee would further respectfully suggest that His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor should urge the Railway Board to sanction the section of the line from Barharwa to Dhulian without delay.

From Government of Bengal (Railway), to Chamber.

No. 643-R.—CALCUTTA, 7th November 1905.

With reference to your letter No. 1603, dated the 25th September 1905, regarding the extension of the East Indian Railway from Barharwa through Azingunge to Hooghly and the early construction of the section between Barharwa and Dhulian, I am directed to forward herewith for the information of the Chamber a copy of letter No. R. C., 31-M-2-dated the 25th October 1905, from the Railway Board on the subject.

No. R. C.-31-M.-2.—SIMLA, 25th October 1905.

From—The Secretary to the Railway Board,

To—The Government of Bengal, Public Works Department.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 386-T. R., dated the 14th October 1905, with which is forwarded copy of a letter from the Bengal Chamber of Commerce on the subject of the early construction of the line from Hooghly *via* Katwa and Azingunge to Barharwa.

2. In reply I am to say that sanction has been accorded to the construction of the section from Hooghly to Katwa, and that for the remainder of the line the following sums have been provided in the forecast of proposed outlay on Railways about to be submitted to the Secretary of State for sanction:—

1906-07	...	10 Lakhs.
1907-08	...	40 "
1908-09	...	36 "

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (RAILWAY).

No. 1929-1905.—CALCUTTA, 25th November 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 643-R of 7th November 1905, with enclosure, with regard to the extension of the East Indian Railway from Barharwa through Azimgunge to Hooghly and the early construction of the section between Barharwa and Dhulian.

The Committee are much indebted to you for the information you have given to them as to the present and probably future progress of this important line. In their opinion, however, the reply of the Railway Board does not quite meet the exigencies of the case. What the Committee asked for in their previous letter of 25th September, to which you are now replying, was that the section Barharwa to Dhulian, about 17 miles, might be sanctioned at once so that work might be proceeded with to this length, in anticipation of sanction to the whole scheme. The reply from the Railway Board deals with the matter in a more or less general way, and the Committee have instructed me to enquire whether immediate sanction could be given for the construction of the particular section between Barharwa and Dhulian which is urgently required, as already pointed out, for the extension of the jute trade.

From Government of Bengal (RAILWAY), to Chamber.

No. 839-R.—CALCUTTA, 22nd December 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1929-1905, dated 25th November 1905, enquiring whether immediate sanction to the construction of the Barharwa Dhulian section of the Katwa Azimgunge-Barharwa Railway could be given which is urgently required for the extension of the jute trade.

2. I am to state that the Railway Board have intimated that funds are not available for the construction of the proposed line during the current financial year but work on the line will be started during next year.

3. I am also to state, that a notification of intention to acquire land for the section of the Railway from Barharwa to Dhulian has already been published in the Calcutta Gazette of the 6th December 1905, which indicates that it is the intention of the Railway Administration

RAILWAY—PROPOSED BARHARWA-AZIMGUNGE EXTENSION. 419

tration to proceed with this portion of the line as soon as funds can be made available.

From Chamber, to Indian Jute Mills' Association.

No. 204-1906.—CALCUTTA, 24th January 1906.

*Proposed Barharwa-Azimgunge-Hughly extension
of the East Indian Railway.*

Your letter No. 258-D., of 5th September—though much delay has taken place in replying to it—has not been lost sight of by the Committee, who have been in correspondence with the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Public Works Department (Railways), on the subject.

I am now instructed to hand you, for information, copies of the correspondence detailed below, which we trust you will consider on the whole fairly satisfactory:—

- (1) Copy of letter No. 1603 of 25th September 1905, to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Railway Department.
- (2) Copy of letter No. 643-R of 7th November 1905 from the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Railway Department.
- (3) Copy of letter No. 1929 of 25th November 1905 to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Railway Department.
- (4) Copy of letter No. 839-R of 22nd December 1905 from the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Railway Department.

SHORT SUPPLY OF WAGONS ON THE PORT TRUST
RAILWAY.

From Chamber, to all Members.

CR. No. 521-1905.—CALCUTTA, 20th December 1905.

Short supply of Wagons on the Port Trust Railway.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to circulate, for the information of the members of the Chamber, copies of correspondence which has passed between the Committee and the Vice-Chairman, Port Commissioners, in connection with an urgent representation made to them on the above subject.

From Chamber, to Calcutta Port Commissioners.

No. 2057-1905.—CALCUTTA, 14th December 1905.

Short supply of Wagons on the Port Trust Railway.

At their meeting on Tuesday last, the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce had before them two letters from leading Export firms making urgent representations as to the present inadequate supply of wagons on the Port Trust Railway. Both firms stated that in their recent experience it has been quite impossible to get their requirements in Port Trust wagons met either promptly or in full, and they naturally conclude that the stock of wagons at the disposal of the Port Trust Railway is quite insufficient to meet the demand. One of the firms writes that they have suffered severely from this scarcity of wagons; their jute has been repeatedly shut out from steamers, and they have had to pay late shipment fines in consequence; they have also been compelled, frequently, to engage boats in order to effect shipments at a heavy expense to themselves and loss of revenue to the Port Commissioners.

It is quite clear that if these statements represent fairly the present state of matters, some immediate and vigorous effort should be made by the Port Commissioners to provide a remedy. The Committee are not aware how many wagons are owned by the Port Trust, but as they understand that the Commissioners have constantly to borrow from other lines, it would seem to be clear that they are not in as independent a position as they ought to be in reference to this matter, and they trust that it will receive your immediate attention.

From Calcutta Port Commissioners, to Chamber.

No. 6613.—CALCUTTA, 15th December 1905.

Short supply of Wagons on the Port Trust Railway.

In acknowledging the receipt of your letter No. 2057, dated the 14th instant, I beg to state for the information of the Committee

SHORT SUPPLY OF WAGONS ON THE PORT TRUST RAILWAY. 421

that the Commissioners have placed an order for 80 wagons of a special design for the carriage of jute, which are to be delivered within 31 weeks.

As regards the present scarcity of wagons, I have to explain that until the last year or two the Commissioners' rolling stock in wagons and locomotives was so much in excess of the average demand that between the years 1901 and 1903-04, no less than Rs. 1,40,000 was earned in hiring them out to other Railways, and during the short period of exceptional pressure the Commissioners were able to hire wagons from other Railways, the total hire paid in the same period amounting in all to Rs. 45,000.

The Commissioners at the commencement of the present jute season obtained 200 wagons on hire from the Bengal-Nagpur Railway Company, and the difficulties that are now being experienced by the jute trade are due to these wagons having been suddenly withdrawn, towards the end of November, by the lending Railway which required them for their own purposes, and the Commissioners have been unable to obtain wagons from any other Railway.

Added to this the Commissioners have been obliged, owing to one of the Jetties being put out of commission, to berth some vessels with import cargo at the Docks, and as the Consignees for the most part would not take delivery of their goods there, these goods had to be railed down to the Jetties for delivery.

There are several changes now in process of being carried out, such as the transfer to the Docks of the Hide export trade and all the traffic in teas landed at the Ghats and sold in the Tea Warehouse at Armenian Ghat, which are now railed from the Ghats, Tea Warehouse and Jetties, employing a number of wagons. These changes, when they have taken effect, will further increase the capacity of the Commissioners' rolling stock, but the question is now under consideration with a view to more wagons being ordered if the conditions should show this to be necessary in the interests of the trade. The Commissioners are at the same time in consultation with the authorities of the E. B. S. Railway and Exporters of jute to determine what steps should be taken in the way of improving the accommodation at certain places where Consignees of jute insist on having their jute delivered and the space is so limited that the line is congested by wagons being kept standing on it while being discharged; also what further accommodation should be supplied in the way of godowns on their line near the jute centres. By so doing it is hoped that the passage of trains along the line will be facilitated and better use made of the rolling stock.

I shall later inform the Committee what has been the result of the Commissioners' deliberations on the subject.

One point to which I beg to draw your attention is that usually the Commissioners' rolling stock is not fully employed for the greater part of the month and at the close of the month when there is a hurry to make shipments, demands are made even by boat contractors for Railway wagons to transport jute, should it then

be found that there are not sufficient boats to meet their engagements. The more convenient method, however, would appear to be the railing of jute, by the Commissioners' line of Railway, from the Commissioners' as well as from the Exporters' point of view, and establishment of their arrangements on such a basis as to insure their being able to deal with the whole traffic.

BENGAL AND NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY.

From Chamber, to B. & N. W. Railway Co., Ltd.

No. 2124-1905.—CALOUTTA, 22nd December 1905.

Tirhoot State Railway.

With reference to the correspondence which took place early in the year 1904, on the subject of complaints from passengers on the above line, I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to intimate that they have again received a complaint from one of their members with regard to the imperfect lighting of the carriages.

I enclose a copy of the letter in question (*not printed*) which would appear to show, if the statements contained in it are correct—and the Committee have no occasion to doubt them—that considerable improvement is still wanted in this direction. The Committee desire me to express a hope that early steps will be taken to provide proper lamps for the carriages and to satisfy the legitimate requirements of passengers.

From B. & N. W. Railway Co., Ltd., to Chamber.

No. 12468.—GORAKHPUR, 27th December 1905.

I am in receipt of your letter No. 2124-1905, dated 22nd instant, with which you forward to me copy of a letter from one of the members of the Chamber in which a complaint is again made regarding the lighting of our carriages. I regret this, as generally speaking there has been a very great improvement effected in our carriage lighting since the subject was raised in 1904, and the matter was receiving our close attention. The present complaint indicates that neglect in certain cases has again occurred and I am taking the matter up. I would suggest, however, that any member making such complaints be asked to state whether the matter complained of was reported to the railway authorities. I think you will agree with me in thinking that before redress is sought from the Chamber, the local authorities should be approached. Cases of neglect arise no matter how closely supervision is exercised and if complaints regarding these were addressed at once to our Traffic Manager at Gorakhpur, or the District Traffic Superintendent at Samastipur or Sonapore, we should be better able to deal with those at fault.

As regards the general question of lighting, I beg to state that since I addressed you on the subject in 1904, estimates have been sanctioned for the introduction of Electric lighting of trains on the principal sections of our System, including the Bettiah Branch of the Tirhoot Railway. Contracts were let early this year, and the plant is now, I believe, in course of shipping. This will no doubt

effect a very great improvement in the present system of oil lighting.

From Chamber, to B. & N. W. Railway Co., Ltd.

No. 53-1906.—CALCUTTA, 10th January 1906.

Tirhoot State Railway.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No 12468 of 27th December 1905, with reference to the lighting of your carriages, and to thank you for the information therein contained, which has been passed on to the member of the Chamber who made the complaint in question.

PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF A FEEDER LINE FROM
CUTTACK TO JAMBOO VIA KENDRAPARA.

From Collector of Cuttack, to Chamber.

No. 3994-G.—CUTTACK, 20th November 1905.

I have the honour to forward, herewith, a copy of the marginally noted correspondence containing proposals regarding the extension of Feeder-Railways to Kendrapara and Jamboo and request that you will be good enough to favour me with a report on the proposed construction of a Railway from Cuttack to Jamboo *via* Kendrapara with special reference to the development of trade and its effect on traffic: your opinion also is invited to the prospects of development of the Hukitola Harbour. My predecessor, Mr. Fischer, was of opinion that if a line were constructed from Sambalpur to Cuttack an extension to Kendrapara and Jamboo and the improvement of the Hukitola Harbour would probably be the necessary sequence in order to afford direct outlet to sea for C. P. exports, and that the Hukitola Harbour and the Jamboo river might be made the best anchorage on the coast though the outlay would doubtless be great. The Port Officer of False Point approves the above views. They do not seem to have taken into consideration the rival claims of the Chandbali Port. I would request you to take these into account in your report.

MEMO. NO. 9—R.Y.—CUTTACK, 3rd August 1905.

ORISSA COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE.

The undermentioned document is forwarded to the District Officer of Cuttack with the request that he will be good enough to submit proposals for such feeder railways as may seem desirable to him.

E. F. GROWSE,
Commissioner.

Document forwarded with the above memorandum. Copy of Bengal Government Circular No. I. R., dated the 24th July 1905 and of its enclosure with 2 spare copies.

CIR. NO. I. R.—CALCUTTA, 24th July 1905.

From—W. A. INGLIS, ESQ., Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Public Works Department,

To—All Commissioners of Divisions.

I am directed to forward, herewith, a copy of letter No. R. C. 313, dated the 23rd June 1905, from the Secretary, Railway Board,

and to ask that you will be so good as to bring forward from time to time any proposals for new railways or extensions of existing railways that may seem desirable in the interests of this Province.

No. R. C. 313.—SIMLA, 23rd June 1905.

From—NEVILLE PRIESTLEY, ESQ., Secretary, Railway Board,
To—The Government of Bengal, Public Works Department,
Railway Branch.

I am directed to say that the Railway Board would be glad if Local Governments would, at any time, send forward proposals relating to projects for new railways, or extensions of existing railways, which they may consider to be desirable in the interests of the various Provinces. It is suggested that the Local Governments should enter into direct consultation with the Railway Administrations likely to be affected by the construction of the lines which may be proposed.

No. 3158.—CUTTACK, 7th September 1905.

From—F. N. FISCHER, ESQ., I.C.S., Collector of Cuttack,
To—The Commissioner, Orissa Division.

With reference to your No. 9-R. Y., of 3rd August last, and its enclosures, I have the honour to say, that there is no urgent scheme to submit. Before the B. N. Railway was opened nearly all the pilgrims travelled to Puri by the Trunk Road and used to visit Jajpur (from Rungta) on their way, but they now go direct to Puri by train and very few get out at Jajpur Road Station to visit Jajpur. If a light railway were constructed from Jajpur Road Station to Jajpur, the stream of pilgrims might again be diverted to the Biraja Temple and Jajpur might again become an important place of pilgrimage.

2. If a line were constructed from Sambalpur to Cuttack an extension to Hendrapara and Jamboo and the improvement of the Hukitola harbour would probably be the necessary sequence in order to afford a direct outlet to the sea for C. P. exports. Hukitola and the Jamboo river might be made the best anchorage on the coast though the outlay would doubtless be great.

No. 34-R. Y. CUTTACK, 4th November 1905.

From—F. W. DUKE, ESQ., I.C.S., Commissioner of the Orissa
Division,
To—The Collector of Cuttack.

With reference to your letter No. 3158-G., dated the 3rd/6th September 1905, regarding Feeder Railways, I have the honour to request you to make further enquiries about the prospect of the

development of the Hukitola harbour. You may for this purpose consult the B. I. S. N. Co., whose steamers usually call at the port and also the I. C. S. N. Co., who are in a position to advise you about the rival claims of the Chandbali Port. The result of your enquiries when completed should be reported to this office.

From Chamber, to Collector of Cuttack.

No. 194-1906.—CALCUTTA, 25th January 1906.

I have the honour to state, with reference to your reminding Post-card No. 3994-G. of 22nd December, that your letter, bearing the same number, of 20th November, is receiving the consideration of the Committee and will be replied to as early as possible.

From Chamber, to Collector of Cuttack.

No. 297-1906.—CALCUTTA, 12th February 1906.

In continuation of my letter No. 194 of 25th January 1906, and with further reference to your letter No. 3994-G. of 20th November 1905, with accompanying papers, with reference to the proposed construction of a railway from Cuttack to Jamboo *via* Kendrapara, on which you ask for the views of the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, with special reference to the development of trade and its effect on traffic, I am now directed to reply as follows—

2. The Committee are strongly of opinion that the proposal for a feeder railway from Cuttack to Jamboo, and the question of the rival claims of False Point and Chandbally, are not ripe for discussion. The late Collector of Cuttack—Mr. Fischer—in response to a general invitation of the Railway Board, forwarded through the Commissioner of the Orissa Division, to bring forward from time to time any proposals for railway extension that might seem desirable, stated that he had no urgent scheme of railways to submit, but advanced the present proposal in a tentative manner as one of two possible schemes. Mr. Fischer, however, made it clear that it was only put forward as a corollary of the Sambalpur-Cuttack connection, and as the latter does not exist, it seems premature to discuss the feeder line which might spring from it. Similarly, the claims of the two potential ports Hukitola (False Point) and Chandbally (or Durgapur) need only be considered in the event of the feeder line coming within the sphere of practical discussion.

MISCELLANEOUS.

CONVENTION WITH JAPAN.

From Chamber, to all Members.

Cir. No. 142-1905.—CALCUTTA, 3rd April 1905.

Commercial Convention with Japan.

MEMO :—The following is published for the information of members of the Chamber in continuation of Cir. No. 366-1904, dated the 19th September 1904 :—

From Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY),
to Chamber.

No. 916-921-C.—CALCUTTA, 29th March 1905.

In continuation of the letter from the Finance and Commerce Department, No. 5823-S. R., dated the 14th September 1904, I am directed to inform you that the Commercial Convention with the Japanese Government was ratified on the 15th March 1905. The terms of the Convention are as follows :—

Article I.

Any article, the produce or manufacture of the dominions and possessions of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan shall enjoy, upon importation into India, the lowest customs duties applicable to similar products of any other foreign origin.

Article II.

Reciprocally any article, the produce or manufacture of India shall enjoy, upon importation into the dominions and possessions of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan, the lowest customs duties applicable to similar products of any other foreign origin.

Article III.

The privileges and engagements of the present Convention shall extend to Native States of India which by treaty with His Britannic Majesty or otherwise may be entitled to be placed, with regard to the stipulations of the Convention on the same footing as British India.

His Britannic Majesty's Government shall communicate from time to time to the Imperial Government of Japan a list of these States.

Article IV.

The present Convention shall be ratified and the ratifications shall be exchanged at Tokio as soon as possible. It shall come

into effect immediately after the exchange of ratifications, and shall remain in force until the expiration of six months from the day on which one of the High Contracting Parties shall have announced the intention of terminating it.

PRESIDENCY GENERAL HOSPITAL

From Chamber, to all Members.

CIR. No. 321-1905.—CALCUTTA, 29th July 1905.

The Presidency General Hospital.

The Committee have been recently in correspondence with the Government of Bengal, with reference to the arrangements for the admission and prompt treatment of patients in this Hospital. As a result of the correspondence, they have been informed that the following arrangements have now been made:—

- (a) All cases of cholera will be removed at once to the Cholera Ward without any delay at the admission room.
- (b) All cases in which the patient is very weak or in urgent need of immediate treatment will be removed at once to the ward. In cases of a doubtful nature where there is a possibility of the disease being infectious and where the patient is in urgent need of treatment, he will be removed at once to the observation ward where the examination shall be completed.
- (c) If the patient is very weak and in urgent need of treatment, he shall be removed at once to the ward, and the entries in the case, and diet and treatment tickets shall be made after he is in bed. (*Conclusion of Rule 27 as amended.*)

2. These arrangements have been approved by His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal; and it is hoped that they will preclude the possibility of any unnecessary delay in admitting patients in the future.

UNDERWEIGHTS OF JUTE GOODS

From Jute Fabrics Shippers' Association, to Chamber.

No. 15-J.—CALCUTTA, 14th February 1905.

Underweights of Jute Goods

I am directed by the Committee of the Jute Fabrics Shippers' Association to

1. Letter No. 1-J, dated 15th January 1905 from this Association to Indian Jute Mills' Association.
2. Letter No. 8-D, dated 25th January 1905 from Jute Mills' Association to this Association.
3. Letter No. 5-J, dated 25th January 1905 from this Association to Indian Jute Mills' Association.
4. Letter No. 24-D, dated 6th February, 1905 from Indian Jute Mills' Association to this Association.

submit for the consideration of the Committee of the Chamber, the marginally noted correspondence upon the above subject.

2. The point at issue between this Association and the Indian Jute Mills' Association is as to whether the certificates of the Licensed Measurers' Department shall be held to be conclusive proof of weights at time of delivery alongside export vessel. As will be noted from the correspondence the Committee of this Association hold this view, the gunny contract providing for delivery "free alongside export vessel."

3. In submitting the question to the Committee of the Chamber, I am directed to solicit the favour of their issuing a Ruling to the effect that where any goods are sold F. A. S. the weights should be ascertained by Licensed Measurers at time of delivery alongside the export vessel.

No. 1-J.—CALCUTTA, 13th January 1905.

From—The Secretary, Jute Fabrics Shippers' Association,
To—The Secretary, Indian Jute Mills' Association.

I am directed by the Committee of the Jute Fabrics Shippers' Association to place before you the following extract from a letter from one of the members of the Association in reference to a dispute with one of the mills regarding underweights of goods:—

"We have had a correspondence with a mill regarding weight of goods and a difference of opinion has arisen which both the mill and ourselves think should form the interchange of opinion between your Association and that of the Mills.

The Mills' Specification and the Sworn Measurers' Weight List did not agree and the latter document proved goods to be underweight at the export vessel. We at once drew the Mill's attention and told them we should have to hold them responsible should we receive claims for underweight. The Mill replied that on referring to their Mill records they found the goods

were all full weight and in future should we take any exception to their weights we should stop shipment and give them an opportunity to go into the alleged short weights.

We pointed out in reply that the only weights which can be considered in a dispute are those of the Sworn Measurers, as they weighed the goods at the ship which is the place of delivery. We also told them that the Sworn Measurers are not acquainted with the details of buyers' purchases, so are unable to stop shipment as they cannot state whether the goods they are weighing are under contract weight, and that it would be necessary for the mill to have a representative on board the Export vessel at time of shipment, and if the Sworn Measurers' weights proved the goods to be underweight such representative should stop shipment.

The Mill writes us in reply as follows:—

"We know that you claim the right to have the goods weighed on board ship by the Sworn Measurers, that we should attend these weighments, that if dissatisfied with the weights we should stop the shipment, and that if goods are shipped underweight as shown by the Sworn Measurers' certificates, that this document should be sufficient proof to establish a claim. We wish to say at once that we absolutely repudiate such an interpretation of the contract, and as the matter is of importance it would be well to have an inter-tion before you press it further. As we view the case, you cannot hold the detached position you desire. You have to take delivery of the goods, and you have to do so alongside. At that point we have completed our contract and it devolves on you to receive, ship, and if you choose, weigh them, but with all this we have no concern."

From the last letter of the Mill you will see that they admit that under the contract we have to take delivery alongside, and as such is the case we should obtain fair average weight according to contract at time of delivery and the only means of ascertaining this is by Sworn Measurers' weights.

In the opinion of the Committee the contention of the buyers claim upon is a reasonable one. Contracts on which Gunnies are sold in the United Kingdom provide for fair average weight at time of shipment from Calcutta, and should a question ever arise on this account the only independent proof it appears to them, would be the Licensed Measurers' weight certificates.

The Committee will be glad if you will place the matter before the Committee of the Mills' Association. It is one, they think, which might well be brought up for discussion at the ensuing annual General Meeting of your members, and would feel obliged if this could be arranged.

No. 2-D.—CALCUTTA, 23rd January 1905.

From—The Assistant Secretary, Indian Jute Mills' Association,
To—The Secretary, Jute Fabrics Shippers' Association.

Underweights of Jute Goods.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1-J., dated 13th January 1905, in which a question is raised in this connection.

2. The Committee have carefully considered the correspondence which you quote, but they do not consider that the dispute to which it relates is of sufficient general interest or importance to justify a reference to the Mills. The point at issue is eminently one for adjustment between sellers and buyers, and they would recommend that it be settled by arrangement in that way.

No. 5-J.—CALCUTTA, 25th January 1905.

From—The Secretary, Jute Fabrics Shippers' Association,
To—The Secretary, Indian Jute Mills' Association.

Underweights of Jute Goods.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 8-D dated 23rd instant, in reply to the Committee's representation of 13th January in connection with this subject.

2. The Committee note with regret that the Committee of your Association do not consider the matter of sufficient general importance to justify a reference to the mills. The Mill with whom the question arose, as will doubtless have been noticed from the extracts of correspondence given in my former communication, suggested that as the matter is of importance it should be made the subject of a reference to this Association and to the Mills Association, and my Committee think that it would be in every way more satisfactory if the matter were brought up for discussion at your approaching General Meeting. They trust that upon further consideration your Committee will agree to this being done.

No. 24-D.—CALCUTTA, 6th February 1905.

From—The Assistant Secretary, Indian Jute Mills' Association
To—The Secretary, Jute Fabrics Shippers' Association.

Underweights of Jute Goods.

In compliance with the request made in your No. 5-J., of 25th January, the case in this connection which was detailed in your No. 1-J., of 13th idem, was submitted to a meeting of the Mills on Tuesday last. Copies of the correspondence had been previously circulated, and, after discussion, it was unanimously resolved to confirm the views taken by the Committee in their No. 8-D. of 23rd January, to your address.

From Chamber, to Jute Fabrics Shippers' Association.

No. 302-1905.—CALCUTTA, 27th February 1905.

Undersweights of Jute Goods.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 15-J. of 14th February 1905, forwarding copies of correspondence between the Committee of your Association and the Committee of the Indian Jute Mills' Association, on the above subject, for the consideration of the Committee of the Chamber.

The Committee have carefully considered the point at issue, *viz.*, as to whether the certificates of the Licensed Measurers' Department should be held to be conclusive proof of weights of goods at the time of delivery alongside the export vessel. You ask the Committee of the Chamber to issue a Ruling to the effect that when any goods are sold F.A.S., the weights should be ascertained by Licensed Measurers' at the time of delivery alongside the export vessel.

The Committee regret they cannot see their way to issue a general Ruling to this effect, as it would apply to other branches of trade, the representatives of which might not approve of it, and in view of the difference of opinion between the two Associations the Committee do not see their way to issue a specific Ruling in connection with jute goods.

OFFICIAL STATISTICS RELATING TO TRADE.

From Secretary, Trades Statistics Committee, Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY), to Chamber.

No. 1-T. S.—CALCUTTA, 28th February 1905.

I have the honor to enclose, for the information of your Chamber, a copy of Government of India Resolution No. 401-S.R., dated 19th January 1905, appointing a Committee consisting of Mr. Morshead, I.C.S., Mr. J. A. Robertson, Director-General of Statistics, and myself, to deal with the question of the improvement of the official statistics relating to trade.

2. The most important subject before the Committee is the revision of the statistics of the sea-borne foreign trade of the country, one aspect of which, relating to the countries to be recorded for imports and exports respectively, has been already discussed by the Chamber with the Government of India in the correspondence ending with Finance and Commerce Department letter No. 4260-S.R., of the 25th August 1903*. It may be remembered that the practice in India is to record the country of the port at which, according to the Exporter's declaration, the goods are to be discharged as the country to which they are exported, and that of the port from which they were last shipped to India as the country from which they are imported. It was found that this practice rendered the statistics faulty in respect especially of exports to Egypt, declared "for orders" and of imports from Ceylon, the Straits Settlements and Hong-Kong; and the proposal was to endeavour to ascertain and record the ultimate destination of the former and the country of original shipment for the latter. In the letter quoted the first proposal was accepted, whilst the second was to form the subject of a further communication. In the course of further consideration it was thought undesirable to confine these attempts at more correct registration to goods passing to or from particular ports only, and the advisability of extending them so as to place all imports and exports on a uniform basis, was considered. In the meanwhile it was ascertained, that the Board of Trade had taken a step in the same direction as regards imports by attempting to register the country whence goods are consigned instead of that from which they are last shipped; and it became a question whether the country of consignment should not be adopted in India instead of the country of original shipment. Difficulties were, however, foreseen in introducing the change and it was decided to refer the question to this Committee, Mr. Morshead being in the meanwhile deputed to study the system of trade registration in force in the United Kingdom, and at one or two important commercial centres in Germany, Belgium and France. Mr. Morshead's report is now before the Committee, and the proposal they have under consideration is to adopt the country whence goods were consigned for imports, and to which they are consigned

* See page 401 of Chamber Report 1903, Vol II.

(that is, practically their final destination) for exports, disregarding the countries through which they have passed in transit or transhipment on the way.

3. The other matters with which the Committee have been referred to deal are—

- (1) The revision of the form and arrangement of the tables published in the Annual Statement of the Foreign Trade and Coasting trade of each Province.

This question has recently formed the subject of communication between your Chamber and the Director-General of Statistics.

- (2) The accounts of the Inland trade of India carried by rail and river, including the methods of valuation.

- (3) The registration of the Frontier trade.

The Committee are not in a position at present to formulate their proposals upon these topics.

4. In dealing with all these questions they are desirous of obtaining the assistance of the various Chambers of Commerce and they would, therefore, be glad if an opportunity could be afforded them of meeting the members of your Chamber for the discussion of the questions at issue. They do not defer this request until they can place more definite proposals before your Chamber because the time fixed by Government for the conclusion of their task is limited, and, as it will be necessary for the members to visit the other principal Indian ports before completing their report, they are anxious, if possible, to conclude their labours in Calcutta before the 5th of next month. While, therefore, regretting that they are unable to give your Chamber longer notice, they would be glad if a meeting could be arranged before that date, on any day and at any hour that may be convenient for your Chamber. Before the date fixed they hope to send a Memorandum stating the case in greater detail as regards the changes in the registration of country suggested, and showing concisely, in respect of the other matters of advice, the points upon which they would be especially glad

of advice. The Committee will also be glad, at any time, to receive communications from any individual members who have suggestions to make. All communications should be addressed to—

THE SECRETARY,
TRADE STATISTICS COMMITTEE,
C/O DEPT. OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY,
Council House Street,
Calcutta.

No. 401-S. R.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

FINANCE AND COMMERCE DEPARTMENT.

CALCUTTA, 19th January 1905.

RESOLUTION.

With the object of rendering the official statistics relating to trade and cognate subjects more accurate and more generally useful, the Government of India have decided to appoint a small Committee to which the revision of the statistical publications on these subjects, at present issued by the Government, will be entrusted. Several important changes in the system of registering the external trade of India are now under consideration, and this question as also other suggestions which have from time to time been made for the improvement of the statistical publications above mentioned, will be referred to the Committee.

2. The Committee will assemble at Calcutta in the beginning of February, and will be composed of the following gentlemen:—

MR. L. F. MORSHEAD, I.C.S., *President*.

MR. J. A. ROBERTSON, *Director General of Statistics*.

MR. R. E. V. ARBUTHNOT, I.C.S., Mr. Arbuthnot will also discharge the duties of Secretary.

3. The Government of India fully appreciate the difficulty and importance of the work which will devolve on the Committee and they are, therefore, averse from prescribing a definite period within which their report should be submitted. They trust, however, that it will be found possible to forward the report, which should be addressed to the Department of Commerce and Industry, within two months from the date on which the Committee assembles.

Ordered that this Resolution be communicated to the President and Members of the Committee, with the remark that the precise date on which the Committee should assemble may be fixed by the President in direct communication with the other Members.

MEMORANDUM.

I.—REVISION OF THE STATISTICS OF THE SEA-BORNE FOREIGN TRADE.

The Committee's task is to revise the statistical publications issued by the Government of India. Their first subject is the revision of the statistics of the Sea-borne Foreign trade of British India.

2. With the Sea-borne Foreign trade statistics the first question is to determine the scope of field they are to cover, that is,

to what limit they are to trace goods in the foreign trade. Hitherto in India it has been the practice to trace imports to the port from which they were shipped direct to India, and exports to that at which they are discharged from ship-board; in the latter case this is believed to have been usually the port at which they are finally discharged, and not merely unloaded for transhipment, but there has been no definite obligation on exporters to declare the former. The result on both sides has been that the real course of Indian trade has been obscured. For instance, on the import side our imports from Ceylon are swelled by the inclusion of gold* and unwrought copper† nearly all of which is in reality imported from Australia and merely transhipped at Ceylon; whilst to quote a well-known case on the export side, all rice and other merchandise declared for Suez "for orders" used to be credited to Egypt, whereas the goods really passed to the United Kingdom and countries on the Continent. Recently the actual destination of this merchandise has been specially recorded, with the result that the figures for exports to Egypt have been reduced by 85 per cent and stand more nearly at their proper total. An identical practice with ours for imports, which is followed in the United Kingdom, was found not long ago by the Board of Trade to have led to the same unsatisfactory results; for instance the import trade on butter and similar produce from Italy was practically not shown in the English record, the goods being attributed to France or Belgium, because they were directly shipped to the United Kingdom from Calais or Antwerp; and similarly the trade from Germany was shown as two-thirds of its proper volume, the difference being credited to Belgium and Holland.

3. In considering a change from our present system the Committee find several alternatives before them; thus for imports instead of the place from which goods were last shipped, it is possible to take the port from which they were originally shipped, or to go further back and take the country from which they were originally consigned, or to go further back still and record that in which they were actually produced, just as with exports it is possible to record that at which they are first discharged, from ship-board, or that at which they are finally discharged, or that in which they are ultimately delivered by rail after discharge. The difficulty felt in deciding between these alternatives, and the principal cause of divergence in the practices of different countries lie, the Committee believe, in the non-recognition of the fact that trade is not continuous with country; that is to say, that merchandise may enter or leave a country without entering or leaving its trade, as is the case with goods in transit; merchandise, for instance, consigned from Germany to India and Antwerp does not enter the trade of Belgium on the way; the transaction is between Germany and India.

4. Trade in fact begins and ends with the sale or purchase of the goods, and the Committee believe that the most satisfactory information that can be offered, to those who may wish to trace

the course of Indian imports and exports is that of the countries from which the goods have been purchased, or into which they are sold; that is to say, in the terms used by the Board of Trade the country of consignment for imports and of final destination for exports, or which may very suitably be called the country of consignment for both.

5. The advantages of this selection, assuming for the moment that it can be carried out in practice, are in the first place that imports and exports are placed on a uniform basis, and, secondly, that it will be easier to reconcile our statistics with those of the leading continental countries and the United Kingdom, Germany and Belgium and, according to the Committee's information, Austria-Hungary, Switzerland, possibly the United States, and a few less important countries.

The results of a six-months' trial for imports have been published and show, for instance, in the case of trade with Germany, an amendment much in proportion to the extent to which the figures were incorrect, before along with substantial corrections in the accounts of other countries. The exception with exports is in the case of countries possessing no sea-board, for which the country of the port of discharge is recorded. It is not known why the Board of Trade stop short at this point; it is an anomaly which seems likely sooner or later to disappear.

tries have already adopted this principle, whilst the United Kingdom is now trying it for imports and follows it with certain exceptions for exports. The chief countries that have not, according to the Committee's information, adopted it are France, Russia and Italy, but the trade with these is of less importance than with those previously mentioned.

6. On the other hand a possible disadvantage of the principle of registration proposed is that it does not necessarily trace imports to the country of origin or production, nor exports to any further destination to which the foreign purchaser may send them. But it is believed that the accepted interpretation of country of consignment and of final destination will go a long way to meet the requirements of those who need this information; this interpretation ignores on both sides, when material for the information is available, the intermediate operations of brokers or agents as well as the countries of transit or transhipment *en route*. And, following this interpretation, if we endeavour to register for imports the country of original purchase to order for the particular transaction and for exports the country to which they are sent for ultimate delivery and for order of the foreign importer, it is believed that in the great majority of cases we shall obtain for the former the country in which the goods were actually produced, and for the latter that in which the foreign importer intends to dispose of them. At any rate so far as the figures given below show these alternative countries appear to be largely identical for imports in Calcutta.

7. The country of consignment then; which the Committee propose to aim at recording, may be defined as, for imports, the country of original purchase to order for the particular transaction and for exports the country to which they are sent for ultimate delivery to order of the foreign purchaser.

8. The question is whether the material for this information is likely to be obtained. It has been represented to the Committee that it is already in a large measure available in Calcutta. Bills of entry and shipping bills have been examined at random in the Custom House, and, although the number examined is not sufficient to form a thoroughly reliable test, it is thought that it may furnish a useful tentative guide. But it is necessary, first, to distinguish between the Eastern and Western Trade. Treating imports first, for those in the Western Trade invoices are regularly presented, which, when they are those of an agent or broker, are not infrequently accompanied by copies of the invoices of the original vendor; and when they are not so accompanied, still usually contain a note of the origin of the goods for purposes of compliance with the Merchandise Marks Act, and sometimes a memorandum of the port of transhipment or other details of transport. These documents, therefore, provide information primarily of the country whence invoiced, and, secondly, of the country of origin. When the two agree the case is plain: when they do not, it is a question whether importers should be asked to instruct their Custom House agents to declare the country whence invoiced, that is, whence originally invoiced if two sets of invoices are presented, or the country of origin. If information were available as to whether the goods had been nationalised, that is, cleared as imports in the intermediate country, the choice would be simple; for whichever is the country of nationalisation would be required so that our statistics might be reconcilable with those of the country concerned; but it is believed that it is impracticable to ask for this refinement, and the proposal before the Committee is that they should aim at reaching it indirectly; that is to say, that a hard-and-fast line should be fixed according to whichever of the alternatives is likely in the long run to effect a result most in accordance with the definition they aim at. According to the test applied the country of origin is the best for this purpose. Details of the cases examined are given in the appendix "A" attached and show that in 108 cases out of the 119 examined, the country of origin agrees with the country whence invoiced, that is whence originally invoiced, whilst in 8 of the remaining 11 the country of origin seems the more likely of the two to tally with the country of consignment. Thus, so far as this test is a guide, in 90 per cent. of the cases there should be no difficulty in obtaining the country of consignment, and in 7 per cent. more it is likely to agree with the country of origin as at present declared. If further enquiries bear out the test so far as at present declared. If further enquiries bear out the test so far as applied, it has been suggested that this result is as near accuracy as it is practicable to go. All that would be needed, therefore, with these imports in order to carry out the change in practice, would be to ask importers to declare the country whence invoiced when it agrees with the country of origin, and when it does not agree, the latter.

9. For the Eastern Import Trade the Committee have not sufficient information of the nature of the trade at the distributing centres of Colombo, the Straits, and Hong Kong which at present cause our statistics to be most at fault. So far as the produce of

countries beyond is cleared as imports into those ports and stocked in anticipation of Indian or other orders, they are the places that should logically be shown as the country whence consigned, because the merchandise enters into the trade of the ports, and if its further origin is required, it should be traceable from their statistics so far as they publish them. It is, however, the case, according to the Committee's information, that Hong Kong publishes no statistics, whilst it is not known upon what principle those of the Straits and Ceylon are compiled, so that in the former case it is impossible, and in the latter it may be a matter of considerable difficulty to trace the further origin of goods by these means. Under these circumstances there are two alternatives before the Committee. One is to adhere to the country of consignment as defined so far as possible: the other to register the country of origin regardless of consignment. For the latter the problem is simple as the declarations, already made will form the basis of registration: whilst, for the former, invoices not being available as a rule for this trade, the bill of lading appears to be the only guide. It has, therefore, been proposed to the Committee, should it be decided to adhere to the country of consignment, to follow the bill of lading, and when this document shows that the goods are consigned in transhipment through the places mentioned from a further place of shipment to have the latter declared, and when they do not show this, the former, assuming that in the second case the goods have been nationalised at one or other of the places mentioned before sale to the Indian importer. It is a question, however, whether the country of origin would not be of greater value for this trade.

10. For exports an experimental change has already been made in Calcutta for those to Egypt for orders with the successful results already mentioned. For others 62 cases have been examined for 41 of which the marks as described in the shipping bill showed the ultimate destination of the cargo apart from that declared in the column for place of destination: and in 34 of these or over 80 per cent. the two destinations were found to agree, but in 7 not. The statistics are at present registered from the column for place of destination, and it is believed that by altering this heading to country of final destination, the heading adopted in the United Kingdom, and inviting exporters to declare accordingly, and perhaps to state their marks and numbers more fully as a check, it will be possible for the Customs authorities to reduce the proportion of cases in which this information is not registered to very narrow limits.

11. It seems possible, therefore, with a reservation for the Hong Kong and Eastern import trade, to adopt the country of consignment both for imports and exports without difficulty, and with the prospect of a material improvement in the results, both in the direction of a more correct record of trade, and of a better means of comparison with the figures of other countries. By proposing the simplest directions for the declarations to be made it is suggested that the chances of error are minimised, and that the only other causes of misdeclaration to be combated occur

when changes take place

* For instance an Indian exporter may consign tea to his London agent for sale, but the latter may find the market unfavourable and tranship the consignment for New York. The Indian exporter obviously cannot foresee this at the time of exportation

affect the gross figures. The Committee think fit to mention in this connection a plan in force in the United Kingdom and Germany by which, when a merchant does not wish to disclose the course of his trade, he reports the information confidentially to the Statistical office. They do not however, anticipate much advantage from such a course in India.

12. In connection with the change proposed the Committee had before them revised forms of a bill of entry and shipping bill upon which they invite the opinion of the Chamber. Copies of these forms are attached as appendices B and C. (*Not Printed*.)

13. As means towards ensuring more carefully declaration it is suggested (1) that brief instructions should be printed on the backs of the forms adopted, and (2) that the Customs authorities should be requested to examine Custom House agents to make sure that they understand the instructions before they are authorized to work in the Custom House. Of course if the changes in the declaration of country proposed be affected, it would be desirable to give both the old and the new figures for a period of years to preserve continuity. In the Committee's opinion 5 years would be sufficient.

14. The points on which the Chamber's opinion is chiefly invited in the above proposals may now be summarised. They include:—

(i) The adoption of the definition of country of consignment suggested in paragraph 7 above for imports and exports.

(ii) The proposal in paragraph 8 that for imports in the western trade importers should be asked to declare the country whence invoiced, when it agrees with the country of origin, and when it does not agree, the latter.

(iii) The alternatives in paragraph 9 for imports in the Eastern trade of adopting the country of origin regardless of consignment, or of attempting to give the country of consignment following the information of the bills of lading.

(iv) The proposal in paragraph 10 to change the heading of the column in the shipping bill for place of destination to country of final destination.*

(v) The suggestion of adopting the method of confidential commitments made in paragraph 11.

(vi) The new forms for bill of entry and shipping bill proposed in paragraph 12.

en route in the destination of merchandise,* or when, for business reasons, it does not suit a merchant to declare the final destination of his goods. In the former case it is believed that something may be done by inviting exporters to send information of the change as soon as it is known to them, whilst for the latter it has been represented that the cases are not sufficiently numerous to seriously affect the gross figures.

The Committee think fit to mention in this connection a plan in force in the United Kingdom and Germany by which, when a merchant does not wish to disclose the course of his trade, he reports the information confidentially to the Statistical office. They do not however, anticipate much advantage from such a course in India.

(vii) The proposals in paragraph 13 for the printing on the backs of the forms of simple instructions to Custom House agents, and of examining them in the same.

(viii) The publication of double sets of figures for 5 years to preserve continuity.

15. Having determined the scope of the statistics as between countries the Committee propose to examine the details of the information recorded with a view to any improvement that may seem desirable, and to consider other subjects that naturally arise in the course of revision. The heads of their enquiry may be thus summarised:—

(i) The list of article and system of grouping.

(ii) The list of countries.

(3) The units of quantity, the use of gross or net weight, and the methods of taring.

(iv) The values.

(v) The articles, if any, to be excluded as not possessing a commercial character.

(vi) The treatment of goods in transit to Nepal and other countries on the land frontier, or under transhipment through the Indian ports.

(vii) The treatment of postal goods, and others under special conditions such as baggage, samples, etc.

(viii) The arrangement of the tables and discrimination of special classes, such as Government stores, treasure, Indian and Foreign produce, dutiable merchandise and free, improvement trade, if any, trade *via* Suez Canal, trade *via* Hong Kong, the Straits and Ceylon, etc.

(ix) The grouping of unimportant items under articles and countries in the printed volumes, and the detailed record of these to be maintained in the office.

(x) The enlargement of the introduction to the volumes so as to show under all the above heads the scope and details of the information they undertake to convey.

(xi) The possible addition of (1) comparative tables of value for comparison between different years, and (2) of containing notices of the allowances to be made in comparing Indian results with those of the chief foreign countries.

(xii) The details of registration and compilation, namely, —

(a) Forms of declarations.

(b) Instructions to declarants.

(c) Instructions to verifying officers.

(d) Forms of registers.

(e) Instructions to registering and compiling clerks.

(f) Processes of check and correction.

(xiii) The publications, including dates, and insertion of corrections.

In all these matters the Committee propose to aim rather at a small body of information, correctly obtained, as far as possible, and lucidly arranged, with an explanation informing the public precisely what they may expect to find, than a larger quantity of a more uncertain character, and they are at present at the stage rather of inviting suggestions than of framing definite proposals. Any suggestions, therefore, that the Chamber may wish to offer will be welcomed.

II.—REVISION OF THE PROVINCIAL ANNUAL STATEMENTS OF TRADE AND NAVIGATION.

The Director-General's proposals for the revision of the Provincial Annual Statements have received the approval of the Chamber in their letter No. 1185 of the 2nd August 1904, with the exception that the Chamber desire the registration of interport trade in the coasting trade to be continued. The Committee find that the changes do not involve the abandonment of this registration: since the interport trade will be shown in the abstracts of the trade of each port to replace tables 3, 4, 5 and 6 in the Coasting Trade part of the Bengal volumes.

2. The Committee have under consideration the following additional changes:—

- (i) To introduce uniformity of size, binding and type in the different provincial volumes.
- (ii) To make the Coasting Trade a separate volume from the Foreign Trade.
- (iii) To change for the sake of uniformity the limit of Rs. 2,500 prescribed for the separate enumeration of articles under main heads in the Coasting Trade to Rs. 1,000.
- (iv) To revise the introductions so as to explain more fully the principle of arrangement, and the information the statistics convey.

III.—REVISION OF THE ANNUAL STATEMENT OF COASTING TRADE AND NAVIGATION FOR BRITISH INDIA.

If, as the Committee propose, an attempt is made to reconcile the arrangement of the Provincial tables with those in the Annual Statement of Coasting Trade, etc., for British India, it is advisable to take the opportunity of revising the latter. The Committee have, therefore, added this subject to their list. The revision will follow the lines of that approved for the Provincial volumes.

IV.—ACCOUNTS OF THE TRADE CARRIED BY RAIL AND RIVER.

These Accounts at present consist of—

- (a) The Quarterly and Annual Accounts of the trade carried by rail and river in India, published by the Government of India.
- (b) The Annual Accounts of Provincial trade carried by rail and river prepared by each Province except Burma.

The following are the points which appear to the Committee to require consideration in connection with these accounts.

2. (i) In the Annual Imperial volume there are at present three tables (III-V) of which tables III and IV give respectively the total quantity of each article imported and exported and the places to or from which imported or exported.

Table V gives a general view of the trade in certain principal articles between different places. It is proposed to substitute for these three tables a single table showing together in the form of table V the imports and exports in each article.

(ii) In the form in which the accounts are at present compiled details are given only of the more important articles under each main head, while the total for the main head includes also the amount of trade in 'other kinds' for which no separate details are given. This arrangement appears to be misleading as it may often be overlooked that the grand total is not the arithmetical sum of the recorded sub-totals. It is, therefore, proposed to revert to the practice in force prior to 1901 and to enter 'others as a separate sub-head.'

(iii) With a view to reducing the bulk of the volumes it is proposed to state the grand total for each main head in a single line, without showing the distribution thereof.

(iv) There are at present four tables (VI to IX) giving the trade by rail and river of the ports of Calcutta and Bombay for five years. It is proposed to add similar tables for Karachi and Madras.

(v) It is proposed to adopt for the Quarterly Accounts the same form as the Annual Accounts.

3. The Accounts of Rail and River-borne Trade in the Provincial Reports are divided into three main statements or divisions—

Statement I.—Trade of the province with other provinces.

Statement II.—Trade of the internal divisions of the province with other provinces.

Statement III.—Trade between the internal divisions of the province.

(vi) In the various Reports each of these statements is as a rule divided into two or more separate tables, while the numbering or lettering of the tables differs in each province. The Committee proposed to consider the advisability of adopting, as far as possible, a uniform method of numbering the tables in the various reports.

As at present compiled, the tables are unduly bulky.

• Tables I and II in Bengal Provincial Report.
• Tables III and IV in Bengal Provincial Report.

Statement I* in particular being little more than a repetition* of the totals in Statement II†. The proposals before the Committee with a view to rendering the returns less bulky are:—

- (vii) To omit Statement I altogether.
- (viii) To combine river and rail traffic in Statement II and to add, where necessary, a separate brief table giving particulars of the river traffic in each article by external blocks.

(ix) It should be considered whether it is desirable in Statement II referred to above to show particulars of the trade in every article and to or from every block, however unimportant, or whether it is desirable to abbreviate the statements by lumping together under the sub-head of others the blocks and the articles in which the trade does not exceed a certain minimum.

(x) Should such abbreviation be considered desirable, it appears to be necessary to consider further what minimum, if any, should be fixed in each case.

4. In addition to giving the quantity of trade the Provincial tables also give values. The values are admittedly very unreliable and are no longer given in the Imperial Returns. In this connection the Committee are of opinion that the following points should be considered:—

(xi) Has any inconvenience been felt from the omission of values in the Imperial tables.

(xii) Are the values regarded as possessing any real utility, or should values be omitted altogether from the Provincial tables.

(xiii) If it is decided that it is desirable that they should be retained, it has been suggested that more reliable results would be obtained if consignors of goods by rail and river were required to record their value. It has to be considered whether this proposal, if adopted, would lead to more reliable results, and whether there would be any objection to the proposals on the part of the mercantile community.

(xiv) As it is difficult at present to ascertain the rate of value adopted for each article, it is suggested that an appendix should be added showing this for each quarter. For purposes of comparison the rates of the preceding two years might be given.

5. The following further points suggest themselves to the Committee as deserving of consideration:—

(xv) Burma at present publishes no returns. It should be considered whether Burma should be brought into line with other provinces in this respect.

(xvi) Cawnpore is of growing importance. Should the trade of Cawnpore be separately shown in the United Provinces volumes as trade of Delhi City in the Punjab.

(xvii) Is it desirable to adopt cwt. instead of maund as the unit of weight.

(xviii) Is the list of articles at present prescribed satisfactory? Should any articles be added or omitted?

V.—ACCOUNTS OF THE TRADE BY LAND OF BRITISH INDIA WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

The points which appear to the Committee to require consideration in connection with the registration of the Land Frontier Trade are the following:—

(1) The adequacy of the staff at present employed in the registration of Trade Statistics.

(2) The desirability of securing closer supervision over the registering staff either by the appointment (as in Burma) of a special Superintendent of Inland Trade Registration whose business it would be to inspect the registration ports or by some other means.

(3) The present method of ascertaining the amount of traffic at each port is to count the vehicles or animals carrying the goods, and to multiply them by the quantity of an average load. The standard average loads were found many years ago, and it appears desirable to consider whether they do in fact represent accurately the actual loads for carts or pack animals.

A.

Western Imports—Examination of Bills of Entry.

Class.	Description of cases.	Number.
(a)	Cases in which the goods appear to have come direct from the original vendor to India, or through an agent or broker in the original vendor's country so that the country whence invoiced is also the country of the origin	102
(b)	Cases in which they appear to have been ordered direct from the original vendor, and came with his invoices, but in transit or transhipment through another country	2
(c)	Cases in which they were ordered through an agent or broker in another country but came from the original vendor's country direct, and accompanied by the original vendor's invoices	4
(d)	Similar cases unaccompanied by original vendor's invoices, but with agent's invoices showing country of origin	4
(e)	Similar cases but with goods coming in transit or transhipment through a country other than agent's	2
(f)	Cases otherwise doubtful, but country of origin as declared probably that of consignment	2
(g)	Cases in which goods probably nationalised in country whence invoiced, but with country of origin declared	3
	TOTAL	119

No mistake could arise in cases (a), (b), and (c), in which the country of origin, as declared, agrees with the country whence invoiced in the original vendor's invoices. These classes cover 108 out of 119 or just about 90 per cent. There remain 11, in 3 of which (g) it is possible that, the goods were nationalised in the country whence invoiced, so that strictly according to the definition which (g) it is possible that, the goods were nationalised in the country whence invoiced should be declared, rather than the country of origin, but in 4 of the remaining 8 (d), (e), (f), the country of origin would be more correct than the country whence invoiced.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
ROYAL EXCHANGE BUILDING,

Calcutta, 8th March 1905.

A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE CHAMBER, was held this day, to meet the members of the newly appointed Trade Statistics Committee, who had expressed a desire for a Conference with members of the Chamber interested in Trade Statistics.

PRESENT:

The HON. MR. A. A. APCAR, *President*.
MR. D. C. BLAIR.
" A. M. MONTEATH.

The following gentlemen, Chairmen of Associations connected with the Chamber, were present by invitation:—

MR. LOCKHART A. SMITH, *Chairman, Indian Tea Association*.
" J. NICOLL, *Chairman, Indian Jute Mills' Association*.
" W. BLECK, *Chairman, Calcutta Baled Jute Association*.
" H. V. LOW, *Chairman, Indian Mining Association*.
" A. GLEN, *Vice-Chairman, Calcutta Import Trade Association*.

The following gentlemen also attended by invitation:—

The HON. MR. E. CABLE.
SIR PATRICK PLAYFAIR, *Kt., C.I.E.*

The following members of the Trade Statistics Committee were present:—

MR. L. F. MORSHEAD, *I.C.S.*
" R. E. V. ARBUTHNOT, *I.C.S.*

MR. F. NOEL-PATON, *Director-General of Commercial Intelligence*, also attended the meeting.

The Trade Statistics Committee had been appointed by a Resolution of the Government of India, No. 401-S. R. of 19th January 1905, with the object of rendering the official statistics relating to trade, published by Government, more accurate and more generally useful.

Copies of a memorandum explaining the system under which statistical publications issued by Government were at present compiled, and the changes proposed to be made by the Trade Statistics Committee had been circulated previous to the meeting.

In this memorandum it was stated that the first subject to be taken up was the revision of the statistics of the Sea-borne Foreign Trade of British India. Regarding this the first question was the determination of the scope or field which the statistics were to cover, that is, to what limit goods in the foreign trade were to be traced. Hitherto in India it was the practice to trace imports to the port from which they were shipped direct to India, and exports

to that at which they were discharged from ship-board; in the latter case this was believed to have been usually the port at which they were finally discharged and not merely unloaded for transshipment, but there was no definite obligation on exporters to declare the former. The result on both sides had been that the real course of Indian trade had been obscured. For instance, imports from Ceylon had been swelled by the inclusion of gold and unwrought copper nearly all of which was in reality imported from Australia and merely transhipped at Ceylon, while on the export side, all rice and other merchandise declared for Suez "for orders" used to be credited to Egypt whereas the goods really passed to the United Kingdom and countries on the Continent. Recently the actual destination of this merchandise had been specially recorded with the result that the figures for exports to Egypt had been reduced by 85 per cent. and stood more nearly at their proper total. The country of consignment, therefore, which the Committee proposed to aim at recording was defined as, for imports, the country of original purchase to order for the particular transaction, and, for exports, the country to which they were sent for ultimate delivery to order of the foreign purchaser. The question, however, arose whether the material for this information was likely to be obtained. Bills of entry and Shipping Bills had, it was stated, been examined, and it was thought that they might furnish a useful tentative guide. But it was necessary to distinguish between the Eastern and Western trade. For imports in the Western trade it was proposed that importers should be asked to declare the country whence invoiced, when it agreed with the country of origin, and when it did not, the latter. Regarding the Eastern import trade it was stated that the Committee had not sufficient information of the nature of the trade at the distributing centres of Colombo, the Straits, and Hong-kong, which at present caused Government statistics to be most at fault. So far as the produce of countries beyond was cleared as imports into those ports and stocked in anticipation of India or other orders, it was considered that they were places which should logically be shown as the country whence consigned because the merchandise entered into the trade of the ports, and if its further origin were required, it should be traceable from their statistics so far as they were published. It was, however, believed that Hong-kong published no statistics, and the principle upon which those of the Straits and Ceylon were compiled was not known. Under the circumstances two alternatives were stated to be open for adoption, *viz.*, to adhere to the country of consignment as defined, as far as possible, or to register the country of origin regardless of consignment. For exports, an experimental change had already been made in Calcutta for those to Egypt for orders, with the successful results already mentioned. It, therefore, seemed, to the Committee to be possible, with a reservation for the Hong-kong and Eastern import trade, to adopt the country of consignment both for imports and exports with a prospect of material improvement in the results. A proposal to change the heading of the column in the Shipping Bill for place of destination to country of final destination; and a suggestion that when a

merchant did not wish to disclose the course of his trade, a confidential report to the Statistical Department should be made, were also included in the memorandum. Copies of new forms of Bills of Entry and Shipping Bill had been drawn up in accordance with the proposed new system; and on all the above matters the opinion of the meeting was invited. Various other small points were also mentioned in the memorandum but these were merely matters of detail.

MR. MORSHEAD now referred to the memorandum. He said the proposals of the Trade Statistics Committee (which are noted above) were specified in paragraph 14, and he invited the opinion of the meeting on them.

MR. LOCKHART SMITH said that, as far as the tea industry was concerned, it would be a step in the right direction if the proposals made in the memorandum could be carried out. The same kind of difficulty was experienced regarding exports of tea as that mentioned in the note with regard to shipments to Egypt "for orders." Large quantities of tea were shipped to London and other places the final destination of which could not be traced. It would be an advantage to the trade if this could be done. Statistics for tea were made great use of and the market was influenced by the publication of these statistics.

A letter from Mr. A. Tocher (Messrs. Duncan Brothers & Co.) who had been invited to the meeting, but was prevented from attending owing to other engagements, was then read:—

MR. TOCHER said that as Chairman of the Tea Cess Committee last year he had occasion to give attention to the Statistics of tea exports. When the cess accounts had been made up for the year ending 31st March last, it was found that there was a large discrepancy between the exports of tea from Calcutta as measured by the amount of cess collected and the figures returned by the Customs as the year's exports of tea. It was then discovered that tea waste or sweepings (exported in sacks and intended for chemical purposes) to the extent of about one million lbs. weight had been shown as tea. Other explanations had been given which reduced the difference to 200,000 lbs. This last figure remained unexplained except on hypothetical grounds which to him were not conclusive. The waste was no longer included in tea exports but other errors might be still possible. The subject was of more than academic interest to the tea industry as the Calcutta exports were regularly telegraphed to London and known to have a direct effect upon the market there. Mr. Tocher, therefore, suggested that the Trade Statistics Committee should have before them the desirability of looking into existing methods of compilation with the view of devising checks, where necessary, upon the accuracy of the figures issued to the public.

MR. MORSHEAD said that the statistics were known to be wrong, because, they included figures relating to transshipments instead of only the country with which the transactions really took place. Calcutta trade statistics could not, therefore, be reconciled with those of other countries. For instance with regard to goods

sent to Egypt, the statistics here could not be reconciled because Egyptian statistics did not take such goods into account at all having been for other destinations. With regard to imports the question was whether the country of actual production should be recorded or the place from which the goods were purchased for shipment to India. The Trade Statistics Committee proposed to record the place from which the goods were purchased as it has been found that the country of purchase was more or less the country of production.

MR. FLECK said that as regards jute, a portion shipped for London and Hamburg was really destined for other countries such as Austria, Belgium and France, but information regarding the ultimate destination was not always available to the shipper here and it might be difficult to furnish it to the Custom House. After a time the destination might be declared to the consignee and the shipper might know of it, and could furnish it to the Custom House. Wheat and Seed cargoes were cleared here for Port Said for orders, but shippers here might be able after a time to give information regarding their ultimate destinations to the Custom House.

MR. NICOLL said the ultimate port of destination was known of most consignments of jute manufactures. A small portion was shipped to London, Liverpool and some Mediterranean port for some other destination, but that was a small proportion of the whole trade. As manufacturers they would like to know the ultimate destination of all their manufactures.

The PRESIDENT said that as regards gunnies, speaking as a Carrier, he could say that his steamers carried quantities of gunnies to Penang, Singapore and Hong-kong. Singapore was known to be a depot only, and supplied the goods to other places.

MR. ARBUTHNOT remarked that as far as India was concerned the trade was as between India and Singapore.

MR. NICOLL stated that a large quantity was shipped to Hong-kong which was really destined for San-Francisco.

The PRESIDENT remarked that with regard to goods shipped under through Bills of Lading the destination would be known.

MR. MORSHEAD said he would take it that in the majority of cases there would be no difficulty in getting the final destination of cargoes, that taking the trade all round there would be difficulty in certain cases, but that in the large majority of cases information as to the final destination could be given. If this were so, he enquired if shippers would willingly do so if they could.

MR. LOCKHART SMITH said that as regards tea there would be no objection, as names were not given in the statistical publications but only the quantities.

The HON. MR. CABLE enquired if there would not be a difficulty regarding jute shipped to London. Taking the amount shipped at say 500,000 bales, it was known that there was no local consumption but that the goods were distributed to various places on the Continent. That would not be found out.

MR. MORSHEAD said there would be no difficulty if the goods were cleared through the Custom House in England and so entered into the British Trade Statistics. The Calcutta figures would show the course of the goods to England, and the figures there would show where they went to from the United Kingdom. If that were the case there seemed to be no reason why the Calcutta statistics should go further than the United Kingdom. The case was different when the goods were not recorded in the statistics of the foreign country to which they were consigned from India.

SIR PATRICK PLAYFAIR remarked that what had been said regarding gunnies was from the point of view of the manufacturer, but was there anything to be said from the point of view of the merchant. It was true a certain amount of goods were sent to certain places for orders and their destination was not known. But the question arose whether distributors cared to declare the destination, and whether there was not a certain amount of benefit to trade by some secrecy regarding business being maintained.

MR. MORSHEAD said that the information might be given confidentially. He enquired if this would be done in such cases.

MR. LOCKHART SMITH said that, as far as tea was concerned, there was no desire to maintain any secrecy about the amount or the destination.

MR. MORSHEAD added that such information would not be published in the daily lists, but would be included in the yearly statistics, and there would of course be no names.

This was agreed to.

SIR PATRICK PLAYFAIR enquired if there was any penalty in case shippers did not disclose the place of final destination.

MR. MORSHEAD said that the procedure was that a form would have to be filled up and there was the penalty of a fine imposed for forms not being properly filled up.

The HON. MR. CABLE suggested that shippers should be informed periodically that, with regard to certain consignments sent by them the ports of destination had not been declared, and they should be asked if they could then give them.

This was considered to be a practicable suggestion and was accordingly noted by Mr. Morshead.

The proposals of the Trade Statistics Committee with regard to recording figures of export were approved with the foregoing modifications.

MR. GLEN said that with regard to imports the packages from foreign countries were mainly direct from the country of origin. Many goods bought in Hamburg, however, were known to be manufactured in Spain, Italy, Austria, &c.; they were shipped from Hamburg. The goods had on them "made in Spain," &c. He thought that as far as imports were concerned it would be fairly easy to give the names of the country of origin.

The proposed forms of Bill of Entry and Shipping Bill were duly examined and approved.

MR. MORSHEAD then enquired whether there was any objection to the proposal to print on the backs of the forms simple instructions to Custom House Agents and Sircars, and of examining them in the same.

This was considered as a rule unnecessary, as the forms would be filled up and signed in the Office by responsible members of firms, but it might be useful in some cases.

MR. ARBUTHNOT enquired whether the omission of values from the Inland Trade Statistics, published by the Government of India, caused any inconvenience.

The reply was in the negative.

MR. MORSHEAD stated that information regarding Indian trade of the nature contained in Consular Reports was asked for by the Board of Trade. He enquired if there was any objection to this being given.

The meeting was of opinion that there was no objection to giving information such as published in the Board of Trade Journal.

SIR PATRICK PLAYFAIR enquired if there was any intention, in view of the formation of the Trade Statistics Committee and of the changes proposed to be made in connection with the compilation of statistics, to alter the nature of the Annual Review of the Trade of India so far issued by the Director General of Statistics. He thought that Review was a most valuable summary, and it would be a pity if the system adopted in it were interrupted.

MR. PATON replied that he had not, so far, heard of any change being contemplated.

The Proceedings then terminated.

A. A. APCAR,
President.

THE LABOUR QUESTION.

From Government of Bengal (JUDICIAL), to Chamber.

No. 2029-J.—CALCUTTA, 7th March 1905.

I am directed to invite your attention to an article which appeared in *The Englishman* of the 27th January, 1905, under the heading "Wants—a Labour Bureau," in which it was stated that the mercantile community would welcome the creation of an organisation that would control the supply of labour. Government intervention was, it was said, essential to success, and it was suggested that a State Labour Bureau should be established. It was also urged, as a matter closely associated with the labour problem, that steps should be taken to lower the transport charges to and from the Port of Calcutta.

2. As the question is one in which the Chamber of Commerce is directly interested, I am to enquire whether any proposals for action in the matter are being considered by the Chamber, and to say that, if so, His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor will be glad to learn what they are.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

ROYAL EXCHANGE BUILDING,

Calcutta, 14th March 1905.

A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE CHAMBER was held this day, to discuss the Labour Question, informally, with the Hon'ble Mr. J. P. Hewett, C.S.I., C.I.E., in connection with the Resolution passed at the recent Conference of Indian and Ceylon Chambers of Commerce.

PRESENT :

The HON'BLE MR. A. A. APCAR, President.
 MR. J. R. BERTRAM.
 " D. C. BLAIR.
 " C. G. GIRO.
 " C. W. N. GRAHAM.

The following gentlemen were present by invitation :—

The HON'BLE MR. J. P. HEWETT, C.S.I., C.I.E.
 The HON'BLE MR. E. CABLE.
 SIR PATRICK PLANTAG, KT., C.I.E.
 MR. J. M. G. PROPHIT.
 " G. H. SUTHERLAND.
 " J. NICOLL,
Chairman, Indian Jute Mills' Association.
 " LOCKHART A. SMITH,
Chairman, Indian Tea Association.
 " H. H. MACLEOD,
Representing the Indian Mining Association.

The HON'BLE MR. HEWETT said that he was glad of the opportunity which the meeting afforded him of learning whether Government could give any assistance to employers in regard to the provision of labour. So far as he had been able to ascertain there was any amount of labour in the country; the great difficulty was to secure it. Judging from certain facts and figures which emerged from a consideration of the statistics, the problem in Bengal was quite different from what it was in other parts of India. Bengal, Behar and the Doab of the United Provinces were practically the most thickly populated areas in India. In Bombay the density was not one-third of the density in the Upper Provinces. In Bengal the Mill hands numbered 213,000; and in Bombay 185,000. And yet in Bombay not the slightest difficulty was experienced in obtaining labour except when the plague attacked the city. Indeed, the supply of labour was now so adequate that he was informed by the Port Trust authorities that no difficulty would be experienced in raising the supply of Dock labourers from 2,000 then employed to 7,000 the number required when export was in full swing. He was aware that in Bengal the case was altogether different. There was a certain amount of emigration from India to the oversea Colonies. But the numbers from Bengal were comparatively few. Of 215 coolies whom he had seen a day or so previously at the Natal Depot, in Calcutta, one only came from Bengal and thirteen from Behar. He had been told by district officers that there was a very large migration of labour from Behar to Mymensingh and Dacca at certain times of the year. He did not know why that labour should not be attracted to Calcutta. He had not arrived at any conclusions on the matter, but it seemed to him that the labour was in existence. And he wished to ascertain if those present could suggest any reason as to why it was so difficult to obtain.

In response to an invitation from the President, Sir Patrick Playfair said his experience was that the recruiting laws in Bengal and other provinces made it so difficult to get labour for the tea districts. In fact he was inclined to regard the laws and regulations as being mainly responsible for the inequities which had been so complained of in the past. On the other hand, it was a fact that large numbers of people went up to the Doors, and abuses were not heard of. They were the same class of people, and were drawn from the same districts as those proceeding to Assam. With regard to emigration from Behar, he was informed some years ago that those emigrants were harvesters who migrated to Mymensingh and Dacca to cut the jute crop. He once saw a report of the Collector of Saran in which it was stated that 30 lakhs of rupees had been remitted back home by such people. Although he spoke with diffidence before Mr. Lockhart Smith, the Chairman of the Indian Tea Association, he thought that if the laws and regulations could be abolished, and if the coolies could go to Assam without restriction, and be made to serve a certain time there until the employer recovered in work the cost of bringing them up, there would be a great increase in the flow of labour. At the present time the actual cost of sending a coolie up to the Brahmaputra

valley did not amount to more than Rs. 30. But tea proprietors had to pay Rs. 150. The difference did not go to the coolie. It was spent in feebing subordinate officials, and in paying middlemen.

MR. LOCKHART SMITH, in reply to an enquiry from the President, said that it was difficult to express a definite opinion as to whether Act VI of 1901 should or should not be repealed. In the Brahmputra valley proprietors favoured its retention, while in the Surma valley there was a feeling in favour of its withdrawal. Mr. Smith then referred to a scheme which had been advanced for the establishment of a Central Recruiting Agency. He asked if the Government would be prepared to legislate for such a scheme if it were supported by 80 per cent. of the industry.

MR. HEWETT said that he considered 80 per cent. would be as much as could be expected; and he thought it would be a sufficient majority for the Government to regard as showing the wishes of those interested in the industry.

MR. SUTHERLAND was opposed to the withdrawal of Act VI from the tea districts. He did not believe that higher wages would attract more labourers. And if the Act were withdrawn proprietors would have no means of recovering from the labourers sufficient work to cover the cost of their importation. Very few of any Brahmputra valley proprietors would support the withdrawal of the Act. Sixty per cent. of the Surma valley proprietors had advocated its withdrawal from that district, but even there the remaining 40 per cent. favoured its retention. As regards the Doorgs he did not quite agree with Sir Patrick Playfair. Doorgs proprietors had difficulties in getting coolies. It was true that abuses were not heard of, but then they were not brought to light by Government inquiry. Mr. Hewett enquired if Mr. Sutherland favoured free recruiting under Sec. 92 of the Act.

MR. SUTHERLAND replied that it would be better to give the *Sardars* a greater chance first. He would insist upon all contractors being licensed so as to check *Sardars* selling coolies to *Arbathis*. He was in favour of Mr. Lockhart Smith's scheme for a recruiting agency if it could be carried out.

MR. NICOLL explained the circumstances and conditions under which the labour supply of the Calcutta Mills is obtained. The Mills had no system of recruitment. The labourers came and went as they pleased. There was always a shortage during certain periods of the year which very greatly hampered the work of the Mills. He did not believe that an enhancement of wages would have any good effect. It would not bring workers at the particular time when they were required; for that was just the time when they wished to go to their own homes. The utmost they, as Mill owners, could do would be to ask Government to publish notices in the congested areas to the effect that profitable employment could be obtained in the Calcutta mills. Beyond that they could not go. For if they asked Government to send down workers it would mean that they (the Millowners) would be under an obligation to employ the men so sent. And to give any undertaking of that description would be impossible.

THE HON. MR. CABLE briefly referred to the conditions under which his firm recruited and employed a very large labour force for handling goods at the Kidderpore Docks and elsewhere. With regard to Mill labour he asked if it would not be possible for Local Governments to address the Department of Commerce and Industry of those districts where plenty of labour was available. The Department could then inform the different interests concerned and recruiting operations in those districts might be commenced. This proposal had, he believed, been originally suggested by Mr. Hewett.

MR. HEWETT said, with reference to Mr. Nicoll's suggestion, that in Bengal there was very great difficulty in disseminating information throughout the country districts. The Police was the only agency available, and the objections to their employment were too well known to need repetition. It was different in Northern India where the land was not permanently settled, and a revenue staff was consequently in existence. Consequently the suggestion could be put into force in the United Provinces without difficulty, but he did not see that it could be very well adopted in Bengal. For himself he thought that the suggestion which Mr. Cable had made might be the best to adopt.

MR. MACLEOD explained the difficulties experienced by colliery owners in obtaining an adequate supply of labour. But he agreed that no remedy seemed to be possible, although he thought perhaps good might result from the suggestion made by Mr. Cable.

After considerable further discussion Mr. Hewett agreed to approach the different Local Governments with a view to the submission to his Department of periodical returns showing the districts in which labour was considered to be plentiful. The information thus obtained would be tabulated and forwarded to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce for distribution to the interests concerned.

THE PRESIDENT having thanked Mr. Hewett for his attendance and for the measures which he had kindly undertaken to adopt, the meeting terminated.

A. A. APGAR,
President.

H. M. HAYWOOD,
Acting Secretary.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal, (JUDICIAL).

No. 584,1905.—CALCUTTA, 4th April 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 2029-J, of 7th March 1905, in which you invite attention to an article in *The Englishman* of the 27th January 1905 on the subject of a Labour Bureau, the creation of which it was said would be welcomed by the mercantile community, and you enquire for the information of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor whether any

proposals in connection with the question are being considered by the Chamber.

2. Your letter was considered at a recent Conference between the Committee and the Hon. Mr. J. P. Hewett, C.S.I., C.I.E., on the Labour Question. Mr. Hewett, was informed that no proposals of the kind indicated were under the consideration of the Committee. As it was understood that Mr. Hewett was intending to confer with His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor on the subject of the suggestions and proposals made at the Conference referred to (copy of the proceedings of which is enclosed), the Committee decided to defer the further discussion of the matter pending the result of the steps which Mr. Hewett contemplated taking.

From Offg. Collector of Customs, to Chamber.

No. 2403.—CALCUTTA, 14th July 1905.

I have the honor to enclose a copy of a letter addressed to me by the Government of Bengal, General Department, No. 641-T. G., dated 24th May 1905, together with a letter from the Government of India, Department of Commerce and Industry, dated 4th May 1905. You will observe from this correspondence that in consequence of Resolution No. 22 passed at the Conference of the Indian and Ceylon Chambers of Commerce in January last, I have been placed on special duty to enquire into the question of labour for mills, factories, mines and similar industries in Bengal, and for the handling of goods in Calcutta, and I have been ordered to put myself into communication with the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

2. Mr. Morshead will relieve me of my present appointment of Offg. Collector of Customs, Calcutta, on July 27th, so I shall be free to commence my new duties on July 28th. Will you and let me know how the Chamber would wish me to proceed. In the first place it seems necessary that I should be informed of the general views of the Chamber as to what are the obstructions that these can be removed, in what direction especially, it is hoped that the present enquiry will prove beneficial. Perhaps you will be able to communicate these to me yourself, or I might meet representatives of the Chamber on or about July 28th at the Chamber of Commerce.

After this I think I should put myself in direct communication with those firms which are the largest employers of labour in Calcutta, and also those firms which contract to supply labour, and I shall be much obliged with a list of those gentlemen whom the Chamber of Commerce would advise me to interview. I am communicating separately with the Port Commissioners. It will be advisable apparently to examine the conditions under which Labour works, first in handling goods in Calcutta, secondly in Jute, Paper and Cotton Mills, thirdly in the Coal Mines. I ought then to have obtained sufficient information to enable me to know which districts in Bengal I should visit.

5. I shall be much obliged if you will let me know as soon as you can, when you can arrange for me a meeting at the Chamber of Commerce, since I think it is not advisable that I should make other engagements till after that meeting.

No. 641-T. G.—DARJEELING, 24th May 1905.

From—H. W. C. CARNDUFF, ESQ., I.C.S., C.I.E., Offg. Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Department,

To—B. FOLEY, ESQ., I.C.S., Offg. Collector of Customs, Calcutta.

I am directed to forward the accompanying copy of a letter from the Government of India in the Department of Commerce and Industry, No. 1476-Emigration, dated the 4th instant, and of its enclosure, regarding the expediency of causing an enquiry to be made into the causes of the deficiency in the supply of labour for mills, factories, mines and similar industries in Bengal, and for the handling of goods in Calcutta. I am to say that the Lieutenant-Governor has selected you as the officer to be placed on deputation in this Province for the purposes of the proposed enquiry, and I am to request you to be prepared to undertake it as soon as you are relieved by Mr. Morshead of your present appointment.

2. You will observe from paragraph 4 of the letter from the Government of India, that the object before the Government is first to ascertain, for the information of the employers of labour, in what localities efforts for the recruitment of more labour may most profitably be made, and afterwards to explain to the classes whom it is desired to attract, the advantages of employment in commercial centres. It is to the first of these that your investigations should be directed, and paragraph 5 of Mr. Harvey's letter lays down the lines upon which you ought to proceed. The enquiry should be made, first, in the mills, factories and mines themselves and secondly, in the districts where labour appears to be available; and the Lieutenant-Governor desires that you should at once enter into and throughout maintain, the closest communication with the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce. You should visit the works of the Port Commissioners, and consult the contractors through whom the greater portion of the loading and unloading work is done. You should also visit selected mills, factories and mines, and put yourself in touch with the persons employed in them; ascertain where they have come from, what are the conditions under which they labour, what are the drawbacks tending to discourage labourers from coming in large numbers, and whether and how these might be removed and a better supply of labour might be attracted; and collect any other information bearing on the subject. You should, at the same time, enquire from the employers of labour what are the means which are, or should be, adopted to attract and retain labour. It will be seen that the Government of India especially contemplate the provision of quarters for operatives and other means of

making labour attractive; and this question, as well as that of forming labour villages down the river Hooghly and arranging for the conveyance of the operatives to and fro daily by steamer should be very carefully considered by you. After the enquiry is completed in Calcutta and in the localities in which the coal mines are situated, it will be necessary for you to proceed to the districts in which labour seems to be available, and in selecting these you should be guided by such information as you may have derived from employers and labourers in Calcutta or may be able to obtain from District officers throughout the Province.

3. I am to add, that, as soon as an officer has been appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces to conduct similar enquiries in those Provinces, his name will be communicated to you and you will then be at liberty to communicate freely with him in regard to any matter connected with the subject of your deputation.

No. 1476-EM.—SIMLA, 4th May 1905.

From—W. L. HARVEY, Esq., Secretary to Government of India,
Department of Commerce and Industry,

To—The Chief Secretary, to the Government of Bengal.

I am directed to forward a copy of the 22nd Resolution passed at the recent Conference of Indian and Ceylon Chambers of Commerce, recommending that an enquiry should be made into the causes of the serious deficiency in the supply of labour in India; and in doing so to explain that the Government of India propose, for the present, to confine the discussion to the question of the supply of labour for mills, factories, mines, and similar industries in Bengal, and for the handling of goods at Calcutta.

2. The complaint as to the shortness of labour does not appear to be well founded in many parts of the country, but the Government of India are satisfied that difficulty is frequently experienced in obtaining an adequate supply of labour for the mines and factories in Bengal as well as for the handling of the goods at Calcutta. So far, however, as the Government of India are able to judge there is no shortage in the amount of labour available, and it appears to them that the congested tracts of Bengal and the United Provinces should afford an ample field for the recruitment of labourers of the class which is chiefly in request.

3. It is recognised that one of the main causes which have operated to produce a scarcity of labour is the fact that unskilled men now demand a higher rate of wages than they were formerly prepared to accept, while the wages of skilled operatives have probably increased more than proportionately. The spread of the plague has also dislocated the labour market during recent years. Apart from these causes, however, it appears to the Government of India that the difficulties which are at present

experienced in obtaining an adequate supply of labour are in a great measure due to the facts that employers of labour are not aware of the most suitable places in which to recruit their men; that they are not always sufficiently alive to the need for adopting certain necessary precautions in order to retain them after recruitment, and that the labourers, as a class, are ignorant of the advantages which they would derive from accepting service in the larger commercial centres of the country. These latter causes are remediable; and the Government of India incline to the opinion that, if steps were taken to remove the defects which have been alluded to, a much larger amount of labour than is at present available would be forthcoming.

4. The question is one of great importance as affecting both the industrial development of India and the encouragement of the poorer classes of the community to depend on means of livelihood other than agriculture, and the Government of India consider that the State may legitimately assist employers of labour by bringing them into closer touch with the available supply which, there seems to be good reason to believe, exists in the congested districts of Bengal and the United Provinces. In order to effect this, it will in the first place be necessary to ascertain the localities in which efforts may profitably be made to recruit fresh labour, and afterwards to explain to the classes whom it is desired to attract the advantages to be derived from employment in the commercial centres of India. The Government of India are satisfied that this work cannot be undertaken by the Collectors of districts unaided. It requires more undivided attention than these officers, who are fully occupied with the administrative duties which at present devolve on them, could devote to it, while in some instances they may possibly be unduly apprehensive as to the effects on the agricultural prosperity of their districts of the recruiting operations. For these reasons, the Government of India consider that any enquiries into the conditions affecting the supply of labour should be conducted by a special officer deputed for this purpose.

5. I am to suggest that, if His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor agrees with this proposal, steps may be taken to depute a member of the Indian Civil Service to conduct the inquiry in Bengal. The first duty of the officer selected would be to acquaint himself on the spot with the conditions under which labourers work in the mills, factories and mines in Bengal, and in handling goods at Calcutta, and to ascertain the precise requirements of the employers of labour. The next step to be taken by him would be to make detailed inquiries in the districts where labour appears to be available and to determine in what tracts the varying requirements of employers can be satisfied. In conducting these inquiries he should pay particular attention to the means to be adopted by employers in retaining labour which they had to, and it is one on which the Government of India lay great stress. They are of opinion that no system will be successful unless this matter receives much more attention than has hitherto

been bestowed on it. The experiment which has already been made at Cawnpore, for instance, of providing quarters for operatives in model villages should, the Government of India consider, be followed in other large centres by employers of labour; and they would also recommend the adoption of a system under which each batch of labourers recruited from a distance would be represented by a *sindar* or *mistari*, who would be recruited with them, and who would, in virtue of his authority over them, be able to represent their grievances to his employers, and to protect them from oppression on the part of the hands already engaged in the factory, mill, or mine.

6. The reports prepared by the officer selected for this work would be forwarded to the Chamber of Commerce interested with a view to giving them accurate information as to places in which particular kinds of labourers are to be found. In order to assist employers in their recruiting operations it would probably, it appears to the Government of India, also be advisable to arrange that the Collectors of districts where labour is considered to be available should be required to submit reports at regular intervals, preferably half-yearly, to the Local Government, stating whether the circumstances at the particular time were favourable or unfavourable for the recruitment of labour. These reports would also be transmitted to the Chambers. It is considered, however, that these details may more suitably be settled later on, when the Government of India are in possession of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor's opinion as to the desirability of deputing a special officer for the purpose of making the enquiries suggested.

7. I am to say that a similar letter has been addressed to the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces, and to ask that, if His Honour has no objection, the officer appointed by him may be authorized to communicate freely with the officer appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces.

From Chamber, to Officiating Collector of Customs.

No. 1283-1905.—CALCUTTA, 28th July 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 2403, dated 14th July (with enclosures) in which you inform them that you have been placed on special duty by the Government of Bengal to enquire into the question of labour for mills, factories, mines, and similar industries, and for the handling of goods in Calcutta.

2. The Committee have read with attention the papers forwarded with your letter; and they will be glad to avail themselves of the opportunity of meeting you as you suggest. Friday, the 4th August, would be a convenient day for them, and they suggest that meeting could be held on that day if suitable to you. The meeting should be held at the rooms of the Chamber; and 3 o'clock in the afternoon would probably be the best time. It is the inten-

tion of the Committee to invite the attendance of representatives of the leading Commercial Associations interested in the questions to be discussed.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,

ROYAL EXCHANGE BUILDING,

Calcutta 8th August 1905

A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE CHAMBER, was held this day.

PRESENT:

The HON. MR. A. A. APCAR,		
Mr. J. D. NIMMO,	(President).	
" J. R. BERTWAM	..	} Committee of the Chamber of Commerce.
" D. C. BLAIR	..	
" C. G. GIRO	..	
" A. M. MONTEATH	..	

MR. J. DOUGLAS, MR. T. FRASER and MR. C. GRAHAM were unavoidably absent.

The following gentlemen were also present by invitation:—

MR. E. CABLE	..	Messrs. Bird & Co.
" F. G. DUMAYNE	..	Vice-Chairman, Calcutta Port Commissioners.
" B. FOLEY, I.C.S.	..	Indian Tea Association.
" T. MCMORRAN	..	Indian Mining Association.
" P. R. LAWRIE	..	Indian Jute Mills' Association.
" J. NICOLL	..	Calcutta Import Trade Association.
" N. B. SIRCAR, C.I.E.	..	Jute Fabrics Shippers' Association.
" C. A. GIANNACOPULO	..	Engineering and Iron Trades Association.
" J. GILLESPIE	..	Calcutta Trades' Association.
" W. T. GRICE	..	Liners' Conference.
" A. J. DENT	..	Messrs. Hashim Ariff & Co.
" W. J. WILLIAMSON	..	} The Dunbar Cotton Mills, Limited.
" H. S. ASHTON	..	
" E. A. MAYALL	..	
" A. PINTON	..	

MR. J. J. SINCLAIR, Chairman of the Calcutta Baled Jute Association, and Mr. ANDREW YULE who had been also invited, were unavoidably absent.

The meeting was called to enable Mr. B. FOLEY, I.C.S., to discuss certain matters affecting the labour supply of Calcutta. Mr. FOLEY had been deputed by the Government of Bengal to conduct an enquiry into the question of labour for mills, factories,

mines, and other organised industries in Bengal, and for the handling of goods in Calcutta.

The PRESIDENT said—Gentlemen, the Government of Bengal have, as you know, appointed Mr. Foley to enquire into the question of labour for mills, &c., in Bengal and for the handling of goods in Calcutta. MR FOLEY has been asked to put himself in communication with the Committee of the Chamber, and has expressed a desire to be informed of the general views of the Chamber, as to what are the obstructions which at present exist in the way of an adequate supply of labour, and how they can be removed. This action on the part of Government has arisen out of the Resolution that was passed at the Conference of Indian and Ceylon Chambers last January, and it is a sign that Government are willing to assist us in every possible way. Perhaps MR. FOLEY had better first say in what direction he wants information or advice, and the gentlemen present will no doubt give him all the assistance possible.

MR. FOLEY said.—Gentlemen.—Government consider that the complaints as to shortness of labour do not appear to be well founded in many parts of the country, but they are satisfied that difficulty is occasionally experienced in obtaining an adequate supply of labour in Bengal; that there are certain causes which are not preventable; and that there are others which are preventable. One of the causes is recognised to be the demand for higher wages, while the spread of plague is stated to be another. Neither of these would seem to be preventable. But it appears to Government that the shortage is also in a great measure due to the fact that employers are not aware of the most suitable places in which to recruit; that they do not always take sufficient precautions to keep the men after recruitment; and that the labourers, as a class, are not aware of the advantages which are to be derived from accepting service in the larger commercial centres of the country. I have been put on special duty to find out the conditions under which labourers work in Bengal, so as to ascertain the precise requirements of employers; to make detailed enquiries in the districts, to determine how these requirements can be satisfied; and, thirdly, to devise means of communicating to the people in the rural areas the advantages which they may derive from working in the large centres. I should like to know, therefore, in what industries labour is deficient, and for how long the shortage has been experienced. I have enquired from the Port Commissioners with regard to the Docks and Jetties, and they have informed me that the shortage only exists during April and May. It is not, that is to say, general throughout the year.

MR. CABLE.—Yes, during April, May and June labour is invariably short at the Docks. We have frequently to send up-country for labour; and we can generally obtain it when we send, except in April, May and June when we have difficulties.

MR. FOLEY.—I take it that sufficient labour for handling goods can be obtained except during April, May and June.

MR. CABLE confirmed this.

MR. LAWRIE said that labour at the collieries was short throughout the year, but particularly so during the three months April to June.

The PRESIDENT.—I take it we could all do with more labour at the collieries throughout the year, but in the three months mentioned the scarcity is accentuated. The output of coal would be increased if we could get more labour throughout the remaining nine months. This shortage has been experienced for many years.

MR. NICOLL.—The Jute Mills are, as a rule, short of labour from about 15th March to 15th June. One of the reasons why there is a shortage is that about 70 to 80 per cent. of the mill hands are of the immigrant class, who come chiefly from Monghyr, Patna, Arrah, Chupra, and Ghazipur. The shortage has been going on for many years.

The PRESIDENT.—Do you find that during the last fortnight you have more workmen for your jute mills than you want? My manager tells me that he has so much labour offering that he can pick and choose.

MR. NICOLL said that his experience was similar.

MR. BLAIR said that, speaking for the Champdany and the Wellington Mills, they could always do with more labour than offered.

The PRESIDENT.—Is there any reason why some mills have more labour than they want, while others are starving?

MR. BLAIR.—Champdany is isolated and it has never been a labour centre like Samnuggur, Titaghur, Howrah or Seebpore. We have never a surplus of labour at the best of times. I think Mr. Cable's experience must be the same with the Dalhousie Mill.

MR. ASHTON.—The case is the same in cotton mills as in jute mills. There is a shortage in the same months. On the whole because they require a better class of skilled labour, the machinery being more delicate.

MR. GILLESPIE.—The engineering trades have the same difficulties as the jute trade. There is a shortage all the year round but it is accentuated in the hot weather months. Our shortage is partly due to the expansion of the jute industry, as each new mill requires a certain staff of trained mechanics which are taken away from the larger engineering works. We have tried to import Panjabis, but it has not been successful. The shortage has been felt during the last three or four years.

MR. NALIN BEHARI SIRCAR.—So far as imports are concerned, we have to deal with three different classes of labour: those that work in the godowns, those that work at the jetties, and the carters who are an important factor in the carriage of goods from the jetties to the godowns, to the Bazaar and to the Railway stations. I do not think there are any complaints with regard to shortage, in that way. During the three months referred to there is a shortage of labour, generally speaking; but the import trade is not much affected by it as are other industries.

MR. BERTRAM.—The Calcutta Corporation is always short of unskilled labour of the class of carters, etc.

MR. BLAIR.—Jute Presses, I may mention, suffer very much from shortage of labour. The shortage is not regular but periodical. Work at the presses is hard, and strong men are required; and it is difficult to get a sufficient supply.

MR. FOLEY.—Is there any shortage in Naraingunge?

MR. BLAIR.—There is always a shortage, and so much is it felt that we have to send out for men during April and May, and give them advances before we can rely on a staff at all. The practice of giving advances is becoming more and more prevalent I am sorry to say; although we should like to stop it, we are powerless to do so.

The VICE-PRESIDENT enquired if tea garden labour was specifically excluded from the enquiry. He did not mean labour for the Act districts, but free labour for the non-Act districts, such as the Dooms.

MR. FOLEY explained that his instructions were to the effect that tea was excluded from the scope of the enquiry.

MR. DUMAYNE said that Mr. Bertram had referred to labour for the Corporation. The Port Commissioners also experienced shortages, but chiefly in connection with large works, for which they often had to bring down men from up-country. But of course these were special cases, in which exceptional demands for labour were made.

MR. GRICE said that the members of his Association experienced a shortage almost always during the hot weather, but particularly during the months when the crops were being harvested. The shortage was in respect of both skilled and unskilled labour.

MR. FOLEY said it was evident that Government would not turn themselves into a recruiting agency. They would, however, be thought, supply information as to where labour might be available, so that anybody requiring it might arrange for it to be got.

The PRESIDENT enquired if Government would establish a bureau where information would be available. It had been suggested at one time that a sort of registry office should be formed where one could go for information as to the districts from which labour might be obtained.

MR. FOLEY replied that in the penultimate paragraph of the Government of India letter to the Government of Bengal it was stated that Collectors of Districts would report at regular intervals to the Local Government. He presumed the information would be the conditions and advantages of work in Calcutta, and the class labour required. He would then go to the districts where labour might be available, and see the various Collectors, and arrange as to the means of letting the people know the requirements of Calcutta.

The PRESIDENT asked what means the Collectors, would employ to disseminate the particulars to the people.

MR. FOLEY replied that notices in the vernacular would be, he imagined, posted up in various places, and information would also be given by the police. The police would merely announce certain facts and nothing beyond that.

MR. MONTEATH enquired if communications of a general nature only would be made, or would intimation be given to labourers, if, say, a certain firm announced that it required a number of labourers?

MR. FOLEY thought that specific requirements might be intimated also.

MR. GIRD said that if it were done through the police people might think it a plan for forced labour.

MR. NICOLL.—Are we all agreed as to the causes of this shortage; if so, the remedies could be considered. The labour supply in and around Calcutta is composed partly of labourers that live near the places where they work. This class of labour work in the general months, and in the hot weather they cease work because it is too hot. Then with regard to the large percentage of emigrant labour that make up the other part, it would appear that they are possessed with a strong instinct to return to their homes once a year, or once every two years. Then a great revolution is gradually going on by agricultural workers becoming industrial labourers. The third reason is that they are required at home for harvesting purposes. Then again, we know that the months of March and April are the marriage season, and many leave to get married or to be present at marriages. While many go back during these months, many also come to Calcutta and take the places of those who have gone away. There is, therefore, in all mill areas a surplus population sufficient to fill gaps in some mills but not in all.

MR. GIRD.—Our experience is limited to jute presses but it bears out what Mr. Nicoll says. We find that in the hot months the men absolutely refuse to work continuously in the sheds, and only agree to take up short shifts.

MR. NICOLL said it was a curious fact that, before the installation of electric light there was comparatively more labour at the Mills than there is at present.

MR. NIMMO.—It is at present, I think, about the same in the Mills that have not got electric light. We suffer very much from shortage during the same months—March to June—and have no shortage to speak of during other months.

The PRESIDENT.—The only way to have sufficient labour would be to have twenty-five per cent. more labour than is required, so that you could let a portion go whenever they wished.

MR. NIMMO.—As to the attractions of remittances from the Mill districts. This was referred to by Sir Patrick Playfair in his speech at the Conference of Chambers of Commerce. He was unable

then to give information as to the total of the money orders sent from Mill areas. He subsequently obtained the information, and it now appears in the Annual Report of the Jute Mills' Association. The sum has been increasing from year to year.

MR. FOLEY enquired if there was any necessity to find out new recruiting grounds.

THE PRESIDENT.—For the collieries and some other industries it would be necessary. The collieries could do with a good deal more labour if they could get it. Mr. Bertram has also told you about the shortage in Municipal labour, and Mr. Gillespie has complained that the shortage in the Engineering trade is greater than it was two or three years ago. If you will go round and enquire in the districts and give us the information you obtain, we will circulate it among members and any assistance that can be given will be gladly afforded. The information itself would be useful. We want more Bengal people working in Bengal. A very large percentage of our labour are immigrants.

MR. FOLEY said that the Government seemed to lay stress upon the provision of houses for labourers. He enquired as to the view entertained regarding this idea.

THE PRESIDENT replied that most Jute Mills provide huts at nominal rates. The collieries would do the same if they were sure that labour would settle down.

MR. NIMMO said that he thought there was something in the question of housing the labourers. Their experience was that the coolies were more contented and remained longer if their houses were good. They found there was a great demand for the better class of houses.

MR. NICOLL suggested that Mr. Foley might visit Mills that provided houses, and other Mills at which there are no houses.

MR. NIMMO said he would be pleased to take Mr. Foley over a Mill where there were entirely masonry coolie lines and a filtered water supply.

Some further conversation followed, in the course of which Mr. Foley said that he would visit some of the Mills, and also other factories and places where labour is employed. He would then pursue his enquiries in the districts. There was associated with him in the investigation an officer appointed by the Government of the United Provinces, who would be in Calcutta shortly, and who would also no doubt make enquiries.

The proceedings then terminated.

H. M. HAYWOOD,
Acting Secretary.

A. A. APCAR,
President.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
ROYAL EXCHANGE BUILDING,

Calcutta, 5th December 1905.

A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE
CHAMBER, was held this day.

PRESENT :

THE HON. MR. A. A. APCAR,	} Committee.
(President).	
" " " J. D. NIMMO,	
(Vice-President).	
MR. J. R. BERTRAM ..	
" D. C. BLAIR ..	
" C. G. GIRO ..	
" A. M. MONTEATH ..	
" C. NICOLL ..	

MR. C. GRAHAM had written regretting his inability to be present.

The following gentlemen were also present —

MR. B. FOLEY, I.C.S.	
" S. H. FREMANTLE, I.C.S.	
" H. S. ASHTON ..	<i>Messrs. Shaw, Wallace & Co.</i>
" W. GIRARD ..	<i>Messrs. Bird & Co.</i>
" W. T. GUICE ..	<i>Master, Calcutta Trades Association.</i>
" H. H. MACLEOD ..	<i>Chairman, Indian Mining Association.</i>
" E. A. MAYALL ..	<i>The Dumbey Cotton Mills, Ltd.</i>
" F. H. STEWART ..	<i>Secretary, Liners' Conference.</i>
" W. J. WILKINSON ..	<i>Messrs. Hashim Ariff Bros. & Co.</i>
" ANDREW YULE ..	<i>Messrs. Andrew Yule & Co.</i>

The meeting was called to enable Mr. B. Foley, I.C.S., who had been deputed by the Government of Bengal to conduct an enquiry into the question of labour for mills, factories, mines and other recognised industries in Bengal, and Mr. S. H. Fremantle, I.C.S., who had been placed on similar duty in the United Provinces, to meet the Committee and other members of the Chamber before submitting their reports to Government on the results of their enquiries which had now been completed.

THE PRESIDENT said — Gentlemen present would remember that on the 8th August last, they had met Mr. Foley and discussed with him certain matters relating to the enquiry into the question of labour for mills, factories, &c., in Bengal, which Mr. Foley had been deputed to conduct. The proceedings of that meeting had been circulated. Since then Mr. Foley had been away from Calcutta collecting information, and Mr. Fremantle, who was present and who had been appointed to make a similar enquiry in the

more or less. This was mainly due to a dislike to coal cutting. It seemed to Mr. FOLEY that inducements might be offered to labourers to learn coal cutting, and he also thought that more men might be brought from the North-West. There was also a new field for the recruitment of labour, *viz.*, Ranchi. Missionaries had a great deal of control over labour in those districts and they would be pleased to assist colliery managers in making a start in recruiting.

Mr. MACLEOD was inclined to think that much of the remedy lay in the hands of colliery owners themselves, but it would be generally conceded that, as far as collieries were concerned, suitable labour in sufficient quantity was not readily at hand. It might exist further afield, but the difficulty of inducing native labour to migrate from their own districts, where little work was obtainable, to districts where remunerative wages could be earned, constituted the real problem awaiting solution. Mr. MACLEOD thought Government through their District officers' might do much to break down those deeply ingrained prejudices, and by a system of free railway passes encourage the population of a congested area to go and see for themselves the condition of work obtainable at the collieries, where, if the work were fairly hard, life was healthy and the wages earned distinctly tempting. Free quarters and free medical attendance were a few of the minor advantages they would gain on a colliery, while in many cases free grants of land were given to induce suitable workmen to settle down.

Mr. FREMANTLE remarked that if Government have free passes for one industry they would have to do the same for all the others.

Mr. FOLEY added that the districts from which the collieries should draw their labour were not congested districts.

Mr. FOLEY then went on to state the other conclusions which had been come to and which would appear in the report. He proposed to recommend the issue of two reports each year, containing information regarding the labour available in the different districts and enquired at what time of the year these reports would be most useful. The Jute Mills' Association wished for the first report in February.

The meeting expressed the opinion that the first report should issue in February and the second in September.

The VICE-PRESIDENT remarked that the only suggestion he had to make was that nothing should be done for one industry more than for another; for instance nothing should be done to recruit labour for mills, coal mines, &c., to the disadvantage of the tea industry. There would, otherwise, be great dissatisfaction. Personally he did not object to, but was in favour of, the system of free passes provided they were given to all industries.

No other gentleman having any remarks to make, the President thanked Mr. FOLEY and Mr. FREMANTLE for having given them an opportunity of discussing the proposed report, and those

gentlemen having thanked the gentlemen present for having met them, the proceedings terminated.

A. A. ARORA,
Chairman.

W. PARSONS,
Secretary.

PROPOSED RIVER POLICE FOR BENGAL.

INDIAN POLICE COMMISSION 1902-1903.

Extract, para 86, from Government of India, Home Department (Police), Resolution No. 248-250, dated Calcutta, 21st March 1905.

86. Para. 113.—In para. 75 of their Report the Commission refer to the prevalence of dacoity and other serious crime upon the large navigable rivers of Bengal and Assam, and dwell on the necessity for securing the safety of travellers, by water. They make no attempt to work the subject out fully, and merely remark that a special force under a Superintendent of River Police will be necessary. In communicating their views the Government of India asked the Local Governments concerned to frame a practicable scheme, and emphasized the desirability of securing the co-operation of the River Steamer Companies. In reply two lakhs a year, exclusive of the purchase of launches, which have been drawn up in consultation with the Governments of the United Provinces and Assam. Its leading features are:—

- (1) To place the Hugli river and the Calcutta port under a District Superintendent of Police with river police stations at Chinsura and Barrackpore.
- (2) To form the rest of the rivers of Bengal, with the Ganges up to Allahabad, the Gogra up to Fyzabad, the Brahmaputra to Gauhati, and the Megna to some point in Sylhet, into a general police district under a Senior District Superintendent, who would be stationed at or near Goalundo, and would have two European assistants, one of whom would be of the rank of District Superintendent.
- (3) To establish sixty-one river police stations, each under a Sub-Inspector with a staff of one head constable and 5 constables. At each station there would be a fast boat with a *manjhi* and four *maliks*, and those boats would be constantly on patrol, meeting the boats of other stations wherever possible.
- (4) For European Officers a fixed travelling allowance of Rs. 150 is suggested, for Inspectors Rs. 30, Sub-Inspectors Rs. 15, and Head Constables Rs. 10. For constables a minimum pay of Rs. 9, is suggested, for *Manjis* Rs. 12, and for *maliks* Rs. 9.
- (5) A proposal made by Mr. Bramley, a District Superintendent of Police of the United Provinces, who has been employed to enquire into the depredations of criminals from that province in Bengal, to introduce a system of registering all trading boats is under consideration, and the Lieutenant-Governor proposes to consult the Chamber of Commerce on the subject.

The question is one of no little difficulty, and the Bengal letter tends to show that the offence of piracy on the great rivers of Assam, Bengal and the lower part of the United Provinces has never been adequately dealt with, though it seems probable that the necessity for affording special police protection to river traffic has hitherto escaped notice, not less from the indisposition of those exposed to the depredations of river-thieves to have their journey interrupted by the necessary police enquiries than, because, a special agency has not been employed for the purpose. The general position of those exposed to the depredations of river-thieves has not been completely worked out. The registration of boats has not yet been fully considered, nor have the River Steamer Companies been approached. In both these directions commercial interests of importance are involved which demand careful consideration. It is also possible that, with better information than has previously existed, the protection of some of the waterways might be left more largely to the local district police. Meanwhile the Government of India have sanctioned, as a provisional and temporary measure, pending the conclusion of the enquiries referred to, the appointment of 3 District Superintendents and Assistant Superintendent, 6 Inspectors, 30 Sub-Inspectors, 44 Head Constables and 314 Constables, to form the nucleus of an effective river police.

From Government of Bengal, to Chamber.

No. 2746-J.—CALCUTTA, 27th March 1905.

I am directed to inform you that Mr. Bramley, District Superintendent of Police, Benares, has been put on special duty in connection with the proposals of this Government to form a Special River Police and to have trading boats registered. This Government would be much obliged if the Chamber of Commerce would assist him to get any information available to the Chamber, which would be of use to him in his work.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal.

No. 566-1905.—CALCUTTA, 1st April 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 2746-J, of 27th March, intimating that Mr. Percy Bramley, District Superintendent of Police, Benares, has been put upon special duty in connection

with the proposals for the formation of a Special River Police Force, and for the registration of trading boats, and you ask that Mr. Bramley may have the assistance of the Chamber in his enquiry.

2. I am instructed to say that the Committee will have much pleasure in affording to Mr. Bramley all the assistance in their power, and have already arranged a Special Meeting for Wednesday next, the 5th April, to enable him to confer with the representatives of the various Associations connected with the Chamber and with other persons interested.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

ROYAL EXCHANGE BUILDING,

Calcutta, 5th April 1905.

PROPOSED RIVER POLICE FOR BENGAL.

A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE CHAMBER was held this day.

PRESENT:

	HON. MR. A. A. APCAR, } Messrs. Apar & Co. President.
Chamber Committee.	MR. J. D. NIMMO ... } Duncan Brothers & Co.
	" C. G. GIRO ... } Ralli Brothers.
	" A. M. MONTTEATH ... } Mackinnon, Mackenzie & Co.
	" J. R. BERTRAM ... } Gladstone, Wylie & Co.
	" D. A. CAMPEBELL ... } Beggs Dunlop & Co.
	" A. TOPPING ... } Rivers Steam Navigation Co., Ltd.
	" JNO. NICOLL ... } Messrs. Thomas Duff & Co., Ltd.
	" H. H. MACLEOD ... } The Bengal Coal Co., Ltd.
	" A. C. PATTERSON ... } Messrs. Becker, Gray & Co.
	" C. E. GUZDAR ... } P. E. Guzdar & Co.
" VICTOR MURRAY ... } South British Fire & Marine Insurance Co. of New Zealand.	
By Invitation.	" O. R. SIMPSON ... } Indian General Navigation & Railway Co., Ltd.
	" W. D. STEVEN ... }
	" CAPT. SIMPSON ... }
	" MR. R. J. R. JARDINE ... } Messrs. Jardine, Skinner & Co.
	" A. D. WILSON ... } Geo. Henderson & Co.
" R. L. B. GALL ... } Landale & Clark.	
" G. W. H. BATHO ... } The Calcutta Landing & Ship- ping Co., Ltd.	
	AND
" PERCY BRAMLEY ... } District Superintendent of Police, Benares.	

Mr. D. C. BLAIR wrote regretting his inability to attend.

The meeting was held for the discussion, with Mr. BRAMLEY, of proposals for the formation of a Special River Police Force for Bengal, and for the registration of country trading boats. The Police Commission in paragraph 75 of their report referred to the prevalence of piracy and other serious crime on the large navigable rivers of Bengal and Assam, and dwelt on the necessity for securing the safety of travellers by water. They also suggested that a special force under a Superintendent of River Police should be organised for the prevention of riverine crime. The Government of India had invited the Local Governments concerned to frame a practicable scheme: and in reply the Bengal Government had put forward proposals which had been drawn up in consultation with the Governments of the United Provinces and Assam. The question of introducing a system of registering all trading boats had also been raised in connection with the scheme.

Mr. BRAMLEY had been deputed to make further enquiries, and to assist in maturing detailed proposals.

The PRESIDENT opened the proceedings by asking Mr. Bramley to state the points which he desired to bring forward.

In response, Mr. BRAMLEY said that he would like to explain briefly the object which he had in view. It was well known that the state of the waterways in Bengal and Assam was discreditable. Crime was rife: there were no rules or regulations for traffic; and generally the position was most unsatisfactory. On several occasions Government had been asked to remedy the evil; but for various reasons action had not been found to be possible. But last year a special enquiry had been instituted with the result that Government had now resolved to take the question up seriously. They had formulated proposals which were specified in the Government of India Resolution on the Report of the Police Commission. He approached the Chamber for advice and assistance in the organization of the Special Police Force, as he had been deputed to submit a scheme. He had drawn up a memo of the points to be regarded to which he thought the mercantile community would be able to give assistance. One of the main points was as to the best trade routes and the possibility, or otherwise, of laying down and fixing regular routes for different seasons, with a view to adequate police protection. It would be of course impossible to extend police protection to every little *midiah* and stream all over the province, but the object in view was to get well-defined routes which would be protected. The next point concerning which he needed information was as to whether any special features existed in respect of riverine crime, and why such crime was more rife in some localities than in others. Then again, he would need particulars of crime usually committed at places of call, or at steamer stations, ghats, jetties, on wharves, or in warehouses on steamers, on country boats, or jute boats, or flats. In regard to these particulars he thought that Insurance Companies might probably be able to assist. And he proposed to ask them for information as to losses suffered

during the last five years; and where such losses occurred. It seemed to him that possibly special areas might be located to which special attention might be given. He also wished to obtain proposals for suitable rules for the regulation of traffic and navigation on the rivers. He understood that in 1903, the Inland Steamer Companies had memorialised the Government of Bengal on this subject. Their proposals were not, however, acceded to for reasons given in the Bengal Government Marine letter No. 732, dated 26th October 1903. He was not, however, sure whether any measures had been subsequently taken in communication with the Steamer Companies. But they had furnished him with a copy of the memorial, and he proposed to take the subject up. The next point for consideration was as to whether the jurisdiction of the river police should be confined to the banks of the river, or whether it should extend to ghats, landing stages, jetties, warehouses, &c., so that all sorts of river work might be brought within it. There was also the question of the trial of river cases. It was proposed that such cases should be taken up on the same principle as Railway cases, and be tried by the District and Sub-Divisional Courts. If such an arrangement were possible it would no doubt be desirable. But there were some riverine districts in which it was difficult to get a Magistrate at all; and in such it might be necessary to appoint riverine Special Magistrates.

The other most important question for discussion was, Mr. Bramley continued, that of the proposed registration of country boats. It was one of the proposals which he had formulated last year in his report, and Government had accepted the idea. He had already consulted the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and the Bengal National Chamber regarding it. The Bengal National Chamber had approached the Government about it in 1892, and had made recommendations. But for reasons given in the reply which they received no action was taken. The Government had, however, now addressed the Bengal Chamber, and had received in reply a letter in which the proposal was generally approved subject to the proviso, that it should be given a trial on condition that the supervision provided, would afford absolute security against any oppression or blackmailing on the part of the Police. What he wanted now to do was to obtain advice and assistance as to the best means of securing effective registration. The points were: (1) the agency to be employed; (2) the most appropriate recruiting centres; (3) the conditions on which licenses would be issued; (4) the Form of license, and rates of fees to be levied. A question had also been raised as to whether it was desirable to register ranyees separately, as qualified boat-masters, apart from the registration of boats. This question had, he understood, already received attention, but it had for cogent reasons not been vetoed by the Chamber. If the registration of boats were introduced, the further question would arise as to whether it was necessary to establish a few boat-checking stations on the rivers; and for any proposals in that connection he would be grateful. He would also be glad for opinions and suggestions as to the particular rules to be enforced at the checking stations, the object being to secure

effective supervision without interfering with the free passage of boats by day and night. The Bengal National Chamber of Commerce objected to checking stations, as being likely to encourage corruption. But he thought a few would be indispensable. The registration of the number might be kept as low as possible. The registration of the boats having been secured, the question of the necessity for the retention of the river toll bars would arise. The United Provinces Government had always observed the principle that if the registration were carried out the toll bars might be done away with.

The PRESIDENT said that he thought it was hardly possible for those present to give Mr. Bramley at once the information for which he had asked. But it might be useful if the points were discussed.

MR. BRAMLEY agreed, and added that there was another point in the scheme to which he had not referred. It was the formation of regular river police districts. The rivers would be divided off into a certain number of river police districts. There would be a staff of Superintendents and Officers and Constables of different grades.

The PRESIDENT remarked that he hoped there would be efficient European supervision.

MR. BRAMLEY replied in the affirmative. There would be three District Superintendents of Police and six Inspectors, with possibly an assistant or two specially in the Port area. The efficiency of the river police would, in his opinion, depend entirely on the amount of European supervision.

MR. BERTRAM enquired if it would be the duty of the river police to enquire into cases of supposed or alleged fires on country boats coming down from the jute districts. He further asked if they would take cognisance of cases where the boat had been sunk and the jute had disappeared.

MR. BRAMLEY said the Police would certainly take up all such cases.

MR. MURRAY enquired if the European Officers would have steam launches.

MR. BRAMLEY replied that he proposed that light patrol launches should be supplied not only to the European-Officers, but to the policemen patrolling up and down the rivers.

MR. BERTRAM said he thought the Marine Insurance Companies could give a great deal of information as regards country boats. It was, he believed, a fact that the past year had been the most disastrous for twenty years from the point of view of the Insurance Companies. At least it was so for the office which he represented, and he understood that other offices had had a similar experience.

MR. MURRAY confirmed this, and said that if Mr. BRAMLEY were to refer to the Calcutta Marine Insurance Agents' Association, they would furnish him with a statement of losses during the past five years. In many cases it would show, he was sure, that insurers had no means of bringing the criminals to justice.

MR. BRAMLEY said that that appeared to be the general opinion. In fact it was admitted that the state of the rivers as regards crime was hopeless. There was no means of grappling with the evil at present.

MR. GALL said it was well known that depots existed where cargoes of stolen jute and rice were received.

MR. BRAMLEY said that he understood such was the case. What he required was that all particulars available respecting such places should be collated and placed before him. The river police, when organised, could then take the necessary steps.

MR. BERTRAM asked when the new police would begin work.

MR. BRAMLEY replied that Government intended to make a start within six months. The men would be recruited two-thirds from Bengal, and one-third from the United Provinces.

MR. CAMPBELL enquired if the jurisdiction of the new force would extend to Assam, and what their powers would be.

MR. BRAMLEY replied in the affirmative. It would include the whole of Assam, and up the Ganges to Allahabad, and the Gogra to Fyzabad. The powers of the river police would be parallel to those exercised by the land force with special powers for the regulation of traffic. The question of carrying police on the steamers would also have to be taken into consideration by the Steamer Companies.

MR. TOPPING said that he thought the Steamer Companies would object to policemen being on their vessels. If proper patrol boats were always running it should be sufficient in case of accidents and so on.

MR. NICOLL enquired if the jurisdiction would extend to the port of Calcutta.

MR. BRAMLEY said that the Calcutta Port Police would be incorporated into the River Police. He had discussed the matter with the Vice-Chairman of the Port Commissioners and the Port Officer. They had thoroughly approved of the idea.

MR. NICOLL complained that the Port Police, at present, were corrupt. It was commonly stated that the amount paid in bribes aggregated as much as Rs. 40,000 to Rs. 50,000 per month. This large sum had to be paid by the trade.

MR. BRAMLEY thought that more European supervision was the only effective remedy for such evils.

After some further conversation,

MR. MURRAY enquired if it were intended to register boats carrying tea.

MR. BRAMLEY replied that it was a point under consideration whether such boats should come under the heading of country boats or not. The idea was that registration should include all country craft not propelled by steam. He did not see how it would be possible to differentiate between the different classes of boats. Registration could not be introduced without legislation.

MR. MACLEOD referred to thefts of coal on the river. It was, he said, quite well known that more than one depot existed for the sole purpose of receiving stolen coal. He thought that perhaps depots might be registered.

MR. BRAMLEY said that it might be possible later. The District Superintendents of River Police would have similar powers under the law to make rules and regulations for regulation of traffic as the Commissioner of Police and District Superintendents now have.

MR. BERTRAM enquired if the registered boats would come under the definition of common carriers.

MR. BRAMLEY said that he had consulted the Inspector General of Police upon that point. It seemed there might be legal difficulties but the point would be considered.

MR. GALL said that, so far as he could ascertain, the only difference which would be made by placing the boats under the Common Carriers Act would be in regard to proof of negligence. Under existing conditions, if a cargo disappears and the boatman is prosecuted, the onus of proving negligence or criminality rests upon the prosecution. But under the Common Carriers Act it would be for the boatman to disprove negligence.

Some further conversation ensued upon points of detail; and it was ultimately agreed that the Chamber of Commerce would obtain, from those interested, such information and suggestions as might be possible respecting the different points involved, and would communicate these to MR. BRAMLEY as early as possible.

The proceedings then terminated.

A. A. AFGAR,
President.

PREVENTION BY LEGISLATION OF THE FRAUDULENT WATERING OF JUTE.

From Chamber, to all Members.

Cir. No. 423-1904.—CALCUTTA, 2nd November 1904.

Prevention by Legislation of Fraudulent Watering of Jute in Bengal.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to forward copy of a note on the prevention, by legislation, of fraudulent watering of Jute in Bengal, together with copy view, and also to suppress other fraudulent practices in the Jute trade. The papers have been received from the Director of the Department of Land Records and Agriculture, Bengal, who is also the Secretary of the Bengal Provincial Agricultural Association, the movement in favour of legislation having emanated in the first instance from the Calcutta Baled Jute Association. The Committee regard the proposal as a most important one in the interests of the Jute trade, but before pronouncing any opinion on it, they would like to be favoured with the expression of the views of members of the Chamber and especially of those interested in Jute.

A reply to this Circular in the course of a fortnight will oblige.

NOTE ON THE PREVENTION OF FRAUDULENT WATERING OF JUTE IN BENGAL BY LEGISLATION.

1. Last autumn the Director of Land Records deputed both of his Assistant Directors to enquire and report on the extent of the evil—Mr. N. G. Mukerji making enquiries in Calcutta and its neighbourhood, and Mr. D. N. Mukerji doing the same at Sirajganj and Chandpur. Their reports, which have been printed, are enclosed in the volume of papers for 1903-1904, and have already been forwarded to members of the Association. Mr. D. N. Mukerji has made some further enquiry this season at Narayanganj.

2. It appears that the fibre sold at the different jute marts varies a good deal in the amount of moisture it contains. What is low, would be held decidedly wet at Madaripur, where the standard again, not only water but also sand has been found to be mixed with the jute to increase its weight.

3. The practice has assumed serious proportions only during recent years, since in fact 1891, when the price of the fibre rose as high as Rs. 9 a maund, and when a certain Marwari began the sanding and watering on an extensive scale. It is found to be openly carried on now in broad daylight on the banks of the river Ganges, and close to the Sirajganj mart in sight of passers-by. The fibre is spread out on the banks, layer by layer, sand and water put on, and then redrummed and loaded in the boats for sale. While in other parts watering has become very common, sanding seems to be a speciality of Sirajganj alone.

4. This fraudulent watering of the fibre, while increasing its weight, weakens and discolours it, and seems to be the chief cause

of the deterioration of which the trade complains. There is no evidence of a general deterioration of the Jute plant. It may have taken place in some parts and in some races, but even this is doubtful.

5. Some amount of moisture is not objectionable in the fibre. In fact the so-called dry jute of commerce loses about 8 or 10 per cent. of moisture by sun drying alone. This amount is accepted by the mills, and its presence does not affect the strength and colour of the fibre. Its amount varies in different seasons, being less in the cold weather than earlier in the season before the rains are quite over. It is attributed by the trade to atmospheric humidity, but this seems hardly correct, as fibre which has been made "bone dry" in the sun does not on standing regain its old weight though it does increase a little by reabsorption of moisture from the air. In one experiment three samples of dry jute had lost, at the end of November, 9.22 per cent. by sun drying, and had by the middle of December (in three weeks) gained 4.60 per cent. by standing in the shade.

6. But while dry jute may contain 8 to 10 per cent. of moisture, samples of jute were examined by the Assistant Directors containing 20 to 25 per cent. of moisture, the amount rising in some cases to as much as 30 per cent. This clearly points to fraud.

7. It further appears that jute dries very quickly in the sun. It can also be very easily protected from dew, a mere thatch being protection enough. Even the thatch may be dispensed with if the fibre is simply drummed, because absorption of dew is a question of extent of surface exposed. But of course in the case of rain some protection is indispensable. Generally, however, the want of accommodation for drying by day and for storing at night, urged in explanation of excessive moisture, seems but an idle plea.

8. The trade is powerless to put down this fraudulent practice (see paragraph 8 of the Director's Annual Report of the Agricultural Branch, 1903-1904). Some firms contract with the mills to supply certain quantities of jute by certain dates, and they are obliged to buy whatever they can get, wet or dry. In many cases, it is stated, the mills' agents make the purchases, and they do not always mind buying wet jute because (it is stated) for immediate consumption the moisture does not matter. The big firms, especially those in the export trade, have generally large establishments for drying the jute, but others are not so scrupulous and trust to luck and other influences in getting their goods passed. Competition is so keen that a voluntary combination of the merchants to boycott wet jute is almost an impossibility. At most of the important marts it has been attempted several times without success (see also Director of Land Records' report for 1903-1904, paragraph 8).

9. In these circumstances the Secretary to the Calcutta Baled Jute Association suggested in May 1903, the desirability of a short Act penalising the sale of jute containing an undue proportion of moisture. He referred to the successful working of the Bombay Cotton Frauds Act (Act VII of 1878). And again in January this year he referred to the Proclamation of the Russian Government making it criminal to water flax. (According to a Dundee firm this had led to a considerable improvement).

10. A translation of the decision of the Russian Imperial Council, dated the 12th April 1899, has been obtained from His Britannic Majesty's Consul-General at St. Petersburg through the Government of India. It enacts, among other things, that "flax shall not contain any admixture of refuse or other extraneous substances and shall not be moistened in order to increase its weight artificially." And it lays down that "traders guilty of sale, preparation or keeping for sale" of such flax shall be liable to imprisonment not exceeding one month or to a fine not exceeding one hundred roubles. In forwarding this Decision of the Imperial Council the British Consul-General at St. Petersburg adds that according to information supplied to him no convictions under the law had been recorded. It is not known what machinery is employed in working it.

11. The Bombay Cotton Frauds Act (Act VII of 1878) is mainly directed against the malpractices of baling presses. The offence is made cognizable by Presidency Magistrates in the city of Bombay and by first and second class Magistrates elsewhere. It provides that "no person shall be proceeded against on account of any such offence except by summons on information laid by an Inspector of Cotton or some other person." As for punishment it lays down that the adulterated cotton which forms the subject-matter of the offence, *fec.*, which has been fraudulently mixed with dirt, etc., or increased in weight by exposure to dew, shall be (1) confiscated and destroyed, (2) confiscated and sold (3) cleaned under the direction of the Cotton Inspector at the owners expense and returned.

There are other offences and other punishments connected with the presses and press marks upon which I need not enter here. The Cotton Inspectors are appointed by the Governor in Council. The Police are bound to help these officers, but have no other hand in the working of the law.

12. A short draft Act is submitted for consideration. It will be necessary to pay for the Inspectors of Cotton and their subordinates. Section 12 suggests an export duty of three pies per bale. The exports are as follows, according to Messrs. Duncan Brothers' list:—

	Bales
1893-96 (average)	3,228,000
1897	4,201,000
1898	2,767,000
1899	2,662,000
1900	3,541,000
1901	4,328,000
1902	3,253,000
1903	3,766,000
Total	27,680,000

The above gives an average of 34,60,000, which would yield Rs: 54,000 and be sufficient for fifteen Inspectors on Rs. 200 per

menem and their establishments. The Jute Association would be asked to contribute for any more Inspectors required.

S. L. MADDOX,
Director of the Dept. of Land Records
and Agriculture, Bengal.

The 6th October 1904.

DRAFT.

ACT No. OF

An Act to amend the law for the prevention of adulteration of jute and for the suppression of fraudulent practices in the jute trade.

WHEREAS it is expedient to amend the law for the prevention of adulteration of jute and for the suppression of fraudulent practices in the jute trade. It is enacted as follows:—

Preliminary.

- This Act may be cited as "The Bengal Jute Fraud Act."
- It extends to the whole of the Lower Provinces of Bengal.
- In this Act, unless there be something repugnant in the Interpretation clause. subject or context—
 - "Jute" includes *Mestha pat* (*hibiscus cannabinus*).
Bale. (2) "Bale" includes any package of jute
 - "Press" includes every kind of machinery used for the purpose of compressing jute.
 - "Foreign export" means export out of British India.
 - "British India" means the territories for the time being vested in Her Majesty by the Statute 21 and 22 Vic., Cap. 106 (an Act for the better Government of India), other than the Settlement of Prince of Wales' Island, Singapore and Malacca.

Appointment and duties of Officers.

- The Lieutenant-Governor in Council may appoint such and so many officers, to be styled "Inspectors of Jute," as shall from time to time appear expedient.

The said Inspectors shall be subordinate, in the city of Calcutta, to the Director of Land Records and Agriculture and to the Board of Revenue, and in all other parts of the Presidency to the above officers and to the Collector of the district in which they hold their appointments, or in which they are at the time employed, and shall be liable to suspension or dismissal by order of the Board of Revenue for neglect or misconduct in the discharge of their duties.

4. It shall be the duty of the Inspectors of Jute, on information received in writing, to examine jute intended for sale, offered for compression or exposed or

In the execution of the said duty it shall be lawful for an Inspector of Jute at all times to enter any building or enclosure within which he has reason to believe that any press is at work, or is prepared for work, or that the packing of jute in bales is being carried on.

5. It shall be lawful for an Inspector of Jute to seize and detain any jute, wherever the same may be, which he has reason to believe is liable to confiscation under this Act, and to give the same into the custody of any Police Officer.

Every Police Officer shall be bound to assist an Inspector of Jute in seizing and detaining such jute, but it shall not be competent to any

Inspector of Jute, unless under a Magistrate's search-warrant, to open any bale which has been finally pressed for foreign export.

6. Every Inspector who shall seize and detain any jute under this Act shall, within seven days from the date of such seizure and detention, apply for and obtain a summons from a Presidency Magistrate in the city of Calcutta, if such seizure and detention shall have taken place in that city, but if elsewhere, then from a first or second class Magistrate directed to the person in whose possession the same was found and requiring him, upon a day therein named, to show cause why such jute should not be confiscated.

If such Inspector shall not apply for and obtain such summons within the time aforesaid, such jute shall be returned to the person in whose possession the same was found, and shall not be liable to re-seizure or detention.

7. Every Inspector of Jute shall have such number of subordinates and their powers, from time to time directed, and it shall be lawful for such subordinates to exercise such of the powers conferred by this Act on an Inspector as the Director of Land Records and Agriculture or the Collector of a district may, from time to time, by writing under his hand depute them to exercise.

Penalties, offences, and prosecutions.

8. If, upon the hearing of the summons issued under section 6 of this Act, the Magistrate or Court be satisfied that any jute seized and detained under the provisions of section 5 of this Act—

(a) has been fraudulently or dishonestly adulterated or deteriorated, or increased in weight by mixing therewith seed, dirt, stones, or other foreign matter, or by exposing it to dew or by any other means, or

- (b) that such jute is a mixture fraudulently or dishonestly made of cleaned and uncleaned jute or of different varieties or qualities in one bale,

the Magistrate or Court shall order—

that such jute be confiscated and destroyed, or that such jute be cleaned and sold, or

that such jute be cleaned by or under the direction of the Inspector of Jute, and that such Inspector do return such jute when so cleaned to the person in whose possession the same was found, upon payment by him of the expenses of cleaning such jute, together with such fine as such Magistrate or Court shall direct, and that, in default of such payment, such jute be sold, and the proceeds thereof, after deducting such fine and the expenses of cleaning and sale, be paid to such person as aforesaid.

9. All proceedings and offences under this Act shall be cognizable, subject to the provisions of any law for the time being in force for the trial of offences, by a Presidency Magistrate in the city of Calcutta, and elsewhere by any Criminal Court exercising powers not inferior to those of a second class Magistrate: provided always that no person shall be proceeded against on account of any such offence except by summons on information laid by an Inspector of Jute or some other person.

10. It shall not be necessary in any proceeding for any offence under this Act to prove an intent to defraud any particular person.

11. The provisions of sections 64 to 70, both inclusive, of the Indian Penal Code shall apply to all fines imposed under this Act, and all such fines shall be recovered according to the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code.

Miscellaneous.

12. A fee at such rate, not exceeding three pies, as the Government may from time to time direct by notification in the *Calcutta Gazette*, shall be levied upon every bale of jute not belonging to the Government exported from any part of the Presidency of Bengal to any port or place other than a port or place in British India.

13. Nothing in this Act shall affect the civil rights of any person in any manner interested in any jute confiscated, or ordered to be cleaned and sold under the provisions of this Act, but every such person shall have the same right of action as if this Act had not been passed, and all fines, cleaning and sale charges paid, and legal and other expenses and losses incurred and sustained in consequence of

ant question and, I think, because of that importance that this Association has been fully justified in taking ample time to consider it. My next remark I would put in the form of a question—Why is it that this important question has not been discussed in conference by all the Associations interested in jute under the wing of the Chamber of Commerce? It is a question that affects a great part of Bengal, and a large portion of Calcutta in a general way. It affects in a more direct way every one dealing in jute goods, and of course in the raw material and in an even more direct way it affects the buyers in the last degree. By the buyers in the last degree I mean the mills as consumers and shippers as shippers of baled jute or before them the balers of baled jute. It is, therefore, a very important subject to have discussed in a general way, and I wish to know why the practice adopted up to within twelve months ago is not being adopted to-day. It is quite evident that some new policy has been brought into operation in dealing with subjects of a general nature like this and that, therefore, it is left to each Association interested to express its own views. I think the Committee of the Chamber, as far back as October, expressed the opinion, though a very general opinion, that this was a most important question affecting the interests of the jute trade. Later the Baled Jute Association, after having considered the measure fully, gave their cordial approval to it as submitted to them, with the exception of one or two verbal alterations. Now apparently the matter has gravitated into the position of opinions being expressed by the individual interests concerned; and I am forced to look into the extent of those interests. We know for a fact that the Baled Jute Association have taken the lead in this matter, and from the very enthusiastic way in which they have carried it on to the final point, we would naturally expect that they were most largely interested not only in wet jute but in jute generally. I think it right, therefore, that the interests of all the various sections of the trade should be brought prominently into view and properly focussed. For that purpose I take the quantity of jute available and marketed up to 31st July, 1904. But before I give the exact figures I ought to say that, as far as my information goes, the Baled Jute Association does not represent the whole of the Baled Jute interests. There are very large interests outside the Baled Jute Association, and I do not find any of them represented here to-day, nor have I seen their opinion upon this important subject expressed in any shape or form in any direction. I of course refer to Messrs. Ralli Brothers and Messrs. M. David & Co., who are large buyers of jute and large shippers of baled jute. Well, going by the figures available up to 31st July, 1904, I make out that the Baled Jute Association, excluding the firms named, represented 37 per cent. of the available marketable jute for 1904. The other interests I have just specially referred to represent 20 per cent. And the Mills represent 43·5 per cent. That is on a basis of 66,600,000 bales. Now we have to consider what would be the position to-day or rather, more particularly with regard to the next crop. I venture to predict that, from the statistics available, the Mill consumption will exceed 50 per cent., but I dare not venture to predict in what respect or to what extent the other percentages will be altered. I

leave that for others, better acquainted with the position. Well, at any rate we have the opinion of one section amounting to 37 per cent. or less; and their opinion is that they approve generally of the measure as it stands. They do not, however, stop there; they go on to say that they hope Mills will contribute their share of the expenses necessary for the working of the measure. I very highly appreciate that recommendation, but I certainly would have appreciated it more cordially had it been accompanied by some workable measure. And if they had had before them the fact that the Mills are interested to the extent of 50 per cent., I am not so very sure that they would have gone the length of stating that they ought to contribute to the cost of working such an Act.

Coming now to the Bill itself, it is, as you know, proposed to make the tendering of wet jute a penal offence. Here to my mind a certain inequity arises, inasmuch as it is not made penal for a buyer to take wet jute and, after carefully studying the Act, I find it quite possible for any buyer to buy wet jute to any extent, and no one can prevent him. How it is expected that this Act will be made operative, I do not know. It is stated further on that no officer under the Act can take any action whatsoever, unless by a complaint in writing, and I can imagine that if balers cannot get a complaint in writing, and if Mills cannot get on with their buying, on with their baling, and if Mills cannot get on with their buying, they will continue to buy wet jute. It is only human nature to expect that they will. If they cannot get dry jute, they will buy wet jute rather than see their business stopped, or their Mills shut down. And you cannot expect one buyer to sit down and see another buyer going merrily on with his work by taking wet jute, wet jute being the only way in which he can get on with his business. Very probably the intention is that one set of balers—the European balers—should put the Act in operation by writing a letter of complaint. They would have a grievance against the party who originally so charged would have a grievance against the party who originally made the complaint. That would end, I suppose, in a suit for defamation or something of the kind. The Mills do not come within the scope of the Act at all, except in so far as they have agencies in the different buying centres, who would also make it operative if they chose to. Then again, there is a wonderful provision whereby *pucca* baled jute in Press Houses is excluded, or practically excluded, from the operation of the Act. Or, in other words, this jute is so hemmed in by the procedure that the Act becomes practically inoperative. That is to say, a Search Warrant has to be obtained from a Magistrate, which would take fully a week or ten days, and by that time the jute may be shipped. Then I can imagine another class of buyers, say the native balers, buying wet jute and sending it to Calcutta and shipping it. They would not be amenable to the provisions of the Act so far as I can see.

On the whole, therefore, Sir, I think that this Act is absolutely impracticable from a buyer's point of view from a Mill point of view it will be more particularly so. We must always remember that before this will be passed by the Bengal Government, the opinions of loose jute sellers and dealers will be obtained, and we can imagine their turning round and saying: "Every buyer takes

"our jute wet; why should we not sell it." Then we might also get from them very directly expressed opinions regarding ourselves as buyers, and I am not so sure but that that would have a very wholesome effect upon us as buyers, if we could only see ourselves as the sellers of wet jute see us sometimes. Therefore, Sir, I have no difficulty in proving that the measure as proposed is unworkable, but it would be unfair if I stopped here; and I think that if it is at all possible, we ought to go forward with some workable measure. In considering that matter, I come face to face with this idea, namely, that the present position of the market in regard to this wet jute question is simply an indication of the exact position of supply and demand. It does not pay any one, so far as my experience goes, to buy wet jute. And I believe that about 50 per cent. of the crop is marketed in an exceedingly satisfactory condition. Here I think we as Mills are in a very unsatisfactory position as compared with balers, inasmuch as we cannot buy and store in our warehouses jute in a damp condition without the fibre deteriorating. The baler, on the other hand, can buy jute in a wetter condition. He bales it promptly, and puts it on board the export vessel. It immediately goes into a cooler climate where a larger percentage of moisture would not have the same effect as a lesser percentage of moisture in our warm climate. And here I would refer again to what I said at the beginning. I fail to see why buyers cannot take the step on their own initiative and decline to buy wet jute, as it cannot serve any good purpose to take it. Then the second objection is the inequality of making it penal for "exposers" to have wet jute, and not penal for buyers to have wet jute in their possession. To my mind the plan most suitable for the operation of the Act is Calcutta. I would not exclude up-country centres, but I would certainly have it enforced in Calcutta, and dealers here would then know that they were exposed to the penalties of the Act, and they would probably exert in a more energetic manner their influence on their up-country agents, prohibiting the latter from sending wet jute down to Calcutta for sale. I would of course include Chittagong as a place where, in addition to Calcutta, the Act should be operative. Then in applying the Act in Calcutta, all buyers would have to refuse to take wet jute, and that practically means a combination among all buyers. Such a combination would be really tantamount to a voluntary agreement among ourselves. Now, is such an agreement possible? We know that all agreements in the past have not worked satisfactorily, but we know also that those founded on what I call a natural basis, did work satisfactorily so long as they remained on a natural basis. But immediately they went beyond these limits, and were placed on an artificial basis, they ended in failure sooner or later. My difficulty is to see how any Act will work in a satisfactory way, even though passed by the Bengal Government. If it will not work in a voluntary way, I do not see how it will work if made compulsory. We must all have jute. We are entering upon a struggle in the matter of demand, which will be greater than ever before; and I expect further difficulties will arise. We ought, therefore, to be particularly careful in regard to any suggestions that we

may make to see that they will provide us with a real remedy, and will not lead us into greater troubles than we have now to face, or than we can at present foresee.

Mr. W. S. MALCOLM said there appeared to him to be one great difficulty about the question. It was as to what was really called wet jute. So far as he knew there was no definition of wet jute, and everybody knew that dry jute in August was a different thing to dry jute in December. The appointment of Inspectors on salaries of Rs. 150 to Rs. 200 would, he feared, be simply an encouragement to swindling. It was certain that men of that class would be bribed, as they would be dealing with people who would be all very anxious to bribe them. If any legislation were introduced, it should be, he thought, on the lines of the Food & Drugs Act in England. The person exposing the jute in a public place should be prosecuted. There was nothing to prevent a buyer buying wet jute; he was forced to keep his business or his mill going. To prevent people exposing wet jute for sale would mean inspecting all the haunts in the mofussil districts, which would be impracticable. Altogether it appeared to him that the difficulties in the way of any workable scheme were almost insuperable, and a bad scheme might eventually prove to be a millstone round the neck of the trade.

In response to an invitation from the Chairman, Mr. J. B. CLARK said:—Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, on behalf of Mr. Glen and on my own behalf, I must in the first place acknowledge the privilege, which you have accorded us, of attending this meeting. I have listened with great interest to what Mr. Nicoll has said. As our experience is from the opposite side of the table, so to speak, to most of you gentlemen—we being sellers and you buyers—I was very glad to hear from Mr. Nicoll some account of the difficulties which he anticipated would occur if an attempt were made to put the draft Act into operation. These difficulties I would speak of more as one who has to buy jute and to supply it to you, and they are of no mean order. As the first instance, I may take it for granted that the ryot himself is not the sinner. Our experience has been that it is generally those in the position of middlemen who are really to blame. The result of all this is that probably more of late years than formerly whenever jute is dear it comes in wet. When we had cheap jute and plenty of it, we invariably found that there was no reason to complain of the condition of it. It would seem, therefore, that the wetting is done simply because the middlemen feel the demand to be such that, let them adulterate the jute to any extent, they will find a ready sale for it. I admit that it is much easier to take up the position of a critic than it is to put forward a really workable scheme. So far as regards my own firm, you will not, I hope, accuse me of personal laudation when I say that we have all along striven against wet jute. But in a session such as this has been, to have refused wet jute would have meant that you would have done no business. The power of sellers in the Mofussil must also be borne in mind. We may make laws, but we cannot compel people always to obey them. If proceeding under the draft Act a person were to give information against sellers in some of the stronger of

the up-country markets, he would find himself at a disadvantage. So much so, that I think the chances are he would be absolutely barred from doing any further business in that market, at least for a time. And seeing the pressure there is now-a-days in getting that jute within the limited space that we are allowed for it, even a fortnight would be a serious matter. Even if a man risked this and gave the information, would any good accrue? He would have working beside him a number of buyers who were not supplying Mills and whose jute is not, as Mr. Nicoll pointed out, subject to examination here by any body. For instance, a native haler who buys up-country and consigns to his own Press House would escape altogether. Such a man would be able to do exactly as he pleased when the Act came into operation. There is I admit very great difficulty in finding a remedy. Then again, I agree with Mr. Malcolm that a definition of wet jute is an absolute necessity. I cannot see how you can possibly suggest anything in the nature of a law, unless you fix a definite point up to which a man is not guilty and beyond which he is guilty. This is of course open to the objection that we should find men smart enough to take advantage of every weak point, and they would take advantage of the definition by never giving you jute without the maximum percentage of moisture. I grant that that objection can be raised, and I cannot suggest an answer to it. At the same time, I fail to see how you can proceed without a definition or, if you like, a limit. Undoubtedly both buyers and sellers admit the desirability of measures being taken to stop the wetting of jute. But at the same time, we must remember that if one out of a hundred buyers is willing to go on taking wet jute and the ninety-nine are willing to stop, then the trade in wet jute will go on. The question is how can we so frame an Act as to stop all that. Mr. Nicoll referred to the question of supply and demand; and there is no doubt that much consideration will have to be given to that question. For we know that there is to-day a pressure brought to bear upon buyers of jute that was unknown ten years ago. And while we would be perfectly willing and indeed glad to have anything brought forward or passed that would assist us in our business, we certainly do not want any legislation that is likely to prove to be a hindrance. We do not, as Mr. Malcolm said, want an Act that may turn out to be eventually a millstone round our necks. I would also support what Mr. Malcolm said in regard to the difficulty of inspection. Inspection we must have. I cannot conceive of an Act in which we do not have an Inspector. We must have some one to move; it is not sufficient for anyone to lay information and then for the Police to do the rest as is the case as regards the ordinary criminal law. In this instance we must have somebody to act as an Inspector, and the difficulty of finding a man who would be above suspicion, I admit, very great. I am extremely sorry that I cannot make any practical suggestions upon which a workable law might be founded and that my remarks have savoured somewhat of the captious grite; but the matter is so difficult that I see no way out of it.

Mr. R. GLEN, in reply to an invitation from the Chairman, said:—Like Mr. Clark I am much indebted to you, Gentlemen, for

being permitted to express my views here this afternoon. I agree with Mr. Nicoll that the less legislation we have for trade the better for trade especially in cases of this kind. Any Act to prevent the wetting of jute would naturally be administered by subordinates, that is officials of the lower grades. And that being so, I do not see that the result can be other than harmful. Speaking from the point of view of a buyer in the Mofussil, I would like to say that most of the respectable Mofussil houses do their best to avoid wet jute and do not touch it. But if a law such as this were passed, I should not myself be at all disposed to give information against a seller. For in the first place, I should have to go to a Magistrate's Court which might be ten or twenty or even fifty miles off to assist in the prosecution. In the meantime, my business would be neglected. And not only that, but I should probably annoy the sellers and get my own supplies reduced. I do not think that any Mofussil buyer of wet jute will take the trouble to give information with that prospect in view. But suppose I were to put myself in a position to prove before a Magistrate that the jute has been fraudulently wetted. To the best of my knowledge the whole trade has not, so far, been able to agree as to what is a reasonable percentage of moisture; nor as to what method should be adopted for discovering whether any particular parcel of jute contains more than that percentage. That being so, I fail to see how we can even hope to prove before a Magistrate that jute has been fraudulently wetted. Of course, I quite recognise that this, like Mr. Clark's remarks, is destructive criticism. And I fear that I am not in a position, any more than he is, to offer any constructive criticism. But it certainly does seem to me that if the Mills were the only buyers, we should have no wet jute. The Mills are well able to look after themselves, and if you sell them wet jute, you hear of it. My own experience is that the bulk of the wet jute is consigned to the Calcutta bazaar and sold there, and if there is to be legislation at all, I would suggest that the fifteen Inspectors should concentrate their efforts there. For I am quite sure that if the wet jute trade were stopped here in Calcutta, the men up-country would not find it worth while to go on with it if the Mills were the only buyers to whom they could offer wet jute.

Mr. J. D. NIMMO:—Mr. Chairman,—I do not propose to speak on the subject of the draft Act, but I think that perhaps it falls to me to take notice of Mr. Nicoll's remarks with reference to the Chamber of Commerce. He suggests that the Committee of the Chamber have changed their policy in dealing with questions like that now before us, which affect the interests of several of the recognised Associations. This is not the case; there has been no change of policy so far as I am aware. As I understand it, this draft Act is the outcome of the investigations which have been going on for a year or two into the causes of the alleged deterioration of the fibre. These investigations were taken up by Government at the instance of the Baled Jute Association assisted to some extent by this Association. One of the causes of deterioration was said to be the adulteration of jute. The Baled Jute Association expressed the opinion that if adulteration could be stopped, a very

great reform indeed would have been effected. This draft Act is the result. It has been sent not by the Legislative Department, but by the new Provincial Agricultural Association to the Baled Jute Association and to this Association for their views upon it. It has also reached the Chamber who, in replying will, I have no doubt, be to a great extent guided by the views expressed by the different sections of the trade. I must say that to my mind it is hardly a case for such a meeting as that which Mr. Nicoll suggests. The question is not sufficiently ripe for any benefit to be derived from a discussion of that nature. That has been, I think, the view of the Committee of the Chamber, who have certainly not changed their policy or their procedure in dealing with questions of importance affecting the different Associations.

MR. NICOLL :—The change of policy is apparent. Hitherto every matter of importance coming before the Chamber and the Association was discussed in conference, and a workable scheme arrived at. That policy has, I say, been departed from, and probably there is a special reason for the departure.

MR. BLAIR said that although he recognised the difficulties surrounding the question, he thought it would be a pity for the Association to discourage the efforts which were being made to prevent fraudulent watering. The draft Act was no doubt crude, but it was, he considered, a step in the right direction; and for the Association to condemn it unreservedly would, he thought, be a very retrograde step. The difficulties were no doubt great, but they might be overcome; and the Association should direct its efforts to that end. To return the draft with a letter saying that it was useless or unworkable would, he considered, be a fatal step, and a positive bar to any future action on the part of Government.

The CHAIRMAN said that that was precisely the position of the Committee in the matter. They did not see how the Act would work, and yet they did not wish to condemn it. No one had been able to suggest a good working scheme. Even Mr. Nicoll in his very exhaustive speech did not get further than a suggestion that the problem should be solved by voluntary combination. That was not helping the Committee to suggest improvements in the Act. And those Gentlemen also who had similarly spoken on the subject—and with whom he was largely in agreement—had not been able to make any suggestions. There was no doubt that the Act was, as Mr. Blair had said, a step in the right direction. But at the same time, it was manifestly unworkable, and in his (the CHAIRMAN'S) opinion no Act at all would be better than the draft before them.

MR. NICOLL said that they were all agreed as to the desirability, if not even the necessity, of something being done. The question was how to do it.

The CHAIRMAN replied that that was the whole point, and they were not, he feared, getting any nearer to it.

After some further conversation the CHAIRMAN suggested that a Sub-Committee should be appointed to confer with the Calcutta

Baled Jute Association, and to endeavour to arrive at some conclusions on the question. Ultimately this suggestion was put in the form of a resolution which, on being proposed by the CHAIRMAN and seconded by Mr. NICOLL, was unanimously adopted. It read as follows :—

“That the draft Act to prevent the fraudulent watering of jute be remitted to a Sub-Committee, consisting of Mr. J. Nicoll and Mr. J. B. Strain, for consideration and report.

“That the Sub-Committee be instructed to consult with the Committee of the Calcutta Baled Jute Association, provided that representatives of up-country sellers and of Messrs. Ralli Bros. and Messrs. M. David & Co. be also invited to the consultation.”

Late Shipment.—Reference was made in the proceedings of the Meeting of the Committee, held on the 20th January, to the following clause which the Jute Fabrics Shippers' Association suggested should be added to the contract, *viz* :—

“11a. In the event of a Mill finding that from any cause whatsoever (other than those provided for by Clause 11 of this contract) goods under this contract, or any portion thereof cannot be ready for delivery alongside the export vessel in terms of contract, six clear days' notice to be given to the buyer.”

The CHAIRMAN said that the proposal was brought forward at the request of the Shippers' Association. Members would recollect that the Committee had recommended Mills to give notice; and the recommendation had been, he believed, largely acted upon. For his own part, he was averse to altering the contract from time to time, and he was not inclined to favour the proposal.

After discussion the members present agreed with this view, and on the motion of MR. MALCOLM seconded by MR. NICOLL, it was decided to inform the Shippers' Association that Mills were not prepared to insert the clause in the contract, for the reasons stated by the Committee in the previous correspondence.

Underweight of Jute goods.—This question was also referred to in the proceedings of the last meeting of the Committee. Regarding it the Committee had, the CHAIRMAN said, informed the Shippers' Association that the dispute about which the correspondence had arisen was a matter for arrangement between buyer and seller. To this the Shippers' Association had replied that they desired the matter to be brought before the Mills, and the Committee had accordingly taken that course.

The correspondence—which had been previously circulated—was discussed, but the members present agreed with the view taken by the Committee. They accordingly decided, on the motion of

the CHAIRMAN seconded by MR. WIGHTON, to inform the Shippers' Association that they confirmed the action taken by the Committee.

ARCHY BIRKMYRE,
Chairman.

H. M. HAYWOOD,
Assistant Secretary.

From Department of Land Records and Agriculture,
Bengal, to Chamber.

No. 465-A.—CALCUTTA, 23rd February 1905.

In continuation of this office Circular No. 153-A, dated 14th October 1904, I have the honour to forward, herewith, a copy of letter dated 9th February 1905, from the Honorary Secretary Chamber of Commerce, Narainganj, with enclosure, regarding the Jute Fraud Act and to request the favour of a report of the Chamber by the 15th March 1905.

NARAINGANJ, 9th February 1905.

From—J. E. EWAN, ESQ., Honorary Secretary Chamber of Commerce, Narainganj.

To—The Secretary, Bengal Provincial Agricultural Association, Calcutta.

With reference to your Circular No. 153-A, dated the 14th October 1904, my Committee have carefully considered the draft Act submitted therein, and have come to the conclusion that although they are not in a position to say what is exactly required for Calcutta, they have no hesitation in stating that the draft Act, is too far-reaching for the mofussil; all that is wanted being something very simple and easily applied. I beg to enclose, herewith, a draft of what my Committee consider is what is necessary for the prevention of fraud in the mofussil.

From this draft you will notice that all reference to bales is excluded, because when the jute is once sold to the buyers, who assort and bale for mills or export, the trade has its own remedy, should any fraud be practised.

With regard to what should be the limit of moisture, my Committee consider that 10 per cent. would be a fair allowance, and anything over that should be considered fraud; also the test should be two hours drying in the full sun over bamboos, the jute to be weighed before and after the test, and should the test exceed 10 per cent. then the fraud is proved.

With regard to the amount of fine, my Committee are of opinion that the amount which should be imposed for wet jute ought to be equal to the adulteration over 10 per cent., that is the amount of fine should be the amount of moisture in the parcel in excess of 10 per cent. calculated at not less than the market rate of the day or which the judgment is given.

Again, with reference to the payment of Inspectors, my Committee suggest that the Calcutta mills as well as the export trade should pay for this, and it should be divided proportionately; also, that in order to ensure the successful working of the Act, my Committee think that three European Inspectors on good salaries, say not less than Rs. 700 per month, should be appointed; their headquarters to be Calcutta, Serajganj and Narainganj.

DRAFT.

An Act to amend the law for the prevention of adulteration of jute and for the suppression of fraudulent practices in the jute trade.

WHEREAS it is expedient to amend the law for the prevention of adulteration of jute and for the suppression of fraudulent practices in the jute trade:

It is enacted as follows:—

1. *Preliminary.*—This Act may be cited as the "Bengal Jute Fraud Act."

It extends to the whole of the provinces of Bengal.

2. In this Act, unless there be something repugnant in the subject or context—

(a) "Jute" includes "Mestha pat."

3. *Appointment and duties of officers.*—The Lieutenant-Governor in Council may appoint such and so many officers, to be styled "Inspectors of Jute," as shall from time to time appear expedient.

The said Inspectors shall be subordinate in the city of Calcutta, to the Director of Land Records and Agriculture and to the Board of Revenue, and in all other parts of the Presidency to the above officers and to the Collector of the district in which they hold their appointments, or in which they are at the time employed, and shall be liable to suspension or dismissal by order of the Board of Revenue for neglect or misconduct in the discharge of their duties.

4. It shall be the duty of the Inspectors of Jute on information received in writing to examine jute offered or intended for sale to the person who lodges the information in writing.

5. It shall be lawful for an Inspector of Jute to seize and detain any jute examined under section 4 if he has reason to believe same as liable to confiscation under this Act and to give the same into the custody of any Police officer.

6. Every Inspector who shall seize and detain any jute under this Act shall, within 24 hours from the time of such seizure and detention, apply for and obtain a summons from a first or second class Magistrate directed to the person in whose possession the same was found and requiring him within 24 hours from the time the summons is issued to show cause why such jute should not be confiscated.

7. Every Inspector of Jute shall have such number of subordinates as the Board of Revenue from time to time directs, and it

shall be lawful for such subordinates to exercise such of the powers conferred by this Act on an Inspector as the Director of Land Records and Agriculture or the Collector of a district may from time to time by writing under his hand depute them to exercise.

8. *Penalties, offences and prosecutions.*—If, upon the hearing of the summons issued under section 6 of this Act, the Magistrate or Court be satisfied that any jute seized and detained under the provisions of section 5 of this Act—(1) has been fraudulently or dishonestly adulterated or deteriorated, or increased in weight by mixing therewith seed, dirt, stones, or other foreign matter, or by exposing it to dew or by any other means, the Magistrate or Court shall order—that such jute is cleaned or dried under the direction of the Inspector of Jute, and that such Inspector do return such jute when so cleaned or dried to the person in whose possession the same was found upon payment by him of the expenses of cleaning or drying such jute, together with such fine as such Magistrate or Court shall direct, and that in default of such payment, such jute to be sold and the proceeds thereof, after deducting such fine and the expenses of cleaning or drying and sale, be paid to such person as aforesaid.

9. All proceedings and offences under this Act shall be cognizable, subject to the provisions of any law for the time being in force for the trial of offences, by a Presidency Magistrate in the city of Calcutta, and elsewhere by any Criminal Court exercising powers not inferior to those of a second class Magistrate: provided always that no person shall be proceeded against on account of any such offence except by summons on information laid by an Inspector of Jute.

10. It shall not be necessary in any proceeding for any offence under this Act to prove an intent to defraud any particular person.

11. The provisions of sections 64 to 70, both inclusive, of the Indian Penal Code shall apply to fines imposed under this Act, and all such fines shall be recoverable according to the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code.

12. *Miscellaneous.*—A fee at such rate as the Government may from time to time direct by notification in the *Calcutta Gazette* shall be levied proportionately on every loom in Jute Mills in Bengal and upon every bale of jute exported from any Port in the Presidency of Bengal.

13. Nothing in this Act shall affect the civil rights of any person in any manner interested in any jute confiscated, or ordered to be cleaned and sold under the provisions of this Act, but every such person shall have the same right of action as if this Act had not been passed, and all fines, cleaning and sale charges paid, and legal and other expenses and losses incurred and sustained in consequence of the seizure and detention of such jute and consequent thereon shall be part of the damages recoverable in such action.

CALCUTTA, 22nd February 1905.

From—G. MORGAN, ESQ.

To—The Secretary to the Bengal Provincial Agricultural Association.

Referring to the letter from our Narayanganj Chamber of Commerce, dated the 9th instant, enclosing draft of an Act for the suppression of fraudulent practices in the jute trade, I would suggest that the following be inserted as clauses 4 and 6 in place of those contained in the said draft.

Clause 4.—It will be the duty of the Inspectors to examine jute offered or intended for sale at any Jute *hāt* or Mart.

Clause 6.—Every Inspector who shall seize, examine and test any jute under this Act shall have the power to issue a summons directed to the person in whose possession the same was found requiring him within 48 hours to show cause why he should not be prosecuted for fraud.

Clause 7.—I would cut out altogether.

I would suggest that no native Inspectors be appointed at all, but that there be only European Inspectors whose duty will be to travel all over the jute districts and also to inspect the various Jute Bazars in Calcutta, and I am of opinion that 10 such Inspectors would prove sufficient for the purpose. They should be well paid and their salaries should certainly be not less than Rs. 750 per month. They would be continually on the move and the Railways and Steamer Services would give them access to nearly every *hāt*. I have suggested their being allowed to issue summonses so as to save all unnecessary delay.

CIRCULAR MEMO. NO. 50A.

Copy forwarded to all members of the Bengal Provincial Agricultural Association, for information, in continuation of this office circular No. 43A, dated the 23rd February 1905.

S. L. MADDOX,

Secy., Bengal Provincial Agricultural Association.

CALCUTTA,

The 3rd March 1905.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,

ROYAL EXCHANGE BUILDING,

Calcutta, 17th March 1905.

A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE was held this day to consider, together with representatives of the Jute Trade in its various branches, the Question of the Prevention by Legislation of the Fraudulent Watering of Jute in Bengal.

PRESENT:

HON. MR. A. A. APCAR	... President, Chamber, presiding.
MR. J. D. NIMMO	... Vice-President, Chamber.
„ J. R. BERTRAM	... Member, Chamber Committee.
MR. J. NICOLL	... Chairman, Indian Jute Mills' Association.
„ W. BLEECK	... Chairman, Calcutta Baled Jute Association.
„ R. O. LAW	... Representing the Jute Fabric Shippers' Association.
„ R. KAR	... Representing the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce.
„ C. W. R. BRYAN	... Messrs. M. David & Co.
„ M. J. CALVOGROSSI	... Rait's Brothers.
„ J. B. CLARK	... „ Landale & Clark.
„ J. B. STRAIN	... „ Bird & Co.

The following gentlemen were also present by special invitation:—

MR. H. C. EGGAR	... Messrs. Sanderson & Co.
HON. MR. J. P. HEWETT, C.S.I., C.I.E.	... Member for Commerce and Industry on U. E. the Governor-General's Council.
MR. S. L. MADDOX, L.C.S.	... Offg. Director of Land Records and Agriculture.

In opening the proceedings, THE PRESIDENT said:—Gentlemen, the Committee have asked you to meet here to discuss the draft of the Bengal Jute Fraud Act. The Hon. Mr. Hewett has kindly accepted our invitation to be present and hear what we have to say about the draft, and I hope we shall be able to arrive at something definite in regard to the subject.

The draft Act has been circulated to all the members, and opinions asked on it. Of the opinions that have been received by the Chamber, some were in approval, some in disapproval, while others made suggestions for amendment. A meeting of the Jute Mills' Association was called to discuss the question, from the proceedings

of which meeting I gathered that there existed a difference of opinion in regard to the point. It was acknowledged at that meeting that it was necessary to do something, but just what that something was, and how it was to be brought into effect, was the great hitch. We have asked you all to meet here, for the purpose of giving us your opinions, which may perhaps result in our being able to arrive at some suggestion which could be sent up to Government as a working measure. We shall be glad to hear any remarks that you may have to make on the subject under discussion.

MR. NICOLL on being asked by the Chairman to open the discussion replied that he thought that such a privilege should be accorded to Mr. Bleeck, as the movement in favor of legislation had emanated, in the first instance, from the Calcutta Baled Jute Association. He would, however, remark that he would like first of all to know how it was intended to put the Bill in operation, so as to apply to all concerned in the Jute trade, and to attain the object it had in view.

MR. BLEECK replied that when the Baled Jute Association had given its opinion on the subject under discussion he was not a member of the Committee. They had, however, made up their minds to support Mr. Nicoll's suggestions. As far as shippers of Jute were concerned, there were hardly any cases of damage caused by wet packing. This was due very largely to the existence of the Calcutta Baled Jute Association, which brought balers under the control of the Association. They had found their own remedy for such evils, which consisted in refusing to purchase Jute which had been unusually watered. At the same time they were prepared to support the Resolution that Mr. Nicoll intended to make, as it was very desirable that the fraudulent watering of Jute should be put a stop to. How far this was practicable it was very difficult to decide.

MR. NICOLL stated that he could only repeat what he had said on a former occasion, *viz.*, that he did not see how the proposed Act would work in any shape or form. It had to be admitted that through the keenness of buyers to buy Jute, either wet or dry, they had contributed towards the trouble to a certain extent, for it was left to them to accept or refuse Jute that was excessively watered. The consequence had been that sellers had seized every opportunity to take advantage of this keenness and to practise frauds. It had to be recognized that, if they were to approach the Government in any of its departments and to ask them to legislate, it would be introducing a very novel feature. A similar Act had actually been put into force in Bombay and found wholly unworkable, and was subsequently repealed; and they would have to take care, in enacting a similar Act on this side of India, that the scheme was based on grounds that would have more satisfactory results. From the point of view of consumers there were many difficulties that might readily arise, if such an Act were passed. He did not see how it was possible for European balers to put the Act into operation. On the other hand he saw the possibility of certain Native balers buying Jute wet, up-country, sending it to Calcutta, baling it and

sending it off by steamer, and the provisions of the Act would prove inoperative in their case. Even taking the case of the European balers, once their Jute was put into the baled form, it could not be touched, for it would be hedged round by an existing procedure that would make the working of the Act almost an impossibility. Again, the Act would prove wholly inoperative everywhere unless it were initiated by some one who would be prepared to go to all the trouble of reducing their complaint to writing and lodging it before a Magistrate, without which it would be impossible for any action to be taken. Then there was the question of proving the charge and the consequent risk of an action for libel arising; so that, under such circumstances, the cure would be worse than the disease. He did not believe in the remedy lying in any Act whatsoever, since legislation was impracticable. Even supposing it was not, it would be wholly impossible to do anything of this character, in time for next season's crop. They had, however, thought of a suggestion which might be put into effect in a practical way, and that was to ask for a Government Commission to enquire into the extent of this watering of Jute; that observations be made during the course of next season, at the end of which the observations in question should be tabulated, and when the extent of the evil had been ascertained, it could then be considered whether legislation was necessary. He would put his suggestion in the form of a Resolution, in order that those present might have the opportunity of seconding the same, or of proposing amendments. The Resolution in question was:—

"That this meeting, representing all sections of the Jute trade and having most carefully considered the question of the fraudulent watering of Jute recommend that an application be made to Government for the appointment of a Commission to enquire into the extent of the practice. The Commission to be composed of a superior official as head Commissioner, with Assistant Commissioners sufficiently numerous to enable one to be placed in each important Jute district during the marketing of the new season's crop. These Assistants to be transferred from district to district for the purpose of efficient administration and the proper carrying out of the work entrusted to them. The Commissioners to be fully empowered to examine and test Jute wherever found. Jute in bales and in pieces to be examined. The Commission would ascertain by fixed system and a fixed standard test to be determined by the trade—the amount in suspected Jute, of moisture over and above the given standard. The Assistant Commissioners would record their daily tests and observations in a weekly return, to be drawn up by the trade and to be sent into the head Commissioner, who would tabulate the information. At the end of the season the whole question would be considered with a view to legislation if required."

THE PRESIDENT.—You say here, "during the marketing of the new season's crop." Do you mean the whole season?

MR. NICOLLI.—Yes, the whole season.

THE PRESIDENT.—Would it not be better if you defined the exact period?

THE PRESIDENT.—We should like to have the views of the buyers of jute up-country, if the representatives of such firms as

Messrs. M. DAVID & Co., Landale & Clark, and Ralli Bros, who are very extensive buyers of loose jute in the Moissal, would be good enough to come forward and say a few words on the subject.

MR. C. R. W. BRYAN said that it had been assumed, that nothing in the way of legislation could be done in time for next season, but even if an Act could be put into effect by the end of September, it would be better than nothing. He thought that in the interim Mr. Strain's suggestion to the effect that a notice be issued throughout the Jute growing districts warning people against the practice of wetting jute as one that would eventually satisfied themselves that the evil existed and had shown their willingness to help the trade, but would not commit themselves to legislation unless the form of such legislation met with the approval of all concerned. It was for the trade to help the Government by coming to some mutual understanding as to what they desired. All the Jute firms in Naraingunj were anxious to have something done quickly even if only a temporary measure. The following alteration had been suggested in the draft Act proposed by the Naraingunj Chamber of Commerce:—

- (1) That Clause 4 should be altered and read as follows:—
"It will be the duty of the Inspectors to examine "Jute offered or intended for sale at any hat "or mart."
- (2) That Clause 6 should read:—
"Every Inspector who shall seize, examine, and "test any Jute under this Act shall have the power "to issue a summons directed to the person in whose "possession the same was found, requiring him with- "in 48 hours to show cause why he should not be "prosecuted for fraud."

It had also been suggested that no Native Inspectors be appointed at all, but that there be only European Inspectors whose duty would be to travel all over the Jute districts and inspect the various Jute Bazaars in Calcutta, and that 10 Inspectors would be sufficient, on a salary of not less than Rs. 750 a month. They would have to be continually on the move, and the Railway and Steamer services should be asked to give them ready access to all the hats. It was also suggested, that they be allowed to issue summonses, so as to save time.

MR. CAFYOCORESSI said that he did not think it would be easy to hit upon any form of legislation that would work satisfactorily, for the prevention of the wetting of Jute. The draft Act received from the Director of Land Records appeared to be directed towards Jute in the *Pucca* bale, whereas the evil lay in the hat itself, towards Jute in the *Pucca* bale, whereas the evil lay in the hat itself, where wet Jute was exposed for sale, and it was necessary to prevent it from coming into Calcutta wet. *Pucca* bales, containing wet Jute, have not of late years been shipped from Calcutta. The *Kutchie* bale had his own buyer of the *Pucca* bale, and of the *Kutchie* bale had his own seller, and required no protection. The Act proposed for the

examination of Jute offered for compression, or exposed or intended for sale, and it seemed to him that the second part of Clause 4 was in conflict with the first, since Jute in the Press house was Jute that had already been bought by the baler and could no longer be said to be offered for sale. He did not see that the Act would work in any way to attack wet Jute before it came into the hands of the baler. It was very difficult to attack Jute in its loose state. It would mean a very big staff of Inspectors, who would have to be very highly paid.

The PRESIDENT:—Referring to Mr. Nicoll's Resolution, are you in favor of this temporary measure that he has suggested?

MR. CALVOCORESSI:—I think it would be the best thing.

MR. EGGAR:—Part of this Resolution seems difficult to put into practice. It says: "The Commissioners to be fully empowered to examine and test Jute wherever found." The Commissioners could not be empowered to do that, except by legislation.

MR. CALVOCORESSI:—I do not think that in practice they would find it very difficult to conduct examinations, etc.

MR. EGGAR:—They would be prosecuted for trespass.

The PRESIDENT:—Mr. Bryan has given me this note, Gentlemen, I will read it to you:—

At a meeting held on Wednesday, 15th March 1905, the Committee of the Narainganj Chamber of Commerce passed the following resolution with regard to the proposed Jute Fraud legislation:—

"That provided no Bill can be passed and brought into operation by the commencement of the coming Jute season, they recommend the adoption of the suggestion made by Mr. Strain at the General Meeting of the Jute Mills' Association to the following effect:—

"That the Chamber of Commerce might approach Government meantime with a request that they notify Collectors and Magistrates in all the Jute districts to warn all Jute sellers and dealers that if this practice of watering Jute is not discontinued, a Bill will at once be brought in rendering it criminal."

"Together with Mr. Nicoll's suggestion made at the same meeting to the following effect:—

"That an application be made to Government by all sections of the trade to appoint a Commission to enquire into the extent of the evil complained of. This Commission to be composed of a superior Official as Head Commissioner, with Assistant Commissioners sufficiently numerous to enable one to be placed in each important Jute district, during the marketing of the new season's crop. These Assistants to be transferred from district to district for the purpose of efficient administration and the proper carrying out of the work entrusted to them.

"The Commission to be fully empowered to examine and test Jute wherever found. The Assistant Commissioners would record their daily tests and observations in a weekly return, to be drawn up by the trade and to be sent in to the Commissioner, who would tabulate the information. At the end of the season the whole question would be considered with a view to legislation if required."

MR. EGGAR:—The only difficulty with regard to the matter is how fully the Government could give the information.

The PRESIDENT:—Will you advise us as to this Resolution?

MR. EGGAR:—I do not know that there are any legal points on which I could give advice.

The PRESIDENT:—Can the necessary powers be given to the Commissioners?

MR. EGGAR:—In my opinion they cannot be given except by legislation. If the Government were prepared to frame a short Act appointing Commissioners and giving them statutory powers, there would be no difficulty, but without legislation I do not see how this is to be done. You say that the Commissioners should be empowered to examine and test Jute wherever found, that is to say, in any premises where it is stored for the time being. Well, unless you have statutory authority to do so, you become trespassers, and as far as the Jute trade is concerned, it would create a great deal of ill-feeling, and you would have people taking every advantage they could of such a measure.

The PRESIDENT:—Could you suggest amending this Resolution in some way as to ask Government to frame a short Act empowering the Commissioners.

MR. EGGAR:—You might put it in that form and no doubt the matter would be considered by Government.

The PRESIDENT:—Would you agree to that suggestion, Mr. Nicoll?

MR. NICOLL:—Most certainly—I should like to strike out the word "fraudulent" in my Resolution.

MR. EGGAR:—Whether the watering is fraudulent or otherwise is to be determined by the Magistrate before whom the case comes. May I ask if any of you have read the Bombay Act. This Bill is taken entirely from that Act word for word, and it has been said that the Act worked well in Bombay. There is one part, however, which relates to licensing, which has not been included.

MR. CALVOCORESSI:—I believe the object of the Cotton Frauds Act was to seize cotton in the bale. The Act provided for every bale having a mark showing from what press it had come.

MR. EGGAR:—It was intended to restrict baling to licensed presses.

MR. CALVOCORESSI:—There was no provision for dealing with cotton before it got to the press-house. Whereas with Jute it is quite a different thing.

Mr. EGGAR :—This draft Act in my opinion is open to many criticisms, in regard to its working. I delayed replying to the Secretary's letter, as I was waiting to get a copy of the Bombay Act.

The PRESIDENT :—Have you been in Messrs. Rallis' office in Bombay, Mr. Calvocressi?

Mr. CALVOCRESSI :—No.

The PRESIDENT :—You could not tell us why the Bombay Act was repealed. I presume it was found such a nuisance that it was withdrawn?

Mr. CALVOCRESSI :—Yes. The letter on the file is signed by Mr. Gho, who has been in Bombay, and is conversant with the conditions that led to the repeal of the Bombay Cotton Frauds Act.

Mr. BERTRAM :—I have heard that the Cotton Frauds Act was a failure. It was a nuisance.

The PRESIDENT :—How do you propose that the expenses of this Commission should be met Mr. Nicoll? You ask for a Head Commissioner with Assistant Commissioners sufficiently numerous to enable one to be placed in each important Jute district.

Mr. NICOLL :—When the question is asked I shall think over it. Speaking on behalf of the Mills I think that they would be quite willing to contribute towards the expenses of such a Commission, which, after all, would not be very much.

The PRESIDENT :—Any how that is a question that is bound to arise.

Mr. NICOLL :—I would say on behalf of the Mills that the expenses could be met in this way. There are about 20,000 looms which would together contribute Rs. 20,000, and the Baled Jute Association would probably contribute another Rs. 20,000, making a total of Rs. 40,000, which I think would be sufficient to meet the expenses of such a Commission.

Mr. CALVOCRESSI :—The Commission would only ascertain facts that are already patent to everybody, *viz.*, that Jute is wet.

The HON. MR. HEWETT :—I understand that the Government of Bengal has admitted that the practice of wetting does prevail, and is ready to consider your proposals if you are able to agree as to the remedy. The draft Act has been discussed, but there is no agreement as to its suitability. Some say it is suitable, some say it is not, and there is no sign of unanimity as to what is wanted.

The PRESIDENT :—I am afraid we have come to a deadlock.

Mr. STRAIN :—I think Gentlemen, that it would be a great pity if we left this Meeting without coming to a decision. As the Hon. Mr. Hewett has said, if we can only tell the Government what it, he really want, there would be a chance of getting it. What we wish is some cure for this wetting of Jute. If nothing is done, it is obvious that matters will go from bad to worse. Is

anybody ready to put forward a scheme that is feasible? The Naraingunj Chamber seem to be the only people who have taken it up in a business-like way, and the question for us now is to say whether we are ready to act up to their suggestions, or suggest something better. I don't pretend to know the legal aspect of their suggestions, but if we want to tackle the trouble, we must go to the Molussil to do so, as that is where the adulteration takes place, and this is where the inspection should take place; not afterwards, when it would be quite impossible to tell who committed the fraud. It is quite unnecessary for Inspectors to enter Press houses. Their duty should be to examine Jute offered for sale at houses. Clause 6 of the draft Act says that "every any hāt or mart. Inspector who shall seize and detain any jute under this Act shall within seven days from the date of such seizure and detention apply for and obtain a summons from a Presidency Magistrate in the City of Calcutta." Seven days is far too long. Naraingunj's suggestion is certainly better. Clause 3 (d), it seems to me, should be omitted, as it is far too intricate a question for any one to decide, whether such Jute is a mixture fraudulently or dishonestly made of cleaned and uncleaned Jute or of different varieties or qualities in one bale. In regard to the question of the definition of wet Jute, I would suggest that it be taken to mean Jute that contains over 10 per cent. of moisture after two hours' exposure in the sun.

The PRESIDENT :—Your suggestion amounts to this, that the draft Act proposed by the Naraingunj Chamber be further considered, in order to see whether it might act on the basis of an Act which we could recommend to Government for acceptance. What do you say to that Mr. Clark?

Mr. CLARK :—I have not had the pleasure of going through the draft suggested by the Naraingunj Chamber, but there is one point which fell from Mr. Strain, *viz.*, that inspection should be confined to *Hāts*, on which I should like to remark. Naraingunj is such a large station that it would be difficult to exactly locate the *Hāt*. This is perhaps a minor point, however. I agree with Mr. Strain very decidedly that we should try and do something definite in the matter. As far as I can see, what we have to do is to frame a law or Act that would work without being an embargo on business, and would press equally on all. I should be glad to support Mr. Nicoll that a Commission should first be appointed in order to see if we could not prepare something sound to put before Government.

The PRESIDENT :—Since Mr. Nicoll made his proposal, our Solicitor tells us that, in order to put it into effect, legislation is necessary. We are asking the Government to do something that they have already done.

The HON. MR. HEWETT :—Government say, we will consider a measure if you will suggest one. At present you cannot suggest anything. First of all the Bill has to be considered by the Bengal Government, from whom it goes to the Government of India, and

then to the Secretary of State. It is impossible to pass a legislative measure of the kind contemplated in a hurry. It would be quite impossible to pass any Bill in time for it to apply to the next season's crop. The suggestion that has been made, *viz.*, that a wetting Jute, if continued, would be treated as a criminal offence, seems to prejudice the case. It could only become criminal if a law was enacted to make it so.

MR. BERTRAM :—In regard to the Naraingunj suggestion about inspection at the *Hds*, what is there to compel the men to sell Jute at the *Hds*? They could very easily make an arrangement with the buyer to sell the jute somewhere else, and the purposes of your Act would be defeated at once.

MR. NICOLL :—It was for this reason that I purposely used the words "wherever found." We have been told that legislation cannot come into operation for a very long time, and I have put forward a proposal that is more or less a temporary measure, but if put into effect would be certain to have good results in all the Jute-growing districts. I think the Solicitors of the Chamber might be asked to consider whether or not there is some way of getting the Government to pass orders, if not on the basis of this Resolution, on that of some amended one.

MR. EGGAR :—I do not see what we could suggest, in regard to this point, that would be accepted by Government.

THE PRESIDENT :—We want to propose something reasonable, that is all. The fact is admitted that there is adulteration, but to what extent?

MR. MADDOX :—Government has asked the Chamber to suggest measures for its prevention.

THE HON. MR. HEWETT :—I would suggest that you should examine the Bill prepared by the Naraingunj Chamber.

MR. NICOLL :—The Naraingunj proposal is a proposal for legislation, and legislation cannot be carried out for some time to come.

MR. CALVOCCRESSI :—Mr. Nicoll's proposal for a Commission is that it should work during the whole jute season. We should stand in the same position with regard to next season's crop.

THE PRESIDENT :—Would it not be better, rather than to separate with nothing done, if we resolved that the proposal sent by the Naraingunj Chamber, with the further amendments be submitted to our Solicitors first for opinion, and then come up for opinion. Mr. Nicoll's proposal would be a waste of time, for we would be asking Government to do what they have already done, whereas they wish us to tell them to what extent the evil prevails and to offer suggestions for its removal.

MR. EGGAR :—There would be one question that would arise, and that would be in regard to what wet Jute is. I would suggest introducing a definition of it into the Act. Supposing you went

before a Magistrate with a charge of adulteration of Jute by water, for the purpose of committing a fraudulent act, how is the Magistrate to arrive at any decision. In your draft Act you have no definition and that is the most important question. You must have a definition.

PRESIDENT :—At certain seasons of the year would not the moisture in Jute be considered natural?

MR. STRAIN :—Not to a greater extent than 10%. Anything more would not be natural moisture, but moisture that would be added.

MR. EGGAR :—How do you ascertain the percentage,—by weight?

MR. STRAIN :—Yes.

THE PRESIDENT :—Do you agree to my amendment, Mr. Nicoll?

MR. NICOLL :—I do.

THE PRESIDENT :—Gentlemen, I take it that my amendment is carried and that we will further discuss this question at a meeting to be called hereafter. I would propose a vote of thanks to the Hon. Mr. Hewett for having so kindly attended here and listened to what we have had to say, and also for having given us the benefit of his advice.

The vote of thanks was put to the meeting, and carried by acclamation.

A. A. APCAR,
President.

W. PARSONS,
Secretary.

From Chamber, to Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY).

No. 631-1905.—CALCUTTA, 10th April 1905.

I am instructed to hand you herewith, for information, two copies of a Special Meeting of the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce held on the 17th March 1905, to consider, together with the Representatives of the Jute Trade in its various branches, the question of the Prevention by Legislation of the Fraudulent watering of Jute in Bengal.

From Chamber, to all Members; the Indian Jute Mills; the Calcutta Baled Jute; and the Jute Fabrics Shippers' Associations; and the Bengal National and the Narayangunj Chambers of Commerce.

CIR. No. 216-1905—CALCUTTA, 25th May 1905.

Prevention by Legislation of Fraudulent Watering of Jute in Bengal.

At a Special Meeting of the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce held on the 17th March, to consider with the representatives of the Jute Trade in its various branches, the question of the prevention by legislation of the fraudulent watering of jute in Bengal, it was decided to refer the two draft Bills which had been received from the Secretary of the Provincial Agricultural Association, and the Narayangunj Chamber of Commerce, respectively, to the Solicitors of the Chamber for consideration and report.

As a result of this reference Messrs. Sanderson & Co. have submitted an entirely new Bill, and I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber to circulate this, together with copy of their explanatory letter of 18th April, for the consideration of the members of the Chamber in general, and representatives of the Jute industry in particular.

The Committee propose, on receipt of opinions from those interested in the matter which they trust will be submitted at an early date, to call a further conference, similar to that held on the 17th March, when the matter will be further discussed.

From Messrs. Sanderson & Co., to Chamber.

No. 4147—CALCUTTA, 18th April 1905.

Jute-Frauds Act.

The Committee of the Narayangunj Chamber of Commerce have arrived at the conclusion in regard to the draft Act (say draft A), which was discussed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce at their Meeting on the 17th March, that it is "too far reaching" for the Mofussil, that what is wanted is something very simple and easily applied, and that the "something" is the draft Act (say draft B), forwarded with the letter of the 9th February last, from the Honorary Secretary Narayangunj Chamber of Commerce to the Secretary to the Bengal Provincial Agricultural Association.

* Draft A is taken word for word from the repealed Bombay Cotton Frauds Act 1878, substituting jute for cotton. Draft B is nothing more than draft A omitting the references in the last draft to bales or packages of jute and foreign export. The reason given for the omissions is that the practices which it is sought to suppress are confined to loose jute and do not extend to jute in drums, cutcha bales and pucca bales, and that, when jute is sold to the buyers who assort and bale it for the Mills or for export, the trade has its own remedy should any fraud be practised.

Draft A being recognised as unsatisfactory, draft B must necessarily be so also. Owing to the great demand for jute and the rivalry which results from competition, to the want of unanimity in the trade, to the fact that a certain amount of moisture and some degree of carelessness in the preparation of jute is unavoidable and is not regarded as objectionable, and to the fact that the degree of moisture is variable in different localities, it is difficult to frame an Act that shall comply in all respects with the expressed intention of the promoters of the legislation.

The watering of jute and the addition of rubbish, if such practices are resorted to with intent to fraud, would constitute the offence of cheating as defined in the Penal Code. As we gauge the requirements, what is sought is an Act that shall define distinctly, by a hard and fast line, the point at which the practices shall be deemed to be intentional and fraud shall be presumed, so as to avoid the necessity and the difficulty attending the necessity of proving an intent to defraud.

We have attempted this in the accompanying draft (say draft C), which we submit for the consideration of the Committee of the Chamber. We have devoted much time and care to the consideration of the subject, and have at length decided on this draft as the nearest in approach to what is required.

Some of the clauses in draft C are based upon provisions to be found in the following Statutes relating to adulteration:

Sale of Food and Drugs Act 1875	...	38-39 Vic C 63.
Adulteration of Seeds Act 1869	...	32-33 Vic C 112.
Margarine Act 1889	...	50-51 Vic C 29.
Public Health (London) Act 1891	...	54-55 Vic C 76.

The definitions of offences are of course entirely new, and it is in regard to them principally that the difficulty arises.

We have found the appointment of Inspectors of Jute to be impracticable, and we have suggested the alternative of enabling the Court to appoint a person for the purpose of examining the jute and applying the test as to moisture, the expense to be provided in the first instance by the complainant but to be eventually recovered from the accused on conviction.

ACT NO. OF 190

An Act for the Prevention of Adulteration of Jute and for the Suppression of certain practices in the Jute trade.

WHEREAS it is expedient to provide by special enactment for the prevention of adulteration of jute and/or for the suppression of certain practices in the jute trade,

1. This Act may be cited as "The Bengal Adulteration of Jute Act 1905."

* It extends to the whole of the Province of Bengal.

2. In this Act, unless there be something repugnant in the subject or context,

“Jute” includes *Mestha Pat (Hibiscus Cannabines)*.
 “The Court” shall mean the Magistrate before whom proceedings may be had and taken under this Act.

3. Every person who, with intent to defraud or to enable another person to defraud, shall sell or expose or offer for sale or tender in fulfilment of any agreement for sale any quantity of jute which has been adulterated or deteriorated or increased in weight by watering or by exposure to dew or by moistening by any other means shall be liable, on summary conviction for the first offence to a fine not exceeding Rs. , and for the second offence to a fine not exceeding Rs. , and for the third or any subsequent offence to a fine not exceeding Rs. .

4. Every person who, with intent to defraud or to enable another person to defraud, shall sell or expose or offer for sale or tender in fulfilment of any agreement for sale any quantity of jute which has been increased in weight by the addition thereto, or in any parcel or package containing the same, of any seed, dirt, stones or other foreign matter or substance whatsoever shall be liable on summary conviction to the same penalty in each case respectively as in the preceding section for a first and subsequent offence.

5. An offence shall be deemed to have been committed under section 3 of this Act if, after weighing the jute as sold, exposed, or offered for sale or tendered and exposing it, suspended over a staging of bamboos in the full sun for the period of two consecutive hours, and again weighing it after such exposure, the difference if any in weight on such subsequent ascertainment shall exceed one tenth of the weight as first ascertained.

6. An offence shall be deemed to have been committed under Section 4 of this Act if on examination of the jute as sold, exposed or offered for sale or tendered, there shall be found to be present amongst such jute, or in the parcel or package containing such jute any seeds, dirt, stones or other foreign matter or substance tending to increase the weight thereof, the presence of which shall not in the opinion of the Court be fairly attributable, or the amount of which shall in the opinion of the Court be in excess of what may be fairly attributable, to carelessness in the cleaning or preparation of the jute for sale.

7. It shall not be necessary in any proceeding for an offence under this Act to prove an intent to defraud any particular person or an intent to enable any particular person to defraud any particular person.

8. It shall be lawful for the Court in any proceeding for an offence under this Act, upon the request of the complainant and upon his depositing with the Court such sum as the Court may direct as remuneration for the services to be rendered by a person appointed under this section, to appoint such person as the Court shall think fit to examine any jute, whether in a loose state of in

any parcel or package, which shall be the subject of a complaint under this Act for the purpose of affording evidence of the condition thereof, and, if complaint shall be made of an offence, under Section 3 of this Act, to direct the person so appointed to apply to any jute the subject of such complaint the test mentioned in Section 5 of this Act. And in appointing a person under this Section for any such purpose as aforesaid the Court may grant to such person a warrant to enter any building or premises and to remove therefrom or cause to be removed therefrom any jute, whether loose or packed, the subject of complaint, in order that the same may be examined or subjected to the test aforesaid. Any person who shall obstruct the person appointed and authorized by the Court under this Section in the performance of his duty under this section shall be deemed to have committed an offence under this Act.

9. It shall be lawful for the Court, besides inflicting upon the person guilty of an offence the punishment directed by this Act, to direct the payment by such person to the complainant of the amount paid as remuneration to the person appointed by the Court under the last preceding Section, and upon non-payment of such amount within days from the date of such direction it shall be lawful for the Court to enforce payment thereof in the same manner as if the same were a penalty incurred by the person liable to pay the same.

10. When an employer is charged with an offence under this Act he shall be entitled upon information duly laid by him to have any other person whom he charges as the actual offender brought before the Court at the time of hearing of the complaint, and if before the commission of the offence he has been proved, the employer proves to the satisfaction of the Court that the said other person committed the offence in question without his knowledge, consent or connivance, the said other person shall be summarily convicted of such offence and the employer shall be exempt from any penalty.

11. Every person selling or exposing or offering for sale or tendering any quantity of jute which shall have been adulterated or deteriorated or increased in weight in manner or by means mentioned in Section 3 or 4 of this Act shall be liable to conviction or conviction or increased in weight in manner or by means mentioned in Section 3 or 4 of this Act, unless he shows to the satisfaction of the Court that he purchased the jute in question and that he had no reason to believe at the time he purchased it and at the time when he sold, exposed or offered it for sale or tendered it, that it had been adulterated or deteriorated or increased in weight in manner or by means aforesaid, and that he sold, exposed or offered for sale or tendered the jute in question in the same state as when he purchased it, and in such case he shall be discharged from the prosecution.

12. Every prosecution under this Act, shall be commenced within days from the time of the commission of the offence complained of.

13. Whenever any complaint is preferred against any person under this Act and the Court upon the hearing thereof determines

that it is not *bona fide* made upon reasonable and proper cause, it shall be lawful for the Court, in its discretion, to direct and order that the prosecutor or other person by whom or at whose instance such complaint has been preferred shall pay to the accused person the just and reasonable costs charges and expenses, to be settled by the Court, of such accused person and his witnesses occasioned by or consequent upon the preferring of such complaint; and upon non-payment of such costs charges and expenses within days after the date of such direction and order, it shall be lawful for the Court to enforce payment of the same in the same manner as if such costs charges and expenses were a penalty incurred by the person liable to pay the same.

14. All proceedings and offences under this Act shall be cognizable, subject to the provisions of any law for the time being in force for the trial of offences, by a Presidency Magistrate in the city of Calcutta and elsewhere by any Criminal Court exercising powers not inferior to those of a second class Magistrate.

15. The provisions of sections 64 to 70 both inclusive of the Indian Penal Code shall apply to all fines imposed under this Act, and all such fines shall be recoverable according to the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code.

16. Nothing in this Act shall affect the civil rights of any person in any manner interested in any jute the subject of a complaint under this Act, nor shall any proceeding conviction or judgment to be had or taken under the provisions of this Act against any person prevent, lessen or impeach any remedy by civil process which any party aggrieved by an offence under the Act might have had if this Act had not been passed.

From Jute Fabrics Shippers' Association, to Chamber.

No. 67-J.—CALCUTTA, 1st June 1905.
Prevention by Legislation of Fraudulent Watering of Jute in Bengal.

I am directed by the Committee of the Jute Fabrics Shippers' Association to acknowledge receipt of copy of your circular letter No. 216-1905, dated 25th May 1905, containing an explanatory new draft Bill submitted by Messrs Sanderson & Co., relative to a Bill in the circular. You invite an expression of the opinion of this Association on the provisions of the draft Bill; and you intimate that a further conference similar to that held on 17th March will be convened to discuss the question further.

The Committee have perused the draft Bill; but they are not disposed to offer any criticisms with regard to the provisions which deal entirely with raw jute with which this Association is not directly concerned.

I am directed to add, however, that when a Bill is finally approved by the Jute trade, they would be glad to see some provision inserted in it which would give manufactured articles the same protection as that which would be secured to jute in its raw state.

From Indian Jute Mills' Association, to Chamber.

No. 197-D.—CALCUTTA, 19th July 1905.

The Watering of Jute.

I am directed by the Committee of the Indian Jute Mills' Association to refer to your circular No. 216-1905, dated 25th May last, on the subject of the prevention by Legislation of the fraudulent watering of Jute in Bengal.

2. The Committee have carefully considered the draft Bill contained in the circular, and are disposed to regard it in many ways as an advance on the original Bill. But the question as to whether it will effect the object in view is one upon which they are unable to express an opinion. They have always hesitated to suggest, or even to approve of any measures designed to make the watering of Jute a penal offence, and they still consider that it is undesirable, on general principles, to attempt legislation.

From Calcutta Baled Jute Association, to Chamber.

No. 285-T.—CALCUTTA, 20th July 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Calcutta Baled Jute Association to refer to your circular No. 216-1905, dated 25th May last, on the subject of the prevention by Legislation of fraudulent watering of Jute in Bengal.

2. The Committee have given the draft Bill submitted by Messrs Sanderson & Co., their attentive consideration. They regard it as an improvement on the original Bill, and, in the absence of any more practical proposal they would favour its being recommended to Government for enactment. Experience of its working will doubtless suggest improvements, and even an imperfect Act, as a beginning, will, the Committee are of opinion, be better than none at all.

3. There are, however, one or two points in the draft Bill to which the Committee would draw attention. They are as follows:—

Sections 4 and 6.—The Committee think that the word "Seed" is a misprint and is intended for the word "Sand" in these sections.

Section 11.—The Committee consider this section will afford opportunity for perjury, and they are strongly of opinion that it should be omitted. All *bona fide* merchants in the trade have ample opportunities for examining the jute they purchase.

From Naraingunj Chamber, to Chamber.

NARAINGUNJ, 15th August 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Naraingunj Chamber of Commerce to forward to you for your consideration an amended draft of a proposed Jute Fraud Act.

In drawing up the said draft the Committee have endeavoured, as far as possible, to adhere to the draft 'C' submitted by Messrs. Sanderson & Co.

In draft 'C' Messrs. Sanderson and Co. make it necessary that before the Act can be called into operation a complaint should be laid before a magistrate by some person, presumably the intending purchaser of the parcel of jute complained of.

This would simply mean that the Act would never be called into operation at all as no purchaser or buyer of jute would dare to lay a complaint before a magistrate with the intention of obtaining the conviction of the person offering the wet jute for sale. To do so, would simply mean that the complainant's business would be at an end for the remainder of the season at any rate, as he would be severely boycotted by all sellers of jute. Likewise, if a body or corporation, such as the Naraingunj Chamber of Commerce, were to move in the matter the result would obviously be even more disastrous. Such being the case the Committees are of opinion that sections 8 to 13 in Messrs. Sanderson & Co's draft 'C' are utterly impracticable.

As an alternative measure they suggest the appointment of four highly paid European Inspectors, to have jurisdiction over the whole of the Jute districts, with headquarters respectively at the four towns named in what may be called draft 'D'. They consider that this number of Inspectors would suffice for the efficient operation of the Act. We have an eminently law abiding people to deal with, and the very fact of the existence of a law against the fraudulent wetting of jute would certainly reduce the practice, while one or two convictions under the Act would probably put an entire stop to it.

Natives have expressed alarm from time to time, and have even gone so far as to agitate against legislation, but that can only have been because they misunderstood the proposed intention of the Act. They are in dread of power being given to the native police to extort bribes from cultivators and beparies. Whenever members of the Committee have been able to discuss the matter with cultivators or dealers, and to show them that the police would have no power over them, they have become keen advocates of the legislation movement.

The worst perpetrators of fraud by the wetting of jute are a class of traders known in some districts as "fariasis." These middle men buy the jute direct from the cultivators at the same price as beparies do, take it to the small hats or marts where they sell it to beparies at probably the same price as they paid for it, their profit, generally a very handsome one, being made by adding a larger or smaller percentage of water to the usually dry jute purchased from the cultivators. These are the men against whom in particular the Committee consider legislation should be mainly directed, and in this respect they are confident that in this district at least the movement will have the hearty support of all arratdars, beparies, and cultivators, who have been properly enlightened as to the proposed details of the Act; more especially on the point of police intervention.

In referring to draft Act (B) Messrs. Sanderson and Co., say that the appointment of Inspectors is impracticable. Why so? They give no reason for this statement.

In making their suggestion of the appointment of Inspectors the Committee have been influenced by the conditions existing at home with reference to the "Sale of Food and Drugs Act of 1875."

"In Section 12 of this Act, it is enacted that any purchaser of an article of food or drug in any place where there is an analyst, shall be entitled, on payment to such analyst of a sum not exceeding 10s. 6d. to have such article analysed by such analyst, and to receive from him a certificate of the result. Private individuals are generally content merely to receive the certificate, and rarely if ever take any further action. In order, therefore, that the Act should not become inoperative, and that dealers guilty of selling adulterated food might be tried and punished for the offence, Inspectors were appointed, whose duty consists in going to the various shops and other places where food is sold, making purchases of the different articles therein exposed for sale and submitting this to the public analyst for examination. If the analyst certifies that any of the substances submitted to him have been adulterated, the Inspectors must take steps to have the seller prosecuted."

The foregoing clearly demonstrates that without the appointment of Inspectors the "Sale of Food and Drugs Act of 1875" would be utterly useless. In the case of jute, however, it is manifestly impossible to follow exactly on the lines mentioned above, and, therefore, the Committee have suggested the appointment of officials vested with the combined powers of Inspectors, Analysts, and Prosecutors.

With regard to the payment of Inspectors and their travelling allowances, etc., it would be quite easy to levy a small tax on the Jute trade, e. g. Re. 1-8 per loom per annum from the mills and Re. 1-0 per 100 bales of jute exported, or something of that kind.

Inspectors would probably have ample means of getting about to the different parts of their districts in the Railway and Steamer services running all over these districts, but if such were found to be inadequate, there is no reason why they should not be supplied with launches or other means of conveyance. Any expenditure resulting in the supply to the trade of sound dry jute in place of the wet, often half rotten, and invariably more or less damaged fibre now procurable, would be well spent money.

All users of jute know to their cost that they suffer severe losses consequent on the shrinkage of weight due to the excessive moisture in the article now supplied. Were it possible to have oily dry jute to work with business would be enormously simplified.

The draft now submitted may be imperfect and open to much criticism, but the same may be said of anything. The chief thing is to have an Act of some kind and give it a trial. If it proves inadequate or difficult to work it can be amended at any time. Unless something is done, and that quickly, things will undoubtedly go from bad to worse.

Speaking specially of this station and the surrounding districts, to which mills have always looked for their supplies of dry sound storing jute, the Committee would like to point out that unless some such measure as they suggest can be made law, Naraingunj jute will before very long be brought to market as wet and unfit for storing purposes as any that can be found in the whole of the Jute districts.

ACT No OF 190 .

An Act for the Prevention of Adulteration of Jute and for the Suppression of certain practices in the Jute trade.

Whereas it is expedient to provide by special enactment for the prevention of adulteration of jute and for the suppression of certain practices in the jute trade,

1 This Act may be cited as "The Indian Adulteration of Jute Act of 190 ."

It extends to the whole of the Provinces of Bengal, Eastern Bengal and Assam, Behar and Orissa.

2 In this Act unless there be something repugnant in the subject or context, "Jute" includes "Mesha Pat" (*Hibiscus Cannabinus*).

3 Every person who, with intent to defraud or to enable another person to defraud, shall sell or expose or offer for sale or tender in fulfilment of any agreement for sale any quantity of jute which has been adulterated or deteriorated or increased in weight by watering or by exposure to dew or by moistening by any other means shall be liable on summary conviction for the first offence to a fine not exceeding Rs. 50-0 per hundred maunds or Rs. 100 per hundred maunds or part thereof, and for the second offence to a fine not exceeding Rs. 200-0 per hundred maunds or part thereof, and for the third or any subsequent offence to a fine not exceeding Rs. 200-0 per hundred maunds or part thereof.

4 Every person who, with intent to defraud or to enable another person to defraud, shall sell or expose or offer for sale or tender in fulfilment of any agreement for sale any quantity of jute which has been increased in weight by the addition thereto, or in any parcel or package containing the same, of any seed, dirt, stones or other foreign matter or substance whatsoever, shall be liable on summary conviction to the same penalty in each case respectively as in the preceding section for a first and subsequent offences.

5 An offence shall be deemed to have been committed under Section 3 of this Act if, after weighing a proportion selected at random and not less than 10 per cent. of the whole of the parcel of jute as sold, exposed, offered for sale, or tendered, and exposing it thinly spread over a staging, of bamboos in the full sun for a period of two consecutive hours, or failing a continuance of full sunshine such other time as the Inspector may consider equal

thereto and again weighing it after such exposure, the difference in weight on such subsequent ascertainment shall exceed one tenth of the weight as first ascertained.

6 An offence shall be deemed to have been committed under Section 4 of this Act if, on the examination of the jute, as sold, exposed, or offered for sale, or tendered, there shall be found to be present amongst such jute, or in the parcel or package containing such jute, any seeds, dirt, stones or other foreign matter or substance tending to increase the weight thereof, the presence of which shall not in the opinion of the Inspector be fairly attributable or the amount of which shall in the opinion of the Inspector be in excess of what may be fairly attributable to carelessness in the cleaning or preparation of the jute for sale.

7 It shall not be necessary in any proceeding for an offence under this Act to prove an intent to defraud any particular person or an intent to enable any particular person to defraud any particular person.

8 For the purpose of giving effect to this Act four Inspectors shall be appointed under the Act having their headquarters respectively at Calcutta, Naraingunj, Sirajgunj, and Saidpur, in Northern Bengal.

The Inspectors to have jurisdiction over the whole districts of which the above mentioned towns are considered the centres, and to be at liberty to examine jute offered, or exposed for sale, or tendered in fulfilment of any agreement wherever found, and in the exercise of their duties to enter any buildings or premises where jute is or may be supposed to be offered, or exposed for sale, or tendered. The Inspectors to have the power to arrest and detain any parcel of jute they may consider to be illegally adulterated in the meaning of the Act, and to subject the same to the tests prescribed in Sections 5 and 6 of this Act, and if it be found that the jute is fraudulently adulterated within the meaning of the Act the Inspector shall have power to issue summonses to the offender or offenders to appear at the court of the nearest magistrate within such number of days as the Inspector may deem reasonable, taking into consideration the time necessary to reach the said court, for trial under Sections 3 and 4 of this Act, and pending the trial of the offender or offenders the Inspector shall have power to detain and hold the parcel of jute the subject of the trial, until such time as the case has been finally disposed of.

Should the magistrate on evidence laid by the Inspector find the accused guilty under Sections 3 and 4 of this Act, he shall order the payment of the penalties named therein, together with all costs of procedure and expenses in connection with the examination, seizure, testing, employment of witnesses, or other means of exposing the fraud and obtaining the conviction of the offender or offenders and the parcel of jute in question shall be detained or held by the order of the Court until such time as all the aforesaid penalties, costs and expenses shall have been paid in full, and failing the payment of the aforesaid penalties, costs and expenses within 48 hours from the time of conviction the Court shall have

power to order to be sold by auction the parcel of jute in question and the proceeds of such sale to be paid to the owner or owners of the jute after the deduction of all penalties, costs and expenses aforesaid, together with the costs, expenses and charges in connection with the sale by auction.

9. All proceedings and offences under this Act shall be cognizable, subject to the provisions of any law for the time being in force for the trial of offences, by a Presidency Magistrate in the city of Calcutta and elsewhere by any Criminal Court exercising powers not inferior to those of a second class magistrate.

10. Nothing in this Act shall affect the Civil rights of any person in any manner interested in any jute the subject of a complaint under this Act, nor shall any proceeding, conviction or judgment to be had or taken under the provisions of this Act against any person prevent, lessen, or impede any remedy by Civil process which any party aggrieved by an offence under the Act might have had if this Act had not been passed.

From Calcutta Baled Jute Association, to Chamber.

No. 348-T.—CALCUTTA, 5th September 1905.

The Watering of Jute.—Proposed Legislation.

I am directed by the Committee of the Calcutta Baled Jute Association to address you in continuation of my letter No. 285-T, dated 20th July, in which it was stated that the Committee were in favour of the adoption of the draft Bill submitted by Messrs. Sanderson & Co., in the absence of any more practical proposal.

2. The Committee, however, have recently been favoured by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, Naraingunj, with a copy of their amended draft Bill. It is understood that your Committee have also been favoured with a copy of the amended Bill. In reference thereto I am directed to say that the Committee consider it an improvement upon Messrs. Sanderson & Co.'s draft, and would be glad to see it introduced. In one respect they think the Bill requires amendment, and that is in the matter of the fines proposed in section 3. The Committee think that a fine of eight annas a maund for a first offence would have little, if any, deterrent effect, and they would strongly recommend that the fine be doubled. As a matter of course the fines for further offences would require to be raised in proportion.

In sections 4 and 6 the word "seeds" is made use of. The Committee think that this is a misprint and that the word "sand" is intended.

From London Jute Association, to Chamber.

LONDON.—20th December 1905.

The Dundee Chamber of Commerce, on the 25th ultimo, addressed a letter to the Secretary of State for India, requesting him to urge the Government of India to undertake the legislation necessary

to put a stop to the fraudulent watering of Jute; and this Association has to-day addressed a letter to the Secretary for India on the same subject.

I am instructed to bring the matter to the notice of your Chamber, in the hope that you may assist the Indian Government to find a means to stop this adulteration which is becoming a serious matter not only to all consumers of Jute in Europe, but to all engaged in the trade, either as Shippers, Importers or Dealers. I may mention that the greatest amount of moisture has been found in Daisee Jute.

From Chamber, to London Jute Association.

No. 92-1905.—CALCUTTA, 13th January 1906.

Fraudulent Watering of Jute.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 20th December, referring to letters which had been addressed by the Dundee Chamber of Commerce and your Association to the Secretary of State for India, requesting him to urge the Government of India to undertake legislation with the view of putting a stop to the fraudulent watering of jute, and you express a hope that the Committee of this Chamber may render assistance in the matter.

I am instructed by the Committee of the Chamber to state in reply that the subject under reference has been receiving their most careful consideration for more than a year past, and so long ago as the 17th of March 1905 a Special Meeting of the Committee was held to consider the question with the representatives of the Jute trade in its various branches. The Committee are extremely anxious to see a stop put to this fraudulent practice, but the matter is an exceedingly difficult and complicated one to deal with owing to the various interests involved. Several draft Bills have been already under consideration none of which, however, have so far been considered a satisfactory mode of dealing with the question. The latest of these drafted by the Naraingunj Chamber of Commerce is now under the consideration of the Chamber's Solicitors and attempts are being made to bring the various bodies interested into line on the subject.

Since the Conference above alluded to, the Committee have been in communication with the Committees of the Indian Jute Mills' Association, the Calcutta Baled Jute Association, the Jute Fabrics Shippers' Association, the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce, and the Naraingunj Chamber of Commerce, and it is hoped to secure the adhesion of the Native Jute Merchants and Balers.

You may rest assured that the matter will not be lost sight of by the Committee of this Chamber, although you will recognise that it may be a tedious one to deal with.

LOCAL PURCHASE OF STORES BY GOVERNMENT.

From Engineering & Iron Trades Association, to Chamber.

No. 53-W.—CALCUTTA, 14th April 1905.

Local Purchase of Stores in India.

I am directed by the Committee of the Engineering and Iron Trades' Association to forward copy of my letter No. 53-W, of 12th April 1905, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Commerce and Industry, asking for the relaxation of prevailing restrictions with regard to the purchase of iron-work of all descriptions including railway bridges, rolling stock and other articles both imported and of local manufacture for the requirements of Government. As the letter fully explains itself, the Committee feel that they need do no more than ask for its careful perusal and consideration on the part of the Committee of the Chamber; and they would feel much indebted if the Committee could see their way to address the Government of India in support of the representation made.

No. 52-W.—CALCUTTA, 12th April 1906.

From—The Secretary, Engineering and Iron Trades' Association,
To—The Government of India, Department of Commerce & Industry.

In October 1905 the Committee of the Engineering and Iron Trades' Association representing the leading firms engaged in the Engineering and Iron Trades in India (both manufacturers and vendors of imported goods), addressed the Secretary to the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department, on the subject of the restrictions then existing against the local purchase of iron work and stores of Indian manufacture, in continuation of a previous Memorial presented in 1890 by the firms of Engineers and Iron Founders domiciled in this country to the then Viceroy, His Excellency the Marquis of Lansdowne. I am now instructed by the Committee of the Association again to take up the matter, in view of the fact that numerous orders for requirements of the Government of India for goods which have been frequently ordered in India on previous occasions, have lately been sent home. This leads the Committee to conjecture, that the Government of India must have recently issued departmental instructions, emphasizing the stringent restrictions already existing against the local purchase of material or plant which is not of *bona fide* Indian manufacture, and prescribing importation from England, through the Secretary of State for India, as the only permissible channel of supply.

2. Having regard to the frequent utterances of His Excellency the Viceroy in favour of a policy tending to encourage the manufacturing industries of this country, I am instructed to express the regret of the Committee that this rigid adherence to the existing

system of indent should be maintained for the supply and manufacture of Government requirements, to the detriment of both local importers and local industries.

3. The arguments submitted on the two occasions above referred to, which were favourably received at the time, resulted in the issue of Resolution No. 2587-S. R. of 9th June 1898, partially relieving the grievances, under which the trade laboured, and extending and adding to the list of articles which might be obtained instead of new restrictions being imposed on the trade in which they are interested, a still more liberal policy should be adopted by Government, and that the range of articles of which purchases may be made in this country, should be considerably increased.

4. In connection with the present representation, the Committee of this Association would respectfully submit that the policy of the Government of India with regard to the local purchase of stores, inflicts great hardship on Indian manufacturing and importing Engineering firms. These firms have in past years maintained large and representative stocks of tools and stores, primarily with the view of meeting their individual requirements as general contractors and manufacturers of larger material, but also to enable them to execute orders received from the Public Works Department and other branches of the Government service, the requirements of which lie in the same line. A fully representative and substantial stock of this class is a very costly one to maintain in a country so distant as India from the source of supply, that even in cases of urgent indent, replacements cannot be counted upon under periods varying from two to several months, and if Engineering firms may no longer rely upon the assistance of Government, they will have no alternative but to cut down their stocks to the lowest possible limits, which would involve great inconvenience and possibly disastrous results, in the event of any contingency arising under which communications with Great Britain might be interrupted and the Government unable to obtain their supplies from home. The Committee respectfully submit that the policy of abandonment of purchase from the local markets is inevitably resulting in the depletion of useful stocks, and they claim that by removing, as far as possible, the existing restrictions against the local purchase of imported stores, Government, while assisting them to maintain their stocks on a commensurate scale, will attain proportionate benefit, not only in times of extremity, but also from the expansion of established industries and the development of others, which will find a profitable opening in this country.

5. In the preceding paragraphs the Committee have only dealt with one branch of the present representation, *viz.*, that present restrictions should be removed and further facilities given for the local purchase by Government, of *imported manufactured articles.*

The position at present appears to be that Government issue strict orders that nothing of this class, *except in an emergency*, should be purchased locally, although Government orders can be filled very quickly and equal in quality and price to those supplied through the India Office. The Committee understand that the India Office purchases the bulk of its requirements in stores from the merchants and not from the manufacturer, and if Government would take larger supplies in this country of articles both imported and manufactured here, it would add considerably to the speed and efficiency with which all Government work would be carried out. The Committee do not for one moment suggest or ask for anything in the shape of preferential rates; but they do consider that tenders for open competition should be called for in this country, and that orders should be placed here on equal terms with those offered at home. There is no doubt that as demand increases, the cheaper and more efficient would be the supply.

6. The Committee would now further submit that much greater encouragement might be given to the Engineering industries of this country and local manufacture generally, if the policy of Government were somewhat more liberal. If the list of articles issued by the Government of India under their Resolution No. 2587-S.R., dated Simla, 9th June 1898, be examined, it will be noticed that the number might be greatly added to for local purchase, and the scope for manufacture considerably widened. In this list only Railway bridges of small span are included, and of these only a very few are ordered in India, the rest being imported. The Committee would suggest that all Railway bridges under 80 feet span, should be ordered in this country, and that all Road bridges of 160 feet span and under should also be ordered locally, provided that the price of the same does not exceed that of similar imported work and that the quality is equal. The Committee would point out that rolling stock is now successfully made by various firms in India, and that certain number, say up to 5,000, might be reserved for local construction instead of the few hundreds for which orders are now doled out at rare intervals. A number of Engineering firms now exist with works fully equipped with the latest machinery, capable of manufacturing all classes of constructional work, buildings, roofing, bridges, pumping machinery, rolling stock, trolleys, dredgers, railway signalling appliances and many other articles. The question of transport whether by rail or road may at any time become a matter of the first importance in this country, and the Committee consider that Government might wisely reserve for construction locally, a substantial share of railway vehicles, carts, wagons and other military, equipment, as this would enable Indian manufacturers to hold considerable stocks of the materials required, and would also secure rapid delivery in time of need. At present only a very small stock of materials, suitable for such work is held in this country, as the uncertainty of orders does not warrant merchants in holding such stocks.

7. The Committee understand that it has been a matter of complaint that materials of sufficiently good quality are not held

in stock in India, and that tools of an inferior description are stocked; the quality of material usually available being not equal to State requirements. This point was specially brought forward when the Engineering firms established in India were seeking to justify their existence in the eyes of Government, and it was then contended that the source of supply of their raw materials was identical with that of the manufacturing firms resorted to by the Stores Department of the India Office; but the Committee would point out that the instructions of Government officers, that they must accept the lowest tender, do not constitute the best means of securing the best article, when there is no definite specification as to the quality which will be accepted. The instructions are practically a declaration by Government that they will only pay the price of an inferior article. There is no such ruling obtaining in the purchase of stores in England, where a distinct specification is drawn as to the quality which will be accepted and only articles fulfilling such requirements are accepted. The same procedure if brought into force in India, will be followed by the same excellent result in the matter of supplies.

8. The Committee would now point out a very serious obstruction to the placing of orders in India under present circumstances, owing to the fact that the Government of India have no specially appointed staff of Inspectors. The consequence of this is, that officers are detached spasmodically from their permanent duties to inspect work of local manufacture. These officers, so far as the Committee are informed, are not paid for this extra work, and while they are engaged in inspection, their own work naturally falls into arrears and has to be overtaken by special efforts on their part. Under these circumstances, it is only natural that Government officers should prefer to have stores imported with regard to which they have no trouble of inspection, being relieved of this by the Stores Department of the India Office. In this connection, the Committee would suggest that the Government of India should appoint a qualified staff for the inspection of all work manufactured or purchased in this country. The cost of such a staff would be trifling, compared with the magnitude of the benefits it would confer on the trade of the country, and it would probably do more than any other measure to raise the quality of work done in the country and enable Government to secure their requirements to any specification stipulated for.

9. The advantages to India of an expansion of her industries are so obvious, that it is not necessary to dwell upon them. If the manufacture of Steel and Iron received due encouragement, there are all the possibilities here of making India a great manufacturing country. All new countries have found it necessary to foster and encourage their iron industry as for instance America, Australia and Canada. The Committee would be quite prepared to place facts before you at a convenient opportunity in proof of the statements made in the present representation, but they refrain from unduly lengthening the present letter.

10. Additional arguments might also be presented for consideration in connection with the subject, but bearing in mind the sympathy of His Excellency the Viceroy with any movement likely to stimulate the manufacturing enterprise and develop the resources of the Empire, the Committee feel sure that the present representation will receive careful attention, and will result in the relaxation of prevailing restrictions which undoubtedly exercise a repressing influence on industrial progress.

11. In conclusion I am instructed to briefly recapitulate the substance of the request made in this letter, *viz.*—

- (1) to widen the list of imported Government requirements which may be purchased locally.
- (2) to order or manufacture in India a larger number of articles, than is provided in the present list.
- (3) to set aside for construction in India a certain proportion for Government requirements in the way of bridges, rolling stock, railway equipment, transport appliances, &c., &c.
- (4) to establish a trained staff of inspectors for the supervision of Indian work.
- (5) to quicken the indigenous supply of steel and iron by fostering their production and by facilitating in every possible way the granting of concessions for mining, prospecting and licensing of properties.

From Chamber, to Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY).

No. 707-1905.—CALCUTTA, 26th April 1905.

The Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce have been favoured by the Committee of the Engineering and Iron Trades Association with copy of their letter No. 52-W, of 12th April 1905, to your address, asking for the relaxation of prevailing restrictions with regard to the purchase for the requirements of Government, of Iron Work of all descriptions, including Railway Bridges, Rolling Stock and other articles, both imported and locally manufactured. The arguments adduced in this letter commend themselves as sound to the Committee of the Chamber and are in accord with the views expressed by the Chamber on previous occasions. I am instructed to state that the Committee strongly support the representation made by the Engineering and Iron Trades Association.

From Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY), to Chamber.

No. 1458-C.—SIMLA, 4th May 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 707-1905, dated the 26th April 1905, in which you intimate that the Chamber supports the representation of the Engineering and Iron Trades Association on the subject of the purchase of Government Stores in India.

2. I am to say that your letter will be submitted for the consideration of the Government of India.

STANDARDIZATION OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

From Chamber, to all Members.

CIR. No. 194-1905.—CALCUTTA, 11th May 1905.

Standardization of Weights and Measures

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to forward, for the information of members of the Chamber, copy of circular letter No. 2-T.—M., of 19th April, from the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Municipal Department, with enclosures, regarding proposals for the standardization of weights and measures in local areas in Bengal.

The Committee have been asked to furnish Government with the opinion of the Chamber on the subject as regards rural areas and in Municipalities, and I should feel obliged if you could favour me with your views on the proposals in the course of the present month.

From Government of Bengal, to Chamber.

CIR. No. 2-T.—M.—DARJEELING, 19th April 1905.

I am directed to forward a copy of a Circular No. 9-M., dated the 29th February 1904, in which the opinion of Commissioners of Divisions was invited with regard to the standardization of weights and measures in local areas in Bengal. I am also to enclose copies of extracts from the Central Provinces Municipal Act, 1903, and the Calcutta Municipal Act, 1899.

2. The matter is now under the consideration of the Government, and before passing final orders in the matter the Lieutenant-Governor desires to be favoured with an expression of the opinion of the Chamber of Commerce on the subject. I am accordingly to request that any remarks which the Chamber may have to offer with regard to the standardization of weights and measures both in rural areas and in Municipalities may be submitted to Government by the 1st July 1905.

3. If it is thought that action should be taken in the direction indicated, I am to enquire whether it is thought better to leave the selection of the standards to local bodies or to fix the standards which may be prescribed by them. It has been suggested that more harm than good might be done if different standards were prescribed by different local bodies.

CIR. NO. 9-M.—CALCUTTA, 29th February 1904.

From—L. P. SHIRRES, ESQ. Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Municipal Department,

To—All Commissioners of Divisions.

I am directed to forward a copy of the papers noted in the margin on the subject of the standardization of weights and measures within prescribed local areas, and to request that the Lieutenant-Governor may be favoured with a report on the merits of the proposal in relation to the present circumstances of your Division, and with any suggestions that you may desire to make for any action to be taken in the matter.

2. I am to observe that there are no provisions in the Bengal Municipal and Local Self-Government Acts corresponding with those of the Central Provinces and Burma Acts to which the Government of India refer in their letter (enclosed) to the Government of Bombay. The great advantages which must accrue from uniform standards need hardly be insisted on. Uniformity becomes almost a necessity as communications and trade develop. The Government of Bengal has from time to time refused to take any action in the direction of the general standardization of weights and measures. So wide a measure, in view of the different circumstances prevailing in different portions of the Province, cannot be at once adopted. But it seems expedient to move cautiously forward towards uniformity. It is open to consideration whether it would not be possible, by the extension of provisions similar to those contained in sections 509-512 of the Calcutta Municipal Act, 1899, to Municipalities in the interior, to do something in the direction of the standardization in prescribed local areas of local weights and measures so as to afford a readier means for the detection of offences under Chapter XIII of the Indian Penal Code, and to pave the way for a wider measure of uniformity hereafter.

3. I am accordingly to ask whether, in your opinion, it would be advisable to enact for mofussil Municipalities in Bengal provisions on the lines of those contained in section 105 (1) (d) of Act XVI of 1903, the Central Provinces Municipal Act, and whether it would be expedient to extend such provisions to rural areas by the insertion of similar provisions in the Local Self-Government Act. In dealing with this subject it will be proper to consider what different weights and measures are in use in particular localities, and whether it is necessary or desirable that all these should be made to conform to any particular standard which may be suggested for that locality.

4. In conclusion I am to point out that the permissive provisions contained in the Calcutta Municipal Act can only be enforced in that town by the co-operation of the Police under section LVI of the Calcutta Police Act, 1866, and that care is required in the enforcement of the powers of the Police. It is desirable that the means of enforcing any similar provisions in the mofussil may be carefully considered.

EXTRACT FROM THE CENTRAL PROVINCES MUNICIPAL ACT, 1903.

Section 105 (1).—The Committee may, from time to time, make bye-laws, consistent with this Act,—

(d) for prescribing the standard weights and measures to be used within the Municipality.

EXTRACT FROM THE CALCUTTA MUNICIPAL ACT, 1899.

Chapter XXXVI.—Weights and Measures.

509. The Chairman shall from time to time provide such local standards of weight and measure as he deems requisite for the purpose of the verification of weights and measures in use in Calcutta, and shall make such arrangements as he thinks fit for the safe-keeping of the said standards.

510. (1) The Chairman shall provide from time to time proper means for verifying weights and measures not less than once in every year by comparison with the said standards, and stamping the weights and measures so verified.

(2) The Chairman shall from time to time fix the times and places at which some Municipal Officer, appointed by him in this behalf, shall attend for the purpose of the verification of weights and measures as aforesaid.

(3) The Municipal Officer so appointed shall attend, with the local standards in his custody, at each time and place so fixed, and shall examine every weight or measure which is of the same description as that which is brought to him for the nomination as one of such standards, and shall compare the same with that standard and, if he finds the same correct, shall stamp it with a stamp of verification in such manner as best to prevent fraud.

(4) The said Municipal Officer shall enter in a book kept by him minutes of every such verification, and shall give, if required, a certificate under his hand of every such stamping.

511. There shall be payable to the Corporation in respect of the verification and stamping of weights and measures by a Municipal Officer as aforesaid such fees as the Chairman may from time to time fix in this behalf.

512. The Chairman shall, in the performance and exercise of the duties and powers imposed and conferred on him by this Chapter, be subject to the control of the Corporation.

at present consider it advisable to use direct compulsion in the matter. The provisions of the Municipal Acts referred to in the second paragraph of this letter empower Municipal bodies to prescribe weights and measures for the use of the people whom they represent, and this is as far as the Governor-General in Council is prepared to go at present. The Government of Bombay might perhaps consider the desirability of making similar provision in their Municipal Acts. The larger town would set the example, the smaller Municipalities would follow; and it may be hoped that the example would eventually spread to the small rural markets which are not large enough for Municipal Government. It is believed that in this manner encouraging progress has already been made in the Central Provinces towards the end desired. The Governor-General in Council thinks that it would not be wise, at any rate for the present, to confer a similar power of prescription upon District Boards. The people concerned in this latter case are less intelligent and more suspicious than the people of the towns; the District Board is for the most part less really representative of the classes most concerned than the Municipal Committee, and the degree of interference involved in prescription would generally be greater in the case of rural urban areas.

5. It is believed, however, that the diversity of weights and measures is even greater in Southern than in Northern India; it may be also that the people adhere more tenaciously to their local uses; and the Government of Bombay may consider it inadvisable to allow their Municipalities to prescribe weights and measures for use, or at any rate to allow them in so doing to diverge materially from those already current. But in any case no such objection seems to exist to the process of standardization, which is aimed at uncertainty rather than at multiplicity—an uncertainty which is injurious to trade, and which is commonly used to the disadvantage of the purchaser. More standardization involves no interference with local custom; and the Government of India, while they would certainly empower all Municipalities in this respect, see no objection to permitting District Boards also to maintain standards of the local weights and measures in current use, with which the weights and measures actually used by traders in all towns and in villages in which a regular market is held must conform. They believe, moreover, that even where interference is limited to standardization, some advance at any rate is possible in the direction of uniformity in the matter of weights. The tola of 180 grains, the seer of 80 tolas, and the maund of 40 seers, have now been adopted as Government standards throughout India. Now a weight that is to be standardized for the first time is not yet absolutely fixed, and in practice the variations are often substantial; and in fixing it for the purpose of standardization, it is, in the opinion of the Government of India, most important to base it upon the standard weights just referred to, whenever it is possible to do so without materially departing from local use. It would probably be possible in all cases to adopt the tola as the basis of the standard; and even this would be one step towards that uniformity which is so eminently desirable. The Government of India are therefore of opinion that,

in all action of the nature under consideration, the standard tola of 180 grains should form the basis of the proposals.

6. I am to say, in conclusion, that the Governor-General in Council will await with interest the proposal referred to in the last paragraph of your letter under reply.

No. 3756.—BOMBAY CASTLE, 8th July 1902.

From—A. M. T. JACKSON, ESQ., Secretary to the Government of Bombay, General Department,

To—The Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue and Agriculture.

I am directed to submit, for the consideration of the Government of India, a proposal for the amendment of Act XXXI of 1871 (Weights and Measures).

2. In this Presidency it is the duty of the District Magistrate, under section 20 of Bombay Regulation XII of 1827 to keep standards of the weights and measures in use in his district, and the use of false weights and measures is punishable under Chapter XIII of the Indian Penal Code and under section 143 of Bombay Act III of 1901 (District Municipal Act). In practice, however, prosecutions are rare, because even if the District Magistrate enquires as to local custom, and keeps in his office standards based on such enquiry, no one can be compelled to compare his own weights and measures with such standards, nor are the District Magistrate's standards conclusive evidence of what the local customary weights and measures are. The consequence is an infinite variety in the weights and measures in use not only in different districts but in different towns in the same district, and even in different parts of the same town. Fraud on the part of retailers is easy and profitable, and the poorer classes are constantly liable to be cheated.

3. It appears to His Excellency the Governor in Council that there are few measures likely to be of more public benefit and more acceptable to the people than the fixing of standards of weights and measures. The subject was taken up by the Government of India measures for the whole of India, but the idea was abandoned and no doubt wisely in 1895 (see Government of India, No. 384-26 of 11th February 1895). What His Excellency the Governor in Council would now propose is a much less ambitious project. He would merely ask that Local Governments may be empowered, subject to the sanction of the Government of India, to prescribe standards for limited areas. It seems to him to be incumbent on Government, to the importance that time and labour should not be lost in trying to devise a scheme suited to every part of the country. Before general standards can be fixed it is necessary to ascertain what local standards are in use and how they can be made to fit into a general

system. It seems to His Excellency the Governor in Council to be best to proceed by degrees, ascertaining and fixing the standards for a limited area at a time.

4. The specific amendment of Act XXXI of 1871 to which His Excellency the Governor in Council attaches the greatest importance is the omission of the proviso to section 4, which requires that all weights and measures of capacity should be integral multiples or sub-multiples of the kilogramme and the litre. His Excellency does not desire to discuss the question whether it will ever be possible to introduce the Metric system into India. He would merely point to the fact that no notifications have yet been issued under any section of the Act as showing that it has not hitherto been possible to do anything in this direction. No standard can at present be introduced into India that is not based on the tola of 180 grains, which is now in universal use through the circulation of Government rupees.

5. His Excellency the Governor in Council proposes, in the event of the suggested amendment being made, to institute careful local inquiries into the standards at present in use before submitting for sanction his proposals as to the precise standards that should be adopted in particular districts or groups of districts.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (Municipal).

No. 1255-1905.—CALCUTTA, 27th July 1905.

I am now directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to address you in continuation of previous correspondence, ending with your circular No. 15-T. M., dated 26th May 1905, upon the question of the standardization of weights and measures in rural areas and in Municipalities.

2. The Committee have carefully examined the papers, and have also submitted them to the members of the Chamber for consideration. Their views are invited upon a proposal to enact, for mofussil Municipalities in Bengal, provisions on the lines of those contained in section 105 (1) (d) of the Central Provinces Municipal Act XVI of 1903. Further, they are asked to say whether it would be expedient to extend such provisions to rural areas, by inserting them in the Local Self Government Act. The provisions in question empower the Municipal Committee to prescribe the standard weights and measures to be used within the Municipality.

3. I am to say in reply that the Committee of the Chamber are fully alive to the many advantages which would accrue from the use of uniform standards. They entirely agree with the Government of Bengal that, as communications and trade develop, uniformity becomes almost a necessity. That it will be difficult of attainment they quite realise, but they feel that cautious steps towards it might be taken. As to the direction of these steps Government should, the Committee think, be guided largely by the reports received from district officers; for it is manifest that an intimate acquaintance with the circumstances and conditions of life in both

the urban and the rural areas of Bengal is essential to a right understanding of the problem.

4. Holding this view, the Committee put forward their own opinions more or less tentatively, as they would have preferred to have had fuller information before them. But on general grounds they are disposed to agree with the suggestion in your letter of 19th April, that more harm than good might be done if different standards are prescribed by different local bodies. A multiplicity of standards is disadvantageous to trade, and might not ultimately tend to uniformity. They doubt, therefore, whether the introduction of the Central Provinces system, or of the system of verification provided for in the Calcutta Municipal Act 1899, would be useful. Their ideas are rather in the direction of some plan by which weights and measures would be standardized by the Local Government. They would not advocate the use of direct compulsion. But they think that Municipalities might be empowered to prescribe Government standards within their own areas, if they considered it desirable to do so. In venturing to make this suggestion the Committee do not overlook the reference, in Mr. Shirres' circular of 29th February 1904, to the difficulties in the way of a general standardization by Government. But so far as they are able to judge, it seems to them that a permissive standardization—based on the tola of 180 grains—would probably be a greater advance towards uniformity, than a plan by which different standards would be legalised in different Municipalities. As regards rural areas the Committee would prefer not to express an opinion. The decision in respect of such must of necessity, they think, be based on the views of district officers.

5. In conclusion, I am to express the hope of the Committee that whatever system may be ultimately adopted, an earnest endeavour will be made to avoid the employment of the police in connection with it.

From United Planters' Association of Southern India, to Chamber.

BANGALORE, 23rd November 1905.

In enclosing a copy of a letter addressed to the Government of Madras, I am desirous to express the hope that your Chamber will see its way to give prompt and earnest attention to the representations made therein.

You will note that while an example is given of the variations in weights and measures—even within a radius of a few miles—no attempt has been made to suggest how the desired reform shall be effected or to indicate a model system. The Association's desire is to draw the special attention of the Government to the matter, in the hope that consideration may be given to what has long been a source of inconvenience to merchants as well as to planters.

If the subject is taken up it will have to come, sooner or later, before the Government of India, but it has been deemed expedient that this Association should address itself in the first place to the Local Government.

BANGALORE, 23rd November 1905.

From—The Secretary, United Planters' Association of Southern India,

To—The Chief Secretary to the Government of Madras, Revenue Department.

I have the honor to communicate to you the following resolution, which was carried at the last Annual General Meeting of the U. P. A. S. I.:

"That this Association desires to bring before the Government of India the information now before the meeting and to request that something be done to level up the weights and measures."

"The existing variations in the weights and measures cause the greatest trouble, inconvenience and loss to planters and their coolies."

The information to which reference is made is embodied in the printed tabular statement that forms an enclosure to this letter. This gives merely a specimen of the local variations that are felt to be anomalous and vexatious. To compile a complete statement in regard to the whole Presidency would occupy a very large time, if indeed, it were found to be possible.

The Association feels that the Government are more fully cognizant than itself of the vagaries of weights and measures in India, and I am directed to state that it would welcome any attempt to give some approach to uniformity to the weights, &c., in common use, not in the Madras Presidency alone, but throughout India.

From Chamber, to United Planters' Association of Southern India.

No. 1999-1905.—CALCUTTA, 6th, December 1905.

Standardization of Weights and Measures.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 23rd November, forwarding copy of your representation of the same date to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Madras, on the subject of the existing variations in the weights and measures in your Presidency, which cause trouble, inconvenience and loss to planters and their employes.

The matter under reference has already been taken up by the Government of Bengal, and I enclose for your information copy of my letter No. 1255 of 27th July, to the Secretary to the Government

of Bengal, Municipal Department, in which the views of the Chamber are stated on a reference from Government on a proposal to standardize weights and measures in mofussil Municipalities in Bengal.

The question will no doubt, as you state, sooner or later have to be dealt with by the Government of India, who have already been in correspondence with the Government of Bombay with regard to it, as you will see from the copy of my circular No. 236, of 5th June, addressed to all members of the Chamber, also enclosed.

*FRENCH IMPORT TARIFF ON SILK GOODS.

From Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY),
to Chamber.

No. 667-C.—CALCUTTA, 16th March 1905.

With reference to the correspondence ending with the letter from the Finance and Commerce Department, No. 6-72-S.R., dated the 24th September 1904, I am directed to say that the Government of India have now received full information regarding the contemplated changes in the French Import Tariff on silk goods. I am to invite attention to the enclosed correspondence, to the Report* submitted to the French Chamber of Deputies, and to the packet* of samples which the French Customs Department now use as a guide in assessing silk goods to duty, and to request that the Government of India may be favoured with the opinion of the Chamber on the following points.

2. Under the existing tariff, "Tissus, pongees, corah, et tussah ou tussor, d'origine extra-Européenne" are exempt from customs duty, provided that they are "fabriqués avec la soie crue, et n'ayant reçu l'appât, ni de la teinture, ni de l'impression." This exemption has hitherto been construed in a liberal manner; but, with effect from the 1st January 1905, and in accordance with the Customs Circular* of the 5th September 1904, pongees, corah and tussar silks which are "simplement décreus ou décreusés," are now subjected to duty, I am to enquire whether the Chamber can indicate the extent to which Indian silk goods will be affected by this change. It will be observed that the Director-General of the French Customs has expressed the opinion that the new regulations will not apply to silks of the qualities at present imported into France from India, and it would appear, from the samples submitted, that these goods will probably remain exempt from duty.

3. I am also to invite attention to the Bill* which it is proposed to introduce with the object of enhancing the rates of duty on silk goods generally. If adopted, pongee, corah and tussar silks, which have hitherto been exempt, will become liable to duty, unless the circumstances in which they are imported are such as to entitle them to the benefits of the "admission temporaire" procedure;—a system under which certain classes of foreign goods imported for completion or manufacture in France are temporarily admitted free of duty on condition that they are re-exported within a fixed period. I am to enquire whether the Chamber can supply information as to the extent to which Indian interests will be affected by the suggested enhancements, and to request that they will favour the Government of India with their remarks on the draft Bill.

4. I am to add that the question of securing most favoured-nation treatment for all Indian goods entering France is at present under consideration.

Enclosure No. 1.

British Chamber of Commerce, Paris, to India Office,
British Chamber of Commerce,
25, Boulevard des Italiens, Paris,
8th December 1904.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th November last, R. & S. 2354, informing me that the Secretary of State for India was unable at present, by reason of administrative difficulties, to accept the offer of our Chamber to act as trade representative of India in France.

While regretting this decision, which we trust may be subject to reconsideration at a future date, I beg to thank you, both personally and on behalf of my board, for the kind expressions contained in the latter paragraph of your esteemed letter. I may add that it will always afford our Chamber pleasure to do all in its power to promote the commercial interests of British India on the Continent of Europe.

In this connection, I would call your attention to the fact that by an administrative measure recently approved by the French Senate, unbleached Asiatic silks, pongees, corahs, tussors, &c., which have been washed to deprive them of a certain portion of gum, and which at present enter France free of duty, will, after the 1st January 1905, pay a duty of Frs. 500 per 100 kgs. if of Japanese or Chinese origin, and Frs. 1500 per 100 kgs. if from British India; the difference being, as you are doubtless aware, due to the fact that British India does not, like Japan, receive "most favoured nation" treatment from France for silk goods.

From advices which we have received from India, there appears to be a misapprehension with regard to the imposition of these duties. It is thought in India that there is no intention of placing duty on any Indian silks which at present enter France free. That, however, is precisely what is proposed, and I would point out that the imposition of this duty of Frs. 15 per kilogram, will prohibit the entry of these washed, unbleached Indian tussors, &c., whatever may be the effect of the Frs. 9 per kilogram duty on similar goods from Japan and China. Should you consider it desirable to take up this matter with the exporters interested, I shall have much pleasure in sending you further details. I may add that this change will probably be supplemented by a Bill increasing the whole of the French silk duties.

I have, &c.,

H. MILLINGTON DRAKE,
President.

The Under Secretary of State
for India.

Enclosure No. 2.

India Office, to Paris Chamber of Commerce,
R. and S. 2942. India Office,
23rd December 1904.

Sir,

I am directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th December, and to thank you for the information given in it regarding the taxation of silks on entry into France, and to say that the matter will receive his careful consideration.

I am, &c.,

HORACE WALPOLE.

The President, of the
Paris Chamber of Commerce.

Enclosure No. 3.

India Office, to Foreign Office,
R. and S. 2942. India Office,
23rd December 1904.

Sir,

I am directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to forward an extract from a letter, of the 8th December 1904, from the President of the Paris Chamber of Commerce, and to request that he may be favoured at as early a date as may be convenient, with a copy of the administrative measure of the French Senate therein mentioned, under which unbleached Asiatic silks, which have hitherto been duty free will be subject to duty from the 1st January next.

I am also to enquire whether any information is available as to the prospects of the enactment of the further measure, for increasing the whole of the French silk duties, to which reference is made at the end of the enclosed extract.

I am, &c.,

HORACE WALPOLE.

The Under Secretary of State,
Foreign Office.

Enclosure No. 4.

The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under Secretary of State for India, and, with reference to the letter from the India Office of 23rd December last, R. and S. 2942, is directed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to transmit to him, to be laid before the Secretary of State for India, the accompanying paper respecting the French duty on silk.

Foreign Office,

28th December 1904.

Annex.

Sir E. Monson, to Foreign Office,
No. 281. (Commercial). Paris,
21st December 1904.

My Lord,

I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship of copies of the report of the Customs Commission of the Chamber of Deputies upon the Bill enclosed in my Despatch No. 202 (Commercial), of the 24th June last, proposing to increase the duties upon silk tissues.

No special reference is made to English crapes in the Report, which supports the adoption of the duties proposed in the Bill, and which will entail an increase of the duty on this article from 400 francs to 750 francs per 100 kilos.

I have, &c.,

EDMUND MONSON.

The Marquess of Lansdowne, K.G.,
&c., &c., &c.

Enclosure No. 5.

The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under Secretary of State for India, and, with reference to the letter from the India Office, R. and S. 2942, of 23rd December, is directed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to transmit to him, to be laid before the Secretary of State for India, the accompanying paper, respecting the increase of the French duty on unbleached silk.

Sent to Board of Trade.

Foreign Office.

7th January 1905.

Annex 1.

M. de Bunsen, to Marquess of Lansdowne.
Paris,
No. 3 (Commercial). 4th January 1905.

My Lord,

With reference to your Lordship's Despatch No. 185 (Commercial), of the 30th ultimo, enclosing a copy of a letter from the India Office respecting the duty on unbleached Asiatic silks, and asking to be furnished with an "administrative measure" of the French Senate on the subject, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the "administrative measure" referred to in the letter from the President of the British Chamber of Commerce in Paris to the India Office, has probably reference to an Order of the Day

presented by Monsieur Méline, and voted by the Senate on the 10th November last, to the effect that—

"The Senate, resolved to defend national work, take note of the Government's assurance that the law will be applied from the 1st January, passes to the Order of the Day."

This, however, is not an administrative measure, which the Senate would have no power to issue.

The resolution was adopted after the discussion of a question addressed to the Minister of Commerce respecting the application of a Circular issued by the French Customs on the 5th September last, enacting that Pongées, Corahs and Tussore, of extra-European origin, if simply boiled (dégrué) or scoured (décreusé) shall be considered as having undergone a finishing operation, and shall no longer be exempt from duty.

Copies of this circular were enclosed in Sir E. Monson's Despatch No. 293 (Commercial), of the 30th September last, and the new *régime* was to come into force on the 15th October 1904, but owing to strong protests from the French Chamber of Commerce in Paris and large commercial houses interested in the trade, the Minister of Commerce agreed to suspend the application of the Circular until the 1st January 1905, as reported in Sir E. Monson's Despatch No. 311 (Commercial), of the 15th October last.

In accordance, therefore, with the promise given to the Senate by the Minister of Commerce and the resolution voted by that Assembly, the new *régime* applied to Pongées, &c., of extra-European origin would appear to be now in operation.

I propose, in a subsequent Despatch, to deal with the question of the treatment to which Indian silks will be subjected on their importation into France.

I have, &c.,

The Marquess of Lansdowne, K.G., M. DE BUNSEN.
&c., &c., &c.

Enclosure No. 6.

The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under Secretary of State for India, and with reference to the letter from this Office of 7th January, is directed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to transmit to him to be laid before the Secretary of State for India, the accompanying paper respecting French duties on Asiatic silks.

Sent to Beard of Trade.

Foreign Office,
9th January 1905.

Annex.

M. de Bunsen, to Marquess of Lansdowne.
No. 4. (Commercial).
Paris,
6th January 1905.

My Lord,

As reported in my Despatch No. 3 (Commercial), of the 4th instant, the French Senate recently voted an Order of the Day presented by Monsieur Méline to enforce the strict application of the Customs Law of 1892 as regards the conditions required for the free importation of pongées, &c.

Difficulties have from time to time arisen as to the proper interpretation of the restrictions for the free admission of these Asiatic silks; the note attached to the tariff stipulating that they must be manufactured with unbleached silk, neither finished, dyed, nor printed, and as far back as 1895 the Minister of Commerce submitted the question for the opinion of the Consulting Committee of Arts and Manufactures, who reported that unsecured ("non-décreusé") tissues, without having undergone any finishing operation, were alone entitled to be considered exempt from duty, while those not answering this description should be taxed according to the tariff—9 francs per kilo (minimum tariff).

This decision, which is stated to be a wide interpretation of the law on the part of the Consulting Committee who were no doubt influenced by the fact that the free importation of these goods had increased very considerably, gave rise to strong protests from the industries and trades interested, and was ultimately withdrawn.

From this period until last year, when a Bill was presented to Parliament proposing to suppress the free importation of Pongee remained in abeyance.

In July last, however, the Lyons manufacturers protested against the existing *régime* as applied to pongées, and again the Consulting Committee of Arts and Manufactures were called on to give their opinion, with the result that a Customs circular was issued on the 5th of September last, containing instructions to the effect that if, from the 15th of October, pongées, corahs, and tussore of extra-European origin were simply boiled (dégrué) or scoured (décreusé) they shall no longer be entitled to claim exemption from duty on their importation into France.

As your Lordship is aware, however, the application of this circular was suspended until the beginning of 1905.

There is no doubt that the restrictive measures have been chiefly directed against the importation of Japanese pongées which now arrive in such a condition, that, although nominally unfinished, they can be sold and used immediately being made up into garments, &c.

The importance of Japan's exports to France of these goods, has grown rapidly. In 1894 their value was only 4,398,400 francs while in 1902 it had increased to 25,355,000 francs.

The effect of the proposal now before the Chamber of Deputies to suppress the free importation of unbleached pongees, if voted, will certainly be very serious to Japan, but Indian tussore will be very heavily hit, as India not being entitled to the minimum tariff for silk goods will be obliged to pay a duty of 15 francs, while Japanese silks will be entitled to the minimum tariff of 9 francs per kilo.

These duties will be practically prohibitive; but it is the intention of the promoters of the Bill in question, to protect, as far as possible, the home industry, and in answer to the objections raised that the proposed legislation will have the effect of depriving the Lyons dyeing and finishing houses of a considerable amount of work and tend to drive the importation of Asiatic silks into Germany, the Bill provides for the temporary admission of these goods in an unfinished state to enable them to receive the finished operations in France previous to re-exportation.

This system, it is stated, works smoothly at the present time in the case of certain other silks which are admitted under the temporary admission régime, and, in case of need, it is thought that the formalities and delay for the re-exportation of the finished goods might be facilitated and improved.

Under these conditions pongée silks destined for re-exportation, after receiving a finishing operation, will practically be on the same footing as at present, but the requirements for interior consumption will be replaced, it is stated, by an identical class of article manufactured in France.

I may add that the importation into France of tussore from India is not important. In 1903 they amounted to only 174,306 francs as compared with 1,893,236 francs in 1902 and 206,820 francs in 1900.

I have, &c.,
The Marquess of Lansdowne, K.G., M. DE BUNSEN.
&c., &c., &c.

Enclosure No. 7.

The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under Secretary of State for India, and, with reference to the letter from this Office of 9th January, is directed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to transmit to him, to be laid before the Secretary of State for India, the accompanying paper respecting the French duty on Asiatic silk.

Sent to Board of Trade.

Foreign Office,
19th January 1905.

Annex.

Sir Francis Bertie, to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

No. 11. (Commercial).

Paris,
17th January 1905.

My Lord,

In reply to your Lordship's Despatch No. 9 (Commercial), of the 14th instant, I have the honour to inform you that on the receipt of your Despatch No. 3 (Commercial), of the 7th instant, Sir Henry Austin Lee saw the Director of the Commercial Department of the French Foreign Office, and communicated to him the substance of the memorandum enclosed in the Board of Trade letter of the 3rd of January, with regard to the proposed increase of the French Customs duties on silk tissues.

Monsieur Henry promised that the observations of the Board of Trade should be carefully considered, but he added that it was not, of course, within the power of the French Foreign Office to exercise any pressure on individual members of the French Parliament.

I may add, however, that the opposition to the Bill raised by the Paris importers of foreign silks has been greatly strengthened by the fact that there is at the present moment a large demand for Lyons silks, and a consequent important increase in their production and the employment of labour, and the opinion appears to be general among those best informed in Paris that a considerable time will elapse before the Bill will be brought on for discussion in the Chamber.

The Paris Chamber of Commerce have also reported strongly against the Bill, and will no doubt use their influence to procure its rejection.

I have, &c.,
The Marquess of Lansdowne, K.G., FRANCIS BERTIE.
&c., &c., &c.

Enclosure No. 8.

The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under Secretary of State for India, and, with reference to the letter from this Office of 19th January, is directed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to transmit to him, to be laid before the Secretary of State for India, the accompanying paper respecting French silk duties.

Copy of Despatch sent to Board of Trade.

Foreign Office,
25th January 1905.

Annex.

Sir Francis Bertie, to the Marquess of Lansdowne,
No. 19. (Commercial). Paris,

24th January 1905.

My Lord,

With reference to previous correspondence respecting the issue by the Ministry of Commerce of certain administrative orders with regard to the admission of silk tissues known as Pongees, Corahs, and Tusseres, which came into operation on the 1st instant, I learn from Sir Henry Austin Lee that, in a conversation which he has recently had with the Director-General of Customs, Monsieur Brunet informs him that, as far as he was aware, the new regulations would not in any way affect the qualities of silks which were now imported from India, and which arrived in an unfinished condition.

Monsieur Brunet showed Sir Henry Austin Lee a collection of samples which was issued to the French Customs officials to guide them in distinguishing between finished and unfinished tissues, and gave him at his request a similar collection, herein enclosed, which will enable the Government of India to appreciate the classification of the silks in question.

I have, &c.,
The Marquess of Lansdowne, K.G., FRANCIS BERTIE.
&c., &c., &c.

From Chamber, to Government of India (COMMERCE
& INDUSTRY).

No. 882-1905.—CALCUTTA, 23rd May 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 667-C. of 16th March 1905, with its accompaniments, relating to the contemplated changes in the French Import Tariff on silk goods. The copies of correspondence, the report submitted to the French Chamber, and packages of standard samples used by the French Customs Department for the purpose of assessment, have all received the careful consideration of the Committee.

(2) From enquiries made from the firms interested in the trade, the Committee have ascertained that while the enhancement of duty will without doubt check the import of Tusseres into France, the business in Indian silks with that country is of so comparatively trifling a nature that it can hardly carry any weight in considerations of legislation, and it would hardly appear worth while for the Government of India to interfere. Under these circumstances, the Committee do not consider it necessary to make any remarks upon the draft Bill, but they trust that Government will persevere in endeavouring to secure most favoured-nation treatment for all Indian goods entering France.

(3) The Committee have been asked to point out that although according to M. DeBunsen's No. 4 of 6th January 1905, fresh legislation is aimed at silks, which though nominally unfinished are imported practically ready for consumption, this, however, has no bearing whatever on Indian Tusseres. These after leaving the looms are roughly boiled to remove oil, dust and dirt, and while drying receive a dressing of a sort of starch made up of sugar, rice-meal, etc., which leaves the fabric stiff and tense when dry. But its removal by boiling is absolutely essential before the tusseres can be prepared for consumption. As a matter of fact this dressing process might just as well be omitted, but it is an old established custom and Importers seem to prefer to receive the goods in this condition, but as a preparative process it is of no value whatever. (Report of the French Chamber *Des Députés*, and packet of samples of silk returned).

From Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY),
to Chamber.

No. 2139-C.—SIMLA, 29th May 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your letter No. 882-1905, dated the 23rd May 1905, on the subject of the French Import Tariff on Indian silk goods.

WORKING OF THE TELEPHONE SERVICE.

From Chamber, to Bengal Telephone Co., Ltd.

No. 994-1905.—CALCUTTA, 9th June 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to address you with reference to the present working of the Telephone service in this city, which is giving cause for a great deal of dissatisfaction among the mercantile firms. The Committee have been approached by members of the leading firms asking them to move in the matter, and they have little doubt from the tenor of the complaints received and from their own experience that the dissatisfaction is general, and that if a poll among the members of the Chamber were taken it would take the shape of a demand for speedy reform and improvement. The complaints may be tabulated generally under the following heads, but it would be quite easy to put forward any number of specific cases—

- (a) Unreasonable delay in attending to calls.
- (b) Further delay in getting a connection.
- (c) The absolute impossibility in most cases of either party understanding intelligibly what is being said.
- (d) The constant crossing of communications and connection with wrong parties.

These shortcomings, as you will be well aware, involve the whole question of the usefulness of the Telephone service, and as to whether it is worthwhile for mercantile firms to continue their subscriptions under the present conditions, The Committee are informed that the present state of things is becoming intolerable. Principals of firms absolutely refuse to answer any call at the telephone owing to the waste of time and consequent irritation which result, and it is found more expeditious to communicate by letter. The object of the Telephone service, as you will no doubt readily admit, is to facilitate the transaction of business, and not prove a hindrance to it; to be a convenience and a help to subscribers and not as it is at present a constant worry and source of exasperation. It is not for the Committee to say to what there is something radically wrong generally there can be no doubt whatever. The Committee understand that a number of leading firms are contemplating withdrawal of their subscriptions unless there is a distinct improvement, and the service becomes of some real use. They are not aware that any reason exists why the service should not be conducted as well in Calcutta as they believe it is in Bombay, and as it is in most of the cities in Great Britain and the Continent. I am instructed to ask your very careful attention to this matter, as unless the service can be improved without much delay, the Chamber on behalf of the mercantile community generally

will have to consider what steps should be taken to provide the city with a really efficient service.

From Bengal Telephone Co., Ltd., to Chamber.

No. 803.—CALCUTTA, 15th June 1905.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 994 of the 9th instant, in which you inform me that you have been instructed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to express their dissatisfaction in the working of the Telephone service in this city.

I regret to say that lately I have experienced very great difficulties in obtaining the services of competent Central Exchange operators. Two of the most experienced have died, four have got married and three have left Calcutta.

To become an efficient operator requires several months careful training, so I am sure you can understand the unforeseen difficulties that I have had to contend with. I have, however, been able to secure the services of some really efficient men from other branches, and I feel certain you will very soon notice a great improvement in the working of the system.

New and thoroughly up-to-date switchboards are at present being manufactured for us in London at a cost of Rs. 45,000; these will, I hope, be delivered here by the end of September, and will I feel certain ensure a much more rapid and certain system of working.

The action of these boards is briefly as follows:—

When a subscriber calls the Exchange, a small electric lamp indicating his number will glow until the operator answers the call, thereby avoiding the occasional uncertainty of a shutter dropping, as at times happens with the present form of switchboards.

The Company intends commencing the laying of underground cables in October or November next, in connection with the Metallic Circuiting of the whole system in Calcutta and Howrah. The cost of these improvements will not be less than Rs. 5,00,000 and when completed, I feel certain the system will be second to none in the East. In the meantime I am gradually changing the present Telephone Instruments and adopting the very latest pattern instruments; this will also greatly improve the service.

I shall be very pleased to show the working of our Central Exchange at any time to any of the mercantile community in Calcutta, and they will then I feel certain, realize, that the faults complained of are not in many cases due to want of inattention or carelessness on the part of the Company's employees. From 30,000 to 35,000 calls are often received during the 24 hours, and this alone will give you an idea of the amount of business that is transacted by Telephone.

Subscribers are often most dilatory in answering when rung up, for which we are of course blamed. All the operators have been most severely cautioned and informed that any serious complaint from any of the subscribers will

to me and to the Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, or I can arrange that the original reports are made accessible either in my office or in the office of the Board of Revenue.

4. As the time between now and the preliminary forecast is short, I shall be much obliged by an early expression of the opinion of the Chamber. For the present I shall continue to treat the intermediate reports as confidential.

From Chamber, to Calcutta Baled Jute Association; Indian Jute Mills' Association; and Jute Fabrics Shippers' Association.

No. 912-1905.—CALCUTTA, 29th May 1905.

Jute Forecasts.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to hand you for information copy of letter of 25th May, received from the Director of the Department of Land Records and Agriculture, in which he enquires whether intermediate reports received from Collectors of Districts and from travelling officers in his Department, which have hitherto been treated as confidential documents, would be of interest if communicated to the trade as received.

The Committee of the Chamber would feel much obliged if the Committee of your Association will favor them with your early opinion on the Director's proposals, and, if they are viewed with favor, with their further suggestions as to the best mode of making these intermediate reports public.

From Indian Jute Mills' Association, to Chamber.

No. 125-D.—CALCUTTA, 31st May 1905.

Jute Forecasts.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 912 No. 1668-A of 25th May from the Director of the Department of Land Records & Agriculture to Bengal Chamber 1905, forwarding a copy of the marginally noted communication.

The Director refers to certain reports, which he receives from Collectors and travelling officers of his Department, between the time of the sowing of the jute crop and the issue of the preliminary forecast and from that date to the issue of the final forecast. These reports contain information regarding the area sown and the prospects of the crop. At present they are regarded as confidential; but Mr. Bell expresses his willingness to publish them if the trade so desire. And you invite the Committee to state their views upon this point.

3. In reply I am to say that the reports would be, the Committee consider, of advantage to the trade. They might be issued either through the agency of the Chamber of Commerce, or in

the same way as the summaries of the Forecasts are now made known to the public. The latter method is perhaps preferable, for it has the advantage of making the reports available simultaneously to all sections of the trade both European and native.

From Calcutta Baled Jute Association, to Chamber.

No. 197-T.—CALCUTTA, 31st May 1905.

The Jute Forecasts.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1668-A of 25th May from the Director of the Department of Land Records and Agriculture to Bengal Chamber of Commerce. No. 912 dated 29th May 1905, forwarding a copy of the marginally noted communication.

2. The Director refers to certain reports, which he receives from Collectors and travelling officers of his Department, between the time of the sowing of the jute crop and the issue of the preliminary forecast and from that date to the issue of the final forecast. These reports contain information regarding the area sown and the prospects of the crop. At present, they are regarded as confidential; but Mr. Bell expresses his willingness to publish them if the trade so desire. And you invite the Committee to state their views upon this point.

3. In reply I am to say that the Committee are distinctly of opinion that the reports should be published, as they are likely to be of great interest to the trade. As to the method of publication, in the plan adopted in the case of the summaries of the preliminary and final forecasts might, the Committee think, be usefully adopted. Copies could also be issued to the public through the Chamber of Commerce and the local newspapers.

From Jute Fabrics Shippers' Association, to Chamber.

No. 68-J.—CALCUTTA, 2nd June 1905.

Jute Forecasts.

I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 29th May, forwarding copy of a letter of 25th idem from the Director of the Department of Land Records and Agriculture, in which he enquires whether intermediate reports received from Collectors of Districts and from travelling officers in his Department, which have hitherto been treated as confidential documents, would be of interest if communicated to the trade as received. You ask for the opinion of the Committee on the Director's proposals, and, if they are viewed with favour, for further suggestions as to the best mode of making the intermediate reports public.

Your letter and its enclosure have received the attentive consideration of the Committee who are of opinion that the information contained in the intermediate reports will be of much use to all concerned in the trade in jute and jute-fabrics; and they further

consider that the best method of making such reports public would be to post copies simultaneously in the Royal Exchange and at the Board of Revenue.

From Chamber, to Department of Land Records and Agriculture, Bengal.

No. 1005-1905.—CALCUTTA, 13th June 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 1668-A, of 25th May 1905, in which you offer to place at the disposal of those interested in the jute trade, intermediate reports which you receive from Collectors and from travelling officers of your Department, which have hitherto been treated as confidential documents, and which contain information regarding the normal area under jute, the area actually sown and the prospects of the crop.

2. After consultation with the Committees of the different Associations interested in jute, I am desired by the Committee of the Chamber to intimate that the reports referred to in your letter are likely to be of interest and advantage to the jute trade generally, and I have to convey to you their best thanks for your offer to publish them which they accept with pleasure. You ask in the third paragraph of your letter for the views of the Chamber as to the most convenient method of making these reports public. As it is important that no section of the trade should have priority in the delivery of the reports, the Committee would suggest that they should be posted in the hall of the Board of Revenue, and also in the hall of the Royal Exchange, immediately they are available, and it might also be intimated that they could be supplied to any firms who were willing to subscribe for them.

From Department of Land Records and Agriculture, Bengal, to Chamber.

No. 2196-A.—CALCUTTA, 1st July 1905.

With reference to your letter of 13th June 1905, on the subject of Jute Forecasts, I have the honour to state, that I have to-day received final orders from Government authorising me to discontinue the practice of treating as confidential documents the intermediate reports received from the districts regarding the prospects of the jute crop. I, therefore, write to inform you that all the reports which I have received up to date regarding the present jute crop will, with effect from Monday the 3rd instant, lie upon the table of the Board of Revenue for the inspection of all interested. You will see from the nature of the documents that any attempt to print and circulate them now would cause considerable delay and would defeat the object which Government has in view—namely, to place all available information at the disposal of the trade.

2. In view of the orders of Government, I have wired to the Collectors of the Jute Districts requesting them to discontinue the present practice of forwarding confidential reports. I have asked

them in future to send all reports in triplicate and in the usual official manner one copy to my office, one copy to the Board of Revenue and one to your address.

3. When those interested in the matter have seen the papers in question, including those which will come in between now and the publication of the preliminary forecast, I shall be glad to arrange, if possible, for printing future papers and circulating them to subscribers. For the present I think it premature to make such arrangements. I hope, however, that the measures which are now being taken will be found beneficial to the trade.

From Chamber, to Department of Land Records and Agriculture, Bengal.

No. 1141-1905.—CALCUTTA, 7th July 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 2196-A., dated 1st July 1905, on the subject of the Jute Forecasts.

2. The Committee note that the reports from the Collectors of Jute Districts are placed on the table at the Office of the Board of Revenue for the convenience of the public. Copies are now received in this Office from the Collectors, and are posted in the Royal Exchange for the information of members and to circulate them to your proposal to print future reports and to circulate them to subscribers, I am to say that the Committee will be glad to learn in due course the rate which you propose to charge for the publications.

From Department of Land Records and Agriculture, Bengal, to Chamber.

No. 2416-A.—CALCUTTA, 18th July 1905.

With reference to your letter No. 1141-1905 dated the 7th July, 1905, on the subject of Jute Forecasts, I have the honour to state that on reconsideration I do not intend to make any charge for the distribution of reports from Jute districts. For the present the only reports of the kind which I am receiving are the weekly telegraphic reports of which 200 printed copies are already sent to you gratis. I propose to continue this practice but instead of 200 copies I shall send you 250, and each copy will contain the reports in duplicate. This will probably be convenient to firms who wish to retain one copy and to forward another copy-by mail.

2. The practice of sending you duplicate copies will begin from next week. For the present week the practice which prevailed last year has been adopted, as the reports are already in the press.

3. Later on, when I receive the district forecasts in addition to the weekly telegraphic reports I shall make special arrangements for sending you as many copies as possible; but I shall not make any charge for the same.

From Chamber, to Department of Land Records and
Agriculture, Bengal.

No. 1241-1905.—CALCUTTA, 24th July 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of
Commerce to acknowledge, with thanks, the receipt of your letter
No. 2416-A., dated 18th July 1905, on the subject of the Jute Fore-
casts.

2. I note that 250 duplicate copies of the telegraphic reports
will be sent to me as from this week. I shall have much pleasure
in distributing these to the firms interested in the jute trade.

PROPOSED STANDARD TIME.

STANDARD TIME IN INDIA.

A PRESS COMMUNIQUE.

SIMLA, June 1st 1905.

A Press *Communique* has been issued to-day from the Depart-
ment of Revenue and Agriculture, giving the history of negotia-
tions which have been in progress for the introduction of a Standard
Time in India, nine minutes in advance of Madras time and in
Burma five minutes and announcing that the Government of India have
decided to introduce it with effect from midnight on the thirtieth
instant on railways (other than small local lines where the change
would be inconvenient) and in all telegraph offices. The Communi-
que adds "for the present it is not proposed to prescribe the
extension of the new system beyond the sphere of the railways
and telegraphs. If, however, the general public at such centres
as Calcutta, Bombay and Karachi which now follow the local time
of their respective longitudes evince any desire to adopt the new
standard for daily use in place of the local time, Government
will be prepared to give support to the change by ordering the
adoption of the new standard at Government institutions in those
cities."

From Government of Bengal (GENERAL), to Chamber.

No. 806-T. G.—CALCUTTA, 5th June 1905.

I am directed to invite your attention to a Press *Communique*
on the "Standard Time in India," reported in a telegram, dated
Simla, the 1st instant, which appeared in *The Englishman* on the
following day.

2. You will observe that it is stated that the Government of
India have decided to introduce the Standard Time, with effect from
midnight of the 30th instant, on railways (other than small local
lines where the change would be inconvenient) and in all telegraph
offices. It is added, "for the present it is not proposed to prescribe
the extension of the new system beyond the sphere of the railways
and telegraphs. If, however, the general public at such centres
as Calcutta, Bombay and Karachee, which now follow the local
time of their respective longitudes, evince any desire to adopt
the new standard for daily use in place of the local time, Govern-
ment will be prepared to give support to the change by ordering
the adoption of the new standard at Government institutions in
those cities."

3. I am to request that you will kindly move your Chamber
to consider this question, and to consult other bodies represent-
ing the general public. It seems to the Lieutenant-Governor
desirable that the matter should be considered by the representa-

tives of the general public acting together; and he hopes that the Bengal Chamber of Commerce will concur with him in this view, and will consult other bodies representing the public. His Honour will be much obliged if you will report to him the action taken. As promised in the *Press Communicat* above referred to, he will be prepared to order the adoption of the Standard Time in Government offices in Calcutta, should its adoption commend itself to the general public.

—

From Bombay Chamber, to Chamber.

BOMBAY, 10th June 1905.

I am instructed to acknowledge the receipt of your telegram of yesterday's date reading as follows:—

"Have you come to any decision regarding adoption Standard Time?"

and to confirm my message of this morning, in reply, as under:—

"Your telegram, Standard Time. Question will be discussed at General Meeting of members this Chamber next Wednesday. Will communicate result."

—

From Chamber, to Bombay Chamber.

No. 1017-1905.—CALCUTTA, 15th June 1905.

Proposed Standard Time.

I have to acknowledge receipt of your telegram of yesterday, as follows, which reached me this morning:—

Telegram begins.—"Meeting held to-day on Standard Time. Twenty-two votes in favour retention local time, seventeen for Standard Time. Beyond advising Government Chamber taking no action."—Telegram ends.

The Committee are much obliged to you for placing this information at their disposal. They have been asked by the Government of Bengal to discuss the matter with other public bodies here.

—

From Chamber, to all Members.

CIR. No. 264-1905.—CALCUTTA, 24th June 1905.

Proposed Standard Time.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to circulate for the information of members of the Chamber, copy of letter, No. 806-T. G. of 5th June 1905, from the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Department, drawing attention to a *Press Communicat* with reference to the establishment of a Standard Time in India, copy of which is also circulated.

It will be noticed that the Government of India have decided to introduce a Standard Time with effect from midnight on the 30th of June, on Railways and in all Telegraph Offices, and that it is not intended for the present to prescribe any further extension, but that if the general public in important cities and towns desire to adopt the new standard for daily use in place of local time, Government will support the change and order the adoption of the new standard in Government Offices. The adoption of Standard Time would involve putting all clocks back 24 minutes in Calcutta, and forward 39 minutes in Bombay. If the clock times of the daily routine were left unaltered a man would get up, breakfast, and go to office 39 minutes earlier in Bombay, and 24 minutes later in Calcutta than before, but per contra, he would leave office 24 minutes earlier in Bombay or 39 minutes later in Calcutta. It is of course open to the community to alter the *clock* times of the daily routine. Thus instead of Offices opening at 10 A.M. and closing at 5 P.M., the opening hour might be made 9.30 A.M., and the closing hour 4.30 P.M., by Standard Time. If this were done the actual difference in office hours as regards *sun* time would be six minutes.

The Committee, in compliance with the wishes of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, are addressing other public bodies on the subject, and will be glad to have a clear expression of opinion from all members of the Chamber on the question. For this purpose I shall be glad if you will kindly record your vote for or against the proposal on the attached sheet, and return it to me within a week from date.

Accompaniment to Circular No. 264 1905 dated 24th June 1905.

PROPOSED STANDARD TIME.

(1) We approve of the local adoption of Standard Time.

Sd. _____

(2) We disapprove of the local adoption of Standard Time.

Sd. _____

(3) We approve of the local adoption of Standard Time provided the hours for opening and closing of Offices (including Banks and Government Offices) are made earlier by half an hour.

Sd. _____

CALCUTTA:
June 1905.

To
THE SECRETARY,
BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

From Chamber, to Indian Jute Mills' Association; British Indian Association; Calcutta Trades Association; Marwari Association, Bengal National Chamber of Commerce; Mahomedan Literary Society; and Central National Mahomedan Association.

No. 1074 1905.—CALCUTTA, 24th June 1905.

Proposed Standard Time.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to forward for the information of the Committee of your Association, copy of a circular which has been issued to all members

of the Chamber on the subject of the local introduction of the new Standard Time. The circular and the letter from the Government of Bengal, to which it gives cover, will clearly explain themselves. It will be seen from the letter that His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor has asked the Committee of the Chamber to communicate with other bodies representing the general public, and to ascertain their views. I should feel much obliged if you would favor me, as early as possible, with the views of your Association with regard to the question of substituting the proposed Standard Time for local time.

From Chamber, to European and Anglo-Indian Defence Association; and Imperial Anglo-Indian Association.

No. 1098-1905.—CALCUTTA, 30th June 1905.

Proposed Standard Time.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to forward for the information of the Committee of your Association, copy of a circular which has been issued to all members of the Chamber, on the subject of the local introduction of the new Standard Time. The circular and the letter from the Government of Bengal, to which it gives cover, will clearly explain themselves. It will be seen from the letter that His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor has asked the Committee of the Chamber to communicate with other bodies representing the general public, and to ascertain their views. I should feel much obliged if you would favor me, as early as possible, with the views of your Association with regard to the question of substituting the proposed Standard Time for local time.

From Marwari Association, to Chamber.

No. 63-1905.—Dated 30th June 1905.

Proposed Standard Time.

With reference to your letter No. 1074—1905, dated the 24th instant, enclosing a copy of your circular letter and the letter from the Government of Bengal on the above subject, I am directed by the Committee of the Marwari Association to say that they have duly considered the question and approve of the local introduction of the new Standard Time. The form attached to the printed letter is returned herewith duly filled up.

From Naraingunge Chamber, to Chamber.

NARAINGUNJ, 30th June 1905.

We approve of the local adoption of Standard Time.

From Calcutta Trades Association, to Chamber.

CALCUTTA, 4th July 1905.

In reply to your letter No. 1074, dated 24th June, I am to state that the Committee of the Trades Association are not in

favour of the local adoption of the Standard Time which has recently been introduced on Railways and in all Telegraph Offices. They are of opinion that it would be difficult to induce the native staff employed by Members' Firms, and particularly those belonging to the artisan class, to fall in with the nominal alteration in their working hours which would become necessary in the event of Standard Time being locally adopted. The Committee regret, therefore, that they do not see their way to support the proposed change.

From European and Anglo-Indian Defence Association, to Chamber.

CALCUTTA, 5th July 1905.

We approve of the local adoption of Standard Time provided the hours for opening and closing of Offices (including Banks and Government Offices) are made earlier by half an hour.

From Chamber, to all Members.

CIR. NO. 282-1905.—CALCUTTA, 6th July 1905.

I am directed to refer you to the Committee's Circular No. 264, dated 24th June 1905, in which members of the Chamber were invited to state their views as to whether Standard Time should be adopted for general purposes in Calcutta. Of the seventy-eight members who have replied to the circular—

Thirteen approve unconditionally of the local adoption of Standard Time,

Thirty six approve of its adoption provided office hours are made earlier by 30 minutes, and

Twenty nine disapprove of its adoption.

2. In addition to the members of the Chamber the Committee also addressed most of the leading public bodies in the city upon the question. The views of these bodies are now awaited. When they are received the Committee will reply to the letter, dated 5th June 1905 from the Government of Bengal, a copy of which was included in the circular quoted above.

From Central National Mahomedan Association, to Chamber.

NO. 44.—CALCUTTA, 11th July 1905.

With reference to your Circular No. 1074-1905 of the 24th June, and its enclosure, I am directed by the Committee of the Central National Mahomedan Association to say that the Committee have no objection to the local adoption of the Standard Time, provided the hours for opening and closing of Offices (including Government Offices and Courts, and Banks) are made earlier by half an hour.

From British Indian Association, to Chamber.

NO. 364.—CALCUTTA, 19th July 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the British Indian Association to state in reply to your letter No. 1074 dated the 24th ultimo, that they do not view with approbation the proposal for the local adoption of the Standard Time in Calcutta. The general idea of local time has been based on celestial phenomena for so long a period, and our business transactions and religious observances have been regulated for so long a period by divisions of time as to make it difficult to change. The least source of confusion would be the difference which it would be necessary to make in Almanacs for use in Calcutta and those in the mofussil, and the difference which would increase the cost of Almanacs and at the same time embarrass, if not bewilder, poor and ignorant people.

The idea of a universal time for a country is tempting, and it has plausible grounds to recommend it, but in spite of the growth of civilising institutions people have clung to their old ideas of time. For obvious reasons Greenwich time, plus or minus a number of hours, is now in use in many parts of the world. But in the United States which are more than double the area of India the States have been divided into five territories by meridians for purposes of local time. In France, although an attempt has recently been made to legalise Paris time in the Provinces, local time obtains in different places. Ireland has a local time of its own, although the telegraph service and the towns where the Atlantic Cables come use Greenwich time.

From Indian Jute Mills' Association, to Chamber.

NO. 203-D.—CALCUTTA, 22nd July 1905.

Proposed Standard Time.

I am directed to refer to your letter No. 1074-1905 dated 24th June, forwarding a copy of your Circular No. 264-1905 of the same date upon this subject.

2. Copies of the circular have been submitted to all members of the Association, and votes have been recorded on the three questions contained in it, as follows:—

- | | |
|---|--------|
| (a) In favour of local adoption of Standard Time | ... 1 |
| (b) Not in favour of local adoption of Standard Time | ... 17 |
| (c) In favour of local adoption of Standard Time provided the hours for opening and closing of Offices (including Banks and Government Offices) are made earlier by half an hour. | ... 9 |

3. It will be seen from the above that the majority of the members of the Association are against the local adoption of Standard Time.

From Mahomedan Literary Society, to Chamber.

No. 844.—CALCUTTA, 25th July 1905.

Proposed Standard Time.

With reference to your letter No. 1074—1905, dated the 24th June last, I am directed by the Committee of the Mahomedan Literary Society of Calcutta, to inform you that they are not in favour of the local introduction of the new Standard Time. Notwithstanding the advantages in having one universal time for the country it is believed that it would seriously inconvenience a large body of people.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (GENERAL).

No. 1314-1905.—CALCUTTA, 4th August 1905.

I am now directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 806-T. G., dated 5th June 1905, with reference to the question of Standard Time.

2. Some delay has occurred in obtaining an expression of opinion from the different public bodies of the city, whom the Committee were desired by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor to consult. But as there was clearly no urgency about the matter, the Committee judged it better that all interested should be allowed ample time to give the fullest consideration to the proposal under discussion. In your letter it was stated that from midnight on the 30th June, Standard Time would be introduced on Railways and in all Telegraph offices. You also added that for the present, it was not proposed to prescribe the extension of the new system beyond the sphere of Railways and Telegraphs; but that Government would be prepared to support the change at important centres such as Calcutta, Bombay and Karachi, if the general public evinced a desire for it.

3. It has always been recognised that, if the system were introduced in Calcutta for general purposes, it might be necessary to make the clock times for the opening and closing of offices, banks, &c., thirty minutes earlier than at present. That is to say, office hours would be from 9.30 A.M. to 4.30 P.M. instead of from 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. Bearing this in mind, the Committee, in obtaining opinions, was asked not only whether the adoption of Standard Time was unconditionally approved or disapproved, but also whether its adoption would be approved if the opening and closing of offices were made earlier by half an hour.

4. From the replies received it is evident that considerable diversity of opinion exists on the subject. Dealing first with the members of the Chamber, the Committee find that of the seventy-eight members who replied to their enquiry, thirteen approved unconditionally of the local adoption of Standard Time; thirty-six approved of its adoption with the qualification as to the re-arrangement of office hours; and twenty-nine disapproved of its adoption. The Committee of the Calcutta Trades' Association expressed

themselves against the proposal either with or without the qualification. A majority of the members of the Indian Jute Mills' Association hold similar views, which are likewise shared by the British Indian Association and the Mahomedan Literary Society. On the other hand the European and Anglo-Indian Defence Association, and the Central National Mahomedan Association, support the proposal provided office hours are changed; while the Marwari Association supports the proposal unconditionally. The views of the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce and the Imperial Anglo-Indian Association have not been yet communicated. It should be added that the Banks in the city are, as the Committee understand, opposed to any change.

5. In the face of such a conflict of opinion it is manifestly impossible for the Committee to make any recommendation, except that the question should be allowed to remain in abeyance. Should a desire for the adoption of Standard Time be hereafter evinced, they will not hesitate to invite the assistance of Government. But at present it is clear that the existing system is distinctly popular. The principal objection to the suggested alteration seems to be—judging from the correspondence—that if Standard Time were introduced without qualification there would be twenty-four minutes less daylight after the closing of offices than there is at present; and that if offices were opened and closed thirty minutes earlier than they now are, difficulties would arise in connection with the Native labour.

From Bank of Bengal, to Chamber.

No. 1400-B.—CALCUTTA, 28th December 1905.

Standard Time.

The Exchange Banks in Bombay have notified by public advertisement that on and after the 1st January 1906, their hours of business will be 10.30 a. m. to 3.30 p. m. Standard Time except on Saturdays when they will be 10.30 a. m. to 1.30 p. m. Standard Time.

Hitherto the banking hours in Bombay have been 10 a. m. to 3.30 p. m., sun time, except on Saturdays when the Exchange Banks have closed at 1 p. m., and the Presidency Bank has closed at 2 p. m.

The Bank of Bombay have apparently decided to continue until 31st March 1906, the practice which has hitherto prevailed and on 1st April 1906 to open at 11 a. m. and close at 4.30 p. m., Standard Time except on Saturdays when they will close at 2 p. m., Standard Time. You will see that, as matters stand, from henceforward there will be a difference between the banking hours of the Presidency and the Exchange Banks in Bombay.

I shall be glad to know if any general movement is being made in Calcutta towards the adoption of Standard Time for banking and business purposes.

From Chamber, to Bank of Bengal.

No. 76-1906.—CALCUTTA, 11th February 1906.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1400 B. of 28th December, in which you draw attention to the fact that the Exchange Banks in Bombay have notified by public advertisement that on and after the 1st of January 1906, their hours of business will be kept by Standard Time; but that the Directors of the Bank of Bombay have apparently decided to continue their present system until the 31st March 1906, after which they propose to open at 11 o'clock a. m., and close at 4-30 p. m., Standard Time, except on Saturdays. Under these arrangements, as you point out, there will be a difference between the banking hours of the Presidency Bank and the Exchange Banks in Bombay.

In reply to your enquiry as to whether any general movement is being made in Calcutta towards the adoption of Standard Time for banking and business purposes, I am instructed to hand you for information copy of my letter No. 1314, of 4th August 1905, to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Department, communicating the result of a reference made by the Chamber at the request of Government to their members and to various other public bodies and Associations. You will notice from this letter that considerable diversity of opinion exists upon the subject, and that the Committee of the Calcutta Trades Association, a very important factor in a movement of this kind, express themselves against the proposal to adopt Standard Time. Under these circumstances it was impossible for the Committee to make any recommendation to Government, and since this letter was sent in nothing further has been done in the matter.

IMPROVEMENT OF THE INDO-CHINESE TURKISTAN TRADE.

From Chamber, to all Members.

Cir. No. 315-1905.—CALCUTTA, 26th July 1905.

Improvement of the Indo-Chinese-Turkistan Trade.

MEMO:—The following is published for the information of members of the Chamber:—

From Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY), to Chamber.

No. 3349-3355-5-4.—SIMLA, 10th July 1905.

I am directed to forward for the information of the members of the Chamber, 10 copies of a report by Mr. G. Macartney, His Britannic Majesty's Consul at Kashgar, containing suggestions for the improvement of the Indo-Chinese Turkistan trade.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE INDO-CHINESE-TURKISTAN TRADE.

A.

Re Imports to Chinese-Turkistan.

(1) It cannot fail to strike any one who is in a position to compare Kashgar, as it now is with what it was, say ten years ago, that the country has increased enormously in a general well being. Living has become much dearer than previously; and yet there seems to be plenty of money in circulation for the purchase of luxuries. Some of the wealthier Kashgari traders, such as Karim Bai Bachcha and Ismail Haji, have realised this condition; and now rather than confining their transactions to the customary imports from Russia, they are launching out in supplying Kashgar with a multitude of goods probably never seen here before, and everything they bring seems to find a ready market, despite high prices. It would be interesting to enumerate a few of the things one can now frequently obtain in the bazaar. They include iron bedsteads, iron stoves, brass candlesticks, field glasses, umbrellas, petroleum lamps, Russian long boots, bevelled glasses, mirrors, woollen stockings, vests, Eau-de-Cologne, bevelled machines, coffee mills, (good quality), scented soaps, silks, electric bells, phonographs, writing paper, cigarettes, electric torches, electric fans, photographic apparatus, clocks, watches, locks, iron safes, coffee-pots, carpentering tools, chemicals, tea-sets, tablecloths, best woods, chairs, carpentering tools, liquors, sardines, tinned caviar, biscuits, Russian tea, &c. There is really no end to the list of foreign goods one might now discover here.

But nearly everything is from Russia. No doubt many of the articles mentioned would be too bulky and heavy for transport *via* India; but there is a quantity of things in demand on which the cost of carriage need not be prohibitive.

One would think there is decidedly room here for a few Parsee general stores shops, and their owners might do a flourishing trade, especially if they had connection with Europe and know how to obtain goods cheaply, by ordering from wholesale houses.

(II) During the last three or four years, some correspondence has passed between Government and the Chinese Turkistan market. Samples of the tea in demand here have also been sent by this office to the Association, and they, in their turn, have sent this office samples of the tea they wish to introduce. But the result has been *nil*. China tea is as unassailable as ever.

No doubt the information, which one like myself, having no technical knowledge of tea, can impart to a body of experts regarding the demand in Turkistan, would always leave much to be desired. At the same time, it has occurred to me that defective information can easily be supplemented by the personal action of the Indian Tea Association. Probably members of this Association are constantly travelling to and fro between India and Europe. It may be suggested that some gentlemen should make a journey home by the Russian Central Asian railway, visiting Yarkand and Kashgar *en route*. An examination on the spot by an expert may give valuable results.

(III) The Chinese bureaucracy in Kashgaria is formed of a large staff of wealthy officials. There is, therefore, an extensive demand for goods from China, such as silks, articles of dress, stationery, table dainties, edible birds' nests, dried turtle, seaweed, lotus seed, etc. This demand is now supplied by a few Tientsin shops located in the different towns, and which obtain their goods overland, from China proper. Their prices are exorbitant. Most of the goods sold by the Chinese shops can probably be procured in Hong-Kong and Singapore; and the question whether a trade *via* India, between these two Colonies and Kashgaria is capable of development may be worth investigating.

B.

Re Export from Chinese-Turkistan to India.

(I) Raw silk appears to be a profitable commodity for export to India, but it is a strange thing that, despite the demand for silk, the industry is still exclusively confined to the town of Khotan. Mulberry trees are not only plentiful there, but in Karghalik, Yarkand and Kashgar also—indeed all over this province. Still for some reason or other, not easy to explain, the people are not utilizing these trees for sericultural purposes. The industry was once flourishing

here but it has gradually fallen off; and the requisite technical knowledge has been lost to all but the Khotanis. The Russians have done a little to encourage silk industry here. It appears that in 1903, the Russian Consul sent a few hundred boxes of silkworm eggs to his Aksakal in Khotan for free distribution.

Now for the Indo-Chinese-Turkistan trade in which the expenses of transport are a most important factor, raw silk ought to make an ideal commodity as an export. What is wanted is some one with a little capital, but much expert knowledge, to come and settle in this country, and re-start this industry which evidently possesses considerable latent vitality. Perhaps firms in India interested in silk, may find it worth their while to probe this matter further, with a view to considering whether it would be profitable to have an agent on the spot, for the culture and exportation of silk.

(II) This plant grows as a weed all over Kashgar. I do not know whether it is equally common elsewhere. If not, its commercial aspect may be worth examining.

(III) I have been told that *Cannabis indica* (charas) enters into the composition of certain medicines prepared in England. If this be really the case, there ought to be, in that country, a certain demand for charas. Perhaps, if drawback is allowed on export out of India, a trade in the drug between Yarkand and Europe may be possible.

(IV) From times immemorial, Khotan has been celebrated in China for its jade. A large trade is still being carried on, overland, between that town and Peking, in this commodity so highly esteemed by the Chinese. Presumably the Chinese population in Calcutta, Rangoon, Straits Settlements and Hong-Kong are as fond of jade as their brothers in China; and perhaps, if communication was encouraged between these Chinese in British territory and Indian merchants in Yarkand, a jade trade could be established *via* India.

C.

Banking Facilities.

Recently the Kashmir Residency called for a report from this office on the feasibility of establishing a post-office money order system between Kashgar and India. Certain difficulties were pointed out, chiefly due to the fact that the value of the orders issued from Kashgar on India would probably much exceed the value of the orders in the opposite direction, and that consequently the Kashgar office would have a large quantity of Chinese silver on hand which it would have no means of disposing of. But what would be a difficulty for a post office, whose sphere of operation, so far as its money orders are concerned, is necessarily restricted, need not equally be one for a bank, whose business it is to make financial combinations of great diversity and extending over an unlimited area.

Perhaps it may be worth the while of such firms as the Hongkong-Shanghai Banking Corporation, or the Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China, to give some attention to Kashgar. At any rate, there can be no harm in their applying for information on specific points.

The meantime, I subjoin a few notes made for me by Mir Munshi Saiyad Bahadur Ali Shah, on the work that is done by the Russo-Chinese Bank in Kashgar. He says:—

"(c) The bank gets Chinese silver (yambu or yuen-pee) from Shanghai and other parts of China, and imports it into Kashgar either overland by the Manchurian railway, or by sea, *via* Batoum.

A yambu of silver, in China proper, costs about 66 roubles, and its carriage to Kashgar comes to 4 roubles more. But the bank here sells yambus to Karim Bia Bachcha (a wealthy Kashgari trader) at 82 roubles, making thus on each a clear profit of 12 roubles. It is estimated that the bank receives from China about 6,000 yambus a year. The annual profit on this branch of its business alone should, therefore, come to about 72,000 roubles.

It may be asked why Indian traders do not bring silver here. The reply is that the Chinese Mint at Kashgar refuses to receive ordinary bar silver; and yambus cannot be procured in India, unless some special arrangement was made with a China bank.

(2) The Russo-Chinese Bank is also a carrying company. Traders who have loads to send can usually make them over to the bank for despatch to their Agents in Russian Turkistan.

(c) The bank purchases cotton here and sends it to Russia.

(d) Its money-lending business is not very extensive, because this being a Mohammedan country, the placing of money at interest is looked askance at by the people."

D.

Mines and other industries of Kashgaria requiring foreign capital to develop.

Mines.

(1) The output of the Khotan gold-mines may roughly be estimated at 4,000 oz. a year. To save the trouble of reference to old trade reports from this office, I make the two following extracts therefrom, which will give an idea of these mines:—

From report for year ending on the 31st March 1894.

"The Chinese are devoting some attention to the working of the Khotan mines, and a certain Mr. Spilgart of the Chinese Customs is now inspecting them." The following extract of a letter from him, dated September last, to the Reverend Father Hendricks, Roman Catholic Missionary at Kashgar, may be of interest:—

"D'abord je me suis rendu au S. E. de Chertchen sur quatre endroits différents: il y avait assez bien de l'or; mais le climat est

très mauvais, j'ai manqué d'y laisser la vie. Le temps pour déterrer l'or est très court. On n'y peut travailler plus longtemps que trois mois. La neige et la glace empêchent le travail, au demeurant, de la fin à la 8^{me} lune (Août—Octobre). On peut laver l'or; et avec les utensils primitifs des indigènes, le résultat n'est pas fâcheux: 2 feng par homme et par jour. Cela fait environ 5 Tsen d'argent. L'or est très cher ici car les marchands turcs donnent 25

2 feng = 0.66 tola.

Tout l'or va à la frontière d'argent pour untael d'or aux mines. Tout l'or va à la frontière d'argent pour untael d'or aux mines. Tout l'or va à la frontière anglaise. Autrefois, on trouvait ici à Kappa et dans les environs beaucoup d'or, mais en Chine cela ne parvient aux oreilles de l'Empereur que quand la mine est épuisée: tant qu'il y a du profit les mandarins se gardent bien d'en dire mot. Dans la vallée de Kappa, où se trouve ma tante Mongol, il y a encore maintenant 3 à 400 hommes occupés. Ils cherchent partout, même dans les résidus des vieilles mines. Des femmes et des enfants s'occupent toute la journée à lever la sable en l'air pour faire enlever la poussière par le vent, et ramasser les parcelles d'or entre les pierres. En un jour ils en trouvent pour 10 à 12 Sapeques tout juste pur du pain. * * * * Il n'y a pas de terres cultivées; c'est très misérable avoir: jamais de ma vie, je n'ai vu autant de pauvreté que dans ces mines d'or."

From report for the year ending on the 31st March 1899-1900.

"It may be mentioned that, since the last two years, the District Magistrate of Keria, within whose jurisdiction the gold-mines are situated, has received some orders, apparently emanating from the Provincial Governor, to purchase gold, at the ratio to silver, of 1 to 25 and to forward it to Urumtchi, such gold being said to be required by the Peking Government for purposes connected with the payment of the interest on certain Chinese loans raised in Europe. But it appears that the District Magistrate of Keria, in executing these orders, has prohibited, as far as he can, miners from selling to others besides himself, and has in fact taken all the mines under his own supervision. For the Peking Government, it appears from information given to me by Huang Taotai, that during the last Chinese year (23th Kuang hsu) only a little over 1,000 liang (= 3,125 tolas) of gold was despatched to the Khotan, Keria, etc. mines to Urumtchi. Whether that amount, or even a portion of it, ever reached Peking would be a matter of some interest to know."

The following notes concerning coal and iron mines, to Ismail prepared by Mir Munshi Saiyad Bahadur Ali Shah:—

"The present Taotai of Kashgar has given grants, to Ismail Hajj a lease for 30 years of the iron mine at Aggiz Yar (three marches south of Kashgar). Ismail Hajj seems to be very anxious to work this mine, and is evidently prepared to spend some money on it. He is arranging with an Austrian, now making mining implements for the Taotai, to assist him in this undertaking and, on being told by this Austrian that coal was a first essential, Ismail Hajj deputed one Rozi Sheikh to Aggiz Yar, to prospect for this mineral. Rozi returned last week, having found some coal in

Coal and iron.

From Upper India Chamber, to Chamber.

CAWNPORE, 15th August 1905.

My Committee have had an opportunity of studying a report from His Britannic Majesty's Consul at Kashgar, containing suggestions for the improvement of Indian trade with Chinese Turkistan.

They are much impressed with the valuable natural resources of the country, and they are disposed to think that, in view of the probable weakening of Russian influence in those parts, the prospects attending the commercial exploitation of the country would justify the support of Mr. Macartney's recommendation for the despatch of a Mission of investigation.

Before formulating any recommendations to Government on the subject, however, my Committee desire to ascertain what views are held by other Chambers, and I am to ask that you may be good enough to advise me what action, if any, the Committee of your Chamber have determined to take in the matter.

From Chamber, to Upper India Chamber.

No. 1406-1905—CALCUTTA, 24th August 1905.

Trade with Chinese Turkistan.

I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 15th August, with reference to Mr. G. Macartney's recent report on Indo-Chinese Turkistan trade. Tea is, the Committee believe, the commodity which members of the Chamber would be most likely to export to Kashgar, if a trade could be opened out. I have been accordingly instructed to submit your letter to the Indian Tea Cess Committee, who are, as you know, concerned with the work of fostering the consumption of Indian tea in foreign countries. I will communicate with you further on learning their views.

From Chamber, to Indian Tea Cess Committee.

No. 1407-1905—CALCUTTA, 24th August 1905.

Trade with Chinese Turkistan.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to forward for your consideration a copy of the marginally noted letter with reference to Letter dated 15th August, from the Mr. G. Macartney's recent report on Indo-Chinese Turkistan trade.

2. You will notice that the Upper India Chamber suggest the advisability of despatching a Mission to Kashgar with the object of investigating the commercial possibilities of the country. As tea would be probably the commodity which members of this Chamber would be most likely to export should any trade be opened up, I am instructed to ask whether your Committee would

be disposed to devote any portion of their funds to meet the cost of such a Mission as that suggested.

From Indian Tea Cess Committee, to Chamber.

No. 831-T. C.—CALCUTTA, 1st September 1905.

Trade with Chinese Turkistan.

I am directed by the Executive Committee to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 1407, dated 24th August, forwarding a copy of a communication from the Upper India Chamber of Commerce with reference to Mr. G. Macartney's recent report on Indo-Chinese Turkistan trade.

2. The Upper India Chamber suggest that a Commercial Mission should be despatched to Kashgar with the object of investigating the commercial possibilities of the country. And you enquire whether the Committee would be disposed to meet any portion of the cost of such a Mission from the Cess Funds. In reply I am to say that, as far as the Committee are aware, the tea consumed in Chinese Turkistan at present is Chinese brick tea, nearly Indian planters experience difficulty in making brick tea so nearly the same difficulty is felt in regard to Tibet, and in order to obtain information respecting Chinese methods of manufacture, the Committee have deputed a Commissioner to Ssu-Chuan to make investigations and to report. On his return—probably in the cold weather—they will be in a position to say whether bricks likely to suit the taste of the people of Chinese Turkistan can be manufactured in India. They would suggest, therefore, that the proposed Commercial Mission should be postponed for the present, at least so far as tea is concerned.

3. I am to add that the Mission to Ssu-Chuan is a confidential undertaking, in which the Committee have been assisted by the Foreign Department of the Government of India. The Committee are advised by Government that it should not be referred to publicly in any way.

From Chamber, to Upper India Chamber.

No. 1482-1905—CALCUTTA, 6th September 1905.

Trade with Chinese Turkistan.

In continuation of my No. 1406, dated 24th August, I have to say that the Committee have, now obtained the views of the Indian Tea Cess Committee upon the proposal for a Commercial Mission to Chinese Turkistan. The tea consumed in Chinese Turkistan at present is, the Cess Committee state, Chinese brick tea. And Indian planters experience difficulty in making brick tea so nearly resembling it as to find a sale in Kashgar. The same difficulty is felt in regard to Tibet; and in order to obtain information respecting Chinese methods of manufacture the Cess Committee are now having certain enquiries made in China. They expect to have the

result of these before them by the cold weather; and they suggest that the proposed mission should be postponed until then, at least so far as tea is concerned. The Committee of the Chamber are inclined to agree with this view and they, therefore, put it forward for your consideration.

From Chamber, to Indian Tea Cess Committee.

No. 2100-1905.—CALCUTTA, 19th December 1905.

Trade with Chinese Turkistan.

In continuation of correspondence ending with your letter No. 831-T. C., of 1st September 1905, I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to enquire whether you are now in a position to favour the Committee with your further views regarding the proposal for a Commercial Mission to Chinese Turkistan, mooted by the Secretary of the Upper India Chamber of Commerce in his letter of 15th August, copy of which was forwarded to you under cover of my letter No. 1407 of 24th August.

From Indian Tea Cess Committee, to Chamber.

No. 939-T. C.—CALCUTTA, 28th December 1905.

Proposed Commercial Mission to Chinese Turkistan.

Your letter No. 2100, dated 19th December, with reference to this matter has been considered by the Executive Committee. In reply to it I am to say that the Committee are not prepared to recommend a contribution from the Cess Funds to meet the cost of the suggested mission. Mr. Jas Hutchison, who has recently visited Ssu-Chuan, the centre of the Chinese brick tea industry, on behalf of the Committee, has now submitted his report. From it the Committee gather that some time must elapse before Indian planters can manufacture brick tea suitable for Tibet and Chinese Turkistan. That being so it would seem to be inadvisable, so far as the tea industry is concerned, to project a Mission to the latter country at present. For it would not be possible for the Commissioner to take any samples which would be likely to meet the taste of the people.

From Chamber, to Upper India Chamber.

No. 51-1906.—CALCUTTA, 10th January 1906.

Trade with Chinese Turkistan.

In continuation of my letter No. 1482-1905 of 6th September 1905, and with further reference to your letter of 15th August 1905, on the above subject, I am now directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to intimate that they are not prepared from the Indian Tea Cess Committee that they are not prepared to recommend a contribution from the Cess Funds to meet the cost of

the suggested Commercial Mission. The representative of the Indian Tea Cess Committee, who has recently visited Ssu-Chuan, the centre of the Chinese brick tea industry, has submitted his report from which it is evident that some time must elapse before Indian planters can manufacture brick tea suitable for Tibet and Chinese Turkistan. That being so it would seem to be inadvisable, so far as the tea industry is concerned, to project a Mission to the latter country at present; for it would not be possible for the Commissioner to take any samples which would be likely to meet the taste of the people.

ADULTERATION OF INDIAN WHEAT.

From Chamber, to Calcutta Wheat and Seed Trade Association.

No. 1562-1905.—CALCUTTA, 18th September 1905.
Adulteration of Indian Wheat.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to invite an expression of your views upon the point raised in the accompanying papers in this connection.

From Calcutta Wheat and Seed Trade Association, to Chamber.

No. 178-H56.—CALCUTTA, 21st September 1905.
Adulteration of Indian Wheat.

I am to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1562-1905, dated 18th instant, forwarding copies of the marginally noted papers on the above subject, and asking for an expression of the views of this Association upon the point raised in them.

2. The Committee have carefully perused the papers. Their opinion is evidently called for upon the question as to whether any practicable action can be taken with the object of preventing the adulteration of grain exported from India.

3. In reply, I am directed by the Committee to say that in a matter of this kind their opinion would not be representative of the entire trade. Large shippers of wheat, such as Messrs. Ralli Brothers, are not members of this Association. They would, therefore, suggest that a reference be made to all the leading shippers of wheat including Messrs. Ralli Brothers.

From Chamber, to Messrs. Anderson, Wright & Co.; Arracan Co., Ltd.; Becker, Gray & Co.; Bird & Co.; Alexander, Classen & Co.; Ernsthausen Ltd.; Finlay, Muir & Co.; Graham & Co.; Hoare, Miller & Co.; Geo. Henderson & Co.; Petrocochino Bros.; E. D. Sassoon & Co.; Schörder, Smidt & Co. and Ralli Bros.

No. 1646-1905.—CALCUTTA, 3rd October 1905.
Adulteration of Indian Wheat.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to invite an expression of your views upon the point raised in the accompanying papers in this connection.

From Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY), to Chamber.

No. $\frac{O \& T}{1087}$ 4762-159-2.—SIMLA, 5th September 1905.

With reference to the accompanying copy of a despatch, of its enclosure, received from the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for India, No. 104 (Revenue), dated the 7th July 1905, I am to request that the Government of India may be favoured with an expression of the views of your Chamber in regard to the question raised. The matter has, on several occasions, received the careful consideration of the Government of India; and in this connection a reference is invited to the volume entitled—"The Indian Wheat Trade," published by the Department of Revenue and Agriculture in 1893, and to paragraphs 376 to 387 of Dr. J. A. Voelcker's "Report on the Improvement of Indian Agriculture." The rapidly growing importance of the export trade in wheat has again directed attention to the question; and the Government of India would be glad to learn whether, in the opinion of the merchants affected, any practical action can be taken with the object of preventing the adulteration of grain exported from India.

2. It would appear that, and apart from the operation of sifting, defects in the processes of cultivation, threshing, winnowing, and storage, the middleman is responsible for the deliberate introduction of impurities into the bulk of the wheat exported, and I am to enquire whether, in the opinion of your Chamber it will be possible to alter the custom of the trade in this respect.

3. The Government of India are, at present, disposed to think that the attitude of the English corn dealers may be, to a great extent, responsible for the systematic adulteration of wheat before it leaves India; and it is probable that the evil to which the Flour Mills' Association refer would disappear if the home buyers purchased Indian wheat on a basis of one or two per cent. re-frac-tion under the existing system; they refuse to pay a higher price for clean wheat, and the Indian dealer, therefore, garbles the grain before

shipment by introducing impurities up to the maximum percentage of refraction admissible. Several of the large English millers are, it is understood, interested in the maintenance of this custom. It is possible that considerable improvement could be effected if the home dealers were authoritatively informed that there would be no difficulty in supplying clean wheat on a basis of 2 or even 1 per cent. refraction, if the home demand for the improved quality were sufficiently large and constant.

INDIA OFFICE, LONDON,
7th July 1905.

Revenue No. 104.

To
HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HONORABLE,
THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA
IN COUNCIL,
MY LORD,

I forward for the consideration of your Excellency's Government a copy of a letter which I have received from the Honorary Secretary of the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Flour Mills Association, regarding the admixture of sand and other foreign matter with Indian wheats especially with those shipped from Karachi.

2. I shall be glad to learn in due course your conclusions on the matter, and to be informed whether you consider that any measures can be devised with the co-operation of the commercial community for the improvement of the purity of Indian wheat exported to foreign countries by sea.

I have the honor to be,

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,
ST. JOHN BRODRICK.

THE NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND DERBYSHIRE FLOUR MILLERS
ASSOCIATION.

Offices:—GUARDIAN CHAMBERS, 4, BRIDLE SMITH GATE,
Nottingham, June 21st 1905.

To
THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
THE RT. HON. W. ST. JOHN BRODRICK.

SIR,
'Sand, &c., in Karachi Wheat.

I am instructed by the Committee of the above Association to call your attention to the admixture of sand in the Indian wheats,

especially in those shipped from Karachi. The so called "Choice White Karachi" wheats have yielded 3 per cent. of pure sand during the last season, besides other foreign matter, such as barley.

1. The shipments of wheat from Karachi during 1904, were 1½ million tons, and a normal freight to Hull, to which port 25 per cent. of these total shipments were sent, is 15 c. per ton. These figures give some idea of the money paid as freight on sand, which, so far as we can ascertain, has no commercial value whatever in this country. Apart from the serious loss to the Indian farmer who must, in reality, pay this cost, there is a further loss to the inland miller in this country on the freight from the port to his mill.

2. Considering the loss sustained both to India and this country through the shipment of sand as wheat, my Committee would be glad if you could see your way to recommend such measures as would effectually check the shipment, annually, of such large quantities of sand mixed with the Indian wheats.

On behalf of the Committee.

I am etc.,

ROBT. HUTCHINSON, JR.,
Honorary Secretary.

From Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY),
to Chamber.

Nos. 5476-5481-87-4.—SIMLA, 2nd October 1905.

In continuation of my letter, No. 4757-4762-152-2, dated the 5th September 1905, I am directed to forward, for the information of the Chamber, a copy of a letter, dated the 1st September 1905, addressed by the Incorporated National Association of British and Irish Millers, to the Secretary, in the Revenue and Statistics Department, India Office, on the subject of the admixture of foreign matter with wheat exported from India.

Nos. 5482-5483-87-4

A copy, with a copy of the letter from the Assistant Secretary, Revenue and Statistics Department, India Office, No. 2287, dated the 5th September 1905, and enclosures, is forwarded, to the ^{Director of Revenue and Agriculture} ~~Director of Revenue and Statistics~~ for information, in continuation of the endorsement from this Department, No. 4703-4764, dated the 5th September 1905.

LONDON, 1st September 1905.

From—The Incorporated National Association of British and Irish Millers,

To—Secretary, Revenue and Statistics Department, India Office,
We understand that representations have been addressed to you by the Nottingham and Derbyshire Flour Millers' Association

and the Sheffield, Rotherham and District Millers' Association, relative to the large amount of dust and extraneous matter which, during the past year especially, has been found in shipments of wheat from India, more particularly in the case of Karachi wheat.

This Association desires to support the appeal made to the Secretary of State for India in the hope that some measures may be taken by the Department to mitigate the evil complained of. The presence of this dust, &c., is not only detrimental to the health of the workmen handling this wheat but is a source of loss to millers using wheat of this description.

Any detailed information which this Association can supply in furtherance of the object in view will be willingly placed at your disposal.

From Chairman, Madras Chamber, to Government of India
(COMMERCE & INDUSTRY).

MADRAS, 4th October 1905.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 5th ultimo, and to inform you in reply that as no wheat is shipped from Madras the Chamber regrets that it is not in a position to offer any opinion regarding the measures that could be adopted to improve the purity of Indian wheat exported to Foreign Countries.

With regard, however, to the adulteration of other grains, the Chamber recently had the advantage of discussing with the Hon. Mr. Hewett, the question of legislating against the adulteration of Indian produce generally, and it would take this opportunity to further refer to the matter.

The main objections to any such legislation appear to be on the one hand that many fear that legislation would mean official interference with trade and possibly Police oppression. On the other hand, some merchants are averse to legislation, feeling that the very difficulties at present resulting from adulteration are an actual advantage to them when, as is sometimes the case, they are relatively better situated for coping with those difficulties than their competitors in the market concerned.

As to the first class of objection, this Chamber considers the trouble indicated would be obviated if Police cognisance of any offence were only taken on complaint being formally laid by a responsible purchaser or would be purchaser.

As to the second class of objection, the Chamber thinks that the good of the country as a whole requires in this case an exception to be made to the sound general rule of leaving trade matters to regulate themselves. The reason is that the middleman, whether Native or European, and the final consumer are practically all able to protect themselves. They, on average, only pay prices that their experience teaches them are safe, after allowing for the cost of transport and loss in cleaning as well as for the risk of deterioration always involved in adulteration whether by the addition of water or other foreign substance. Consequently, the eventual and per-

manent loser from the practice is the ignorant ryot and the Chamber thinks that in his interests legislation, as suggested, should at least be attempted. Whether he is the victim of his own short-sighted dishonesty or of the less excusable frauds of the dealer to whom he has sold, in either case the Chamber believes that such legislation would have a beneficial educative effect even though action under it were seldom resorted to.

From Bombay Chamber, to Chamber.

BOMBAY, 12th October 1905.

I am directed to forward for your information a copy of a letter addressed by this Chamber to the Under Secretary to the Government of India, in reply to a communication from him relative to the large amount of dust and extraneous matter which of late years has been found in shipments of wheat from India to the United Kingdom. The correspondence received shows that representations from the above subject have been made to the Secretary of State for India by the following Associations, *viz.* the Nottingham and Derbyshire Flour Millers' Association, the Sheffield, Rotherham and District Millers' Association, and the Incorporated National Association of British Irish Millers.

From Bombay Chamber, to Government of India
(COMMERCE & INDUSTRY).

BOMBAY, 12th October 1905.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. ~~667~~ dated 5th ultimo, together with a copy of a despatch from the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India, No. 104 (Revenue), dated 7th July 1905, as also your second letter No. 5476 (dated 2nd October 1905), enclosing communication from the Incorporated National Association of British and Irish Millers, regarding the adulteration of wheat exported from India.

2. In reply I am directed to state that the Committee of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce are in complete accord with Government in their desire to promote the purity and cleanliness of Indian wheat intended for the United Kingdom. My Committee have for years repeatedly urged a purer basis in all wheat transactions, and have maintained that if a higher standard was authoritatively adopted there would be no difficulty whatever in obtaining any quantity of clean wheat for the Home Market. In the opinion of my Committee the unsatisfactory condition in which Indian wheat is now placed on the English and Irish Markets is due entirely to the action of the home buyers who have hitherto refused for reasons of their own, to differentiate in price between comparatively pure wheat and wheat with an acknowledged high percentage of impurities. The remedy is entirely in their hands and the initiative must therefore be taken in England. It is felt that if a demand was made for purer wheat, and a proportionately better price paid for

it—there would be no reason to fear that the requisite supply would not be forthcoming.

3. Experience has, however, shown that wheat cannot on the whole be procured in a clean state in India as in Europe, America and Australia, (a) because the Indian farmer frequently sows wheat as a mixed crop. For instance in Northern India and Sind, wheat is often deliberately grown with barley, while in the Central Provinces it is mixed in the field with gram, peas, lentils, and other indigenous food grains. Consequently at the time of harvesting and threshing it is impossible altogether to eliminate these foreign seed from the wheat. (b) Further, when the crops are harvested, earth often adheres to the sheaves as they lie on the ground, and these are then placed on a mud floor and threshed out by cattle. As no machinery is ever used, the above two causes would alone be accountable for a considerable proportion of the dirt complained of.

4. Nevertheless, it is believed, wheat could be procured in Western India, *i.e.*, from the ports of Bombay and Karachi, in a much purer state than it is at present, if it was agreed that it would be purchased in the United Kingdom, like most Oil Seeds, on a fixed basis of refraction, that is, with certain recognised percentages of dirt, and of grains, other than wheat. A fair basis for the above two items would be:—

- (a) For dirt 4 per cent. with mutual allowances. For example, if the wheat contained only 2 or 3 per cent. the seller would benefit to the extent of 2 or 1 per cent. and *vice-versa*. To protect the buyer against an excessive admixture of dirt, anything over 6 per cent. should be penalised: the seller having to pay double allowance for all dirt in excess of the above percentage.
- (b) Other grains, such as gram, peas, lentils, teora, etc., might be included in dirt as their percentage is comparatively inappreciable. But as regards barley found in the wheat, a 5 per cent. basis should be fixed with mutual allowances: the barley being calculated either way at half the value of wheat. In the interests of the buyer it should be stipulated that any excess of barley over 10 per cent. would be treated as dirt, though not necessarily penalised as in the case of dirt in wheat.

5. The above basis of refraction has long since been adopted with satisfaction by other European countries, which thus not only consistently obtain a very much cleaner wheat than the United Kingdom, but have also saved themselves all handling charges and Railway and Steamship freight on thousands of tons of extraneous matter annually. Representations on somewhat similar lines have, it is believed, been made from time to time by various sellers in England, but as the buyers showed no particular desire to pay the slightly higher prices for wheat thus treated, no practical results

have hitherto followed the laudable attempts to establish a purer basis on behalf of Indian wheat.

From Chamber, to Madras Chamber.

No. 1741-1905.—CALCUTTA, 25th October 1905.

Adulteration of Indian Wheat.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge with thanks copy of your letter of 4th October to the Secretary, Government of India, Department of Commerce and Industry, Simla, on the above subject.

From Chamber, to Bombay Chamber.

No. 1742-1905.—CALCUTTA, 25th October 1905.

Adulteration of Indian Wheat.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your letter of 12th October, forwarding for information copy of your letter of same date to the Secretary, Government of India, Department of Commerce and Industry, on the above subject.

From Chamber, to Government of India (COMMERCE & INDUSTRY).

No. 1785-1905.—CALCUTTA, 31st October 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your two letters No. 4757-476-159-2 of 5th September and No. 5476-5481-87-4 of 2nd October, with their respective enclosures, in which you ask for an expression of the views of the Chamber on the question of preventing the adulteration of grain exported from India.

2. The Committee have given very careful consideration to the contents of your letter and also to the representations made to the Secretary of State for India by the various British and Irish to the Secretary of State for India by the various British and Irish Millers' Associations. In the opinion of the Committee the remedy for the evils complained of lies in the hands of the Home Millers and is practically stated in the third paragraph of your letter of 31st September. No adulteration of wheat takes place in Calcutta on the contrary, it is often cleaned before being exported. The bulk of the admixture contained in wheat exported from Calcutta cannot be called adulteration in the strict sense of the word as it is not purposely added to the wheat but results from the custom of sowing wheat mixed with a certain amount of other food grains, and from the primitive way in which it is threshed by bullocks in the fields. The whole question resolves itself into one purely of cost: if Millers at Home are prepared to pay a proportionately higher price for a cleaner wheat, shippers will clean the wheat accordingly. But the opinion of large shippers on this

side, so far as the Committee have been able to ascertain it, is that Millers will not pay the additional price.

From Director of Agriculture, Bengal, to Chamber.

No. 3614-A.—CALCUTTA, 21st November 1905.

I have the honour to request the favour of your kindly informing me as to the usual percentage of refraction (adulteration) in Indian wheat and the usual amount of damage done to exported wheat by weevils.

The above information is required in connection with the subject of the improvement of the wheat industry in India to be shortly considered by the Board of Agriculture.

From Chamber, to Director of Agriculture, Bengal.

No. 1922-1905.—CALCUTTA, 24th November 1905.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 3614 A, of 21st November 1905, asking what is the usual percentage of refraction in Indian wheat, and also the usual amount of damage done to exported wheat by weevils.

2. In reply to this enquiry I have to state that weevilling in wheat depends entirely on circumstances and that no estimate can be given. The refraction in wheat that comes to Calcutta for export varies from 2% to about 12% or 12%, but on the whole the average is probably from 3% to 7%.

THE PIECE-GOODS TRADE.

From Marwari Chamber and Merchants Committee
Vaishya Sabha, to Calcutta Import Trade Association.

No. 165.—CALCUTTA, 6th September 1905.

We, under directions of the Marwari Chamber of Commerce and the Merchants Committee of the Vaishya Sabha, beg to forward for the information of your Association, a memorandum containing new conditions which we desire should be incorporated into the Piece-Goods contracts now in use between dealers and the importing firms. At the joint meeting of both these Associations, the conditions in question were fully discussed and it was unanimously resolved that the adoption of these conditions in the contracts with the importing firms had become essentially necessary to safeguard the interests of the members of these Associations, both dealing in piece-goods, etc. The absence of such conditions, both the Associations find, has for some time past caused such members as aforesaid much trouble and difficulty, entailing heavy loss.

We beg also to submit that it is desirable in the interests of all parties concerned to have one uniform contract form for piece-goods business.

MEMORANDUM TO BE INCORPORATED IN THE CONTRACT FOR PIECE-GOODS.

- 1.—If any goods sold to arrive become late then the buyers on being informed by the sellers of some reasonable cause of the delay will have the option to grant 1 month's extension of time or to cancel the goods. If the sellers require further extension for the goods for which extension has already been granted then the sellers shall have to make good the profit that would have been earned by the buyers calculated at the market price of the day.
- 2.—When any goods are sold 'to arrive' the signature of the buyer is to be taken on the sale sample and this should be mentioned in the contract.
- 3.—In case of goods sold to arrive the sellers shall give timely arrival notice to the dealers and in the arrival notice are to be mentioned all particulars of the goods, invoice allowances, date of shipment and the name of the vessel.
- 4.—In case of ready sales all the particulars in the invoice relating to the goods are to be mentioned in the contract.
- 5.—All allowances given in the invoice should be deducted in chits.
- 6.—If the dealers want to see the invoice, the sellers shall have to show the original invoice.
- 7.—Shipment samples shall be given to buyers.

8.—If there be any difference in the goods sold a survey will be held by two persons one of whom will be an European and the other an Indian merchant. In the case of any disagreement between them a third person shall have to be appointed as umpire.

(SD.) GUNPUT ROY KHAEMKA.

" MAHADEO LAL PRAG CHAND.

CALOUTTA IMPORT TRADE ASSOCIATION,

ROYAL EXCHANGE BUILDING,

Calcutta, 12th September 1905.

PROCEEDINGS OF A SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING
OF MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION held this day.

PRESENT :

The Hon. Mr. Nalin B. Sircar,	} Messrs. Kerr, Tarruck & Co.
<i>G.I.E., Chairman</i> ...	
Mr. A. Glen, (<i>Vice-Chairman</i>) ...	} Gladstone, Wyllie & Co.
" H. F. Bull ...	
" G. Watson ...	} Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co.
" W. G. Wickham ...	
" G. A. K. Hutton ...	} Walker, Gurnard & Co.
" F. Doxey ...	
" D. Van Wijngaarden ...	} The Holland, Bombay Trading Co., Ltd.
" E. N. Vassilopoulos ...	
" C. W. Ellis ...	} A. Agelasto & Co.
" R. Edmondson ...	
" G. Gillespie ...	} Birkmyre Brothers.
" H. Booth ...	
" D. Cameron ...	} Hoare, Miller & Co.
" S. Russ ...	
" A. P. Hirschhorn ...	} Struthers & Co., Ltd.
" J. G. Dean ...	
" A. Moll ...	} S. Russ & Co.
" T. D. Edilston ...	
" W. L. Mackenzie ...	} Ullmann, Hirschhorn & Co.
" H. W. Smyth ...	
" H. K. Pierson ...	} Anderson, Wright & Co.
" H. R. Cobbold ...	
" G. A. Klemis ...	} Moll, Schutte & Co.
" A. D. Frood ...	
" W. N. Cresswell ...	} Allen Brothers & Co.
" L. Stanfield ...	
" W. Ross Craik ...	} Kettlewell, Bullen & Co.
" A. S. Drew ...	
	} Mitchell, Bardsley & Co.
	} Ashworth, Taylor & Co.
	} Sir Jacob Beltrons & Sons.
	} Geo. Henderson & Co.

Mr. P. Hurl ...	... Messrs. Finlay, Muir & Co.
" I. R. Coulthard ...	" Machenzie, Smith & Co.
" F. Kehl ...	" Schroder, Smith & Co.
" C. Graham ...	} Graham & Co.
" A. Forsyth ...	
" E. S. Petrocochino ...	" Petrocochino Brothers.
" F. J. Thomaides ...	" Ram Chand Seal & Co.
Babu Doorga Dass Seal ...	

The notice convening the meeting having been taken as read, the Chairman said.—

GENTLEMEN,—You are no doubt all aware of the existence of a recently formed combination amongst the Marwari dealers here, for the purpose of introducing into the Piece Goods Contract form certain additional conditions which they believe will remove some of their long-standing grievances and safeguard their own interests. The attention of the Committee of the Import Trade Association was first officially drawn to this matter on the 30th ultimo by a leading firm, one of the members of the Association.

The Committee thereupon met on the 1st instant, and at this meeting the representatives of the firm referred to were present by invitation. After a full discussion of the position of affairs it was decided to await a representation on the subject from the dealers, which the Committee understood was under preparation and would shortly be submitted. The Committee also considered it desirable in the interests of the members generally to suggest that they should, in the meantime, keep their minds open and not commit themselves to any definite course of action. A circular letter to this effect was accordingly issued to all members on the 2nd instant.

On the 7th idem a joint letter from the Secretaries of the Marwari Chamber of Commerce and the Merchants Committee of the Vaishya Sabha was received, enclosing a list of the conditions in which they desired to be incorporated in the contract form. In their letter they had also suggested that there should be one uniform form for all Piece Goods contracts.

On receipt of their letter the Committee met again on Friday last and discussed the proposed conditions. But before coming to any decision, and having regard to the great importance of this question, the Committee have thought it necessary to call this General Meeting of the Association to-day, in order to ascertain as far as possible the views of the members generally.

The Committee also considered it desirable to obtain full information as to the genesis of the present combination and as to the grievances of dealers so that these might, if required, be laid before this meeting for consideration. For this purpose the Secretaries and two other representatives of each of the two Associations attended by invitation the Meeting of the Committee held yesterday, I may mention here that beyond eliciting the necessary information, the Committee have expressed no opinion of their own. I will now call upon you, gentlemen, to proceed with the discussion of the question before us.

A general discussion then took place after which the following Resolution was proposed by Mr. J. G. Dean—

“That a communication be addressed to the Marwari Chamber of Commerce and the Merchants Committee of the Vaishya Sabha stating, in reply to their letter of 6th September, proposing the insertion of eight new conditions in piece goods contracts—

- (1) that, so far as regards condition No. 2, this Association will address the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and ask them to address the Manchester and Glasgow Chambers of Commerce with the view of getting these grievances taken up.
- (2) that, as regards conditions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7, members here present will do what they can to give the information required to the dealers on application without anything being inserted in the contract.
- (3) that, as regards clause 8, this meeting will not agree to it.”

This Resolution was seconded by Mr. W. R. Craik, and on being put to the meeting was carried unanimously.

NALIN BEHARY SIRCAR,
Chairman.

H. M. HAYWOOD,
Acting Secretary.

From Calcutta Import Trade Association, to Chamber.

No. 66-M.—CALCUTTA, 26th September 1905.

Dealers' proposed New Conditions in Piece-Goods Contracts.

I am directed by the Committee of the Calcutta Import Trade Association to hand you for the information of the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, copy of the proceedings of a Special General Meeting of the Association, held on the 12th instant, to consider a joint letter from the Secretaries of the Marwari Chamber of Commerce, and the Merchants Committee of the Vaishya Sabha, dated 6th instant. A copy of this joint letter, with enclosure, is also sent herewith for the information of your Committee.

2. The first item of the resolution adopted by the meeting relates, you will observe, to the late shipment of goods. This question, I may remind your Committee, formed the subject of a lengthy correspondence in 1900 between the Bengal, Bombay, Upper India, Manchester, Glasgow and Blackburn Chambers of Commerce, which will be found reproduced on pages 505-523 of Volume II of the Report of the Chamber for that year. The correspondence concluded with an expression of hope by your Committee that “prompt attention having been now drawn at home to the serious consequence arising from late deliveries, the evil will be minimised,

and that vigorous efforts will be made by merchants and manufacturers on your (home) side to adhere more strictly to the terms of their contracts.” During the past year, however, with a steady rise in prices for Manchester Piece-Goods generally, the irregularity about late shipment has re-appeared in an acute form, resulting in the stoppage of all sales in the local Bazaar since the 1st instant.

3. In the course of their enquiry into the present grievances of dealers, the Committee have become convinced that the dealers' complaints in regard to late shipment are not unfounded, instances having been placed before them where extension of time has been asked for and granted month by month, as many as five times, until the extension required has been six months (and sometimes more) later than the date originally contracted for. In other cases, too numerous to detail here, goods were shown to have missed their sale season entirely. To refer to one specific case only, two large sales of a standard quality were made last cold weather at intervals of say 5-6 weeks, the sale price of the latter being considerably higher than that of the former; and while the goods sold last at the higher rate all arrived to contract time during the first four months of this year, the goods first contracted for at the lower rate have not yet arrived; and the sellers have now informed the first buyers that the goods will not be shipped.

4. In these circumstances, the Committee of the Calcutta Import Trade Association are of opinion that a strong representation on the subject should be made to the Manchester and Glasgow Chambers of Commerce; and they now beg to request your Committee, in accordance with the terms of the first item of the resolution of the Special General Meeting of this Association, to be good enough to request those Chambers to take up the question and to adopt such effective measures as they will ensure in future the punctual execution of contracts by manufacturers and shippers on their side and thus remove the legitimate grievances of the dealers on this side.

From Chamber, to Manchester Chamber.

No. 1759-1905.—CALCUTTA, 26th October 1905.

I have been directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to address your Chamber with reference to serious difficulties which have arisen in connection with the Piece-Goods trade between importers and their constituents in the Calcutta Bazaar. These difficulties, which have no doubt already been brought to the knowledge of the Directors of your Chamber by members interested in the Piece-Goods trade with Calcutta, have arisen in connection with the question of late shipments, which, as you are no doubt aware, have been for many years a standing grievance in the trade, and one which has caused much friction between buyers and sellers. The present difficulties are simply the occurrence in a more acute form of those which formed the subject of considerable correspondence between the principal Indian Chambers and your Chamber

early in the year 1900. In my letter of 23rd January of that year I wrote as follows:—

"The confidence of the native dealers in the bazaar is being seriously shaken, especially as the latter have no remedy except to cancel or extend the time, either of which courses frequently lands them in serious loss if they have themselves resold the goods, or at any rate deprives them of prospective profit."

2. The position at the present moment is distinctly more serious in the view of the Committee than it was in the year 1900, as the Marwari buyers are no longer disconnected units, but have learned the power of combination to safe-guard their interests. They are now represented by the Marwari Chamber of Commerce, the Merchants Committee of the Vaishya Sabha, and the Marwari Association. The first two of these bodies recently held a joint meeting at which they framed certain new conditions (copy enclosed) to be incorporated in the Piece-Goods contracts now in use by importing firms, and unanimously resolved that the adoption of these conditions in the contracts have become necessary to safe-guard the interests of the members of the Associations, who had for some time past been encountering great difficulties and suffering heavy losses.

3. The clauses in question were discussed at a Special General Meeting of members of the Calcutta Import Trade Association held on the 12th September, when the following Resolution was carried unanimously—

"That a communication be addressed to the Marwari Chamber of Commerce and the Merchants Committee of the Vaishya Sabha stating, in reply to their letter of 6th September, proposing the insertion of eight new conditions in piece-goods contracts:—

"(1) that, so far as regards condition No. 1, this Association will address the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and ask them to address the Manchester & Glasgow Chambers of Commerce with the view of getting these grievances taken up.

(2) that, as regards conditions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7, members here present will do what they can to give the information required to the dealers on application without anything being inserted in the contract.

"(3) that, as regards clause 8, this meeting will not agree to it."

4. The Committee of the Chamber have since been addressed by the Committee of the Calcutta Import Trade Association with regard to the first of the conditions above referred to, pointing out that during the past year, with a steady rise in prices for piece-goods generally, the irregularity about late shipments has re-appeared in an acute form, resulting on the 1st of September in the stoppage of all sales in the local bazaar and requesting the Committee of the Chamber to make a strong representation to your Chamber in favour of adopting such effective measures as will ensure, in future,

the prompt execution of contracts by manufacturers of your city, and thus remove the legitimate grievances of the dealers on this side.

5. In the course of their representation to the Committee of the Chamber the Committee of the Calcutta Import Trade Association write as follows:—

"In the course of their enquiry into the present grievances of dealers, the Committee complaints in regard to late shipments are not unfounded, instances having been placed before them where extension has been asked for and granted month by month, as many as five times until the extension required has been six months (and sometimes more) later than the date originally contracted for. In other cases, too numerous to detail here, goods were shown to have missed their sale season entirely. To refer to one specific case only, two large sales at intervals of say 5-6 weeks, the sale price of the latter being considerably higher than that of the former; and while the goods sold last at the higher rate all arrived to contract time during the first four months of this year, the goods first contracted for at the lower rate have not yet arrived; and the sellers have now informed the first buyers that the goods will not be shipped."

6. Referring again to the correspondence which took place in the year 1900, on this important matter, you were good enough to place at the disposal of the Committee copies of letters which had passed between your Chamber and the Blackburn Chamber of Commerce, and the Committee noted at that time that the Committee of the Blackburn Chamber in their letter of 16th May 1900 to your address, expressed their opinion that it might be to the advantages of the cotton trade if a penalty always followed the failure to complete any time contract, whenever such a failure was not the result of fire, break-down, strike, general lock out, or other non-preventable causes, and were willing to co-operate in establishing some common understanding between manufacturers, spinners and merchants with this end in view, as they considered the operation of such a self-acting principle would meet the difficulties of the position. They thought that the contract should make it quite clear that in the event of accepting or not the late merchandise should have the option of accepting or cancelling a portion at a reasonable allowance, and also the option of cancelling or not the undelivered portion of a contract at a difference in market price of the commodities. It would appear to the Committee of this Chamber that there is an opening in this opinion for a *modus vivendi* in settling such disputes as are now under consideration, and as you, in your letter of 1st June 1900, informed me that your Directors had taken special pains to impress upon manufacturers and merchants the importance of adhering strictly to the terms of all contracts and to circulate throughout the city

and the manufacturing districts the correspondence on the subject which had passed between the Indian and the Manchester Chambers, the Committee trust that your Directors will, in the interests of your own merchants and manufacturers, again deal with the matter, which calls for early and serious consideration in view of the obstruction of trade which has already taken place.

From Chamber, to Glasgow Chamber.

No. 1700-1905.—CALCUTTA, 26th October 1905.

(Same as letter to Manchester Chamber up to and including para 5.)

6. Referring again to the correspondence which took place in the year 1900 on this important matter, the Board of Directors of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce placed at the disposal of the Committee copies of letters which had passed between that Chamber and the Blackburn Chamber of Commerce. I am instructed by the Committee of this Chamber to draw your attention to the letter of 16th May 1900, from the Secretary, Blackburn Chamber of Commerce to the Secretary of the Manchester Chamber, copy of which is enclosed herewith. As it appears to the Committee of this Chamber that there is an opening in the suggestions made in that letter for a *modus vivendi* in settling such disputes as are now under consideration, the Committee trust your Directors will, in the interests of their own merchants and manufacturers, again draw their attention to this matter, which calls for early and serious consideration in view of the obstruction to trade which has already taken place.

BLACKBURN, 16th May 1900.

From—The Secretary, Blackburn Chamber of Commerce,
To—The Secretary, Manchester Chamber of Commerce.

Your letter of February 26th, dealing with the punctual fulfilment of contracts, about which Indian Chambers of Commerce have recently been in communication with your Chamber, has been carefully considered by the Directors of this Chamber, with a view to seeing in what way the very large trade in cotton goods and yarns between our Indian Dependencies and the cotton districts can be put upon a firmer and more satisfactory basis as far as manufacturers are concerned. As a Chamber we feel that the evils alleged to be due to the delays complained of are assigned too broadly to the manufacturers of cloth without taking into account the delays due to its subsequent handling by agents, printers, bleachers, finishers, merchants, and others. The fact to which you draw our attention in your letter of February 26th, of the lax arrangement in regard between manufacturers and spinners, as to the frequent absence in their contracts of specified dates for the delivery of yarn, is undoubtedly the cause of much trouble, and this Chamber will welcome any well considered method which will tend to ensure the due fulfilment of these contracts. It may

be that it would be to the general advantage of the cotton trade if a penalty always followed the failure to complete any time contract, whenever such a failure was not the result of fire, breakdown, strike, general lockout, or other non-preventable cause. The contractor should make it quite clear that in the event of delay the buyer of the merchandise should have the option of accepting or not the late portion at a reasonable allowance, and also the option of cancelling or not the undelivered portion of the contract at the difference in the market price of the commodities. This Chamber is quite willing to co-operate in establishing some common understanding between manufacturers, spinners, and merchants to this end. The operation of such a self-acting principle as is now suggested would to a great extent meet the difficulties of the position. At the same time there are very plain and obvious advantages about the recognition of some Tribunal of Arbitration to deal with the application of the principle, and with cases not discovered by it. As regards the Tribunal of Arbitration, my Directors hardly think that it would be desirable that the Arbitrators should be drawn entirely from a body which must principally represent the merchants, who are one of the parties to disputes in case of cloth delivery. It is known no doubt to your Chamber that there is a similar Tribunal of Arbitration in connection with this Chamber, representing as it does a very large section of the manufacturing trade. Perhaps it would be found practicable for cases in which Manchester merchants and Blackburn manufacturers were involved, to be heard before Arbitrators taken from both the Tribunals of Arbitration, and so to remove any feeling that the associations of Tribunal were more with the merchants or shippers than the manufacturers.

From Chamber, to Calcutta Import Trade Association.

No. 1615-1905.—CALCUTTA, 6th November 1905.

Proposed New Conditions in Piece-Goods Contracts.

Your letter No. 66-M. of 26th September has been receiving the careful consideration of the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, although the intervention of the Deoga Pooja holidays, soon after its receipt, caused a certain amount of delay in dealing with it.

2. The Committee of the Chamber fully recognise the grave importance to the Piece-Goods trade of the representation you have made to them, and I have accordingly addressed, under their instructions, letters to the Manchester and Glasgow Chambers of Commerce, dealing fully with the matter. I have now the pleasure to enclose for your information copies of these letters together with spare copies, for the members of your Committee.

From Chamber, to Manchester and Glasgow Chambers.

No. 1834-1905.—CALCUTTA, 9th November 1905.
Difficulties in the Piece-Goods Trade.

Referring to my letter No. 1769 of 26th October 1905, on the subject of the serious difficulties which have arisen in connection with the Piece-Goods trade between importers and their constituents in the Calcutta Bazaar, the date of the stoppage of sales in the local bazaar was, owing to a clerical error, stated in para. 4 of the letter as 1st October, instead of 1st September, and I shall feel much indebted if you will kindly make the necessary correction.

From Chamber, to Bombay, Madras and Karachi Chambers.

No. 1846-1905.—CALCUTTA, 10th November 1905.
Difficulties in the Piece-Goods Trade.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to enclose, for the information of your Chamber, copies of letters addressed on the 26th October to the Chambers of Commerce, Manchester and Glasgow, with reference to the difficulties which have arisen here lately in connection with the Piece-Goods trade between importers and their constituents in the Calcutta Bazaar, the main question at issue being that of late shipments.

The present difficulties are simply the occurrence, in a more acute form, of those which formed the subject of considerable correspondence between the principal Indian Chambers and the Manchester and Glasgow Chambers in the year 1900. If your markets are similarly affected, perhaps your Committee will see their way to make similar representations to the home Chambers. The matter was pressed upon the Committee by the Calcutta Import Trade Association as one requiring immediate action, so far at any rate as this market was concerned.

From Madras Chamber, to Chamber.

MADRAS, 14th December 1905.

With reference to your letter of the 10th ultimo, regarding the difficulties experienced in the market on account of late delivery of goods and yarns, I beg to enclose copy of a letter which this Chamber has addressed to the Manchester and Glasgow Chambers of Commerce.

MADRAS, 14th December 1905.

From—The Chairman, Madras Chamber of Commerce,

To—The Secretaries, Chambers of Commerce Manchester and Glasgow.

This Chamber has received from the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, copy of the letter which it addressed to you, on the 26th

October last, with reference to the trouble arising in their market on account of late delivery of goods and yarns against contracts.

While hardships of the nature referred to have not been uncommon in this market during the summer, and it is hoped that this evil may not have reached the magnitude here which it appears to have attained in Calcutta, so far no specific instances have been brought to the notice of the Chamber. It is recognised that the subject is beset with some little difficulty, but having in view the correspondence exchanged in 1900 between the Manchester and the Blackburn Chambers of Commerce more especially the latter Chamber considers that it should not be impossible to devise a method of dealing with the trouble as between spinners, manufacturers and merchants in a manner which will inspire confidence among dealers.

This Chamber would, therefore, strongly support the Bengal Chamber in its request that your Directors will give the subject their very serious and early consideration.

From Manchester Chamber, to Chamber.

MANCHESTER, 23rd December 1905.

Your letter of the 26th October is receiving the careful attention of a Committee of this Chamber, in consultation with the Chambers of Commerce of the Lancashire manufacturing districts most concerned. The discussion will necessarily occupy some time, but I hope to be able to write you fully in the course of a few weeks.

From Chamber, to Manchester Chamber.

No. 2152-1905.—CALCUTTA, 27th December 1905.
Difficulties in the Piece-Goods Trade.

I have the pleasure to acknowledge, with thanks, the receipt of your telegram of 23rd instant, reading as follows:—
Telegram begins.—"Chamber considering October letter."
Telegram ends.

This telegram of course refers to my letter of 26th October, with reference to the serious difficulties which have arisen in connection with the Piece-Goods trade between Importers and their constituents in the Calcutta bazaar. I will place it without delay before the Committee of the Chamber; and may mention in the meantime that the Marwari Chamber of Commerce have been making anxious enquiries as to whether any reply had been received. They have been informed that a representation such as the Chamber has made necessarily takes time for consideration as various bodies would have to be consulted. An attempt is being made by the Committee of the Calcutta Import Trade Association to induce the bazaar to resume business pending receipt of communications from the Manchester and Glasgow Chambers.

From Chamber, to Calcutta Import Trade Association.

No. 2167-1905.—CALCUTTA, 30th December 1905.

Proposed New Conditions in Piece-Goods Contracts.

In continuation of my letter No. 1615 of 16th November 1905, handing you copies of letters of 26th October addressed by this Chamber to the Manchester and Glasgow Chambers of Commerce on this matter, I have now the pleasure to inform you that a telegram has been received from the Manchester Chamber of Commerce dated 23rd instant, as follows:—

“Chamber considering October Letter.”

From Karachi Chamber, to Chamber.

No. 71-1906.—KARACHI, 27th January 1906.

Late Deliveries of Piece-Goods and Yarns.

I am directed to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 10th November last, and in reply to enclose, for the information of your Chamber, a copy of a letter addressed by this Chamber to the Manchester and Glasgow Chambers of Commerce on this subject.

No. 64-65.—KARACHI, 30th December 1905.

From—Hon'ble Mr. M. de P. Webb, C. I. E., Chairman,
Karachi Chamber of Commerce,

To—The President ^{Manchester}_{Glasgow} Chamber of Commerce.

Late Deliveries of Piece-Goods and Yarns.

I beg once more to invite the attention of your Chamber to the serious difficulties experienced in this part of the world by importers of piece-goods and yarns consequent upon frequent late deliveries. Prices have been ruling very high, and with a large business and heavy commitments forward, there is a feeling that manufacturers and suppliers at home, anxious to take advantage of the position have in many cases knowingly booked ahead, far in excess of their possible production, relying upon the present conditions of the piece-goods and yarns trades to escape from the consequences of the inevitable late delivery. On this side the results are very serious. Importers not only find themselves deprived of goods on which they may have earned a legitimate profit, but having no option other than to cancel or extend the time for shipment, they find themselves in the position of not only losing their profits but probably of missing the market altogether. The evils of the position were explained by this Chamber to you six years ago (in January 1900) and it was then understood that your Chamber was fully alive to the importance of the subject and was doing all in its power to remedy a state of affairs so undesirable in itself and so very unfair to importers and buyers in India. Unfortunately no improvement has been perceptible, on this side and the question of late deliveries is now assuming an acute stage that,

it is feared, can only result in the permanent disadvantage of Home manufacturers and European importing Houses. As you are aware Indian buyers are every where combining and forming Associations with the object of securing more advantageous terms from Importing firms; these Associations are yearly gaining in strength, and the losses and disabilities which result from late deliveries act as a most powerful stimulus to their progress. Then again the movement in India for encouraging the use of Indian-made articles and goods (the Swadeshi movement) is very wide spread and is undoubtedly gaining ground throughout the country. Every case of late delivery serves as a direct incentive to Indian merchants to divert trade from English manufacturers to Indian Mills, and it is well known that enormous orders for spinning and weaving machinery for India are now in course of execution.

The above facts all show very clearly that apart from the monetary inconvenience and loss which Importers out here suffer owing to late deliveries, the results are likely to prove in a marked degree permanently disadvantageous to all concerned in the manufacture and importation into India of piece-goods and yarns. My Committee, therefore, urge upon you the necessity of giving the matter your most serious attention. They notice that the Bengal Chamber have recently addressed you at length on this subject. They entirely concur with the Bengal Chamber's representation of the whole matter, and they hope that your Chamber may be able to take steps that will result in an improvement of the present very unsatisfactory state of affairs.

THE GOPASHTAMI FESTIVAL.

From Marwari Chamber, to Chamber.

No. 177.—CALCUTTA, 28th September 1905.

I have been directed by the Committee of the Marwari Chamber of Commerce, to lay before you the proposal of the Calcutta Pingrapole Society with reference to the adoption of the Gopashtami festival as a public holiday.

Gopashtami is an important festival, observed by all classes of Hindus here, and almost all the merchants of the place suspend themselves from all sorts of transactions and business and pay a visit to Pingrapole for the purpose of worshipping the sacred cows.

Taking into consideration the importance attached to this festival by the merchants and the stoppage of business, the Committee of this Chamber shall deem it a great favour if you can find your way to move the Government to recognise this festival as a public holiday, under the Negotiable Instruments Act.

From Marwari Association, to Chamber.

No. 107-1905.—CALCUTTA, 3rd October 1905.

The Gopashtami Festival.

The question of the necessity of observing the day of the above Hindu festival, as a public holiday, has long been before the Committee of this Association, as a question demanding the most thoughtful consideration, and I now beg to place the following views of the Committee before the Chamber for their favourable consideration.

The Gopashtami festival is one of the most important and sacred religious ceremonies of the Hindus and the date is observed as one of religious worship, and the performance of certain important religious rites by every section of the large Hindu community. The Marwari community is strictly particular in observing this day as such and the very large influx of men of all classes to the Sodepur Pingrapole grounds for the purpose of worshipping the sacred cows, year after year, on the Gopashtami day testifies to the sacredness of the festival.

The duties which its full observance entails upon the devout Hindus, are heavy enough to preclude his attending to the other ordinary daily avocations of life, and the Marwaris and all the up-country Hindus have, therefore, to close their business on that day, and hasten to Sodepur to offer their pujahs there after the ceremonies at home are over.

Thus the Marwaris are unable to attend to any other work. But the offices, banks and the courts with which the Marwaris have so close business relations all remain open and in conse-

quence the Marwaris are put to serious inconveniences and often to losses. Marwari brokers, banians or dealers cannot attend to business on that day, and consequently deliveries of goods or payments are almost at a standstill. In the courts, Marwari litigants or their respective witnesses cannot attend, and postponements have, therefore, to be taken which costs the parties some unnecessary amount of money in the shape of lawyers' fees, etc.

The market also remains practically closed, but the dealers do not get the advantages of a holiday, but rather have to suffer disadvantages in certain respects.

Under these circumstances, the Committee are of opinion that the Gopashtami day should be recognised as a public holiday, under the Negotiable Instruments Act, both by the European mercantile community, as well as by the Government. Considering the amount of business transacted on that day it may be reasonably expected that by closing their offices on the Gopashtami day, the European mercantile houses will not be in any way inconvenienced and the Committee entertain definite hopes of success with the Government. Besides, if the Chamber will take a favourable view of this proposal, the Committee are further of opinion that a large section of the population of the metropolis have a just claim upon the consideration of both the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and of the Government, since they have no other day of religious worship of theirs recognised as a public holiday, as every other community has, though their relations with the mercantile houses of Calcutta are not less close than those of the other communities.

The Committee, therefore, earnestly hope that this proposal of observing the Gopashtami day as a public holiday will be favourably entertained by the Chamber. The Committee would further request the Chamber to address the Government recommending the sanction which the Association will be glad to submit to Government on hearing from you will be greatly strengthened. I need hardly say that the Chamber will earn the gratitude of the entire community if they will extend their valuable support and approval to this proposal of the Marwari community. The favour of a reply will greatly oblige.

From Marwari Association, to Chamber.

No. 124-1905.—CALCUTTA, 3rd November 1905.

The Gopashtami Festival.

Permit me to draw your attention to my letter No. 107-1905, dated the 3rd ultimo, on the subject of recognising the day of the above festival as a public holiday under the Negotiable Instruments Act. The Committee of this Association have not the pleasure as yet of hearing from you what view the Committee comes off on Saturday next, and the Committee know full well that nothing can be done, now for this year. But in order that

the Government sanction, for which the Chamber's approval of the proposal is deemed important, may be received before the next year's celebration, I have to request, under instructions from the Committee, that the question may be dealt with by the Chamber before long. The favour of a reply will highly oblige.

From Chamber, to Marwari Chamber.

No. 1819-1905.—CALCUTTA, 7th November 1905.

The Gopashlami Festival.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 28th September 1905, on the subject of recognising the day of the above festival as a public holiday under the Negotiable Instruments Act.

The Committee have been giving the matter their most careful consideration, although the intervention of the Durga Puja holidays, soon after the receipt of your letter caused some delay in dealing with it.

I am now instructed to say that in view of the fact that the festival, so far as they can ascertain, is a purely local one and its celebration confined to Calcutta, they do not think that the Government of India would be in the least likely to accede to any request to have it declared as a public holiday under the Negotiable Instruments Act which, as you are aware, applies to the whole of Bengal. The Committee much regret, therefore, that they are unable at present to take action in the direction you suggest.

From Chamber, to Marwari Association.

No. 1820-1905.—CALCUTTA, 7th November 1905.

The Gopashlami Festival.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 107 of 3rd October, and also your subsequent reminder No. 124 of 3rd November, on the subject of recognising the day of the above festival as a public holiday under the Negotiable Instruments Act.

The Committee have been giving this matter their most careful consideration, although the intervention of the Durga Puja holidays, soon after the receipt of your first letter, caused some delay in dealing with it. I am now instructed to say that in view of the fact that the festival, so far as they can ascertain, is a purely local one, and its celebration confined to Calcutta, they do not think that the Government of India would be in the least likely to accede to any request to have it declared as a public holiday under the Negotiable Instruments Act which, as you are aware, applies to the whole of Bengal. The Committee much regret, therefore, that they are unable at present to take action in the direction you suggest.

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF MASTER COTTON
SPINNER'S AND MANUFACTURERS'
ASSOCIATIONS.

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF MASTER COTTON SPINNER'S
AND MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATIONS.

22, ST. MARY'S GATE,

Manchester,

23rd October 1905.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE
BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,

Calcutta.

DEAR SIR,

I have pleasure in sending you, under separate cover, a few copies of the Report of the 1st and 2nd International Cotton Congress and of the Rules of the International Federation of Master Cotton Spinner's and Manufacturers' Associations.

My Committee is very anxious that all cotton using countries should become affiliated to this International Federation, and I, therefore, take the liberty to approach you in the matter, trusting that you will be good enough to explain to the mill owners of Calcutta and district the work and aims of this International Organization.

For your guidance I beg to draw your special attention to the presidential address (pages 10-15 in the Report of the 2nd Congress) and to the circular enclosed in each book. A perusal of these pages will give you a fair idea of the aims of the International Federation has set itself, whilst the Reports themselves will show you the work which is being accomplished. I may add that the International Federation is on the position of collecting in its area very useful information on the consumption and the invisible supply of cotton.

At the head of this letter you will find the names of the countries affiliated with us (England, Switzerland, France, Germany, Austria, Belgium, Italy, Portugal and Spain), and shortly we hope to enjoy the co-operation of the American, Dutch, Norwegian, Swedish and Danish cotton users, with whom we have recently lately in correspondence. The American mill owners have been sent us an official invitation for a meeting in April next in Boston for the purpose of discussing the question of affiliation.

Only united action on the part of the cotton users of the world can effectively reduce speculation, and protect the interests of the trade.

I think with the above details and with the information given in the Reports, it will be an easy matter for you to convince the

Spinners' and Manufacturers' of India, that it will be in their own interests, and in that of the entire Cotton Trade, if they become affiliated with us.

I have written similar letters to—

The Bombay Mill Owners' Association,
 " Upper India Chamber of Commerce, Cawnpore,
 " Chamber of Commerce, Madras,

and I should be pleased if you would communicate with the Bombay Mill Owners' Association, for the purpose of electing a delegate who is to represent India on the Committee of the International Federation.

Thanking you in anticipation for the trouble, I am causing you,

I remain,

DEAR SIR,

Yours faithfully,

Sd. C. W. MACARA.

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF MASTER COTTON SPINNER'S
 AND MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATIONS.

International Committee.

<i>Chairman,</i>	|	<i>Vice-Chairman,</i>
C. W. MACARA, <i>England.</i>		JOHN SVZ, <i>Switzerland.</i>

Hon. Treasurers.

C. BERGER, <i>France.</i>		FERD. GROSS, <i>Germany.</i>
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Committee.

A. KUFFLER, <i>Austria.</i>		JEAN DE HEMPTINNE, <i>Belgium.</i>
HENRY HIGSON, <i>England.</i>		BARON CATONI, <i>Italy.</i>
H. P. TAVERIA, <i>Portugal.</i>	|	E. CALVET, <i>Spain.</i>

Hon. Secretary.

JOHN SMETHURST.

Secretary

ARNO SCHMIDT.

Auditors.

DAVID SMITH, GARNETT & CO., *Chartered Accountants.*

22, ST. MARY'S GATE,

MANCHESTER, 11th October, 1905.

MR. C. W. MACARA, in sending the official Report of the Second International Cotton Congress desires to intimate that the principal aims of the International Cotton Federation are—

1st To counteract the operations of manipulators in unduly enhancing the price of the raw material making

it a counter in gambling operations; indeed an effective remedy for these operations can only be attained by international action on the part of users of cotton.

(The recent wages dispute in the English cotton trade was mainly brought about by these gambling operations which, during the six weeks which elapsed between the first and second Conference of employers and operatives, raised the price of cotton 1½d. per pound, rendering it impossible for the employers to give an answer to the operatives demand, and nearly producing a calamity of national dimensions).

2nd. To promote the cultivation of cotton in the Colonies and dependencies of European nations.

It is not generally realised that the annual average cotton crop of the world at 5d. per pound amounts to £160,000,000, and that the estimated value of the fabrics produced from this raw material amounts to £350,000,000. It is estimated that an average price of four pence per pound would adequately remunerate the growers of cotton even in a season of a comparatively small yield. During the season before last the average price, mainly raised by gambling operators, which was paid by the spinners of the world was seven pence per pound,—in round figures about £100,000,000 in excess of a price which would have adequately rewarded the growers for their labour and enterprise.

There have been indications since the recent Second International Cotton Congress that the Associations of Cotton Employers in the United States, one of which Associations was there represented, will ere long become affiliated with the International Cotton Federation.

With regard to speculation in Cotton Futures, Mr. J. R. McColl, President of the New England Cotton Manufacturers' Association, at the Semi-Annual Meeting held in Atlantic City, N. J., September 20th and 21st, referred to the great work undertaken by the International Federation and after indicating that the action of gamblers was as seriously felt by the spinners of cotton in the United States of America as in Europe, said: "it is remarkable that a huge system of speculative trading can be carried on, which is contrary to the law of nearly every State in the Union, which works incalculable injury to a great industry, and which has drawn into the vortex of gambling thousands if not millions of men throughout the country."

From Bombay Millowners' Association, to Chamber.

BOMBAY, 4th December 1905.

My Committee have been favoured with a communication dated Manchester, 23rd October 1905, from the "International Federation of Master Cotton Spinner's and Manufacturers' Associations," and have been informed that you, have been similarly

addressed on the subject of joining the Federation, and appointing a delegate to represent the whole of India on their Committee. As the Committee of the Bombay Millowners' Association desire to act in harmony with the various Chambers in this matter, they are of opinion that an interchange of ideas would be advisable before replying to the Federation. They would, therefore, be much obliged if your Committee would be so good as to favour them with an expression of their views on the subject. Any conclusions this Association may subsequently arrive at will be duly communicated to you.

From Chamber, to Bombay Millowners' Association.

No. 2017-1905.—CALCUTTA, 8th December 1905.

International Federation of Master Cotton Spinners and Manufacturers' Associations.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 4th December, addressed to the President of this Chamber. The Committee are now in communication with the Managing Agents of the various Cotton Mills in and near Calcutta, as there is no Cotton Mill Association at present on this side. On obtaining their views on the subject of joining the Federation and appointing a delegate to represent the whole of India, I will communicate with you again.

From Chamber, to Bombay Millowners' Association.

No. 100-1906.—CALCUTTA, 15th January 1906.

International Federation of Master Cotton Spinners and Manufacturers' Associations.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 4th December, and to state that they have also received a communication from the Secretary of the above body suggesting that the Bengal Cotton Mills should become affiliated to the Federation and in conjunction with your Association to elect a delegate to represent India on the Committee of the International Federation.

There is no Cotton Mill Association on this side of India, where as you are aware, the number of Cotton Mills is comparatively limited. The Committee have, however, been in communication with the Managing Agents of the various Mills; but they do not find that there is at present any inclination to join the International Federation or to elect a delegate.

From Chamber, to Chairman, International Federation of Master Cotton Spinners' and Manufacturers' Associations.

No. 189-1906.—CALCUTTA, 25th January 1906.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 23rd October, and also of its accompaniments which have received the careful consideration of the Committee.

There is no Cotton Mill Association like the Bombay Millowners' Association on this side of India where the number of Cotton Mills as you are no doubt aware is comparatively limited; but the Committee have been in communication with the representatives of the various local Mills on the subject of your letter. There is, however, no apparent desire at present on the part of any of them to join the Federation or unite with the Bombay Millowners' Association in appointing a delegate. In the event of any further development taking place in connection with this matter I will again place myself in communication with you. In the meantime I subjoin for your information a list of the local Mills with the names of their Managing Agents.

COTTON MILLS.

BENGAL AND CENTRAL PROVINCES.

- Messrs. Andrew, Yule & Co., Managing Agents, Bengal Mills Co., Ld.
 " Kettlewell, Bullen & Co., Agents, Bowreah Cotton Mills Co., Ld.
 " Kilburn & Co., Secretaries, Dunbar Mills, Ld.
 " D. P. Mehta & Co., Managing Agents, Empress of India Cotton Mills Co., Ld.
 " Mackinnon, Mackenzie & Co., Agents, Garden Reach Spinning and Manufacturing Co., Ld.
 " Andrew, Yule & Co., Secretaries, Goosery Cotton Mills Co., Ld.
 " Kettlewell, Bullen & Co., Agents, New Ring Mill Co., Ld.
 " P. E. Guzdar & Co., Proprietors, Victoria Cotton Mills.
 " Shaw, Wallace & Co., Managing Agents and Secretaries, Bengal Nagpur Cotton Mills, Ld.
 Raja Shewbux Bogla, Proprietor, Raimdyal Cotton Mills.

JUTE FORECASTS.

From Department of Land Records and Agriculture,
Bengal, to Chamber.

No. 3583-A.—CALCUTTA, 17th November 1905.

I have the honour to invite your attention to your letter, No. 1748-1903, dated the 14th December 1903, and to say that one of the views expressed in the joint letter, No. 452-T, dated the 4th December 1903, from the Chairmen of the Calcutta Baled Jute Association, the Indian Jute Mills' Association and the Jute Fabrics Shippers' Association, was that the first forecast of the jute crop "should give the acreage sown and a general survey of the prospects but exclude any estimate of yield."

2. My predecessors while refraining from forming in the first forecasts of 1904 and 1905, any estimate of the crop in *bales*, thought it important and necessary to publish the District Officer's estimate of the crop in percentage.

3. It is now proposed to omit the column of percentage of output from the Appendix, and to make no mention of it in the letter-press of the first forecast, and make no estimate of yield till the final forecast which issues on the 21st September. I shall be glad to be favoured with the opinion of the Chamber as to whether the trade generally will be satisfied with this.

From Chamber, to Indian Jute Mills' Association;
Calcutta Baled Jute Association; and Jute Fabrics
Shippers' Association.

No. 2070-05.—CALCUTTA, 15th December 1905.

Jute Forecasts.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to forward, for the careful consideration of the Committee of your Association, a copy of letter, No. 3583-A, of 17th November, from the Director of Agriculture, Bengal, on the subject of a proposed change in the form of the first forecast of the jute crop issued annually.

2. In this letter you will notice that the Director refers to the joint letter, No. 452-T, of 4th December 1903, from the Chairmen of the Calcutta Baled Jute Association, the Indian Jute Mills' Association, and the Jute Fabrics Shippers' Association (copy enclosed for reference), in which the following suggestion was made:—

"That the first forecast should be issued between the 7th and 15th July, and give the acreage sown and a general survey of the prospects, but exclude any estimate of yield."

3. The Director states that although no estimate of the crop in bales was given in the first forecasts of 1904 and 1905, his predecessors thought it important and necessary to publish the estimate of the crop in percentage framed by the District Officers. It is now proposed to omit the column of percentage and to make no reference to it at all in the first forecast. Under these circumstances there will be no estimate of yield till the final forecast, which issues on or about the 21st September. The Director wishes to have the views of the trade on this proposal.

4. I am instructed by the Committee to say that after giving their careful consideration to the proposed change they are opposed to it, as they think that to give the acreage and to omit the percentage would deprive the forecast of a necessary and valuable factor in the calculation. In the opinion of the Committee the estimated yield has been generally worked out with a fair amount of accuracy, and the Director of Agriculture has the means at his disposal of forming an approximately correct estimate.

5. The Committee, however, feel that the question is one to be decided by the representatives of the trade and they would, therefore, feel much indebted for the views of your Committee on the proposal of the Director of Agriculture, at as early a date as possible.

No. 452-T.—CALCUTTA, 4th December 1905.

From—The Chairmen, Calcutta Baled Jute; Indian Jute
Mills' and Jute Fabrics Shippers' Associations,

To—The Offg. Director, Department of Land Records &
Agriculture, Bengal.

We, the undersigned, have the honor on behalf of the Associations we represent, to address you on the subject of the publication of the Jute Forecasts referred to in your letter No. 2554-A, dated 9th November 1903. You suggest therein that, as the 15th monsoon sets in, throughout Bengal generally, about the June, reports of Collectors regarding the Jute Crop should be submitted on the 30th June, and that the date for the publication of the Preliminary Forecast should be postponed until the 7th July.

2. We have had an opportunity of perusing copies of letters recently addressed to the Government of Bengal and the Secretary of State for India, by the London Jute Association and the Chamber of Commerce, Dundee, respectively. The first named body urge that the First Forecast should not be issued before the 7th July, and recommend that fortnightly reports should thereafter be published from the four principal districts stating, if the weather had favourably or unfavourably affected the crop; and that a Final Forecast should be issued, as at present, not later than the 21st September. The Dundee Chamber thought not more than the publication of the First Forecast, giving any precise date for the publication of the Final Forecast, considering that it should not be issued until it is known that the sowings have been completed. They further consider that the

First Forecast should give the acreage sown, with the weather conditions from time of sowing, and the general conditions and outlook, leaving the estimate of yield to be given in the Final Forecast only. Between the issue of the First and Final Forecasts, they also suggest that reports should be published at stated periods during the general weather conditions.

3. The Jute Forecasts have ever given, and will probably continue to give, rise to much discussion and adverse criticism in certain quarters, whatever may be done towards improving them and rendering the information they contain as accurate as possible. As an instance of this we may state that it was urged at the last annual meeting of the Baled Jute Association that one Forecast only should be issued, the Final Forecast being abolished altogether. Though not endorsing this view we nevertheless agree that improvement is desirable, and we welcome the suggestion contained in your letter as a step in the right direction.

4. The whole matter has been carefully considered at a Conference of representatives of our respective Associations and the conclusions unanimously arrived at are as follows:—

(a) That the First Forecast should be issued between the 7th and 15th July, and give the acreage sown and a general survey of the prospects, but exclude any estimate of yield.

(b) That the Final Forecast should be issued on 21st September in its present form.

5. We agree with the suggestion put forward by the London Jute Association and the Chamber of Commerce, Dundee, that in the interval between the publication of the First and Final Forecasts, a weekly summary should be issued giving the weather conditions prevailing in the principal jute-growing districts. We understand that the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, in consultation with Sir John Elliot, K.C.I.E., Meteorological Reporter to the Government of India, and Mr. Chas. Little, Meteorological Reporter to the Government of Bengal, have recommended the issue of supplementary tables giving the weekly rainfall and the average temperatures of certain stations in the jute-growing districts. If this recommendation be acted upon by Government, and, to the information thus afforded such other particulars concerning the prospects of the crop as may be available in your Department, be added, the trade will be supplied with all that is desired.

6. In conclusion we beg respectfully to submit for the consideration of Government the desirability of the Officials concerned in the preparation of the Jute Forecasts being permanent, or at all events, less liable to change than at present. The importance of this matter, indeed, is emphasised in the Final Forecast issued in September last, where it is explained that a discrepancy of 150,000 acres in the area placed under Jute in the Mymensingh district was due to the fact that the Collector duly joined his post just before "the issue of the Preliminary Forecast and accepted the figures reported."

From Jute Fabrics Shippers' Association, to Chamber.

No. 127-J.—CALCUTTA, 15th December 1905.

Jute Forecasts.

I am directed by the Committee of the Jute Fabrics Shippers' Association to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 2070-1905, dated 15th December (with enclosures) regarding a proposed change in the form of the first forecasts of the jute crop issued annually.

2. In reply I am directed to state that the Committee have given the matter their careful attention and would deprecate omitting any of the information contained in the present form of forecast. To their mind the forecast should give all the information possible. The weekly crop reports now issued, I am to add, are greatly appreciated.

From Indian Jute Mills' Association, to Chamber.

No. 345-D.—CALCUTTA, 15th December 1905.

Jute Forecasts.

I am directed by the Committee of the Indian Jute Mills' Association to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 2070-1905, dated 15th December (with enclosures), regarding a proposed change in the form of the first forecast of the jute crop issued annually.

In reply I am to say that the Committee have given the matter their attentive consideration but are not in favour of any change in the form of the first forecast. They think that before considering further alterations the present arrangement should be allowed to stand for some time longer.

From Director of Agriculture, Bengal, to Chamber.

No. 270-A.—CALCUTTA, 18th January 1906.

I have the honour to invite your attention to this office letter No. 3583-A, dated 17th November, 1905, on the subject of the jute forecast and to request the favor of an early reply thereto. The Board and Government are pressing for a reply.

From Chamber, to Director of Agriculture, Bengal.

No. 143-1906.—CALCUTTA, 18th January 1906.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your reminder No. 270 A. of this date, requesting an early reply to your letter No. 3583 A. of 17th November, on the subject of the jute forecast.

2. I much regret the delay which has taken place in connection with this matter. It has been necessary to refer the subject to the three Associations connected with Jute before it was possible for the Committee of the Chamber to submit an opinion. I am still waiting for the views of the Calcutta Baled Jute Association; which

are, however, promised in the course of the next day or two. I hope to be in a position to reply on the matter after the next meeting of the Committee of the Chamber, which will be held on Tuesday next the 23rd instant. It necessarily takes some little time for the Committees of Associations to ascertain the views of their members.

From Calcutta Baled Jute Association, to Chamber.

No. 12-T.—CALCUTTA, 19th January 1906.

The Jute Forecasts.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 2070-1905, dated 15th December 1905 (with enclosures), in reference to a proposed change in the form of the first forecast of the jute crop.

2. In reply I am directed to state that the Committee have given the matter their attentive consideration, but see no reason to depart from the opinion expressed in the joint letter of 4th December 1905, to which you refer, to the effect that the first forecast should give the acreage sown and a general survey of the prospects, but exclude any estimate of yield. I am to add that, in the opinion of the Committee, the date of the issue of the first forecast is too early to allow a reliable estimate to be made.

From Chamber, to Director of Agriculture, Bengal.

No. 179-1906.—CALCUTTA, 24th January 1906.

I have now to address you in continuation of my letter No. 143 of 18th January, and with further reference to your No. 3583 A. of 17th November 1905, on the subject of the proposed change in the form of the first forecast of the jute crop issued annually.

2. In this letter you refer to a suggestion made in the joint letter No. 452-T., of 4th December 1903, from the Chairmen of the Calcutta Baled Jute Association, the Indian Jute Mills' Association and the Jute Factories Shippers' Association, that the first forecast of the jute crop should give the acreage sown and a general survey of the prospects, but exclude any estimate of yield.

3. After intimating what has been the receipt procedure of your Department in connection with this matter, you now state that it is proposed to omit the column of percentage and to make no reference to it at all in the first forecast. Under these circumstances there would be no estimate of yield until the final forecast, which issues on or about the 21st September. You ask for the opinion of the Chamber as to whether the trade generally will be satisfied with this.

4. The Committee have now ascertained the views of the three Associations interested in jute on the matter. The Committee of the Indian Jute Mills' Association are not in favour of any change in the form of the first forecast. They think that before considering further alterations, the present arrangement should

be allowed to stand for some time longer. The Committee of the Baled Jute Association see no reason to depart from the opinion expressed in the joint letter of the 4th December 1903, and an effect that the first forecast should give the acreage sown, and a general survey of the prospects, but exclude any estimate of yield. They are of opinion that the date of issue of the first forecast is too early to allow a reliable estimate to be made. I would point out that these two Associations are the most important bodies affected by the jute forecast. The Committee of the Jute Factories Shippers' Association, which is concerned with manufactured goods only, deprecate omitting any of the information contained in the present form of forecast. To their mind the forecast should give all the information possible, and they greatly appreciate the weekly crop reports.

COMMERCIAL EDUCATION.

From Government of Bengal (GENERAL), to Chamber.

No. 4216.—CALCUTTA, 31st December 1904.

With reference to the correspondence resting with your letter No. 1648, dated the 5th November 1904,* I am directed to forward for the information of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce the accompanying copy of the proceedings of the meeting which was held on the 6th December 1904, of the Committee appointed under the orders of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, to consider the question of commercial education at the Presidency College, Calcutta.

2. The Committee approved of the proposal that local examinations should be adopted in preference to the London Chamber of Commerce examinations. They suggested that the setting of the papers for the examinations should be left to an Examination Board to be constituted for the purpose, on which educational officers and representatives of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce should sit; that the certificates given by the Education Department to students who passed the examinations should be endorsed by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce; and that the Bengal Chamber and the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce should be requested to publish lists of the successful examinees. I am to request that you will be so good as to state whether the Bengal Chamber of Commerce agree to these proposals so far as they concern that body.

3. The Committee recommended that arrangements should be made for the instruction and the examination of students in two different courses of studies, one obligatory and the other optional. The obligatory course will comprise the subjects mentioned in para 5 of the proceedings; the lectures for this course will be given by day; candidates will be admitted to the class who have passed either the School Final or the Entrance Examination, or who satisfy the Education Department by passing a simple preliminary test examination that they have sufficient general education to derive advantage from the courses of lectures; and they will be required to pass in all the subjects at the same time. The optional subjects which candidates will be permitted to take *à p.* are shown in para 6 of the proceedings; instruction in these special subjects will be given in the evening only; candidates will be admitted to the course of lectures who have either passed the examination in the obligatory course or who satisfy the Education Department by passing a simple preliminary test examination that they will be able to derive advantage from the courses of lectures; and they will be allowed to take up each of the optional subjects separately and to obtain separate certificates of having passed in them.

4. I am to state that the Lieutenant-Governor approves of these proposals and has decided that the scheme shall be brought

* See page 497 of Chamber Report for 1904, Vol. II.

into operation as soon as possible. It has been explained, however, that the Presidency College year begins in June and ends in April; that Commercial Classes are already at work in that institution and that these will close in April next; and that it will be impossible to open the new classes for teaching the obligatory course referred to in para 5 of the proceedings until the new College year begins in June 1905. The reasons for this are:—

- (1) the new classes will take the place of those that are existing;
- (2) it would be very awkward to have two separate courses going on side by side for the remaining few months of the College year; and
- (3) the results of the Entrance Examination are published in the month of May and many of the candidates who will join the new classes will be the new Entrance passed men. It is impossible to begin the new classes until those results are published.

The evening classes for teaching the special subjects referred to in para 6 of the proceedings will be held quite independently of the day course, and the Lieutenant-Governor desires that they should be opened at once if the Bengal Chamber of Commerce approve. I am to request that you will be so good as to ascertain and report the views of the Chamber on this point.

5. I am to enquire whether the Bengal Chamber of Commerce can suggest who would be suitable examiners for the special subjects to be taught in the evening class, and what arrangements as to dates they would suggest for the conduct of the examinations. I am also to request an expression of their opinion, whether lectures on more than one of the optional subjects should go on at the same time. The Director of Public Instruction who was consulted is of opinion that subjects (1), (2), (3) and (7) should be taken up as consecutive courses and that lectures in regard to them should go on simultaneously with lectures on subjects (4), (5) and (6). Thus lectures on (1) might be given, say, on Mondays and Thursdays; those on (4) on Tuesdays and Saturdays and those on (5) and (6) on Wednesdays and Saturdays and so on.

6. With regard to the suggestions made in para 5 of your letter under reference that Government should offer scholarships and invite the mercantile community through the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to offer prizes in order to encourage candidates, I am to invite a reference to para 12 of the proceedings. The Committee were of opinion that, as they had decided to recommend a considerable reduction in the fees payable at the Presidency College, it was unnecessary to suggest to Government any increase in the number of scholarships at present given. This matter was thus left to the Director of Public Instruction, through the Chamber of Commerce, to offer prizes for the encouragement of candidates, but recommended that such prizes should be accepted if offered voluntarily.

7. The Committee recommended that the offer made by the Remington Type-writer Company to give three gold medals to the three students who acquire the highest efficiency in type-writing should be accepted. I am to request that you will be so good as to inform the Resident Manager that the Lieutenant-Governor has been pleased to accept the offer, and that, as recommended by the Committee, the prizes will be given on the results of the examination in the optional course in type-writing referred to in para 6 of the proceedings.

8. Steps are being taken at once to publish the scheme in accordance with the recommendation made by the Committee in para 13 of the proceedings.

Proceedings of the meeting, held on the 6th December 1904, of the Committee appointed under the orders of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, dated the 14th November 1904, to consider the question of Commercial Education at the Presidency College, Calcutta.

PRESENT :

1. THE HON'BLE MR. A. A. APCAR, Chairman.
2. MR. D. M. HAMILTON.
3. " E. HENRY.
4. " JAMES LUKE.
5. " A. PEDLER, F.R.S., C.I.E., Director of Public Instruction.
6. " M. PROTHERO, Principal, Presidency College.
7. " H. S. ASHTON—Representing the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.
8. BABU RADHA CHURN PAL—Representing the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce.
9. THE HON'BLE MR. C. F. LARMOUR—Representing the Calcutta Trades Association.
10. THE HON'BLE MR. A. EARLE, I.C.S., Secretary.

1. The Chairman opened the proceedings by stating that His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor had recently been good enough to invite him to Belvedere in order to discuss the question of Commercial Education. His Honour explained that he had consulted several gentlemen interested in the subject, but that, as he had not as yet received clear and definite proposals, he proposed to convene a conference of gentlemen interested in the matter. He wished the Committee to meet as soon as possible and to submit to him a well considered and clearly defined scheme. He left the matter entirely to them for discussion, and desired to have their opinion on the whole subject. The only suggestion that he made was that the Committee should not aim too high or attempt too much. The Chairman said that he thought it important to bear in mind the caution which the Lieutenant-Governor had given. We could always raise our standard if we found it possible to do so

hereafter; but it was desirable that we should make a thoroughly practical beginning and not fail by attempting too high a standard. In his opinion it would be sufficient if the Education Department undertook the examination, and if the certificates which were issued by that Department were endorsed by the Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Henry, however, who had recently been to England on made enquiries on the subject of establishing an examination and made enquiries on the subject of establishing an examination on the lines followed by the London Chamber of Commerce for the Indian candidates, would explain the results of the investigation which he had made. The first question which the Committee had to decide was whether it was desirable to adopt an examination to be held by the London Chamber of Commerce or one to be held by the Education Department in Calcutta.

2. Mr. Henry said that it would be impracticable at present to adopt the London Chamber of Commerce Senior examination. All that we could aim at would be the Junior examination. The principal difficulty as regards adopting the London Chamber of Commerce examination had been that certain European foreign languages were compulsory. Mr. Henry had made a arrangements, however, with the London Chamber that in the case of Indian students English should be the only language required besides their mother-tongue. The Chamber had also agreed that all Mathematical papers should be set in terms of the currency, weights and measures, etc., of this country. He then read out the syllabus of the subjects for the Junior examination as given in the margin; examination could, he explained, be taken up subject by subject; and this arrangement would be found to be of great convenience. He thought that a great object to be gained by adopting the London Chamber of Commerce examinations would be that a uniform standard of examination would be secured. This, he feared, would be a very difficult matter if the examinations were to be held in this country.

- 1.—SUBJECTS OF EXAMINATION.
- (a) *Obligatory*
- (i) English essay, including handwriting, dictation and analysis.
 - (ii) Arithmetic, including mental arithmetic and tests, with a knowledge of the metric system.
 - (iii) A foreign language, comprising translation, dictation, composition and conversation.
 - (iv) Commercial geography.
 - (v) Commercial history and the elements of political economy.

(b) *Optional.*

- (i) Commercial arithmetic.
- (ii) Book-keeping.
- (iii) Drawing.
- (iv) Shorthand or stenotypy.
- (v) Typewriting.

NOTE 1.—In these papers alternatives will be set in Indian British currency.

NOTE 2.—For European candidates, Bengali, Hindi, Urdu or Urdu will be set as the foreign language; and for Indians and Eurasians, English will be accepted as the foreign language.

NOTE 3.—European candidates may if they wish, take as the foreign language either French or German or any other European language.

3. Mr. Pedler said that when he was on leave in England some years ago he had seen Mr. Keith Murray, Secretary to the London Chamber of Commerce, in order to ascertain whether it would be practicable to introduce the London Chamber of Commerce examinations in Calcutta. As the Chamber, however, required

examinees to take up European foreign languages and to be examined in Arithmetic in terms of English currency, weights and measures, etc., nothing had come of the negotiations. He said that we could very well work up to the London Chamber of Commerce Junior examination, as now proposed to be modified for Indian candidates, but that it would not be practicable to adopt a higher standard. Mr. Ashton observed that practically none of the clerks who were recruited for his office ever entered the Presidency College. It seemed to him that the scheme of commercial education as given at that College aimed too high, and that it was essential that instruction in this subject should be given in the schools from which the bulk of the clerks are drawn. Mr. Pedler explained that when the question of commercial education had been first raised it had been decided to open classes dealing with commercial subjects in a few Government schools, some being in the mofussil and one (the Hare School) in Calcutta; and the classes in question were to lead up to the commercial classes in the Presidency College. When the curriculum for these classes was being arranged, the heads of various Colleges and schools had announced their intention of establishing similar classes, but so far this intention had not been carried out. At present, therefore, no schools or Colleges other than those belonging to Government have made any progress in this branch of education; but it is hoped that this will not continue to be the case for long. Mr. D. M. Hamilton said that the principal subject in which clerks were deficient was the English language, and that a great effort should be made to improve the branch of education. Mr. Pedler said that though we should undoubtedly do all we can to improve the English education of students who propose to enter upon a commercial career, the groundwork of a knowledge of English was laid in the schools; and until the schools were improved and the standard of the Entrance examination raised by the various measures which are now under consideration no great advance could be made. The Hon'ble Mr. Lammour said that he considered that the London Chamber of Commerce rule regarding the foreign language was an insuperable difficulty in the case of Indian students. If English is to be treated as a foreign language in their case, the subjects included in the course would all have to be taught in a vernacular; and this is precisely what is not required. Very few firms keep their accounts or carry on their correspondence in Bengali or other vernacular. He also observed that as long as the average pay given by firms was as low as it is (about Rs. 60), no great advance could be expected. Men who could secure such a small rate of remuneration would scarcely be willing to undergo any severe form of examination. The Hon'ble Mr. Apar observed that the London Chamber of Commerce examinations are held in May, and that that would not be a suitable time of year for Indian candidates. Mr. Pedler said that he thought that the necessary examinations could be arranged locally by a Board of Examiners in Calcutta composed of members of the Education Department and Commercial experts. It rested, however, with the commercial community to come to a decision in regard to this matter.

4. The question whether the London Chamber of Commerce examinations or local examinations should be adopted being put to the vote by the Chairman, it was found that two members voted for the former and six for the latter, Messrs. Pedler and Ezle not voting. The proposal to adopt local examinations was therefore carried.

5. The Chairman then said that the question as to the agency by which the examinations should be conducted having been decided, it was next necessary to consider what subjects should be included in the courses. After discussion and scrutiny of the London Chamber of Commerce, Singapore and Madras courses, the Committee decided to recommend that the following subjects should be taken up and that they should all be made compulsory:—

- (1) English (modern), and especially English correspondence, including commercial correspondence, letter-drafting and *precis*-writing.
- (2) Arithmetic, including commercial and mental arithmetic.
- (3) A second language—either Bengali, Hindi, Urdu, Uriya, French, German or Latin.
- (4) One of the three following subjects:—Book-keeping, shorthand or type writing.
- (5) Commercial history and geography.

Candidates should be required to pass in all of these subjects at the same time. It is not considered necessary to prescribe handwriting or penmanship as a separate subject; but it should be clearly laid down that all the papers answered by a candidate must be written in a good legible handwriting, and that however well a candidate may do in examination, he will not be considered to have passed unless he gives full satisfaction in that respect.

6. The Chairman then said that it was next necessary to consider whether arrangements should be made for examinations in any optional subjects. After some discussion the Committee decided to recommend that special examinations should be held in the following subjects:—

- (1) Banking and currency.
- (2) Outlines of political economy.
- (3) Commercial and industrial law.
- (4) Book-keeping.
- (5) Shorthand.
- (6) Type-writing.
- (7) Annuities and insurance.

Candidates should be allowed to take up each of these subjects separately and to obtain separate certificates of having passed in them. In the case of subjects (4), (5) and (6) the standard of examination should be higher than the standard for the same subjects according to the scheme described in paragraph 5.

7. Various questions in connection with the Billigator course referred to in paragraph 5 were then discussed. The Committee

recommend that the lectures for this course should be given by day. There should be no age-limit. Candidates who have passed the School Final or Entrance Examination should be admitted; but candidates who do not possess such a qualification should be admitted provided that they satisfy the Education Department, by passing a simple preliminary test examination, that they have sufficient general education to enable them to derive advantage from the courses of lectures. The Committee also recommend that candidates who have not been through the course at all should be allowed to compete at the examination, provided that they have passed the School Final or Entrance Examination or satisfy the Education Department, by passing a simple preliminary test examination, that they have a reasonable prospect of success.

8. The next question considered was whether the optional subjects referred to in paragraph 6 should be taught by day or in the evening. The Committee recommend that the instruction in these special courses should be given in the evening only. There should be no age-limit. Candidates should be admitted to the course of lectures and the examinations who have either passed the obligatory course described in paragraph 5 or who satisfy the Education Department, by passing a simple preliminary test examination, that they will be able to derive advantage from the courses of lectures or have a reasonable prospect of passing the examinations, as the case may be.

9. The question as to what fees should be levied for the courses was next considered. The Committee consider that, in the present condition of commercial education, the fees now paid by students attending the commercial classes at the Presidency College (Rs. 12) are too high, and that it will be quite sufficient if fees amounting to Rs. 3 or Rs. 4 a month are taken for the whole obligatory course, and if a sum of Rs. 3 or Rs. 4 is levied for each optional course of lectures. It is important of course that the Presidency College should not draw away students from other colleges by levying too low fees. At present, however, very little instruction in commercial subjects is available anywhere; and it will be quite easy to raise the fees hereafter if it is found that the Presidency College is unduly interfering in this respect with other educational institutions.

10. The Committee suggest that the certificates given by the Education Department to students who pass the examinations should be endorsed by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce. They are of opinion that the value of the certificates will in this way be enhanced, because it will then become generally known that the Chamber is co-operating with the Education Department in the matter of Commercial Education, and that it recognizes the value of the training given at the Presidency College and elsewhere. The Committee also recommend that the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce should be requested to publish lists of students who are successful at the examinations.

11. The Committee recommend that the setting of the papers for the examinations should be left to an Examination Board to be constituted for the purpose, on which educational officers and persons representing the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce should be represented. They recommend that the exact constitution of the Board should be left to the discretion of the Director of Public Instruction.

12. The suggestion made in paragraph 5 of Mr. Parson's letter, No. 1648-1904, dated the 5th November 1904, that the Government should offer scholarships and invite the mercantile community, through the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, to offer prizes, in order to encourage candidates, was considered. The Committee are of opinion that as they have decided to recommend that the fees payable at the Presidency College should be lowered very considerably, it is unnecessary to suggest to Government any increase in the number of scholarships at present given. This is a matter which may well be left to the Director of Public Instruction to deal with. Should the Director consider it desirable to make any recommendation to that effect to Government, he will doubtless do so. The Committee consider it unnecessary to recommend to Government that it should invite the mercantile community, through the Chamber of Commerce, to offer prizes in order to encourage candidates. Such prizes if offered voluntarily should, however, be accepted.

13. The Committee recommend that if the proposals made by them are generally accepted, they should be made publicly known. They also recommend that colleges or schools of all classes which undertake to teach the prescribed courses to the satisfaction of the Education Department should be given grants-in-aid for the purpose.

14. The Committee recommend that the offer made by the Remington Typewriter Company to give three gold medals to the three students who acquire the highest efficiency on the typewriter should be accepted. The prizes should be given on the results of the optional course in typewriting referred to in paragraph 6. It is not proposed to classify the students who pass the obligatory course referred to in paragraph 5.

A. EARLE,
 Secy. to the Committee and Secy. to the
 Govt. of Bengal, General Dept.

The 6th December 1904.

From Offg. Principal, Presidency College, to Chamber.

No. 42.—PRESIDENCY COLLEGE, 11th January 1905.
 I have the honour to forward herewith a copy of a letter No. 15787, dated the 22nd December last, from the Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, and its two enclosures, on the subject of the Final Examination and to request that you will be so good as to convey the same to the Chamber of Commerce and to request that you will be so good as to

nominate two merchant gentlemen who would be willing to serve as members of the Board of Examiners for the examination as proposed by him.

2. A very early reply is requested.

No. 15787.—CALCUTTA, 22nd December 1904.

From—The Director of Public Instruction, Bengal,
To—The Principal of the Presidency College.

With reference to para. 1 of your letter No. 1169, dated the 7th December 1904, I have the honour to refer you to para. 1 of my letter No. 14845, dated the 5th December 1904, in which I have suggested that the test examination of the 2nd year Commercial class of the Presidency College should be held in the Arts School as suggested by Mr. Havell.

2. As regards the "Routine and Programme" of the final examination of the Commercial class forwarded with your letter under reference, I have to state that some of the dates of the examination in the programme prepared by you will not do as they are gazetted holidays, and as some would extend after the proposed date for closing the Presidency College for the summer vacation.

3. Moreover, I am not in favour of the Regulations or details of the examination proposed by you. It will be remembered, we are now trying to make new departures and improvements in the conditions of the Indian examinations, and are trying to conduct them on sounder principles than have hitherto been recognised.

4. The procedure proposed by you in my opinion rather accentuates the faults of the Calcutta University examinations.

5. In the first place, I think we shall have to nominate a Board of Examiners to conduct the examination, consisting of the various Examiners who will do the work of the examination together with a President and with some merchants (probably two would do) who will act more or less as Moderators of the questions and results.

6. I think, also, in order to satisfy the public idea of fairness it will be necessary to have some outside examiners in addition to some of the teachers of the classes.

7. Taking these points into consideration, I have prepared a Provisional or tentative revised programme and routine for the examination from which it will be seen that a Board of Examiners consisting of a President and 11 members will have to be formed.

8. The set of rules, etc., herewith enclosed, which represent my ideas, of the manner in which the examination should be conducted, will have to go before the Board of Examiners for discussion, modification or approval before the rules can be finally adopted.

9. I have already consulted the Secretary to the Government of Bengal on the subject of the formation of a Board of Examiners as indicated above, but formal Government sanction will have to be obtained to the formation of the Board after you have arranged for its formation, and also to the "Routine and Programme" after they have been discussed and approved by the Board.

10. I have to ask, therefore, you will take the necessary steps to the tentative formation of a Board of Examiners at once.

11. Details as to the proposed payments of the examiners and of any other arrangements necessary can also be suggested by the Board of Examiners.

*Constitution of the Board of Examiners for the Presidency College
Final Commercial Class Examination.*

President.—Principal of the Presidency College.

Members.—Two gentlemen to be nominated by the Chamber of Commerce through its Secretary.

- | | | |
|---|-------|---|
| (1) Examiners in English | ... { | Mr. Stewart. |
| | | Revd. Mr. Wann. |
| (2) Examiners in Mathematics | ... { | The Lecturer to the classes who-
ever this may be. |
| | | Babu Gouri Santor De. |
| (3) Examiners in Physics and
Chemistry and Physiogra-
phy | ... { | Mr. J. A. Cunningham. |
| | | Mr. P. Bruhl or Mr. Jackson. |
| (4) Examiners in Commercial
History and Geography | ... { | Babu Binoyendra Nath Sen. |
| (5) Examiners in Drawing and
Penmanship | ... { | Mr. Havell. |
| (6) Examiners in Book-keeping,
Shorthand & Typewriting | ... { | One of the mercantile members
of the Board of Examiners. |
| | | One person nominated by the
Chamber of Commerce. |

This would form a Board of Examiners consisting of a President and 11 members.

The examination will be held on the dates and hours and in the order noted below :—

Wednesday	12th April	10-1	English including Grammar and Composition.
Wednesday	12th "	2-5	English correspondence including commercial correspondence.
Friday	14th "	10-1	Letter drafting and Precise writing.
Friday	14th "	2-5	Arithmetic and Algebra.
Monday	17th "	10-1	Geometry, Trigonometry and Conics.
Monday	17th "	2-5	Physics.
Tuesday	18th "	10-1	Chemistry.
Tuesday	18th "	2-5	Physiography.
Wednesday	19th "	10-1	Commercial History and Geography.
Wednesday	19th "	2-5	Book-keeping.
Thursday	20th "	10-1	Drawing and Penmanship.
Thursday	20th "	2-5	Short-hand and Typewriting.

From Chamber, to Offg. Principal, Presidency College.

No. 50-1905.—CALCUTTA, 13th January 1905.

In reply to the enquiry in your letter No. 42 of 11th January, received this morning, I have the honour to inform you that I wrote yesterday to the Director of Public Instruction nominating Mr. E. Henry of Messrs. Blackwood, Blackwood & Co., and Mr. J. B. Lloyd of Messrs. Shaw Wallace & Co., as members of the Board of Examiners for the Commercial Class of the Presidency College on behalf of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

From Offg. Principal, Presidency College, to Chamber.

No. 122.—CALCUTTA, 24th January 1905.

In connection with the Commercial Classes of the Presidency College, it is proposed to open at once classes in the evening on the following subjects :—

- (1) Book-keeping.
- (2) Short-hand.
- (3) Typewriting.

In accordance with the recommendation of the Committee, the standard of teaching in these classes will be higher than the standard for the same subjects in the classes held during the day. I should be obliged if you could nominate a competent teacher for the evening classes. The salary sanctioned by the Govern-

ment is Rs. 150/- per month. I may tell you that for the day classes on the same subjects we have got a teacher, Mr. H. B. Rae who draws a pay of Rs. 125/- per month. We want a person who would be able to teach the more advanced parts of the subjects to the students who have already attended the day classes on those subjects.

It is further proposed to stop the existing Commercial classes from April next, and to open classes on the obligatory subjects as recommended by the Committee on the reopening of the Presidency College after the summer vacation *i. e.*, by the latter part of June next. I should be obliged if you could nominate a person who would be able to give his whole time to the work of the Commercial classes and teach the following subjects, namely, Modern and Commercial English and especially English Correspondence, including Commercial Correspondence, letter drafting and precise writing. If a competent teacher were available we might pay Rs. 400/- to Rs. 500/- per month.

It is also proposed to have courses of evening lectures on the following optional subjects :—

- (1) Banking and Currency.
- (2) Commercial and Industrial Law.
- (3) Annuities and Insurance.

Could you nominate persons who would be able to give courses of say 12 lectures on each of those subjects? What remuneration should be paid for each course? Do you think that clerks in merchants' offices and in the Banks would attend these lectures, if a small fee of Rs. 3/ only were charged for a course of 12 lectures on each of the above subjects?

An early reply will oblige.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (GENERAL).

No. 151-1905.—CALCUTTA, 1st February 1905.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter, No. 4216 of 31st December 1904, under cover of which you forward, for the information of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, copy of proceedings of the meeting held on the 6th December 1904, of the Committee appointed under the orders of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor to consider the question of commercial education. I duly placed this letter before the Committee of the Chamber, and am now instructed to reply as follows to the various enquiries contained in it.

2. I am to say in the first instance that the Committee of the Chamber agree to the proposals detailed in paragraph 2 of your letter so far as they apply to this Chamber. They also approve of the proposal to open at once classes without delay the evening classes for the teaching of the special subjects referred to in paragraph 6 of the proceedings of the Committee.

3. In reply to the enquiry in paragraph 5 of your letter under reply, I am directed to suggest the names of Mr. E. Henry,

of Messrs. Blackwood, Blackwood & Co., Mr. J. B. Lloyd, of Messrs. Shaw, Wallace & Co., and Mr. F. H. Stewart, B. A., of Messrs. Gladstone, Wylie & Co. as suitable examiners for the special subjects to be taught in the evening classes. These gentlemen might be invited by Government to act in this capacity, and to suggest arrangements as to dates for the conduct of the examinations. In reply to the further enquiry in paragraph 5 as to whether lectures on more than one of the optional subjects should go on simultaneously, the Committee agree with the opinion of the Director of Public Instruction recorded on this point.

4. The Remington Typewriter Company have been informed, as I have previously intimated to you, that their offer to give three gold medals to the three students who acquire the highest efficiency in typewriting, has been accepted by His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor. The Committee would recommend that shorthand and typewriting should be bracketed as one subject, as a shorthand writer who is not also a typist, loses very much of his efficiency. The two subjects could, if necessary, be taught separately and separate examinations should of course be held, but candidates should also have facilities for learning both together.

5. The Committee understand, although it has not been made quite clear either in your letter, or the proceedings of the meeting of the Special Committee, that, while the course of commercial instruction which has been decided upon will be taught in the Presidency College and examinations always held in that institution, it will also be extended to colleges and schools of all classes whether State-aided or not, and practically form a supplement to the present educational code. The Committee attach great importance to this, as although they notice with satisfaction that the Special Committee have recommended a considerable reduction in the fees payable at the Presidency College, large numbers of promising students would still prefer to attend colleges and schools outside the College but possibly in connection with it.

6. In conclusion, the Committee would refer to paragraph 12 of the proceedings of the meeting of the Special Committee in which a number of scholarships at present given by Government are incidentally referred to. The Committee think that greater publicity should be given to the existence of these scholarships, as they do not think it is generally known of what nature and amount they are. The success or failure of the entire scheme depends on how these classes will be regarded by the prospective students themselves, and while a reduction in fees is primarily necessary, some other inducement in the shape of a medal, a prize, or a scholarship to which some prestige is attached should be offered in addition. The Committee would specially suggest that some of these inducements should be offered to the students attending evening classes; and they also think that Modern English and Arithmetic ought to form part of the curriculum of these classes. So far as they understand the proposal for evening classes, it would appear that only optional subjects will be taught in the evening.

7. The Committee trust that the scheme as now decided on will meet with success, and have every reason to believe that if the classes and examinations are availed of by students, a great improvement will take place in the attainments of clerks available for mercantile employment.

From Government of Bengal (GENERAL), to Chamber.

No. 716.—CALCUTTA, 9th February 1905.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 151, dated the 1st February 1905, in which you communicate the views of the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce on certain points in connection with the new scheme of commercial education.

2. The Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, has been requested to submit definite proposals for opening the evening classes at the Presidency College at an early date. That officer has also been requested to state his views on the suggestion made in paragraph 4 of your letter that shorthand and typewriting should be bracketed as one subject.

3. With reference to the remarks made in paragraph 5 of your letter I am to invite your attention to paragraph 13 of the proceedings of the meeting of the Commercial Education Committee which was held on the 6th December 1904, from which it will be seen that the Committee contemplated an extension of the scheme of commercial education to colleges and schools of all classes and recommended that grants-in-aid should be given to such of them as undertake to teach the prescribed courses to the satisfaction of the Education Department. This is a very important part of the scheme; and the Director has been requested to submit proposals on the subject at an early date.

4. In paragraph 6 of your letter you state that the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce think that greater publicity should be given to the existence of scholarships for commercial students. Reference is also made to the necessity of offering inducements to the students such as a medal, a prize or a scholarship to which some prestige is attached. In regard to these points I am to state that when the scheme of commercial education is published as contemplated in paragraph 8 of my letter, No. 4216, dated the 31st December 1904, the necessary information will be given as to the scholarships, medals or prizes which will be offered for the day and the evening classes at the Presidency College and at other colleges and schools. The Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, is also being consulted in regard to the inclusion of modern English and Arithmetic in the curriculum of the evening classes.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (GENERAL).

No. 258-1905.—CALCUTTA, 22nd February 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 716 of 9th February 1905, and for the information contained in which on certain points in connection with the new scheme of Commercial Education referred to in my letter No. 151 of 1st February 1905, the Committee are much obliged.

From Chamber, to Offg. Principal, Presidency College.

No. 309-1905.—CALCUTTA, 28th February 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 122 of 24th January, in which you invite the Committee,—

- (1) to nominate a competent teacher for the commercial evening classes at the Presidency College for book-keeping, shorthand and typewriting;
- (2) to nominate a person able to give his whole time to the work of the commercial classes for modern English and English correspondence, letter drafting and precis writing;
- (3) to nominate persons able to give courses of twelve lectures on (a) banking and currency; (b) commercial and industrial law; (c) annuities and insurance.

After making enquiries in all likely and available quarters, the Committee much regret that they are unable to make any of the nominations for which you ask. They are inclined to think that you will not get a sufficiently qualified person in Calcutta to teach the evening classes in the subjects mentioned, and suggest that you should apply to Messrs. Pitman & Sons, London, to send out a person thoroughly qualified for the work. In the opinion of the Committee the salary offered is not sufficiently remunerative to secure a competent teacher. The Committee further consider that the whole-time instructor to whom you are willing to pay Rs. 400 to Rs. 500 per month should also be brought out from England. The Committee much regret that they have not been able to find among the mercantile community any gentlemen willing to undertake the courses of the evening lectures on the subjects above mentioned. Under these circumstances they are unable to suggest what remuneration should be paid for each course. The Committee are inclined to think that if it is found possible to organise these courses of lectures they would possibly be attended by a fair number of clerks at the small fee named.

From Chamber, to Offg. Principal, Presidency College.

No. 523-1905.—CALCUTTA, 25th March 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to address you in continuation of my letter, No. 309 of

28th February 1905, and with further reference to your letter, No. 122 of 24th January, in which you invited the Committee to nominate a person able to give his whole time to the *inter alia* to teach the commercial classes for Modern English and English correspondence, including Commercial correspondence, letter drafting and precis writing.

2. At the time of writing the letter above referred to, the Committee were not able to nominate any suitable person, but they have instructed me now to address you in support of the application of Mr. J. A. Chapman of the National Bank of India, Ltd., who they consider would be fully qualified for the post. The Committee understand that Mr. Chapman has already filed with his application, copies of testimonials from the Manager of his Bank and also from several leading Educationalists, and they would ask you to add their recommendation to those you have already received.

From Government of Bengal (GENERAL), to Chamber.

No. 181-T.G.—DARJEELING, 24th April 1905.

With reference to the correspondence resting with this Department letter No. 716, dated the 9th February 1905, I am directed to forward for the information of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to forward the accompanying copy of a Notification No. 1964, dated the 11th April 1905, which embodies the prospectus of the new scheme of Commercial education as now provisionally decided upon.

2. The Committee of the Chamber made certain suggestions regarding the scheme which were stated in your letter No. 151, dated the 1st February 1905. In paragraph 5 of the letter referred to was made to the extension of the scheme to colleges and schools of all classes, whether State aided or not. As you will observe from paragraph 2 of the Notification applications for grants to colleges and high schools to enable them to introduce schemes of education on the lines laid down in the case of the Presidency College will be considered by the Government as they are received. In accordance with the suggestions of the Committee of the Chamber the number and values of the scholarships which are now given or will be given to the students of the day course are stated in paragraph 3 of the Notification. It has also been decided that Modern English should form part of the curriculum of the evening classes.

3. I am to add that Mr. H. M. Percival, Professor in the Presidency College, is conducting the evening classes in political economy and that classes in the other optional subjects will be opened as soon as Lecturers, who are being advertised for, have been appointed.

NOTIFICATION.

No. 1964.—The 11th April 1905.—The Lieutenant-Governor has been pleased generally to accept the recommendations made

by the Committee appointed to consider the question of commercial education at the Presidency College, Calcutta and to direct that the following prospectus, showing the courses of study, the examinations, the rates of fees, and other cognate matters, as now provisionally decided upon, be published for general information:—

(1) Arrangements have been made for instruction and examination in two different courses of study—one to be a complete course every part of which shall be obligatory; and the other to consist of a series of lectures or classes all or any of which may be attended at option. The lectures in the former course shall be delivered during the day, while those in the latter shall be delivered in the evening only.

Day course.

- (2) The following shall be the subjects prescribed for the day course:—
- (i) English (modern), and especially English correspondence, including commercial correspondence, letter-drafting and *précis*-writing;
 - (ii) arithmetic, including commercial and mental arithmetic;
 - (iii) one of the following languages, namely, Bengali, Hindi, Urdu, Oriya, French, German or Latin;
 - (iv) one of the following subjects, namely, book-keeping, shorthand-writing or type-writing; and
 - (v) commercial history and geography.

The course shall extend over a period of two years, at the end of which an examination shall be held in the prescribed subjects, in all of which the candidates will be required to pass. No candidate will be allowed to pass unless his answers on every subject are written in a good, legible handwriting.

Evening course.

- (3) The following shall be the subjects prescribed for the evening course:—
- (i) outlines of political economy;
 - (ii) banking and currency;
 - (iii) commercial and industrial law;
 - (iv) annuities and insurance;
 - (v) book-keeping;
 - (vi) shorthand-writing;
 - (vii) type-writing; and
 - (viii) English (modern).

In these subjects special examinations shall be held, candidates being allowed to take up each separately and to obtain certificates of having passed in it.

- (4) Certificates shall be awarded by the Education Department to students passing the examinations, and shall require endorsement by the Secretary to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, and lists of successful candidates, without-classification, shall be published

Courses of study and delivery of lectures.

by that Chamber and by the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce.

Admission.

- (5) There will be no age-limit for candidates for either course.

Candidates who have passed the "C class" Examination of High Schools or the Entrance Examination will be eligible for admission to the day course; but others will be admitted only if they satisfy the Education Department, by passing a preliminary test examination of a similar standard, that they have sufficient general education to enable them to derive advantage from the general education to enable them to derive advantage from the general education. Candidates who have not attended in the day course, will be allowed to compete at the examination only if they have passed the Entrance or the "C class" Examination or satisfied the Education Department, by passing a preliminary test-examination, that they have a reasonable prospect of success. The form of certificate to be issued to students who have passed this examination, as laid down in paragraph (2) above, shall show whether the student has passed the "C class" or Entrance Examination or not and also whether he has duly attended the lectures prescribed for the day course. Those only who have passed the "C class" or Entrance Examination, and after attending the full day course of lectures have passed the prescribed examination, will be considered to be eligible for the full commercial certificate.

Candidates who have attended the lectures in the day course, will be eligible for admission to the evening course and allowed to compete at the examinations; but others will be admitted and allowed to compete only if they satisfy the Education Department by passing a preliminary test-examination that they have sufficient general education to enable them to derive advantage from the general education, or that they have a reasonable prospect of success, as the certificates may be. The certificates issued on the result of the examination in this course, as laid down in paragraph (3) above, shall show whether the students have attended the lectures prescribed for the day course and have passed such examination and also whether they have attended the evening course of lectures.

- (6) The fees shall not exceed Rs. 3 *per mensem* payable for the whole school year for the entire day course, and the like sum for each series of fifteen lectures in the evening course on—

- (i) banking and currency;
- (ii) commercial and industrial law;
- (iii) annuities and insurance;
- (iv) English (modern).

The fee for each course of thirty-two lectures on the outlines of political economy shall be Rs. 5.

As the evening lectures on book-keeping, shorthand-writing, and type-writing will be on advanced portions of those subjects and will continue over a considerable period, the fee for each course shall be Rs. 10.

(7) The setting of the papers for the examinations will be left to an Examination Board, which shall be constituted for the purpose by the Director of Public Instruction, and upon which the Education Department, the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce shall be represented.

(8) Three gold medals, offered by the Remington Type-writer Company, shall be awarded on the results of the examination on the evening course of lectures on type-writing to the three students awarded the highest marks for efficiency.

Should any other prizes be offered hereafter, the fact will be announced and the terms on which they are offered for competition published in due course.

(9) The evening course of lectures on political economy began on the 7th March last. The new classes in the day course will be opened next June.

2. The Government of Bengal will be prepared to consider applications for grants-in-aid, which will probably take the form of contributions towards the salaries of the necessary lecturers, to enable other colleges and high schools to introduce schemes of education on the lines laid down in the case of the Presidency College by the prospectus above; but these will be dealt with separately and considered on their merits as they are received.

3. Four scholarships, of Rs. 16, Rs. 12, Rs. 8 and Rs. 8 *per mensem*, tenable for two years, respectively, are, under existing arrangements, available for candidates admitted to the day course who have passed the "C class" Examination; and candidates who have obtained similar scholarships at the Entrance Examination will be permitted to hold them during the day course.

H. W. C. CARNDUFF,
Offg. Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (GENERAL).

NO. 767-1905.—CALCUTTA, 6th May 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your letter, No. 184-T. C., of 24th April 1905, forwarding copy of a Notification No. 1904 of 11th April 1905, embodying the prospectus of the new scheme of commercial education as now provisionally decided upon.

2. The Committee note with satisfaction that the new scheme of commercial education has now been actually organised, and they are pleased to see that applications for grants for Colleges and High Schools to enable them to introduce commercial education into their curricula will be considered by Government.

**From Director of Public Instruction, Bengal,
to Chamber.**

NO. 11027.—CALCUTTA, 28th July 1905.

In accordance with rule 4 of the Government Notification No. 1904, dated the 11th April 1905, I have the honour to forward for publication a list of the successful candidates of the last final Commercial class examination held in April 1905. This list has already been published in the *Calcutta Gazette*.

The undermentioned Students have passed the final Commercial Class Examination held in April 1905.

Name	Examination where held.
Berat Behari Neogi	... Presidency College.
Mohit Mohan Banerji	... Ditto.
CALCUTTA,	A. PEDLER,
The 8th July 1905. }	Director of Public Instruction, Bengal.

From Chamber, to Government of Bengal (GENERAL).

NO. 1519-1905.—CALCUTTA, 11th September 1905.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to address you in continuation of previous correspondence ending with my No. 767, dated 6th May 1905, upon the subject of Commercial Education.

2. A point connected with the conduct of the final examinations in commercial subjects at the Presidency College has been recently raised, and has engaged the attention of the Committee. As you are aware, one examination only in each subject has been held so far. The question papers used were mostly drawn up, the Committee are informed, by the teachers of the particular subjects. This procedure was no doubt unavoidable as the classes being of a more or less experimental character, no well-defined courses of study had been prepared. But it is not, the Committee think, a procedure which should be permanently adopted. In their opinion it would be a better plan for the Board of Examiners to draw up, in consultation with the Presidency College staff, a full syllabus of the proposed courses of study, detailing all the books to be used as text books. Some considerable time before the next examination is held, the Board might appoint for each subject, an examiner who would be persons not engaged in teaching their particular subjects in the College. These examiners would not, the Committee anticipate, experience much difficulty in setting the question papers, as they would have the syllabus and the text before them. It is perhaps beyond the province of the Committee to offer suggestions as to the Board's methods of working. But it occurs to them that the simplest and most expeditious way of dealing with the matter might be for the Board to appoint a Sub-Committee to draw up the syllabus and to report.

5. The educational authorities are of course familiar with English examination methods. But the accompanying copy of a letter from the Secretary to the City of London School is of interest, as showing how the practice of teachers examining their own pupils is regarded in the leading English schools and colleges.

4. I am to add that Mr. E. Henry, who was one of the representatives of the Chamber on the Board of Examiners has left India for good. The Committee venture to suggest that Mr. T. McMORAN, of Messrs. Duncan Brothers & Co, who is willing to take his place, should be invited to do so.

LONDON-VICTORIA EMBANKMENT, S. E., 7th June 1905.
From—C. J. AUSTIN, ESQ., Secretary, City of London School,
To—E. HENRY, ESQ.

In reply to your letter of the 10th May, I have pleasure to send you the following information in regard to the conduct of examinations in this School and I think you may take it, it is the plan adopted by most good schools.

The practice by which the teacher examines his own pupils, and gains, as the result thereof, credit and emoluments, is indefensible and bad. Unless checked, it must in the long run result in scandals more or less serious in character.

At the same time it must be acknowledged that the recent reorganization of the University of London involved giving the teachers of the University some share in the arrangement of the examinations, subject, however, to sufficient safeguards.

In the City of London School the classes are examined:

- (a) By outside examiners, who conduct *visu voce* examinations at the School and look over the written answers to questions the examiners have got the boys by means of printed papers. In setting their questions the examiners are only told the books the boys have studied or the periods of history, etc., in general terms.
- (b) By the Head Master, who examines *visu voce* and by printed papers various classes. For example, the class may have been studying the Geography of India. The Head Master would expect the class to be well informed upon the subject and would take as the basis of his questions the text book used in the School on the subject. He might ask questions outside this if he thought fit.
- (c) To relieve the pressure on the Head Master in a very large School, the Master of one class might be asked to set a paper for and examine a class taught by another Master.

Very little credit would be attached to the results of an examination conducted by the teacher of the class examined. Such an

examination might be of use to the teacher, as showing how well he had done his own work as teacher, but the best of teachers knows that unconsciously even, he asks what he has taught and asks it too in the way in which he has taught it, thus giving the pupil a double chance to answer to his teacher's taste.

The boys of the City of London School are occasionally examined (about 60 per annum of the upper boys) for Matriculation and other Entrance Examinations and for open Scholarships at the Universities.

The work to be prepared is very vaguely stated and the examiners are never the teachers of the pupil.

I trust the above notes will answer your purpose.

From Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, to Chamber.
No. 15567.—CALCUTTA, 3rd November 1905.

With reference to your letter No. 1519, dated the 11th September, 1905, to the address of the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Department, in which you make certain suggestions for the conduct of the Final examinations in Commercial subjects at the Presidency College, a copy of which has been forwarded to me, I have the honour to state that I agree generally with the views expressed by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and shall carry them out as far as possible at future examinations.

From Government of Bengal (GENERAL), to Chamber.
No. 2952.—CALCUTTA, 17th November 1905.

With reference to your letter No. 1519, dated the 11th September last, regarding the Commercial Classes at the Presidency College, I am directed to forward for the information of the Chamber the accompanying copy of a letter from the Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, No. 15563, dated the 3rd instant.

No. 15563.—CALCUTTA, 3rd November 1905.
From—The Director of Public Instruction, Bengal,
To—The Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Department.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your endorsement No. 2418-T.G., dated the 25th September 1905, forwarding for report, copy of a letter, dated the 17th idem, from the Acting Secretary, Bengal Chamber of Commerce in which he makes certain suggestions for the conduct of the Final Examinations in Commercial subjects at the Presidency College.

2. In reply, I have to state that I agree generally with the views expressed by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and shall carry them out as far as possible at future examinations.

HOLIDAYS—1906.

From Chamber, to all Members.

• CIR. No. 83—1906.—CALCUTTA, 26th February 1906.
Holidays—1906.

MEMO.—The following particulars relating to Public Holidays in Indian Ports, &c., during the current year 1906, are circulated, under the orders of the Committee, for the information of members of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

HOLIDAYS IN BENGAL.

I.—Holidays declared by the Government of Bengal.

OFFICIAL.

HOLIDAYS UNDER THE NEGOTIABLE INSTRUMENTS ACT XXVI OF 1881.

[Extract, page 2000, Part I, from the "Calcutta Gazette," of 6th December 1905.]

NOTIFICATION—No. 4863-Mis.

The 4th December 1905.—Under Section 25 of Act XXVI of 1881, entitled "The Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881," the Lieutenant-Governor hereby declares the following days to be public holidays during the year 1906—

January, 2nd ...	...	In honor of the visit of Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales.
" 29th and 30th ...	...	Sri Panchami.
March, 10th ...	...	Doljatra.
April, 13th ...	...	Chaitra Sankranti.
" 14th ...	...	Easter Saturday.
" 16th ...	...	Easter Monday.
June, 2nd ...	...	Dasahara.
" 26th ...	...	King-Emperor's Birthday.
August, 11th ...	...	Jannastami.
September, 18th ...	...	Mahalaya.
" 24th, 25th, 26th and 27th ...	...	Durga and Lakshmi Pujas.
October, 1st and 2nd ...	...	Kali Puja.
" 17th and 18th ...	...	Jagadhatri Puja.
" 26th and 27th ...	...	Christmas Eve.
December, 24th ...	...	The first and second days following Christmas.
" 26th and 27th ...	...	The last day of the year.
" 31st ...	...	(e) Sundays, New Year's day, Good Friday (13th April) and Christmas day are public holidays under the Act.

HOLIDAYS IN PUBLIC OFFICES OTHER THAN THOSE NAMED.

DEPARTMENTAL HOLIDAYS.

NOTIFICATION—No. 4863-Mis.

The 4th December 1905.—With reference to the above Notification, the Lieutenant-Governor hereby notifies that on the following days during 1906, which are not declared to be "public holidays," the offices under the Government of Bengal, and all Revenue and Magisterial Courts in Bengal, with the exception of the offices of the Collector of Customs, Shipping Master, the Registrar of Assurances, Calcutta, the Collector of Stamp Revenue, Calcutta, and the Salt Revenue and Opium Departments of the Board of Revenue, shall be closed:—

I.—Muhammadan Holidays.

Id-uz-zuha ...	...	On the 5th February, but if the moon be visible on the 25th January, then on the 4th February (Sunday.)
Muharram ...	...	On the 6th and 7th March, but if the moon be visible on the 24th February, then on the 5th and 6th March.
Fatila-Dowzadaham ...	...	On the 7th May, but if the moon be visible on the 24th April, then on the 6th May (Sunday.)
Id-ul-Fitr ...	...	On the 19th November, but if the moon be visible on the 17th November, then on the 18th November (Sunday.)

II.—Hindu Holidays.

Durga and Lakshmi Pujas September 22nd, 23rd (Sunday), 28th, 29th, 30th (Sunday) and October 3rd.

III.—Other Holidays.

In honour of the visit of Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales ... 3rd January.

The third, fourth and fifth days following Christmas ... 28th, 29th and 30th December (Sunday).

L. P. SHIRES,
Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

COMMERCIAL.

II.—Holidays declared by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

Holidays under Charter-Parties and Shipping Orders.

With reference to the above Notifications, the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce empowered on that behalf by the Resolution passed at a General Meeting of the Chamber, held on the 5th December, 1888, do hereby declare that the holidays specified below shall be the Holidays during the year 1906, recognised by the Chamber under Charter-Parties and Shipping Orders as Holidays according to the custom of the Port:—

1906.

Date.	Holidays.	Days.	Number of days to be observed as Holidays.
January, 1st	... New Year's Day	... Monday	1 day.
2nd	... In honour of the visit of Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales.	... Tuesday	1 "
" 29th	... Sri Panchami	... Monday	1 "
April, 15th	... Good Friday, Chait Sankranti	... Friday	1 "
" 14th	... Easter Eve	... Saturday	1 "
" 16th	... Easter Monday	... Monday	1 "
June, 26th	... King Emperor's Birthday	... Tuesday	1 "
September, 24th	... Durga Puja	{ Monday Tuesday Wednesday }	3 days.
" 25th			
" 26th			
October, 1st	... Laksmi Puja	... Monday	1 day
" 18th	... Kali Puja	... Thursday	1 "
" 26th	... Jagadhatri Puja	... Friday	1 "
December, 24th	... Christmas Eve	... Monday	1 "
" 25th & 26th	... Christmas day and the day following.	{ Tuesday & Wednesday }	2 days.

N.B.—All Sundays are holidays.

By Order of the Committee,

W. PARSONS,

Secretary.

OFFICES OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

HOLIDAYS DECLARED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA FOR THE CALCUTTA OFFICES UNDER THAT GOVERNMENT.

[Extract, pages 42-43, Part I, from the "Gazette of India" of January 27th, 1906.]

HOME DEPARTMENT.—NOTIFICATION.

PUBLIC.

CALCUTTA.—the 23rd January 1906.

No. 99.—The Governor-General in Council hereby notifies that on the following days during 1906, which are not declared* by the Government of Bengal, No. 4862 M.B., dated the 4th December 1905, under section 25 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 (XXVI of 1881), the offices directly subordinate to the Government of India at Calcutta with the exception of—

- (1) the office of Issue of the Paper Currency Department,
 - (2) the office of the Comptroller and Auditor General,
- shall be closed:—

I.—MUHAMMADAN HOLIDAYS.

Id-uz-zuha.—On the 5th February; but if the moon be visible on the 25th January, then on the 4th February, (Sunday).

Muharram.—On the 6th and 7th March; but if the moon be visible on the 24th February, then on the 5th and 6th March.

Fatiha-c-Duazdaham.—On the 7th May; but if the moon be visible on the 24th April, then on the 6th May (Sunday).

Id-ul-Fitr.—On the 19th November; but if the moon be visible on the 17th November, then on the 18th November (Sunday).

II.—HINDU HOLIDAYS.

Durga and Laksmi Pujas.—September 22nd, 23rd (Sunday), 28th, 29th, 30th (Sundays); and October 3rd.

III.—OTHER HOLIDAYS.

The third, fourth and fifth days following Christmas—December 28th, 29th and 30th (Sundays).

H. H. RISLEY,

Secretary to the Government of India.

SMALL CAUSE COURT HOLIDAYS.

[Extract, page 122, Part I, from the "Calcutta Gazette," of January 24th, 1906.]

The following list of holidays to be observed in the year 1906 as holidays in the Court of Small Causes of Calcutta has been drawn up with the approval of the Local Government, and is published in accordance with the provisions of section 92 of Act XV of 1882 (Presidency Small Cause Courts Act):—

Names of Holidays.	English date.	Bengali date.	Days of the Week.	Number of days.
1	2	3	4	5
New Year's Day ...	1st January ...	1312 17th Pous ...	Monday ...	1
In honour of the visit of Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales.	2nd and 3rd January.	16th and 19th Pous.	Tuesday and Wednesday.	2
Sree Panchami ...	29th and 30th January.	16th and 17th Magh.	Monday and Tuesday.	2
Id uz-Zoha ...	5th and 6th February.	23rd and 24th Magh.	Ditto ...	2
Moharram ...	3rd to 7th March.	16th to 23rd Falgoon.	Saturday to Wednesday.	5
Dot Jatra ...	16th March ...	26th Falgoon.	Saturday ...	1
Good Friday ...	13th and 14th April.	30th Choitro 1312 2nd 1st Bysack 1313	Friday and Saturday.	2
Easter Monday ...	16th April ...	31st Bysack ...	Monday ...	1
Dasahara Gango-rnan ...	2nd June ...	19th Joisto ...	staturday ...	1
King Emperor's Birthday ...	26th June ...	16th Assa ...	Tuesday ...	1
Jannashitami ...	11th August ...	26th Srajan ...	Saturday ...	1
Dusseva Vacation including Mahalaya, Durga, Lakshmi and Kali Pujas and Bhatridwita ...	18th September to 20th October.	3rd Kartick ...	Tuesday to Saturday.	35
Jagadhatri Puja ...	26th and 27th October.	9th and 10th Kartick.	Friday and Saturday.	2
Id ul-Fitr ...	19th and 20th November.	3rd and 4th Aghran.	Monday and Tuesday.	2
Christmas ...	24th to 29th December.	9th to 14th Pous.	Monday to Saturday.	6
Last day of the year ...	31st December.	16th Pous ...	Monday ...	1
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E. W. ORMOND,

H. L. BELL,

A. HASSAN,

A. F. M. ABDUR RAHAMAN,

C. D. PANIOTY,

Judges, Court of Small Causes, Calcutta.

HOLIDAYS IN EASTERN BENGAL AND ASSAM.

Extract, page 203, Part II, of the "Eastern Bengal and Assam Gazette," of December 23rd, 1905.]

THE 22ND DECEMBER 1905.

No. 2361-J.—Under section 25 of Act XXVI of 1881, entitled the "Negotiable Instruments Act 1881," the Lieutenant-Governor hereby declares the following days to be public holidays during the year 1906:—

January 2nd ...	In honour of the visit of Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales.
" 29th and 30th ...	Sri Panchami.
March 10th ...	Dojitra.
April 13th ...	Chaitra Sankranti.
" 14th ...	Easter Saturday.
" 16th ...	" Monday.
June 2nd ...	Dasahara.
" 26th ...	King-Emperor's Birthday.
August 11th ...	Jannashitami.
September 18th ...	Mahalaya.
" 24th, 25th, 26th, and 27th ...	Durga and Lakshmi Pujas.
October 1st and 2nd ...	Kali Puja.
" 17th ...	Jagadhatri Puja.
" 26th ...	Christmas Eve.
December 24th ...	The first and second days following Christmas.
" 26th and 27th ...	The last day of the year.
" 31st ...	Sundays, New Year's Day, Good Friday (13th April), and Christmas Day are public holidays under the Act.

The 22nd December 1905.

No. 2362-J.—With reference to the above Notification, the Lieutenant-Governor hereby notifies that on the following days during 1906, which are not declared to be "public holidays," the

offices under the Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam and all Revenue and Magisterial Courts in Eastern Bengal and Assam shall be closed :—

I.—MUHAMMADAN HOLIDAYS.

Id-uz-Zuha	...	...	On the 5th February; but if the moon be visible on the 25th January, then on the 4th February (Sunday).
Muharram	...	...	On the 5th, 6th, and 7th March; but if the moon be visible on the 24th February, then on the 4th, 5th, and 6th March.
Fatiha-Dowazdaham	...	...	On the 7th May; but if the moon be visible on the 24th April, then on the 6th May (Sunday).
Shab-i-Barat	...	...	On the 4th October; but if the moon be visible on the 21st September, then on the 5th October.
Id-ul-Fitr	...	...	On the 19th November; but if the moon be visible on the 17th November, then on the 18th November (Sunday).

II.—HINDU HOLIDAYS.

Durga and Lakshmi Pujas	...	September 22nd, 23rd (Sunday), 28th, 29th, 30th (Sunday) and October 3rd.
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III.—OTHER HOLIDAYS.

The third, fourth and fifth days following Christmas	...	28th, 29th, and 30th December (Sunday).
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The 22nd December 1905.

№. 2363-J.—The following day will be observed as a Brahmō holiday in all districts under the Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam :—

January 24th Maghotsav.

L. J. KERSHAW,

Secretary to the Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam.

HOLIDAYS IN BOMBAY.

OFFICIAL.

I.—HOLIDAYS DECLARED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY.

Public Holidays for the Year 1906.

Sanctioned by Government under section 25 of Act XXVI of 1881, entitled the "Negotiable Instruments' Act, 1881":—

New Year	...	1st & 2nd January	Monday & 2 Days.
Maha Shivratri	...	21st February	Tuesday.
Mohurrum	...	6th March	Wednesday 1 Day.
Holi	...	10th "	Tuesday ... 1 "
Jamshedi Naoroz	...	21st "	Saturday ... 1 "
Ramnavmi	...	3rd April	Wednesday 1 "
Easter	...	13th, 14th & 16th April	Tuesday ... 1 "
			Good Fri- 3 Days.
			day, Sa- turday & Monday.
Birthday of his Majesty the King-Emperor	...	26th June	Tuesday ... 1 Day.
Coconut Day	...	4th August	Saturday ... 1 "
Gokul-Ashtami	...	11th "	Saturday ... 1 "
Ganesh Chaturthi	...	23rd "	Thursday ... 1 "
Parsee New Year	...	13th & 14th Sep- tember	Thursday & 2 Days.
			Friday.
Khordadsal	...	19th September	Wednesday 1 Day.
Dussera	...	27th "	Thursday ... 1 "
Divali	...	17th, & 18th October	Wednesday 2 Days.
			& Thurs- day.
Christmas	...	24th, 25th & 26th December	Monday, 3 "
			Tuesday & Wed- nesday.
New Year	...	31st December	Monday ... 1 Day.

Note.—Good Friday, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day are holidays under the Negotiable Instruments' Act, but are included in the above list.

By order of the Committee,
J. B. LESLIE-ROGERS,
Secretary.

BOMBAY, 4th December 1905.

COMMERCIAL.

II.—HOLIDAYS DECLARED BY THE BOMBAY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Holidays under Charter-Parties for the year 1906.

In accordance with the Resolution passed at a General Meeting of the Chamber of Commerce held on the 22nd July 1881, the Committee of the Chamber beg to inform the public that the following days have been fixed by them to be holidays, under Charter-Parties, for the year 1906:—

New Year	... 1st January	... Monday	... 1 day.
Mohurrum	... 6th March	... Tuesday	... 1 "
Holi	... 10th "	... Saturday	... 1 "
Ramnnavami	... 3rd April	... Tuesday	... 1 "
Easter	... 13th "	... Good Friday	... 1 "
Birthdays of His Majesties- The King Emperor.	26th June	... Tuesday	... 1 "
Cocoanut Day	... 4th August	... Saturday	... 1 "
Gokul-Ashtami	... 11th "	... Saturday	... 1 "
Ganesh-Chaturthi	... 23rd "	... Thursday	... 1 "
Dassara	... 27th September	... Thursday	... 1 "
Divali	... 17th October	... Wednesday	... 1 "
Christmas	... 25th December	... Tuesday	... 1 "

By order of the Committee,

J. B. LESLIE-ROGERS,

Secretary.

BOMBAY, 4th December 1905.

HOLIDAYS IN SINDH.

OFFICIAL.

I.—Public Holidays for the year 1906.

The Committee of the Karachi Chamber of Commerce do hereby declare that the holidays specified below shall be the holidays during the year 1906, sanctioned by Government, under section 25 Act XXVI of 1881, entitled "The Negotiable Instruments' Act, 1881":—

1906.			
New Year	... 1st and 2nd January	... Monday and Tuesday	... 2 days.
Bakri-Id	... 5th February	... Monday	... 1 day.
Maha Shivratri	... 21st "	... Wednesday	... 1 "
Mohuram	... 6th March	... Tuesday	... 1 "
Holi	... 10th "	... Saturday	... 1 "
Ianushedi Naoroz	... 21st "	... Wednesday	... 1 "
Chetichand	... 26th "	... Monday	... 1 "

Easter	... 13th, 14th and 16th April	... Friday, Saturday and Monday	... 3 days.
Birthdays of His Majesties- The King Emperor.	26th June	... Tuesday	... 1 day.
Cocoanut Day	... 4th August	... Saturday	... 1 "
Gokul Ashtami	... 11th "	... Saturday	... 1 "
Parsi New Year	... 13th and 14th September.	... Thursday and Friday	... 2 days.
Dassara	... 27th September	... Thursday	... 1 day.
Divali	... 17th and 18th October	... Wednesday & Thursday	... 2 days.
Ramzan-Id	... 19th November	... Monday	... 1 day.
Christmas	... 24th, 25th and 26th December	... Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday	... 3 days.
New Year	... 31st December	... Monday	... 1 day.

By order of the Committee,

THE CHAMBER BUILDINGS, }
Karachi, 10th February 1906. } C. H. CHETTIAM,
Secretary.

COMMERCIAL.

II.—HOLIDAYS DECLARED BY THE KARACHI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Holidays under Charter-Parties and Shipping orders for the year 1906.

The Committee of the Karachi Chamber of Commerce do hereby declare that the holidays specified below shall be the holidays during the year 1906, recognised by the Chamber under Charter-Parties and Shipping Orders, as holidays, according to the custom of the Port:—

1906.			
New Year	... 1st January	... Monday	... 1 day.
Bakri-Id	... 5th February	... Monday	... 1 "
Mohuram	... 6th March	... Tuesday	... 1 "
Holi	... 10th "	... Saturday	... 1 "
Good Friday	... 13th April	... Friday	... 1 "
Birthdays of His Majesties- The King-Emperor.	26th June	... Tuesday	... 1 "
Cocoanut Day	... 4th August	... Saturday	... 1 "
Divali	... 17th October	... Wednesday	... 1 "
Ramzan-Id	... 19th November	... Monday	... 1 "
Christmas	... 25th December	... Tuesday	... 1 "

By order of the Committee,

THE CHAMBER BUILDINGS, }
KARACHI, 10th February 1906. } C. H. CHETTIAM,
Secretary.

HOLIDAYS IN MADRAS.

HOLIDAYS DECLARED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS AND
ACCEPTED BY THE MADRAS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Official and Commercial Holidays, 1906.

[Abstract from the Fort St. George Gazette, dated 12th
December 1905.]

Under Section 25 of the Negotiable Instruments' Act (XXVI
of 1881), His Excellency the Governor in Council has declared the
following days to be public holidays for the year 1906 :-

Christmas.—(1905-06 latter part.) Monday, the 1st January.
Pongol.—Saturday and Monday, the 13th and 15th January.
Mahastavarathi.—Wednesday, the 21st February.
Telugu New Year's Day.—Saturday, the 24th March.
Tamil New Year's Day.—Friday, the 13th April.
Good Friday.—The 13th April.
Easter.—Saturday, the 14th, and Monday, the 16th, April.
King Emperor's Birthday.—Tuesday, the 26th June.
Avani Chathurthi.—Saturday, the 4th August.
Vinayaka Chathurthi.—Thursday, the 23rd August.
Sree Jayanthi.—Monday, the 10th September.
Mahalaya Amavasya.—Tuesday, the 18th September.
Ayudha Puja.—Wednesday, the 26th September.
Dipavali.—Wednesday, the 17th October.
Ramzan.—Saturday, the 17th November.
Christmas.—Tuesday and Wednesday, the 25th and 26th
Friday and Saturday, the 28th and 29th, and Monday
the 31st December.

N.B.—Of the above Holidays, the following are already legalised
by the Negotiable Instruments' Act :- New Year's Day,
Good Friday and Christmas Day.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, } ARTHUR E. LAWSON,
Madras, 15th December 1905. } Secretary,

HOLIDAYS IN BURMA.

I.—Public Holidays for 1906 declared by the Lieutenant-Governor under the
Negotiable Instruments' Act.

NOTIFICATION.

Dated Rangoon, the 23rd December 1905.

No. 343.—The Lieutenant-Governor declares the following
days to be public holidays during the year 1906 for the purposes
of the Negotiable Instruments' Act, 1881 (XXVI of 1881), in
addition to the days mentioned in section 25 of the Act, namely
Sunday the 1st January, the 13th April (Good Friday), and the
25th December (Christmas-day) :-

Holidays.	Date.	Number of Days.	Day of Week.
Full Moon of Tabung	8th March	1	Thursday.
Day after Good Friday	14th April	1	Saturday.
Easter Monday	16th April	1	Monday.
King-Emperor's Birthday	26th June	1	Tuesday.
Beginning of Buddhist Lent.	4th and 5th July	2	Wednesday and Thurs- day.
End of Buddhist Lent	1st and 2nd October	2	Monday and Tuesday.
Tazaungdaing	29th and 30th October	2	Monday and Tuesday.
Christmas Vacation	24th, 26th, 27th and 31st December.	4	Monday, Wednesday and Thursday.

II.—Holidays under Charter-Parties for the year 1906 sanctioned by the
Rangoon Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber recognizes as Charter-Party holidays, such days
as may be declared by the Custom house to be full holidays.

The following have been notified as Custom holidays :-

New Year, 1st January	1 day.
Full Moon of Tabung, 8th March	1 day.
Good Friday and day following	13th and 14th days.
14th April	2 days.
Easter Monday, 16th April	1 day.
Burmese New Year, 13th to 15th April	3 days.
King Emperor's Birthday, 26th June	1 day.
Beginning of Buddhist Lent, 4th and 5th July	2 days.
End of Buddhist Lent, 1st to 2nd October	2 "
Tazaungdaing, 29th and 30th October	2 "
Christmas vacation, 24th to 31st December	8 "
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The Chief Collector of Customs has undertaken that of the above holidays, not more than two shall run consecutively.

RANGOON,
27th December 1905.

By order,
C. CONES,
Secretary.

Ceylon Chamber of Commerce.

The following have been officially announced as holidays for the year 1906.

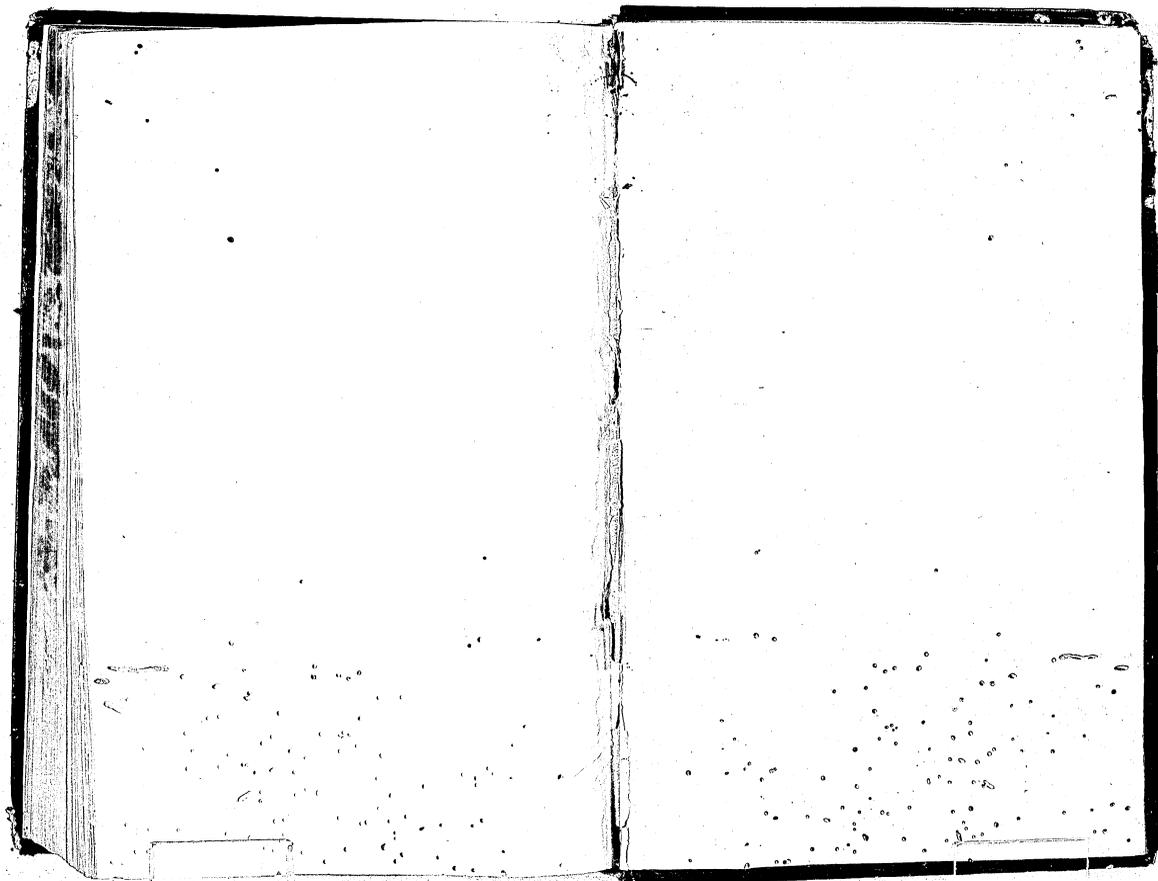
Public Holidays.	Bank Holidays.	Charter-Party Holidays.	Customs Holidays.
January 1st and 2nd* New Year.	January 1st and 2nd* New Year.	January 1st and 2nd* New Year.	January 1st and 2nd* New Year's Day.
January 13th. Thuni Thun Pongal Day.	January 13th. Thuni Thun Pongal Day.	January 13th. Thuni Thun Pongal Day.	February 2nd. Good Friday.
January 22nd. King's Accession Day.	April 18th to 17th.* Good Friday and Easter.	April 18th to 17th.* Good Friday.	April 18th. Easter Monday.
February 2nd. The Mohammedan Holy Festival.	May 7th. The First Full Moon of the Sinhalese Month Vesak.	April 18th. Hindu New Year.*	April 18th. Hindu New Year.*
February 2nd. The Mohammedan Holy Festival.	May 7th. The First Full Moon of the Sinhalese Month Vesak.	April 18th. Hindu New Year.*	April 18th. Hindu New Year.*
April 18th. Hindu New Year.*	June 4th. Prince of Wales' Birthday.	May 7th. The First Full Moon of the Sinhalese Month Vesak.	May 7th. The First Full Moon of the Sinhalese Month Vesak.
April 18th to 17th. Good Friday and Easter.*	July 1st. Special Holiday to Banks.	June 4th. Prince of Wales' Birthday.	June 4th. Prince of Wales' Birthday.
May 7th. The First Full Moon of the Sinhalese Month Vesak.	August 2nd. The Festival of the King's Birthday.	July 1st. Special Holiday to Banks.	August 2nd. The Festival of the King's Birthday.
May 24th. Accession Day.	October 14th. The Festival of the King's Birthday.	August 2nd. The Festival of the King's Birthday.	October 14th. The Festival of the King's Birthday.
June 4th. Accession Day.	November 24th. King's Birthday.	October 14th. The Festival of the King's Birthday.	November 24th to 25th.* Christmas.
June 4th. Accession Day.	December 24th to 25th.* Christmas.	November 24th. King's Birthday.	December 24th to 25th.* Christmas.
June 4th. Accession Day.		December 24th to 25th.* Christmas.	

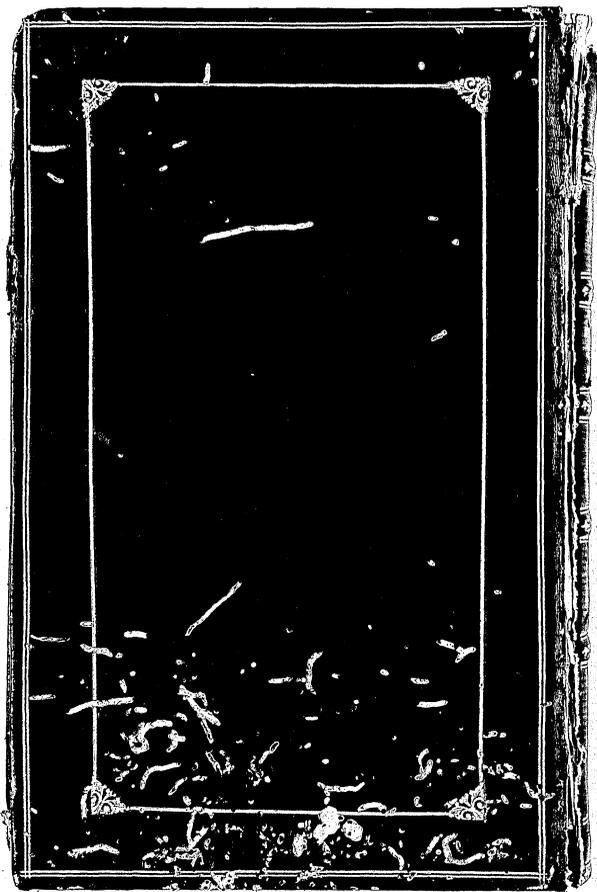
These Holidays are subject to alteration by H. E. the Governor.

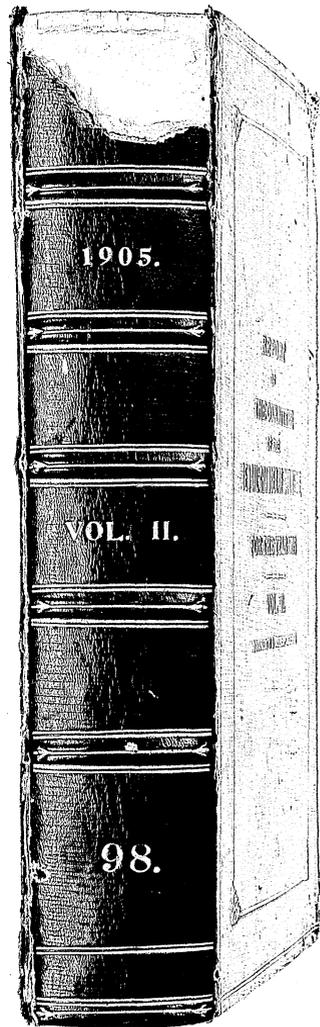
F. M. SIMSON,
Secretary.

* Both days inclusive.

The dates given for the Native Festivals are not definitely fixed. Timely notice regarding them will be found in the Government Gazette.







1905.

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