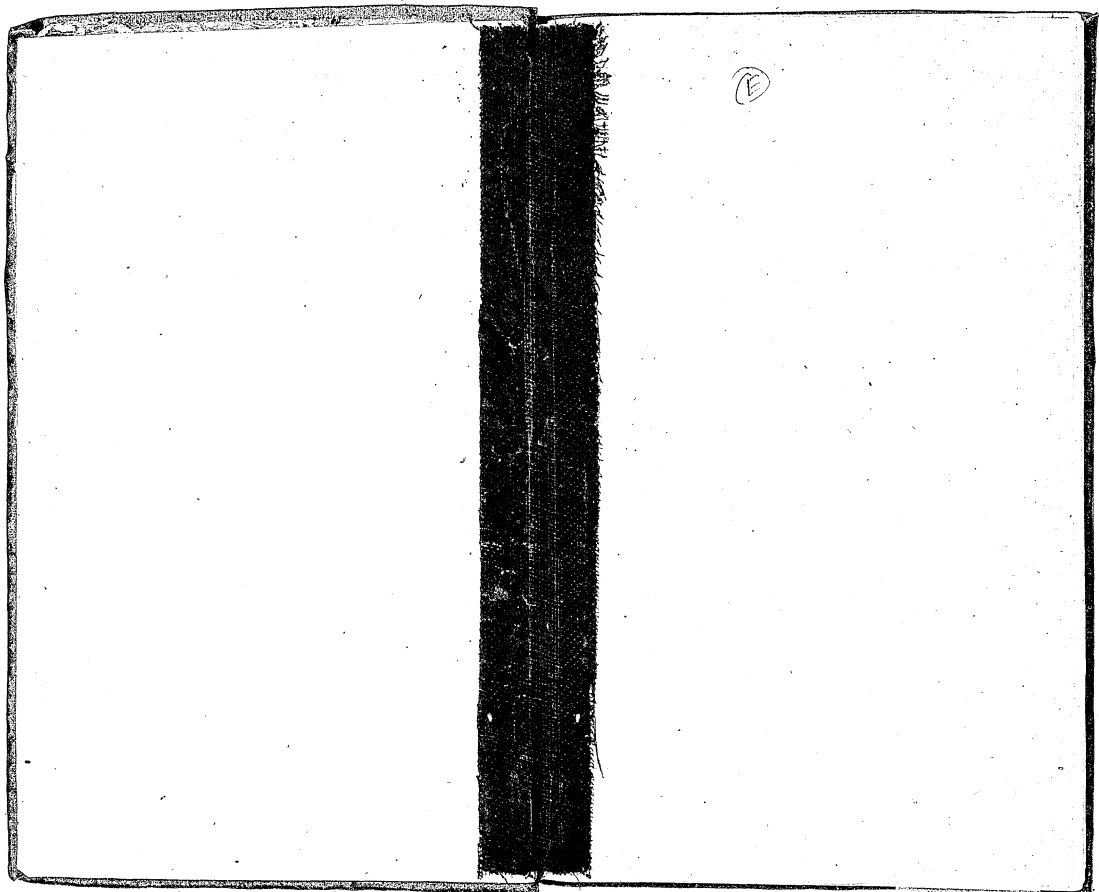


REPORT  
OF THE  
BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
FROM 1<sup>ST</sup> NOVEMBER 1867 TO 30<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 1868



# REPORT

OF

THE COMMITTEE

OF THE

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

---

From 1st November 1867 to 30th April 1868.

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Calcutta:

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*Proceedings of the Half-yearly General Meeting  
of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce held on  
Monday, the 1st June, 1868.*

F. G. ELDRIDGE, Esq., *Vice-President*, in the Chair.

THE Chairman in opening the proceedings said :—Gentlemen, owing to the recent departure of our late President, the Hon'ble Henry Crooke, the duty devolves upon me of placing before you the Report of the Committee who have had the honour of conducting the affairs of the Chamber during the past six months, and whose term of office expires to-day. I regret for your sake that the hon'ble gentleman (Mr. Crooke) was obliged to leave before this Meeting could be held, as he would have addressed you in a much abler manner than it will be in my power to do, and I can but feel that after an honorable career of thirty years as a merchant of Calcutta, anything which he might say would be entitled to a great deal more weight than what I shall be able to offer. I am sure that all of you will join in the regret which the Committee felt at the loss of such a valuable member. (Applause.)

The Report having been before you for a

week, and being lengthy, I presume it may be considered as read. You will notice among the various subjects which have come under our consideration the—I may almost say—*time-honoured* one of the River Trust is given the most prominent place, and it will doubtless be as satisfactory to you as it has been to your Committee to see that practical steps have at last been taken towards affording facilities for the landing and shipping of goods, which we are so urgently in need of. It is little enough, I grant you, but it is something, and there is finally a fair prospect of our being able, during the course of the current year, to unload and load a ship with some of those appliances which are to be found in every other civilised community, and without resorting to the tortuous modes which have existed ever since Calcutta has been a port, and on which we are still dependent. You will notice that, on the 10th March last, the Committee addressed the Government of Bengal giving their views as to the formation of a River Trust for carrying out a more comprehensive scheme of improvement which it was hoped and believed would soon be in progress, but I regret to say that since this Report was issued we have had reason to fear that at present but little action is being taken on this most important subject. Having authorized an outlay of five lakhs of rupees for the construction of four piers, the Supreme Government

seems disposed to postpone the time when a larger sum will be needed for the further improvement of the port. While millions are being spent annually all over Bengal and India for public works, it certainly seems surprising that such lethargy should exist in regard to improvements at our own doors, which will not benefit Calcutta alone, but indirectly the whole of Bengal. Our present energetic—and I may say public-spirited—Lieutenant-Governor certainly has an opportunity of achieving a popularity exceeding that which any of his predecessors have enjoyed, if it can be said that during his term of office, and owing to his exertions, Calcutta has obtained some of those facilities for the landing and shipping of goods which are to be found in every other part of the world. These works may be strictly classed as “reproductive,” and possibly to an extent far exceeding what people generally estimate. It seems, therefore, the greater pity that while public money is being spent so freely in other directions some of it should not be devoted to this most important project; or rather some more of it, for I have already said that an outlay of five lakhs has been authorized.

During the six months under review the weekly postal service *via* Bombay has been inaugurated, and, so far as the incoming mails are con-

cerned, the increased regularity which has lately marked the reception of our home letters must be considered satisfactory. I dare say, however, that the majority of you will coincide in voting the outward weekly service a nuisance, (*a laugh*) especially at this season of the year. When it was positively known that the increased rate of postage on overland letters would be enforced, steps were taken to obtain statistics on which to base a reasonable protest against such an unfortunate measure, and the result is before you in a letter from the Chamber addressed to the Secretary of State for India, dated the 14th April. During the time that was necessarily expended in getting this data together, I regret to say that the press felt called upon to frequently ask "what the Chamber was doing" and why they did not take up this subject. Such articles are calculated to throw discredit on our institution, and possibly to weaken what influence it may have;—the unfairness of them will be the more apparent when I tell you that, at the very time they were issued, the Editors of certainly two of our leading journals were made acquainted with the reason for the delay, and might have satisfied themselves that it was unavoidable. In this country, where the preponderating influence of officials is so great, and the voice of public opinion may be said to be almost struggling for existence,

it seems to me a mistake to, perhaps, partially neutralize the effect which the views of a large, intelligent, and independent body of men, such as compose the Chamber, may have, by continually casting slurs upon them for their alleged inactivity, especially when it has often turned out that the Committee have already moved in the very matters referred to. There is another point upon which a few remarks may not be out of place, and that is—the frequent enquiries one sees in the daily Press as to "why the Chamber does not do this" and "why the Chamber does not do that" in relation to matters which certainly cannot come exclusively under the head of commercial interests. It is doubtless very complimentary for the Chamber to be looked upon as the proper source from which all questions of a public nature should emanate, but I apprehend that this is not the object for which the institution was formed. A recent instance has occurred in which, while the Committee would have felt honored in initiating a movement with the view of forwarding an address to Her Majesty the Queen on the escape from assassination of H. R. H. the Duke of Edinburgh, they felt that it certainly was not a commercial sentiment that was required on that occasion, and it would, perhaps, be assuming too much responsibility to take up a question which properly belonged to all classes of the community. But when, in despair of the proper

people coming forward to inaugurate a meeting of this sort, application was made to the Committee to move in the matter, and they did so, they were then accused of being "better late than never" in a subject which certainly did not come within their province; and, possibly, so accused by some of the very people who should have come to the front. (*Laughter.*) I feel myself at liberty to make these remarks because my term of office expires to-day, and while criticisms of such a nature can no longer affect me as a member of the Committee, I think the Chamber should not be continually charged with taking no action in matters which do not actually concern it.

Referring again to the Report, at page 78 you will see an important subject in regard to the duty claimed by the Collector of Customs and the Board of Revenue on goods lost in the river. At page 84, it will be noted that the time allowed for application for a refund of duty on short shipments of goods has been extended by the Government to three working days after the ship has left the Port. At page 90, it will also be seen that the Port rule of November, 1864, regarding ships sending down their topgallant masts and spars during certain periods of the year, has been relaxed to a certain extent, which will prove very agreeable to many shipmasters and owners. I am sorry to say that, in reply to the letter of

the 20th of April, to the Government of Bengal, on the same page, regarding changes proposed in the 52nd Section of the Customs Act, a communication has been received since this report was in press, refusing to concur in the recommendations of the Chamber on grounds which are advocated by the Board of Revenue and the Collector of Customs. Believing the latter to be untenable, another representation has been addressed to His Honor, the Lieutenant-Governor, requesting a reconsideration of the subject; the entire correspondence will probably be placed before you in the next semi-annual report. Should the opposition to the wishes of the Chamber, which has been manifested by the officials alluded to, be continued, it will then lie with your Committee to decide as to the advisability of appealing to the Supreme Government, and obtaining the co-operation of the Chambers of Commerce at Bombay and Madras, which, I may add, has been already promised.

Everyone who read the late Financial Minister's statement must have at once detected the fallacy of his arguments in regard to the one aim extra duty which was levied on grain last year, when he pointed to the increased trade as a proof that the tax was not felt. He either ignored or was unaware of the fact that during 1865-66 the

grain crops were so short as to create a famine in certain districts; and to raise prices all over Bengal to a point which seriously interfered with the usual exports; and, therefore, during the past year of plenty, and low prices, shipments appeared relatively larger than they would otherwise have done. While fully aware of this, however, your Committee did not feel called upon to remonstrate against a continuance of this additional duty, as it was levied with the concurrence of your Chamber's representatives who were on the Tariff Committee of 1866, and it is not believed that it will seriously affect trade. It is a matter of congratulation that in our new Finance Minister we have such an able man as Sir Richard Temple; one who has filled with unusual ability the many high and honourable posts for which he has been chosen,—whose name is identified more or less with many of the most prominent events in this country during the past ten or twelve years—who is thoroughly conversant with the habits of the people, their opinions, their wants, and who has their confidence. If he has a surplus at the end of next year so large as to enable him to abandon any of the sources of revenue, perhaps then the Chamber may fairly ask for the repeal of the additional duty on grain on the admitted grounds of political economy—that the productions of a country should be taxed as lightly as the exigencies of the State will admit of. Mr. Massey having

left the country, it will be hardly necessary to more than allude to his very weak attempt—I think I may call it—to answer the arguments in the Chamber's letter, which was forwarded to Government, pointing out the other sources from which revenue might be derived. I do not think the honourable gentleman did himself much credit by the way in which he replied to those arguments, for he proved nothing whatever.

The increase in the number of accidents which have occurred to ships in the river has given rise to very serious apprehensions regarding the efficiency of the Pilot Service, and your Committee took steps to get information in order that they might inquire as to the advisability of introducing some reforms into the department. I am sorry to say that until to-day we have been unable to get anything. In a book which has been received at the last moment, I find that the rules for admitting pilots and leadsmen were apparently issued on the 24th November, 1853; and I do not see that they have since been revised at all. Rule 5 says "A candidate offering himself for examination touching his qualifications for the duties of pilot, or for leave to act as leadsmen in order to qualify, will be required to show, first, that he is 22 years of age; second, that he has been 7 years at sea; the last 2 as an officer; third, that

he has merited the good opinion of those under whom he had served for the last two years." Now, I fear there is reason to believe that these rules have not been strictly adhered to. Anything affecting the shipping arriving and departing from the port is a matter very seriously concerning underwriters and shippers of cargoes, and I am in hopes your next Committee will have an opportunity of dealing with it. Of course I cannot vouch for them, but I think it would be a very proper thing that they should look into this question and endeavour to enlist Government in their behalf to see that this Department is conducted as it should be. (*Hear, hear.*)

You will doubtless be pleased to hear that never in the history of the Chamber has it been in a more flourishing or prosperous condition than it is at the present time. Seventeen firms and individuals have been admitted as members during the past six months, subject to the usual confirmation at this meeting, and our monthly receipts are larger than they ever were before. Feeling that under such circumstances any steps which the Committee, with the concurrence of the members of the Chamber, might take towards healing the unfortunate differences which led to the secession of six influential firms some four years ago could not by any possibility be construed into a sense of weakness, or inability to maintain the position which the Chamber has always oc-

cupied, and believing that the united influence of the mercantile community is very necessary for the successful accomplishment of what we undertake, the Committee again brought forward a resolution which was adopted by the Council of the Chamber two years since, and approved of by the seceded firms, but which unfortunately did not at that time accomplish the object for which it was intended, owing to the insignificant majority in favor of the measure. This resolution, as you are aware, was circulated to all the members who were entitled to vote, and, owing to the almost unanimous expression of opinion elicited in its favor, I am happy to inform you that Messrs. Jardine, Skinner and Co., Lyall, Rennie and Co., Wattenbach, Heilgers and Co., and Williamson Brothers and Co. have accepted your invitation, forwarded through the Committee, to rejoin the Chamber—a result which I believe will be very satisfactory to the majority here present.

It is hardly necessary for me to refer to the various other matters in the report, in addition to which many others of a more trivial nature have come before the Committee during the past six months. The Committee have endeavoured to give their best attention to all these subjects, and have been ably seconded by their officiating Secretary, Mr. Shekleton. I leave the report, Gentle-

men, in your hands, and trust you will approve of the action of the Committee during the past six months. (*Loud applause.*) This being the annual election, perhaps, it would be as well if scrutineers were appointed.

Mr. Murray proposed that Mr. S. Danby and Mr. H. H. Sutherland be appointed scrutineers to report the result of the election for officers during the ensuing year.

The Chairman observed that before the result of the scrutiny was declared, it had just been suggested that, in consequence of the unusually large number of members who had been admitted during the last six months, it might be deemed advisable to postpone the election for a week, to allow the new members in question to vote and to be voted for. He (the Chairman) thought that the course proposed might be followed.

Mr. Murray saw difficulties in the way—he apprehended the Rules of the Chamber were explicit on the point, and they were bound to act in conformity with the Rules.

The Chairman read Rule 7 which was to the following effect:—"The business and funds of the Chamber shall be managed by a Committee of 7 members, consisting of a President and Vice-President, and five members, to be elected annu-

ally at the General Meeting of the Chamber in the month of May." Unfortunately we have not on this occasion adhered strictly to rule. (*Laughter.*)

Mr. Murray again gave it as his opinion that the course proposed was not in order: he understood that not only the election of the new members, but also that of the seceded firms had to be confirmed at this meeting, until which time they were not members, while under the rules the election was to be held in May: it was true that this was the 1st of June, but the 31st May having been Sunday, the Committee should have one day's grace.

The Chairman then called attention to another rule to the effect that candidates for admission might be elected by the Committee provisionally, such election being subject to confirmation at the next ensuing general meeting. What the members present were then asked to do was this: viz., to confirm the election of 17 firms and individuals who had been elected in that manner—that is, proposed and seconded by two members, and elected by the Committee subject to the confirmation of that meeting. But with reference to the four seceded firms, they had been invited to rejoin by 63 votes out of 66, and were, therefore, in an entirely different position—were, in fact, members of the

Chamber two weeks ago, and as much entitled to vote or be voted for as any one else; if this meeting was asked to confirm their admission it would be equivalent to asking the members to do verbally what nearly the whole of them did in writing a few days before.

Mr. O. Von Ernsthauseu saw nothing in the Rules to preclude these new members from voting, nor to prevent the postponement of the scrutiny for a week to enable them to do so.

Mr. Peter Anderson said as a member he had, as he understood it, been called to the meeting to consider the report, and he did not perceive any reference to the seceded members in that document. In his view they had first to decide whether the report should be received, and then they could go on to any other question, if necessary.

A discussion on the point continued, in which several members took part, when it was proposed by Mr. James Murdoch, seconded by Mr. John Cowie—

“That the Report of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce for the half-year ended 30th April, 1868, be received and adopted.”

*Carried unanimously.*

Mr. A. Stirling next proposed, and Mr. Temple Willeox seconded—

“That the Committee’s conditional election of Messrs. A. Walker and G. Fournier, J. Thomas & Co., Huber & Co., E. D. Latapie & Co., Ullmann, Hirschhorn & Co., Wienholt Brothers, Macknight & Co., John Atkinson & Co., Mr. S. H. Robinson, Captain J. Paterson, *Superintendent of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company*, Mr. R. Stevenson, *Local Agent of the Hong-Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation*, Mr. S. Cochrane, *Manager of the Agra Bank, Limited*, Mr. Elias S. Gubbay, and Mr. G. M. Blacker, and the re-election of Messrs. Grindlay & Co., and Mr. R. Macallister, *Agent of the Tudor Company*, as members of the Chamber, be confirmed.”

*Carried unanimously.*

It was then proposed by Mr. A. G. Graham and seconded by Mr. John Cowie—

“That the election of office bearers should be postponed for a week, in order that the seventeen firms, admitted during the half-year, should have the opportunity of recording their votes and of being themselves elected to office.”

Mr. Murray said he would beg to propose an amendment. According to the rules they could

not in his view postpone the election. Without in any way casting a slur upon the new members he might say that the Chamber were bound, as long as it had rules, strictly to abide by them. He would be very willing to second any resolution to alter the rules, but, as he could not coincide in the resolution proposed, he would move as an amendment—

“That as the foregoing resolution is contrary to the rules of the Chamber, which state that the election shall be held in May, and any change in the bye-laws shall be only made at a Special General Meeting to be held after three months’ previous notice, the votes, as already recorded, be considered decisive.”

Mr. Ernsthausen adhered to his opinion that it was competent to postpone the election to admit of the new members recording their votes.

Mr. Sutherland entirely coincided with Mr. Murray, and would second the amendment, which, being put to the vote, was declared to be carried by a majority of 2, the original motion being therefore lost.

The result of the scrutiny was then declared by Mr. S. Danby, as follows:—

James Rone, Esq., *President*.

F. G. Eldridge, Esq., *Vice-President*.

A. G. Graham, Esq.; O. Von Ernsthausen, Esq.; Seth A. Apear, Esq.; P. T. Ralli, Esq.\*  
H. Reinhold, Esq.; *Members of Committee*.

The Chairman said he was duly sensible of the confidence that had been reposed in him, and so long as he could spare the time he should be happy to do all in his power to forward the interests of the Chamber. (*Loud applause*.)

Mr. Murray proposed and Mr. Danby seconded “that the cordial thanks of the Chamber be given to the Committee for their services during the past half-year.”

*Carried unanimously.*

The Chairman intimated that a short time since Messrs. E. E. Petrocchino and Co. wrote to the Chamber regarding the difficulty which was felt in recovering from either the captains or agents of vessels demurrage on cargo boats. The Committee suggested the best remedy they thought possible, with a request that the matter should be brought before this general meeting.

Mr. D. Convela, on behalf of the firm of Messrs. Petrocchino, desired that the letter of the firm

\* Mr. Ralli being unable to serve, Mr. J. M. Rone, who was next in order of votes, accepted the office.

representing the nature of their grievance be referred to. The letter was to the following effect :—

To A. B. SHEKLETON, Esq.,

Offg. Secy., Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

SIR,—We beg to draw your attention to the very defective manner in which claims by shippers against agents of vessels for demurrage are settled, and request that you will place the matter before the Committee of the Chamber for their opinion, and to ascertain whether no remedy can be effected to prevent the heavy losses which are daily being made by shippers from agents refusing to pay demurrages.

By several decisions of the Small Cause Court, which have been confirmed by the High Court, it has been ruled that agents are not liable for claims of this nature, consequently, the shipper's only chance of recovering demurrages actually disbursed by them is to sue the captain, and in nine cases out of ten, although the bill may be sent in to the agents in time for examination by the master, they (the agents) delay till the moment of the vessel's departure to make known whether the captain accepts or refuses to pass the claim ; by which means, in the event of his refusing, which is frequently the case, no opportunity can be had of applying to the Small Cause Court ere the vessel leaves the port.

We beg that you will place the subject before the Committee for their consideration as to the measures to be adopted in future to prevent such unfairness to shippers.—We remain, &c.,

(P.P.) E. E. PETROCCHINO & Co.

(Sd.) S. E. PETROCCHINO.

Calcutta, 6th May, 1868.

Mr. Murray was inclined to think that the agent of the ship was responsible for the demurrage, and he could himself speak from experience of the serious nature of the complaint under notice.

The Secretary read the reply of the Chamber to Messrs. Petrocchino, which is as follows :—

MESSRS. E. E. PETROCCHINO & Co.

DEAR SIRS,—Your letter dated the 6th instant has been considered by the Committee of the Chamber, who quite agree with you as to the expediency of some measure being adopted to enable shippers of goods to recover demurrage claims with greater facility.

As the general half-yearly meeting of the Chamber will be held on the 1st proximo, it appears to the Committee that it will afford a good opportunity for a public discussion of the question, and they will accordingly give notice of this intention in their circular calling the meeting. Your firm,

they assume, will be prepared to bring the subject forward on that occasion.

Meantime, a member of the Committee suggests for your consideration the practice of his firm, *viz.*, sending *every* morning to the agents of the ship, for settlement, the claim for the previous day's demurrage.—Yours, &c.

(Sd.) A. B. SHEKLETON,

Offg. Secy.

A desultory discussion here ensued as to which party, the agent or the master of the vessel, was liable at law for such demurrage charges, in which the Chairman, Messrs. Reinhold, Murray, Smith and other members engaged.

Mr. Ernsthause related his experience of a case in point, in which, having threatened the agent of the ship with an action for the amount, he ultimately succeeded in compromising the matter by consenting to receive half the sum claimed. In his opinion a claim for demurrage was a difficult one to establish in any court, as it invariably turned upon evidence, and not unfrequently a good deal of hard swearing was resorted to, which in many instances tended to defeat the claim.

As the best way of deciding on the preferable course to pursue to recover such claims, Mr. Seth A. Apear proposed, and Mr. D. Smith, seconded :—

"That the question regarding recovery of demurrage on cargo boats sent alongside ships be circulated by the Committee amongst the members of the Chamber for expressions of opinions as to the best manner of treating the subject."

*Carried unanimously.*

A vote of thanks was passed to the Chair, and the meeting separated.

A. B. SHEKLETON,

*Offg. Secretary.*

## BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE HALF-YEAR

ENDED 30TH. APRIL, 1868.

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

### River Trust.

This most important matter has been constantly before the Committee, and has had their earnest attention. The last half-yearly report informed the members of the Chamber that steps had been taken, both by letter and a personal interview, to bring the attention of the Government of Bengal to the urgent necessity for taking prompt measures to improve the river bank, and that His Honor the Lieutenant Governor had promised his cordial co-operation in the matter. The result has been that on the 1st of February a contract was entered into, at a total cost of five lakhs, for 4 screw pile jetties, 6 steam cranes, 6 hoists, 8

covered sheds and the necessary rails, waggons, &c., the whole to be completed by May 1st, 1869, and two of the piers with cranes, sheds, &c., to be ready for use on or before the 1st. of February next. The masonry work has been commenced, and two of the abutments are already above ordinary high tide. The arrangements are intended to be of the most complete description, enabling ships to lie alongside of the jetties at all stages of the tide, and to discharge their cargoes with the aid of the steam hoists, cranes, &c.; the goods can be placed in trollies alongside of the vessels, and run under a covered way to the goods sheds, passed by the Customs officers, and delivered to the carts with very little delay. It is understood that these steps have been taken so that partial relief may be afforded without waiting for the complete formation of the proposed Board of Commissioners, or Trustees, which will, your Committee believe, be appointed to carry out a more comprehensive scheme for the general improvement of the port; and viewed in this light—if considered as an augury of further movement in a similar direction—the action of the Government is most satisfactory. The following correspondence will shew that the subject of the organization of a Board of Commissioners has had the attention of the Government of India, the Government of Bengal, and your Committee

too during the past few months, and, it is to be hoped that before the next semi-annual meeting of the Chamber is held this long mooted and most important matter will have assumed a definite shape. The Committee are happy to say they believe that His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor and Mr. H. Leonard, the late Officiating Chief Engineer to the Government of Bengal in the Public Works Department, are both fully alive to the necessity of prompt action in regard to the larger scheme; it is owing to the Lieutenant Governor's exertions that the works in progress have been so promptly undertaken, and it is hoped that His Honor will continue to exert his powerful influence in pushing on the question.

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

*Calcutta, the 21st February, 1868.*

Referring to the letter from the Chamber of Commerce

Minute dated the 2nd December 1867, by the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal on the proposed amendment of Act X. of 1866 of the Bengal Legislative Council, for the improvement of the Port of Calcutta.  
From Government of India, Public Works Department, No. 87C dated the 19th February 1868.

to Mr. Dampier's address, dated the 30th September last, I am now desired to forward to the Chamber a copy of the correspondence marginally noted; and to invite an early expression of the opinion of the Chamber on the suggestions contained in

the letter from the Government of India, No. 87C, dated the 13th instant, and more especially on those in paragraphs 3, 7, and 8.

2. With respect to the latter two paragraphs, I am to say that it seems to the Lieutenant-Governor desirable that express provision should at once be made by law for securing a return for the large expenditure which it will be proposed to undertake. It would appear, however, that such a provision may be introduced either in the form which it assumes in the present Act of the Bengal Council, or, as suggested by the Government of India, in the form of a general tax on the whole commerce of the Port, the only substantial difference between the two apparently being that in the latter case it would be left optional with ships, notwithstanding that the general tax would be levied on their cargo, to make use of the wharves, jetties, &c. or not, instead of its being compulsory on them to do so as it is made by the present Act. The Lieutenant-Governor does not feel sure how far it would be practicable under this arrangement to levy the tax from boats and inland country vessels which is provided for by Sections XLIX. to LI. of the present Act.

3. With reference to the concluding paragraph of your letter under acknowledgment, I am desired to state, for the information of the Chamber, that the sanction of the Government of India has been given to the construction of four jetties and sheds at an estimated cost of about 5 lakhs of Rupees, and that a contract for the execution of the work has been concluded. Mr. Leonard's proposed improvement of a portion of the river bank for the accommodation of country boats will also be carried out at once.

*Minute by the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.*

In proposing an amendment of Act X. of 1866, the

principal points which it is necessary to consider seem to be these :—

1. The composition of the Board or Committee of Management.
2. The mode of appointing them.
3. Their functions and powers.
4. The provision of funds for carrying out works of improvement.
5. The agency for constructing the works.
6. The position of the Government.

The last point it seems obvious will be mainly determined by the decision which may be come to as to the material question—how funds for the works are to be provided. And this question indeed must in a great degree influence the whole character of the arrangements to be made.

After full consideration, I am myself strongly inclined to the opinion that the best course will be for Government to advance the whole money required for the works, provision being made by arrangements, similar to those contained in Act X. of 1866, for raising such a revenue from the works as shall suffice for the payment of interest on the outlay, for the efficient maintenance and management of the works, and, perhaps, also for a sinking fund to redeem the first outlay.

I can perceive no advantage in such a case as this in carrying out the works by capital raised under a Government guarantee rather than by money directly advanced by Government. In either case the Government will require to have full control over the expenditure, but in the

latter case the responsibility of the Government will be more direct and complete than it is under the guarantee system. This seems to me to be an advantage.

Assuming, then, that the Government will advance the money required for improving the Port of Calcutta, I would further recommend that the construction of the works should be undertaken by the Government, and that as they become ready for use they should be made over to the Board or Committee of Management in, whom, subject to a certain general control by Government, should be vested the entire management of all wharves, jetties, ware-houses, tramways and other works, and of the revenues derived therefrom. To this Board or Committee I would also give the duty of originally selecting and determining what works are to be constructed, and in what order, their decisions being subject to the final orders of Government.

With respect to the composition of the Committee\* or Board of Management, I am of opinion that it may, with advantage, be constituted as follows:—

- Four Government servants.
- Five Members of the mercantile and trading community.
- One Member specially representing the Municipality.

Of the four Government servants, one should be the Chairman of the Commissioners; and eventually, though not, I think, for some time to come, it may be found necessary that this should be a gentleman with no other occupation. Another of the Government servants should be an Engineer, a third an officer of the Customs Department,

and the fourth an officer of the Marine Department. It seems to me unnecessary to appoint more than one Commissioner *specially* to represent the Municipality, for the other nine Commissioners, both the Government servants and those from the commercial and trading community, will most of them be Justices for the Town of Calcutta, and will certainly all of them have an interest in municipal management and taxation. I presume it to be probable that, under any plan of appointment, the Chairman of the Justices would be selected as the Commissioner to represent the Municipality.

With respect to the mode of appointing the five non-official Commissioners, and the representative of the Municipality, there will, perhaps, be some difference of opinion, and it is a point that I think may be fitly left for determination by the Legislative Council, to whom will be afforded full opportunity of ascertaining the views and opinions of all persons concerned.

As to the functions and powers of the Commissioners, I have already indicated in a general way what I consider they should be. As regards the practical management and use of the works to be constructed, I think that their authority should be complete; but as regards the tolls and rates to be levied, maxima rates should of course be fixed as now by law, and within those maxima rates the Commissioners should fix the rates to be levied, subject to the sanction of Government. Assuming as above that the works are to be constructed by means of public money, it is obviously right that this power should be reserved to Government.

I submit this as a mere outline of arrangements, which,

it appears to me, may be advantageously substituted for the existing arrangement under Act X. of 1866, which arrangement has proved entirely inoperative owing to the admitted inability of the Justices to raise money for effecting the objects of the Act. Most of the provisions of Act X. of 1866 will probably be found, with very little alteration, to be susceptible of application to the new Agency now proposed.

The essential alterations of the law will consist in the creation of a specially selected body of Commissioners, instead of, as now, a Committee of Justices of the Peace, in providing for the execution of the necessary works by public money, and consequently for a fuller control by Government in respect of the expenditure to be incurred, and the actual construction of the works to be undertaken. It only remains to say further that, in the event of the Government of India giving its assent to an arrangement of the nature above stated, it will be necessary that special provision should be annually made for the requisite funds, irrespective altogether of the general budget provision allotted out of Revenue for Public Works General in Bengal. It will, I think, also be desirable that the professional control and execution of the works should be separate from, and independent of, the General Public Works Establishment in Bengal.

*From Govt. of India to Govt. of Bengal.  
Calcutta, the 13th February, 1868.*

I am directed to acknowledge receipt of your letters Nos. 6731, and 114, dated respectively 20th. December 1867, and 11th. January 1868, regarding the improvement

of the Port of Calcutta and the Agency under which should be carried out, and in reply am to state that the Governor General in Council agrees generally in the views entertained by the Lieutenant-Governor as to the conditions to be observed in constituting a fresh agency for this purpose, and desires me to request that His Honor will be so good as to cause the necessary Bill to be prepared, which, perhaps, His Honor might introduce himself into the Legislative Council of the Governor General.

2. There are one or two points, however, which appear to call for remark, and on these I am to offer the following observations for the consideration of the Lieutenant-Governor :—

3. First, as to the extent of the responsibility to be entrusted to the new Commission. His Excellency in Council is in favor of limiting, as far as practicable, the exercise of executive functions to the Chairman or whatever other designation may be selected for the head of the Commission, leaving the other members to exercise purely consultative functions with respect to the arrangement of the works, the system of management, the tariff of charges, and any other matters which the Government may refer to them, all of which should be distinctly specified in the Act creating the Commission. His Excellency in Council is further of opinion that it would be better to abstain from laying down any fixed number of Commissioners; it will suffice if it be specified that at no time shall there be less than three of them, the local Government being entrusted with full power to determine the number to be appointed, and the class of

the community (whether official or non-official) from which they shall be drawn.

4. In cases where the Chairman differs from the rest of the Commissioners, he should be empowered to ask for the orders of the local Government before acting, and the decision of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor should be final and conclusive.

5. Under the arrangement now contemplated it will be unnecessary to introduce any clauses dealing with the property to be created, as that will now belong to the Government, and the new Bill need only define the system of administering the property.

6. The Government of India, I am to add, see no objection to the Chairman of the proposed Commission, or the Engineer under him, being allowed to communicate direct with the Chief Engineer and Secretary in the Public Works Department of the Government of Bengal.

7. I am, in conclusion, to suggest that, in framing the new Bill, it will not be desirable to introduce compulsory clauses such as those which formed Nos. 47 to 51 of Act X of 1866. It appears to the Governor General in Council that it will be best to trust to the success and convenience of the arrangements to induce the shipping to use the jetties and other means provided to facilitate the landing and lading of goods. It is not likely that private competition will arise to interfere with the action of a public body in such a matter; and at all events it seems better that any legislation in this direction should be reserved till its necessity is apparent.

8. It is quite possible that, under certain circum-

stances, it might become necessary, for the preservation of order in the Port, to make some rules which might have some such complexion as these compulsory clauses. But the object with which they were introduced into the Act seems to be to create an income, and this whether the real convenience of the ships needed the new works or not. The Governor General in Council is willing to concede the propriety of allowing such works to be carried out in anticipation of their proving useful to trade; but the best way to make the trade pay for them, if there be a loss at first, would appear to be to put some general duty or tax on the whole commerce of the Port. The community may, His Excellency in Council thinks, legitimately be called upon, as a whole, to provide the means of constructing works which shall be of general utility, and it is no sufficient ground for exempting an individual that he personally does not benefit to the full by the arrangements for which, in common with other citizens, he has to pay.

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

*Calcutta, the 10th March, 1868.*

I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1190, dated the 21st. ultimo, and annexures, on the subject of the improvement of the Port of Calcutta, inviting an expression of their opinion on the suggestions contained in a letter No. 87C, dated the 13th. ultimo, from the Government of India to the Public Works Department of the Bengal Government.

2. Reserving that communication for subsequent notice, the Committee first desire to record their perfect

concurrence in the views taken by His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor as embodied in his minute, dated 2nd December 1867, with the following slight modifications:—

They are of opinion that instead of the Board of Management being constituted of ten *only*, there should be fifteen Commissioners, *viz.*

Four Government officials.

One member specially representing the municipality.

One to represent the municipality of Howrah; and

Nine members of the mercantile and trading community.

3. It will be seen that the five first named Commissioners are the same as His Honor has himself suggested, and the Committee agree in the details of his selection; in view, however, of the contemplated improvements on this side of the river having some influence on the opposite bank, and as in time it may even be thought desirable to extend the facilities for landing and shipping goods to Howrah, they think that that municipality should also be represented. With regard to the representation of the mercantile and trading community, the Committee are in favor of the number advocated for these reasons:—

1st. It must be admitted that the merchants of Calcutta are more directly interested in, and feel the necessity for the proposed improvements more than any other branch of the general community, and from their daily experience are better capable of judging as to the nature of the facilities which should be adopted for the landing and shipping of goods, and their protection while in transit from ship to shore.

2nd. It must be borne in mind that the mercantile Commissioners who may be chosen will probably

be gentlemen with large private interests to look after, and, while willing to devote a portion of their time to the public good, especially in the prosecution of a work from which they are likely personally to derive considerable benefit, it can scarcely be expected that, with the heavy calls on their time incident to the nature of their occupations, they can be so regular in their attendance at the meetings, or give such undivided consideration to the subject as may reasonably be looked for from the Government officers. It is, therefore, expedient to provide for a fair representation of commerce at all sittings of the Board.

3rd. Out of the nine mercantile members suggested, at least two should be taken from the native community.

4. The other modification of His Honor's minute which the Committee of the Chamber propose has reference to the mode of appointing the nine non-official Commissioners, and they can only confirm the views expressed in their letter, dated the 3rd December, 1863, to the Officiating Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Public Works Department, of which such portion as the present Committee are prepared to advocate is here introduced for convenience of reference, with verbal amendments and omissions to meet the altered intentions of Government:—

1. 'The power and duty of carrying into effect the provisions of any Act that may be passed for the purposes of the improvement of the Port should be vested in, and performed by, a *Body of Commissioners* consisting of fifteen (15)

members, to be styled "*The Commissioners for the improvement of the Port of Calcutta.*"

2. 'Of the said fifteen (15) members four (4) should be nominated by Government as representing its interests, as is done in the case of the "Clyde Navigation Trust," in the Engineering, Marine, and Customs' Departments; two (2) should represent the municipalities of Calcutta and Howrah; and nine (9) should be representatives of the mercantile and shipping interests of Calcutta, elected by the Chamber of Commerce, but from the mercantile and shipping interests, generally, and not necessarily from the members of the Chamber only; the Committee think it may fairly be considered that the mercantile and shipping classes have a greater interest than any others in the improvement of the Port of Calcutta; and they, therefore, propose that a majority of members of the Board should be chosen from them.
3. 'There should be a chairman and deputy-chairman of the Commissioners, who should be elected on the principle adopted in the election of the chairman and deputy-chairman of the Justices of Calcutta, viz., that the former shall be appointed by the Government of Bengal, and the latter by the Commissioners—subject to the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor.
4. 'That the Commissioners to be chosen by the Chamber of Commerce shall be elected in the manner usually observed in the election of its own office-bearers; that they shall go out of office annually, but be eligible for re-election; and va-

cancies occasioned by death, resignation, or any other cause, filled up immediately in the manner adopted by the Chamber under like circumstances.

5. 'If any Commissioner, so elected, shall be directly or indirectly interested or concerned in any contract or work or office of the Commissioners, he shall cease to be Commissioner; and his office thereupon become vacant.
6. 'The Commissioners should be authorised to appoint Committees of their number with such powers and under such instructions, directions, and limitations, as may appear to the Commissioners expedient.
7. 'The Commissioners should have the power to determine, from time to time, subject to the approval of Government, what port dues shall be levied on and in respect of all vessels entering or using the river, and what rates shall be levied on all goods shipped or unshipped in the river, or placed or stored in sheds, and warehouses belonging to the Commissioners; and for the use of wharves, cranes, stages, and other works constructed for the convenience of the trade of the port.'
5. In answer to the letter from the Government of India to which you have invited attention, I am directed to say that the Committee entirely dissent from the 3rd. paragraph of that communication, in which it is stated that "His Excellency in Council is in favor of limiting, "as far as practicable, the exercise of executive functions "to the Chairman, leaving the other members to exercise "purely consultative functions with respect to the arrange-

"ment of the works, the system of management, the tariff of charges, and any other matters which the Government may refer to them."

6. Were this principle adopted, the effect would be to render the Commissioners, other than the Chairman, practically without power in the administration of the port improvements. The Committee consider it would be difficult to induce independent members of the commercial community to put themselves in such a position, and believe that if His Excellency's suggestion were carried out they would prefer to leave the Commission for the improvement of the river bank *entirely* in the hands of Government rather than assume a *quasi-responsibility* from a nominal control over the direction of affairs, while, in reality, having no voice in determining the action to be taken.

7. From the concurrence expressed generally in the ideas of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, it may be inferred that the Committee of the Chamber do not agree with para. 6 of the letter from the Government of India. In order to obtain a *prompt and steady* prosecution of the works for the improvement of the port, it seems to them desirable that a special grant, should be made each year for this purpose, quite distinct from the estimate for Public Works General in Bengal, and that the executive control should be perfectly independent, so as to avoid the *possibility* of delay which might be occasioned by placing it under the supervision of a Department with already a vast amount of work to attend to.

8. With reference to paras. 7 & 8, the Committee coincide in the opinion of His Excellency in Council, feel-

ing confident that, so far as ships are concerned, the expedition and advantages which the wharves and jetties would offer for landing and shipping goods are so apparent as to render compulsory legislation unnecessary to ensure their being used.

9. In the case of boats and inland country vessels it might, perhaps, be advisable to adhere to the compulsory clauses provided in Sections 49 to 51 of the present Act, as soon as the proposed accommodation referred to in the concluding paragraph of your letter under acknowledgment has been effected, for it does not appear so certain to the Committee that the owners of up-country boats would otherwise have recourse to the advantages constructed for their convenience and despatch if they had to pay for using the same.

10. It would be manifestly unfair to levy a tax on tonnage and merchandise in anticipation of improvements, and it seems proper to the Committee of the Chamber that the interest on the loan from Government should be added to the principal until such time as the proposed works are either completed or sufficiently advanced to accommodate the shipping which visits the port; a *general* tax should then be imposed on *all* ships, as well as upon their inward and outward cargoes; meantime, as the works progress and are used by vessels and cargo, (as they undoubtedly will be) a similar levy might be laid on ships and merchandise *availing* of the jetties or other facilities afforded.

11. The effect of the foregoing suggestion would undoubtedly be to increase eventually the rate of taxation which will have to be levied to pay interest on the loan,

current expenses for keeping the works in repair, and the creation of a sinking fund to liquidate the debt; but it may be confidently asserted that a higher tax will be far more cheerfully paid by the mercantile community when deriving actual benefit from the improved facilities of the river bank, than in anticipation of such a result. It can be readily understood that a general tax on ships and commerce, if imposed at once, would be highly onerous and objectionable to shipowners, merchants, and others, who are suffering from existing evils, as it is not only possible, but highly probable, that by the time the works are accomplished the interest many of them now possess in the port will have ceased, and they would, therefore, be paying for benefits which, while of immense advantage to their successors, confer none whatever on themselves.

#### **The New Postal Service.**

The half-year under review has been marked by the establishment of more regular and frequent postal communication with England, a desideratum which has long been felt by the merchants of both countries. In November last the Home Government completed a contract with the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company which included the conveyance of a weekly mail to and from Bombay, and which, it is believed, would have given general satisfaction but for the very low rate of speed agreed to,—a letter thereby taking 23 days in transit between Bombay and London—and the length of time the

contract extends over with conditions so inadequate to the large subsidy paid.

A telegram from London, dated the 21st November, informing the public that the day fixed for the despatch of the weekly mails was Friday, caused considerable dissatisfaction to the community of this city, as, supposing the message to have reference to their departure from Bombay, it would necessitate the Calcutta mails being closed on Sundays. Your Committee, accordingly, lost no time in pointing out to the Director General of the Post Office of India the great inconvenience of such an arrangement, and expressed their earnest desire that both the Saturday half-holiday and Sunday should not be interfered with. Subsequent arrangements were made by which the Calcutta mail closed on Mondays; and the difficulty merchants experienced in disposing of their correspondence in one day having been further represented to Mr. Montearth, that gentleman has since organized an "Express" closing on Tuesday.

The following is the principal correspondence on the subject :—

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

*Calcutta, the 3rd-December, 1867.*

A late telegram, dated 21st ultimo from London, in-

formed the public that "the new contract for the conveyance of the Indian mails includes the despatch of a Bombay mail every Friday."

The wording of this message has given rise to sundry conjectures as to whether the arrangement has reference to the outward or homeward mail, or to both; and the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce direct me to request you will do them the favor to state if any absolute understanding exists in this respect.

The great inconvenience which the commercial community of this city would experience by the homeward mail leaving Bombay on Fridays—necessitating as it would the despatch of the Calcutta mail on Sundays, at all events until the railway communication between the two places is complete—need only be indicated by the Committee to ensure the ready exercise of your influence in obtaining a more convenient and fitting day for the closing of the weekly mail, should their surmise, with regard to the pending arrangement for the Bombay homeward service, prove correct.

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

*Calcutta, the 4th December, 1867.*

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication dated the 3rd instant, and to state in reply that I have received as yet no information which would enable me to say positively whether the telegram<sup>a</sup> quoted in your letter refers to the day fixed for the departure of the weekly mail from London or from Bombay.

<sup>a</sup> "The new contract for the conveyance of the Indian mails includes the despatch of a Bombay mail every Friday."

2. I do not, however, think that the day of departure from Bombay would be fixed without a preliminary reference to this country: and the fact that the adoption of Friday as the Bombay date would, in the present state of postal communication, make Sunday the day for the departure of the Calcutta mail renders it, in my opinion, all the more improbable that the telegram in question refers to the day on which the mail is intended to leave Bombay.

3. I have addressed the Government of India on the subject.

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

*Calcutta, the 30th December, 1867.*

I annex for your information an extract from a letter just received from the Superintendent of the P. & O. Company, and will be much obliged by your replying, if in your power, to the following questions:—

Will the mail intended to leave Bombay every Saturday be closed there in the morning or evening of that day?

On what week day and at what hour will the same mails be closed in Calcutta?

Will the express mail be continued under the new arrangement, or will the *entire* mail close on one day?

<sup>a</sup> "By the mail just arrived I have received definite advice that the departures under the new mail contract will commence from this port on Wednesday, the 19th February, and from Bombay on Saturday,

*the 29th February. From and including those dates, the steamers will leave Calcutta every alternate Wednesday, and Bombay every Saturday."*

*From Post Master General, Bengal, to Personal Assistant to the Director General of the Post Office of India.*

*Calcutta, the 31st December, 1867.*

In reply to your docket, No. 3203 of yesterday's date, requesting information on certain points connected with the mail arrangements under the new contract with the Peninsular and Oriental Company, I have the honor to inform you that the only intimation on the subject which has as yet been received by me is from a letter from the General Post Office, in which it is merely stated that, commencing in February next, mails for England will be made up at Bombay on a fixed day in every week.

By a Time Table, forwarded with the above letter, I observe that Saturday is the day entered, and 10 A. M. the time for the departure of the mail steamer from Bombay. Under that arrangement the mails for the steamer will have to be closed in Calcutta on the Saturday. I have heard nothing of the discontinuance of the express mail under the new arrangement, which will continue to be closed as usual a day later, or on the Monday.

Saturday being a very inconvenient day for the despatch of the mail steamer from Bombay so far as Calcutta is concerned, I am in hopes that it may yet be changed to Thursday, which will suit us much better, enabling our merchants to get the bulk of their letters

despatched on Friday, and the residue of their more important correspondence on the Saturday.

The new arrangements do not come into force until the 29th February, before which time, I trust, the day may be altered, of which I will give you due notice immediately I receive the same.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Post Master General of Bengal.*

*Calcutta, the 27th February, 1868.*

Tuesday's issue of the "Englishman," gave publicity to a communication from the Financial Secretary to the Government of India to the address of Messrs. Jardine, Skinner and Co., stating that His Excellency the Governor General in Council had authorized the detention of the mail steamer at Bombay from 10 A. M. every Saturday until 5 P. M. of that day, and that the mail will close in Calcutta on the afternoon of every Monday until further notice.

No official intimation of this change has been received by the Chamber of Commerce from the Post Office, the last notice, bearing date the 18th instant, being to the effect that "no alteration will take place in the dates for despatching the homeward mails," and the authorized postal notices published in the newspapers this morning inform the public that the next overland mail will be closed here on Sunday, 1st proximo, and the Express on Monday.

As the question is one particularly affecting the mercantile community, and as you have doubtless communicated

with Government on the subject, I am directed to request you will favor the Committee of the Chamber by acquainting them at your earliest possible convenience which of the two days has been definitely settled for the closing of the next homeward mail, and what future arrangements in this respect are contemplated.

*From Post Master General to Chamber  
of Commerce.*

*Calcutta, the 27th February, 1868.*

In reply to your letter of this day's date, I have the honor to inform you that I have as yet received no official intimation from the Government of India of the change in the date of despatch from Calcutta of the overland mail to Bombay.

However, seeing the communication in the daily papers alluded to in your letter, I have directed the Post Master to alter the previous notice, and to notify for general information that Monday will be the latest safe date for letters and papers to England via Southampton and Marseilles.

There will be no Express packet, as letters of a later date cannot by any possibility under existing circumstances reach Bombay before Sunday, too late for the steamer.

It is understood that an extra allowance of four days has been granted to the P. and O. Company for the passage of their steamers between Bombay and Suaz during the south-west monsoon,

and, therefore, from the 7th May to the 20th October, the Calcutta mail days will be Thursday and Friday in each week. When the railway communication between the two presidencies is completed, another change will necessarily result.

**Increased rates of Postage on Overland letters.**

The following representation addressed by your Committee to the Right Honorable Sir Stafford Northcote, condemning the retrograde expedient which has been resorted to for the purpose of rendering the Indian lines of communication with England self-supporting, needs but little introductory comment. Despite the persistent opposition of the Viceroy in Council, the unanswerable arguments of the postal authorities of this Empire, and the voice of public opinion, the Secretary of State for India yielded his assent to a proposal by which an additional and unnecessary impost of 30 per cent. is levied on correspondence previously paying at all events sufficiently heavy rates for conveyance.

Copies of this memorial have been forwarded to the principal Chambers of Commerce in England, and your Committee anticipate their cordial support in endeavouring to procure the annulment of this most impolitic taxation. A late telegram from London states that Sir Stafford

Northcote had consented to receive a deputation of the East India Association on the subject ; and it is sincerely to be hoped that sufficient influence may be brought to bear to induce the Home Government to reconsider its action, and to provide for any deficit exhibited in the working of the Indian postal service from other resources of the State.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Her Majesty's  
Secretary of State for India.  
Calcutta, the 14th April, 1868.*

The establishment of a weekly mail service between this country and England has been justly regarded by all classes and communities in India as an important step towards the development of political, commercial, and social interests, and has accordingly been hailed with universal satisfaction ; but the recent action of the Home Government in sanctioning no considerable addition to the rates of postal communication will, it is feared, seriously neutralize the advantages anticipated from these increased relations between the United Kingdom and its largest and most valuable dependency.

2. Hitherto the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have refrained from giving expression to the opinions they entertain with respect to this prejudicial policy, opposed as it is to the most enlightened principles of national progress, being desirous before recording their protest of investigating to what extent the course adopted is borne out by the statistics upon which so dispropor-

tionate an increase has been advocated ; and the opportunity of reviewing them has only recently presented itself.

3. Although far from agreeing in the expediency of regarding the question from an entirely fiscal point of view, the right of thus dealing with it may, perhaps, be conceded to the officials of the Post Office Department ; but after a patient examination of the details which would appear to form the basis of their calculations, the Committee of the Chamber cannot admit that any sufficient necessity for raising the rates of postage has been exhibited.

4. The estimate which was framed in November last by the Secretary to the General Post Office, shewing the amounts to be contributed by the respective Governments and Colonies towards the cost of maintaining the various lines of Eastern communication, requires the Indian Government, after being credited with the value of the sea postage, to make good a deficit of £54,271, which sum includes a proportion of the cost of the line between

Galle and China	...	£4,012
Bombay and Galle	...	7,212
and between Galle and Calcutta	...	12,296

This total amount of ... .. £24,420  
the Committee contend cannot with justice be imposed on the revenues of the Empire ; and the Indian public are not sufficiently interested in the maintenance of these lines to make them consent to their correspondence with the mother-country being taxed at a higher rate for that purpose.

5. The Committee observe from the despatches published in the Blue Book on "India Communications" that the Government of India felt it *difficult to understand why any subsidy should be given to steamers running between Galle and Colcutta*; and Mr. Riddell, in his letter dated 22nd February, 1867, pointed out how entirely independent India was of imperial contract lines to Galle, or from Galle to China. There is obviously, therefore, room for considerable reduction in the amount which it is intended to charge the Indian exchequer; but, whatever may be the view taken by the Home Government on this point, the Committee feel sure that no reason can be shown why sums which India may be made to pay for postal communications with Galle and China should be permitted to swell the charge of the European mail service, and thus form a pretext for increased taxation on Indian correspondence.

6. Such an anomalous arrangement cannot possibly be justified, and cannot be too emphatically condemned; and the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce endorse most fully the opinion expressed two years since by the late Director-General of the Post Office of India—*If on any ground of imperial policy it is considered right to charge upon the revenues of India a portion of the subsidies paid to British mail steamers employed between Australia, China, Ceylon and Suez, I submit that the charge should be a distinct one, and not be allowed to interfere with the improvement of the postal communication between Great Britain and India.*

7. Leaving this question for further subsequent notice, the Committee respectfully solicit your Honor's attention

while they endeavour to determine what is the *actual* deficit on the interchange of correspondence between India and England, their calculations being based on the statements published by the Post Office authorities of London.

8. The entire cost of maintaining the lines of communication between the United Kingdom and Alexandria is estimated at ... £115,524

From this aggregate must be deducted

the amount chargeable	
to Ceylon	1,730
„ Mauritius	1,250
and „ China and Japan	4,677
	<hr/> 7,657

leaving a balance of £107,867

Of this sum the Imperial Government pays on account of Egyptian and other mails unconnected with India ... £33,359  
leaving the total cost for conveying the Indian mails on the Mediterranean side at £74,528

The proportion of the subsidy allotted for the weekly line between Suez and Bombay, (which is entirely for the Indian service) is ... £94,106

or a total cost for the transit of the mails east and west of Suez of ... £168,634

To this may be added for incidental expenses ... 7,000

making the entire expenditure ... £175,634

In March 1866 (the latest statistics available) the sea postage derived from

the India and China line of packets was estimated at £137,700 per annum, of which about ...

105,700

was received from India, and the balance (£32,000) from China and Japan.

Assuming these figures, founded on the contract expenses of the new weekly, and the income of the old fortnightly services to be approximately correct, the deficit on the working of the entire *Indian* postal service, divisible between both Governments, may be assessed at ...

£69,934

9. Regarding this amount as a standing loss for the sake of argument, the Committee of the Chamber with all deference submit—that it is unreasonable to suppose the Post Office should pay its own expenses in a long sea inter-communication conducted on so rapid and regular a system:—that the benefits derived by the nation at large from the enormous business transacted between the two countries can scarcely be over-rated, and this balance may, therefore, fairly be discharged by other branches of the State administration: and further—that the service rendered to Government by the postal steamers is of great magnitude, and post letters have no right to bear the entire expense of maintaining auxiliaries which contribute in so important a manner to the defence and well-being of the Indian Empire.

10. While it has been thought proper, and with perfect justice, to concede the privilege to soldiers of sending

their letters for one penny, it is difficult to understand why the excess cost is not debited to *Military expenditure* instead of being met by a direct tax on the letter-writing public. Sir Charles Wood ably pointed out that *at the present day there are classes in India, not private soldiers to whom the increase of the rate of postage between the two countries would be not only a hardship, but a positive hindrance to their progress*; and surely these classes have an equal claim to consideration with the other subjects of Her Majesty.

11. It has been contended by many that the Post Office ought not to be regarded as a source of revenue; whether with reason, or otherwise, is beside the purpose of this communication; but it must be admitted that every letter despatched from India will probably result in three or four others being written,—as, for instance, the home branch of a mercantile firm necessarily corresponds with its clients on receipt of foreign advices—thereby yielding a large increase of inland postage to the State; and accordingly the Committee hold that the surplus shewn on the working of the Post Office might in equity be made contributory to any loss accruing on conveyance of the mails by sea.

12. Thus far the arguments have been on the hypothesis that no corresponding fiscal advantages will be derived from the increased facilities afforded by the new weekly service; but the Committee entertain no doubt whatever that the new weekly line through Bombay would shortly have become self-supporting *at unaltered rates of postage*, and they believe they are well within bounds in estimating immediate additional receipts of at

least one-third, or to £140,000, taking the sea postage realized two years ago at £105,700; and at a further annual accession of 5 per cent. *the assumed deficit would be entirely absorbed in about five years.* In a period of seven years, from 1860-67, the sum credited to England for sea, British inland, and foreign postage collected in India was *doubled*, and with this fact before them the Committee feel satisfied they have drawn a moderate conclusion.

13. With the imposition of the present scale, however, no such result can be anticipated; and, indeed, it is very doubtful if the amount realized by the additional postage will at all increase the present revenue of the line, as the tendency will be to decrease considerably the number of letters exchanged between the two countries. If the financial prospect of the new service is considered unfavorable, and an attempt to render it self-supporting from its initiation essential, the Committee believe that such object might be attained with far greater probability by adopting the recommendation of the Indian postal authorities, *vis:—to reduce the weight of letters by one-half, or to a quarter ounce, and the present postage to six annas.* At all events this step would have been attended with less dissatisfaction, while the principle would have been theoretically and practically unassailable, and in accordance with that enlightened and successful policy, inaugurated thirty years ago, which made the name of Rowland Hill eminent in the history of the world's progress.

14. Having presumed to trespass at such length on your Honor's attention, the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce will only further venture to express their sincere and earnest hope that you may see fit

to exert your powerful influence in procuring the abolition of this most inequitable enhancement in the rates of Indian postage, from the deterrent influence and hardship of which it is expedient that the Empire and the public should be speedily relieved.

*From Govt. of India to Chamber of Commerce.  
Calcutta, the 30th April, 1868.*

In reply to your letter of the 14th April, 1868, to the Private Secretary to the Viceroy and Governor General, submitting a representation by the Chamber of Commerce against the recent increase of the rates of postage on correspondence between this country and the United Kingdom, I am directed to state that the representation has been forwarded to the Secretary of State for India.

#### **Telegraphic Communication with England.**

In January last your Committee forwarded to His Excellency, the Viceroy in Council, the appended memorial, signed by 140 merchants and bankers, &c., of Calcutta, in favor of granting a guaranteed interest of 5 per cent. on the required capital of a Company to be formed for the purpose of providing a line of direct telegraphic communication with England.

The instability of Joint Stock Companies during late years resulted in such a general want of public confidence that it was found impossible

for the Anglo-Indian Telegraph Company,—started under the very best auspices, with the object of establishing *under one control and management in London a direct and thoroughly effective line of Telegraph, vid Egypt and Aden, to India*—to raise the necessary capital for carrying out their undertaking, unless with the aid of a guarantee.

This the Home Government is unwilling to grant, looking to the fact that the country has still to pay annually £36,000, in the shape of interest on the capital unsuccessfully expended ten years ago in an attempt to lay the Red Sea cable, and hesitates to risk another failure; of that, however, there would be but little probability, as difficulties which in those days existed in ocean telegraphy have since become accomplished facts, and projectors can now call to their assistance all the practical experience gained in the manufacture and laying down of the Atlantic cables.

The recent interruption in the present line of communication makes the want which has been so frequently complained of by the mercantile community the more apparent, and your Committee have great hopes that ere long it will be supplied. The question has been taken up in earnest at home, and on the 23rd March an influential meeting was held in London, at which a standing

Committee of members of Parliament, and others representing various Eastern interests, was formed “for the purpose of collecting and supplying such further information as may be necessary or available on the subject of Eastern telegraphic communication; and of arranging and carrying into effect such action as may be deemed advisable for the purpose of bringing this subject before Government and the House of Commons.”

*The Memorial of the undersigned Members of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, Merchants and Bankers of Calcutta, and others.*

SHEWETH,—That your Memorialists are extensively engaged in the trade of the port of Calcutta, and deeply interested in all matters affecting the commercial welfare of British India.

2. That, in order to promote the progress and prosperity of the commerce of British India, and encourage the extension and improvement of internal traffic, it is expedient that the enterprise and industry of your Memorialists should receive such assistance and support as your Excellency can give.

3. That, in view of the great and increasing commercial relations subsisting between India and Great Britain, it is of the highest importance to the interests of your Memorialists that speedy and regular telegraphic communication should be maintained between the two countries.

4. That your Memorialists have grave cause of com-

plaint as to the manner in which the existing telegraphic service between the two countries is carried out.

1st. As to the length of time occupied in the transmission of messages, and the constant interruptions that occur on the lines.

2nd. As to the imperfect and occasionally unintelligible manner in which messages are transmitted; and

3rd. As to the irregular order in which messages are received in India, those of a later date being constantly delivered some days before others of an earlier date.

5. That these delays, errors, and irregularities are most detrimental to the interests of commerce, and comparatively neutralize the benefits which the country would otherwise derive.

6. That, in the belief of your Memorialists, these interruptions and confused transmissions are principally attributable to the fact that a considerable portion of the line passes through Turkey and Persia, and is altogether out of English jurisdiction, and that the wires are under charge of native clerks, unacquainted with the English language, and consequently unsuited for the duties with which they are entrusted.

7. That your Memorialists understand it has been proposed to establish a new direct line of effective telegraphic communication between London and India, via Egypt and Aden, by sub-marine cable to Bombay, and thence by land-wires along the line of railway to Calcutta; but that, failing the support of Government in

the shape of a guaranteed interest, the difficulties in raising the required amount of capital cannot be overcome.

8. That, on political grounds alone, the expediency of connecting England and India by such reliable, rapid, and controlled telegraphic communication is prominently marked by the annals of the past.

9. That your Memorialists learn through advices from England that the question of granting a guarantee of 5 per cent. on the required capital for promoting this project has been referred for settlement to the Government of India by the Home Government.

10. That your Memorialists, therefore, most respectfully but strongly urge your Excellency to support in the manner indicated such a scheme as will bring India into uninterrupted and more direct communication with England, such, for instance, as that detailed in the prospectus of the Anglo-Indian Telegraph Company, the advantages of which are:—

1st. That the proposed line would be under one management and control.

2nd. That it would be worked exclusively by an English staff.

3rd. That the transmission of messages by the route indicated would occupy less time than at present.

4th. That the projected line would be far more freely availed of than that existing, and, in consequence, messages would be transmitted at cheaper rates.

11. The national as well as commercial importance of these advantages is such, your Memorialists respectfully submit, as to call for encouragement at your Excellency's hands, and in affording the pecuniary assistance required the Government would, in the opinion of your Memorialists, be undertaking only a nominal risk.

12. Your Memorialists, therefore, venture respectfully to express their hopes that, having due regard to the magnitude of the interests, political, commercial, and social, involved in the connection between this country and England, your Excellency may see fit to grant the concession advocated.

And your Memorialists will ever pray.

*From Government of India to the Members of the  
Chamber of Commerce, the Bankers and Mer-  
chants of Calcutta.*

*Calcutta, the 10th February, 1868.*

Having laid before the Viceroy your memorial of the 4th ultimo, regarding the establishment of a second line of Electric Telegraph between England and India *via* the Red Sea, I am instructed to inform you that this important subject has received, and still is receiving, the best attention of His Excellency in Council; and that a despatch on the general bearing of the whole matter, together with a copy of your memorial under acknowledgment, has been transmitted to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India.

# **The proposed System of Weights and Measures for British India.**

At the request of the Government of India, as narrated in last report, two members of your Committee were deputed to represent the Chamber on the Commission appointed to revise the existing Weights and Measures in British India, in view to the introduction of an universal system to be selected rather on account of its practical convenience for adoption in the Empire generally than for its superiority of theory.

Colonel Strachey, the President of the Commission, strongly advocated the French metric system with certain modifications, being of opinion that the assimilation of the English Weights and Measures, to those of France is a mere question of time; and your representatives believing it to be the most complete and perfect at present in existence, and looking to the fact of its almost universal adoption in Europe, supported his views.

Afterwards, finding that the majority of the Committee were in favor of a reform based upon the present English Weights and Measures, as being more acceptable to, and easily introduced among the natives of India, for whose benefit rather than for any commercial reasons the Com-

mission had been appointed, Messrs. Graham and Apear withdrew their objections, and signed the Report of which the following is a summary :—

“The Committee, after taking such evidence as was available, and considering the history of the question in England, and the evidence taken before the select Committees on Decimal Coinage and on Weights and Measures, were of opinion that there is no probability of the French *mètre* system being adopted within any reasonable period, if ever.”

“On the ground, therefore, that it would be impolitic to link India with a Foreign State, and dis sever her from England as regards her Weights and Measures, and that such a step would abandon all that has yet been done to familiarise the natives of India with the English system, the Committee decided that the reform should be based on the assimilation of Indian Weights and Measures with those of England in preference to those of France.”

“They recommend the introduction of the following standards :—

For length—the yard, cubit, foot, and inch.

For area—the acre ; but only in Government transactions.

For weight—the *seer* of 2 pounds, with binary divisions down to the two hundredth and fifty-sixth part and decimal multiples, the *maund* being 50 *seers*, the double *maund* or *sotek* 100 *seers*, and the *ton* 1,000 *seers*. While binary sub-division is preserved as most conso-

nant to native *habli*, and, perhaps, more convenient for the general transaction of retail trade, decimal sub-division is permitted.”

“The *tola* of 180 grains is abandoned, and the new *tola* proposed for the Post Office is equivalent to the half ounce.”

In the event of this scheme being adopted by the Government of India, your representatives further recommended that “the Secretary of State be requested to bring before the Home Government the necessity of altering the present English *cwt.* and *ton* of 112 and 2,240 lbs. respectively to 100 lbs. and 2,000 lbs., as without this change the new system of Weights and Measures for *India* would be of no use to her in her commercial relations with England.”

#### The Merchant Shipping Acts.

The Government of India having been advised by the Secretary of State that the Board of Trade has under consideration the revision of the various Acts relating to Merchant Shipping, and will be glad to receive suggestions on the subject, the opportunity has been afforded to your Committee of submitting any recommendations thereon which they deemed expedient.

As the views of the Chamber regarding the

Indian Shipping Bill had been communicated to the Government of Bengal on the 25th of September last, they had little of importance to add to the remarks contained in their letter of that date; the following general observations, however, were placed at the disposal of His Honor, the Lieutenant-Governor:—

1st. That whilst acknowledging the greatness of the attention which has been devoted by the framers of the various Shipping Acts to the subject matter, the Committee are of opinion that there is danger lest by over legislation British merchant ships may be placed at a disadvantage as compared with those of other nationalities, through reason of exceptional restrictions from which others are free.

2nd. That whilst advocating perfect freedom of trade, they think that there is still much to be done in the way of reciprocity before British ships can be considered on an equal footing with those of other countries.

3rd. That the liability of ship-owners for acts done by their servants is excessive, and ought to be reduced.

4th. That the Courts for trying shipmasters in cases of casualties are not constituted in a manner calculated to ensure acquiescence in the justice of their decisions, and would be more satisfactory if juries were composed partly of Captains

of merchant vessels, and partly of other persons having a knowledge of seafaring life.

5th. That the light expenses and other local charges of a similar nature should be met from the revenues of each country, and not be levied on ships frequenting its ports.

6th. That the number of cases relating to seamen which come before the Police Courts are disproportionately numerous, and should form the subject of special enquiry with a view to their abatement.

#### Cotton Frauds Act of 1867.

The following correspondence regarding the necessity of imperial legislation to prevent adulteration in cotton is worthy of special attention. In consequence of a representation on the subject made by Messrs. Gladstone, Wyllie and Co., the Government of India addressed the Chamber, requesting to be informed "how far the individual experience of its members bears out, or contradicts the statements contained" therein. The Committee, accordingly, addressed a circular to the members, soliciting careful consideration of the correspondence, and expressions of opinion—

1st.—As to whether legislative protection to the cotton trade is desirable or otherwise.

2nd.—If desirable, should it be extended to Calcutta, where shippers have facilities for an examination of the cotton by their own servants while it is being pressed, or should the operations of the Act be confined to the up-country districts; and

3rd.—Whether the Cotton Frauds Act, as framed, is sufficiently comprehensive, or whether any modifications or additions are necessary to give it due effect.

The replies received were of a contradictory nature, and shewed that a great variety of ideas were entertained which rendered it impossible for the Committee to oppose or recommend legislation in decided terms, and, at the same time, to represent fairly the views of a large number of firms. Finally, after a patient study of the entire evidence before them, the annexed answer, which, it is believed, indicates the opinions of the majority interested, was sent to Government: your Committee, while admitting that unnecessary legal interference with trade is obnoxious, and should not be resorted to unless corresponding advantages are ensured, pointed out the manifest injustice to Calcutta merchants of a law for the protection of buyers and shippers of cotton in Bombay, no such measure being in force here.

Whether the proposed Bill will be proceeded

with or abandoned is not yet definitely known; but an attentive reading of the original Act introduced in Council makes it apparent that some of the clauses are too stringent; and it is desirable that your next Committee should watch closely the course which Government may adopt in this matter.

*From Govt. of India to Chamber of Commerce.  
Calcutta, the 13th February, 1868.*

I am requested by the Governor General in Council to forward to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce a copy of a letter addressed to the Government of India by an eminent Calcutta firm, Messrs. Gladstone, Wylie and Company, on the subject of the Cotton Bill recently published in the *Gazette of India*, as amended by the Select Committee of the Legislative Council. For reasons which I proceed to state I am to beg the careful attention of the Chamber to this communication.

2. The Bombay Cotton Frauds Act No. IX. of 1863, on which much of the amended Bill is modelled, was not a measure which originally emanated from the Local Executive Government of Bombay. It was framed, introduced into Local Legislature, and conducted through all its stages by a leading member of the mercantile community who had then a seat in the Council of the Governor for making Laws and Regulations. The Governor in Council of Bombay acceded, it is believed, to the measure after much hesitation, and, in forwarding it to the then Viceroy and Governor General for his assent,

the Bombay Government recommended it in the words which follow :—" Almost all classes, Natives as well as Europeans, concur in the necessity for some measure of this kind, and those immediately interested in the trade look with the greatest anxiety for the measure as essential to prevent wholesale adulteration. As to whether its provisions might not with advantage have been made more stringent and comprehensive there is considerable difference of opinion among the mercantile community, but almost none for at least as much protection to the Cotton Trade as the Bill is intended to afford." It is known that the late Lord Elgin, before giving his assent, carefully weighed the general objections to this description of legislation, but he considered them outweighed by the reasons for this particular measure derived from special mercantile experience.

3. In the course of three years from the coming into operation of the Cotton Frauds Act, much official evidence as to its working was received by the Government of Bombay, and by it submitted to the Government of India. The effect of this evidence may be considered as summed up in a passage of a Despatch from the Secretary of State for India addressed to the Governor in Council of Bombay, and dated September 14th, 1867 :—" It appears to me there is ample evidence to show that the objects for which the Act was framed are in fair progress of attainment. There seems to be no reasonable ground for doubt that the general quality of the cotton shipped in 1866 has been better than of that exported in previous years. The adulteration of the article, either by the addition of foreign matter, or by the admixture of inferior descriptions, has been to a great extent checked."

4. During the same period the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces frequently and urgently requested the extension of the Cotton Frauds Act to the territories under his administration, on the ground that the cotton grown in those territories was, from the absence of this law, falling behind that of Bombay in point of quality, and also that of Barr, into which the Governor General in Council has been able, from the nature of his authority over the Assigned Districts, to introduce the Cotton Frauds Act without legislation.

5. On March 1st, 1867, the Chamber of Commerce of Bengal addressed the Government of India on the subject of certain representations with reference to frauds in cotton, which had been made to the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces. The Chamber requested that the Governor General in Council would "submit this important matter for the consideration of the Legislative Council of the Governor General, with a view to the introduction of a Bill for the prevention of adulteration of cotton, and the better suppression of frauds in the cotton trade in the Presidency of the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces, and in other territories where it may be expedient to apply its provisions." "The Governor General in Council, in reply, asked the Chamber, in effect, whether the experience of the trade in Calcutta bore out the allegation which had been made in the North-West, and an affirmative answer was received. The Government of India further called for the opinion of the Government of the North-West as to the propriety of extending the Cotton Frauds Act to those Provinces in conformity with the representations which had been addressed to both Governments. Both the

Lieutenant-Governor and the Board of Revenue recommended the extension.

6. Nearly at the same time at which these communications were exchanged the attention of the Governor General in Council was drawn to Reports of Meetings held in England by the Chambers of Commerce of Manchester and of Liverpool. Speakers at these Meetings were described as strongly testifying to the great recent improvement in the quality of Bombay cotton, and as distinctly attributing it to the operation of the Cotton Frauds Act. His Excellency in Council was particularly struck with statements favorably contrasting Indian cotton with other Oriental varieties, such as the Egyptian, which are intrinsically superior, but which have suffered from the dishonest practices of the grower or dealer.

7. At the time, therefore, of the publication of the Bill for the extension of the Bombay Cotton Frauds Act to other parts of India, there appeared to be a great weight of official evidence, and a very unusual amount of unofficial and mercantile evidence in favor of such extension. But more recently, and since the publication of the Bill, some evidence of a different character has been supplied to the Government of India. The Bombay Chamber of Commerce, though apparently admitting the improvement in the quality of Indian cotton, has expressed doubts whether it is attributable to the direct operation of the Cotton Frauds Act; and the Madras Chamber is opposed to the extension of the measure to that Presidency, while, at the same time, it contemplates circumstances under which such legislation may be desirable. It will be seen, however, that Messrs.

Gladstone, Wyllie and Company are unconditionally opposed to any legislation on the subject.

8. The importance which the Governor General in Council attaches to this letter arises from its advancing positive statements of fact. It is probably unnecessary to say that on certain questions raised by Messrs. Gladstone, Wyllie and Company—for example, on the question whether, in all trades, and under all circumstances, an exclusive reliance should be placed on the rule *caveat emptor*, and on the question whether for the prevention of special frauds, a departure from the general law, *i. e.*, from the Indian Penal Code, is, or is not, permissible—the Government of India reserves to itself its own opinion. But it is impossible for the Governor General in Council not to take note of the assertion by a firm of very extensive cotton-buyers that, as a matter of fact, no frauds are committed in the cotton-trade on this side of India which a purchaser cannot guard against by the exercise of ordinary diligence and caution. If such a position could be established, His Excellency in Council would certainly hesitate to use his influence with the Council for making Laws and Regulations for the enactment of a measure adding to the Penal law, and providing a machinery of inspection at the expense of the trade.

9. Under these circumstances, the Governor General in Council trusts that the Chamber will carefully consider the letter of Messrs. Gladstone, Wyllie and Company, and will inform him how far the individual experience of its members bears out, or contradicts the statements contained in the letter.

From Messrs. Gladstone, Wyllie and Co. to Govern-  
ment of India.

Calcutta, the 27th January, 1868.

We have the honor to communicate to you our views regarding a "Bill for the improvement of Cotton," published in the *Gazette of India* last Saturday. We presume that the publication of the Bill is intended to elicit the expression of public opinion respecting it, and we begin this letter by stating the grounds on which we venture to trouble His Excellency in Council with our views on the subject.

2. The grounds are these—first, that as exporters of cotton from this Presidency we are interested in everything that may tend to the development of the cotton trade, whether by increase of cultivation or improvement in quality; secondly, that as among the largest importers of cotton manufactures we are still further interested in this matter; and thirdly, that as owners of cotton presses in the vicinity of Calcutta we have another and personal concern with a measure which must seriously affect our own operations. On this head we shall only add that we are unwilling to trouble the Government without sufficient cause; but that, in a case like the present, intimately affecting our interests, we have thought that His Excellency in Council will not deem us obtrusive if we lay before him, with deference, the opinions we have formed.

3. We may as well state at once that we are entirely opposed to legislation on the subject at all; and, in parti-

cular, to the Bill now before the Council, both in its general principles and in its details.

4. We are opposed to special legislative interference in all matters relating to commerce unless a clear and distinct necessity for such legislation is apparent, and we are particularly opposed to such interference when, as in the present instance, legislation takes the form of protection; and we submit that, though the ostensible object of the measure is to develop the Indian cotton trade, the real effect, if the Bill becomes law, will be a fruitless attempt in the first instance to protect the buyers of cotton, and ultimately the merchants, and manufacturers in England, as against the growers and sellers. We do not go so far as to say that there are no circumstances under which special legislative interference would be justifiable, but we maintain firmly the general position that the less the natural operations of trade are interfered with the better; that in the case of the cotton trade of Bengal no such interference is required, and that, if sanctioned, it can only prove hurtful, and, we believe, frustrate the very object its promoters have in view.

5. Generally, we think its effect will be this. It will discourage the growth of cotton by interposing serious difficulties in the way of sale, for it stands to reason that no man will grow cotton as readily when his produce is subject to official scrutiny, and with heavy penalties hanging over him in its disposal, as he would do if absolutely free to grow it as he may other crops independent of Government interference, and subject only to the risk of markets and the usual operation of the law.

6. It may be urged, we are aware, that the penalties apply chiefly in case of intentional adulteration, but we believe that it will be found practically difficult, if not impossible, to draw the line between intention and absence of intention in cases of this description; and that the penalties provided by the Bill may be enforced where the proper and natural punishment would be an inability to dispose of the cotton, or difficulty in doing so, and consequent pecuniary loss.

7. It will affect the cotton trade in Calcutta—the great centre of transactions between Native sellers and European purchasers—by still holding over the former the penalties to which we have referred, and it will, in like manner, affect Europeans who may themselves import cotton from the growing districts, or buy it on the spot for resale in Calcutta.

8. And it will do all this, we believe, without effecting any substantial good in a matter in which we think that an adherence to the well-established maxim, *caveat emptor*, and the ordinary course of the laws affords the best and most certain protection to the interests of all.

9. We wholly deny the necessity for any special legislative interference whatever, and to establish this we quote the following pertinent fact:—During the months beginning 1st January, 1866, and ending 30th April, 1867, we bought, chiefly in Calcutta, but partly also in the growing districts, and shipped to England 30,000 bales of cotton of an aggregate value of about £320,000; and in no instance—the cotton being entirely on account of third parties, many of whom had to sell

or manufacture it at a heavy loss owing to falling markets in Europe—had we to pay one shilling on account of inferiority of quality. We do not allege that the selection and shipment of this large quantity was effected without trouble and care on our part, or without frequent collision with the sellers in regard to quality; but we state the fact as a proof that, with proper care and vigilance on the part of the buyer, he can very well protect his own interests without special legislation; and we add unhesitatingly that no amount of inspection on the part of officials will cause any careful buyer to relax in the least degree his own care for his interests, while it may, and probably will lead to increased laxness on the part of others, and to the export of a greater quantity of adulterated cotton than is exported under existing circumstances. When to these considerations is added the fact that the Government inspection may be considered by some as a sort of guarantee of the quality—we consider it worthless—and discharge of the responsibility of the seller, we are convinced that the proposed interference will result in good to no one, but in the decline of the cultivation, the interposition of difficulties which must injuriously affect the trade, and the real protection of neither buyer nor consumer. The manner in which the interests of the owners of cotton presses will be affected may be most conveniently considered in connection with the details of the Bill, to some of which we shall now refer.

10. Section 8 amounts, as it seems to us, to an unwarrantable interference with the liberty of private persons to do what they please with their own property, subject only to such restrictions as the law considers

necessary for the protection of all, and will be found most vexatious in practice. For example, a Calcutta merchant receives an order from a constituent in England to ship for him a certain quantity of cotton of a particular quality, and bearing a special mark. Under the provision to which we are referring, it would be *compulsory* to impress on the bales, in addition to the mark ordered by the Home principal, a certain press-mark "not less than one foot square," with a name in letters "not less than one inch and a half long"; and we are not overstating the case when we affirm that the presence of this press-mark might in many cases render the cotton unsaleable in the markets and for the purposes for which it was intended, it being the fact that immense operations are daily carried on among mercantile persons on the faith and guarantee of certain well known and recognized marks,—which marks this Section would render it impossible for the merchant to impress on his shipments.

11. The duties of Inspectors, as defined in the 9th and following Sections, appear to involve such an unusual and hateful system of espionage on the business of private individuals that for our own part we are astonished that they could have been even seriously *proposed*; and we observe that no provision whatever is made for the Inspectors having any knowledge of the trade they are to possess such an unlimited control over. We believe that it will be found impossible to secure the services, as Inspectors, of persons in any way adequate to the discharge of the functions with which these Officers are to be entrusted. If the Bill as it now stands is passed into law, we shall seriously consider the propriety of giving up our cotton presses altogether, rather than be subjected to

such interference as that now proposed; and we mention the fact (which, of course, is of little importance to any one excepting ourselves) as a proof of the sincerity of our views. It will serve to show how strongly we object to being taxed, to pay for what we consider a worse than useless and mischievous interference.

12. The Sections defining offences and penalties we think most objectionable. In the first place, we see no reason why, if A chooses to sell, and B *knowingly* to buy inferior or adulterated cotton, Government should interfere to prevent them, for, in such a case, the question between buyer and seller would resolve itself into one of price; and surely if it is worth A's while to sell, and B's to buy such cotton, or such *cotton* and *stones* for that part, it is their own affair, while in the case of fraudulent sales the law already provides a remedy.

13. It is not, we believe, by such means as those proposed, but by the natural operation of the laws of supply and demand, (for if there is no demand for inferior or adulterated cotton the supply must soon cease) and by showing producers by other than penal measures that it is for their own interest to grow better cotton, that any improvement in the quality is to be looked for; and we say this, ourselves entertaining a strong opinion of the desirableness of in every reasonable way encouraging the trade and promoting the growth of an improved staple.

14. In conclusion, we repeat our earnest hope that this Bill may not be passed into law, for we are convinced, as we have said already, that it is wholly unnecessary; that its principle is wrong; its provisions vexatious and

intolerable; and that its working in any case, but especially in the hands of those to whom its details must, we suppose, be entrusted, will be wholly unsatisfactory. To us it appears, as we observe it does to the mercantile members of the Legislative Council, that there is no more need to legislate regarding cotton than regarding any other export, and that all special legislative interference, especially such as that now proposed, is to be deprecated.

15. We have confined ourselves to viewing the Bill as it affects this Presidency, for of the Bombay trade we have no experience.

Apologising for the length of this communication.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of India.  
Calcutta, the 20th March, 1868.*

Your letter dated 13th ultimo, forwarding copy of a communication addressed to the Government of India by Messrs. Gladstone, Wylie and Co. on the subject of the Cotton Frauds Act, has received the careful consideration of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce; and I have now the honor to submit the views which, in compliance with the request contained in the last paragraph of your letter, have been elicited by general reference to the mercantile firms they represent.

2. There can scarcely be two opinions regarding the evils of legislative interference with commerce; and unless grave State reasons, the public health or safety, or some equally strong necessity urge the expediency of a special departure from the universally admitted principles

of political economy, nothing can justify restriction on Free Trade. But the question under review is—whether any such call for legislation exists in the cotton trade of this country.

3. Messrs. Gladstone, Wylie and Co.'s experience would seem to have been almost entirely confined to Calcutta; where the necessity for legislative protection has never been generally considered requisite, as all exporters have enjoyed the same facilities for inspecting and selecting their cotton as those gentlemen, and on the whole with equally satisfactory results; it seems, therefore, to the Committee that the communication in question is of very little importance to the general subject, as the representations which gave rise to the proposed Act were from the North-West Provinces, to the effect that wilful adulteration was becoming a very serious matter there, and that the provisions of the Penal Code were quite inadequate to check it.

4. Calcutta merchants had a direct interest in any legislation which would tend to do away with such fraudulent practices, because through the introduction of cotton screws up-country under the supervision and control of Europeans it had become the custom to ship hence without examination a large proportion of the staple, which formerly was purchased in a loose state and compressed at this port.

5. Apart from the losses and annoyances to which traders would be subjected by this increasing evil, the admitted importance to the Empire of improving the quality of Indian cotton, in order that it might compete

in the home markets with the productions of other countries, suggested the advisability of adopting any legitimate course likely to secure such an effect. The Committee of the Chamber, accordingly, advocated the introduction of a Bill for the suppression of Frauds in the cotton trade of the North-West Provinces, or other territories where it might be expedient to apply its provisions.

6. In taking this action the Committee had before them a large amount of evidence in addition to that noticed in the 3rd and 6th paragraphs of your letter under reply, arguing that the Bombay Act had proved most serviceable in preventing adulteration which was previously notorious. In his report dated from Meerut, the 30th April, 1866, Lieut. Col. C. W. Walker, Acting Inspector-in-Chief of the Cotton Department writes:—

*"There can be no doubt as to the benefits conferred on the cotton trade of the Presidency by Act IX. Scarcely or never have we cases of cotton unjustly deteriorated by the admixture of foreign matter. The staple reaches Bombay, as I am informed by persons constantly at the press, in a state of comparatively great cleanliness, and in condition very superior to that of former years."*

Assuming this mass of testimony in favor of protective legislation indisputable, and believing, as they still do, that no penal enactment would in any way affect the cultivation of Indian cotton, (as the small dealers, or middle-men, who make advances to the cultivators, and not the ryots are the people who find their interest in adulterating the cotton) it seemed most desirable that a measure apparently productive of such good results to Bombay should be extended to all other parts of India where these frauds were perpetrated.

7. While unanimously admitting the great improve-

ment in the quality and cleanliness of the raw staple now brought to that market, the Bombay Chamber of Commerce appears of late generally to attribute the amelioration to the use of machinery—called into existence by the Act—rather than to the direct operation of the law. This is a question on which, in the absence of personal practical experience, exporters on this side of India must defer to the opinions of those who have watched the working of the Cotton Frauds Bill on the other; and if the Bombay merchants, after a fair trial of Act IX. of 1863, are so far agreed as to advocate its repeal, the Committee of this Chamber are decidedly disinclined to the introduction of any protective enactment, the benefits of which would seem so problematical.

8. If, however, protection is still to be continued to the trade of Bombay, it should, in the opinion of the Committee, extend equally all over India, and not be confined to any one Presidency, as the effect of such partial legislation would be to inundate this market, where no restrictions prevailed, with all the unclean and adulterated cotton, as soon as the junction of railway communication between Calcutta and Bombay is completed; rather than submit to this disadvantage, the Committee are prepared to recommend the imposition in a modified form of the proposed Act of 1863.

#### Tariff values of Piece Goods and Yarn.

This important subject has from time to time engaged the attention of the Chamber; and in November last it was again brought to the notice

of your Committee in a communication from the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, calling the attention of the local Government to the discrepancy then existing between the tariff and actual market values of Cotton Piece Goods and Yarn.

As your Committee concurred in the views expressed by the Bombay Chamber in regard to the advisability of modifying the tariff values fixed by Act XVII of 1867, they complied with a request to support the representation of that body, and on 21st November addressed the Government of Bengal requesting a revision of the tariff values in accordance with a promise made in the last budget statement of the Finance Minister.

The Committee at the same time brought to the notice of the Lieutenant-Governor the many inconveniences, and it might have been added the *injustice*, to which the mercantile community is exposed by the uncertainties attending the present method of appraisement adopted by the Customs' authorities under Act VI of 1863. They also suggested that merchants generally would be gratified by His Honor taking into consideration the advisability of substituting some system of appraisement which would be alike fair to the Government and to the importer.

When the Committee made these representa-

tions, prices of cotton and cotton manufactures had materially declined, and appeared to be approaching their normal values in the markets of the world; at all events, judging from the opinion generally entertained in reference to future supplies of the raw material, they considered the prices then ruling in this market for our chief articles of import would be an ample basis upon which to fix a revised scale of tariff values.

To the Committee's communication no reply was received from the local Government until the end of February, when it was intimated that, with the sanction of the Government of India, a Committee had been appointed to adjust the tariff values, and the Chamber was requested to nominate a gentleman to serve thereon with two others,—a member of the Board of Revenue, and the Collector of Customs.

During the three months which had elapsed between the dates of the Chamber's representation and the reply of Government, important changes had taken place in the position of the cotton market in England, and prices had rapidly been advancing under the fostering influences of diminished shipments from America, and an increased consumption of the raw material; values of cotton manufactures were responding in this, as well

as in other Indian markets, to the increased cost of production, and, when this Committee was appointed, had reached a point which indicated that the time for determining a fair standard for fixed values had not yet arrived.

Feeling assured, therefore, that under such altered circumstances the Chamber would be unwilling to take advantage of this opportunity of reducing the tariff values, your representative, acting in that spirit of fairness towards the Government by which this institution has always been animated, expressed his willingness that existing values should for the present be retained, pending the establishment of a lower range of prices in this market upon a more settled basis than the renewed uncertainty attaching to the American cotton supply seemed likely to admit of, probably, for some time forward. This proposal was approved by the other members of the Committee, and a report having been sent up to Government, a notification in reply has since been received announcing that in accordance with their suggestion the proposed alteration of the tariff values has been postponed.

The inconveniences arising from the uncertain administration of the Customs Act, however, press heavily upon the mercantile community; and in the event of its proving expedient to defer for an

indefinite period any reconsideration of the tariff question, it may become necessary, meanwhile, to make the objectionable provisions of the Act the subject of a separate application to Government.

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

*Calcutta, the 21st November, 1867.*

A representation to the local Government has lately been addressed by the Bombay Chamber of Commerce calling attention to the present high tariff values, as fixed by Act XVII. of 1867, for Grey Cotton Piece Goods and Yarns, with a view to their reduction; and a copy has been forwarded to this Chamber for the Committee's confirmation and support.

In the communication referred to, the arguments adduced are so exhaustive that it becomes a matter of difficulty for the Committee to give them any additional weight beyond their hearty concurrence in the opinion that a necessity exists for an early reconsideration of this most important question; they will, however, endeavour to indicate briefly the grounds upon which their conviction is based.

The constant and continued fall in the price of cotton in England and America during the past six months must be accounted, without doubt, a good and clear proof that this article is rapidly approaching its normal price, viz.—that ruling before the commencement of the American Civil War. The last cotton crop in America amounted to about 1,750,000 bales, and the incoming

one is estimated at 2,750,000 to 3,000,000. Taking into consideration, therefore, that the production of other countries, particularly of India and Egypt, when added to the American crop will materially increase the supply of cotton in Liverpool during the ensuing year, the conclusion is inevitable that the future value of this important staple will ere long reach its original minimum.

Abundance of produce signifies low prices, and there is no doubt that the cheapening of the raw material must seriously affect the prices of the manufactured articles; for example, British Piece Goods and Yarns have been steadily declining in their values during the last six months, following exactly in the course of the home markets with respect to the price of raw cotton.

From the annexed statement it will be seen that there exists a considerable difference between the market and tariff values of the principal denominations of Piece Goods and Yarns to the manifest disadvantage of importers, who pay duty on fictitious values, ranging from eleven annas per piece on Grey Shirtings to two annas and nine pie on Grey Madapollans, and nine pie per mowah on Yarns; and taking to account the late heavy arrivals of Piece Goods, and shipments on the way, the future prospects of this important and chief branch of the import commerce of the port, as foreshadowed by the facts enumerated, are most discouraging, and the strongest probabilities exist that a much lower range of prices generally must be submitted to by importers.

The above reasons are, the Committee believe, sufficient to show the necessity of an immediate revision of

the Import tariff with regard to a proper and equitable reduction in the values of British Piece Goods and Yarns; it may, however, assist their arguments to state that such a reduction was promised in the last financial statement by Government; and the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce now desire to submit, with all deference, that there has been a sufficiently decided change in the course and prospects of this branch of trade since the period referred to to warrant them in claiming at the hands of His Honor, the Lieutenant-Governor, the speedy fulfilment of the assurance they then received.

Another matter on which the Committee desire to invite the Lieut.-Governor's attention is the serious inconvenience the commercial community are continually exposed to through the uncertainties of *ad valorem* duties, especially those chargeable on manufactured fabrics. It is not their purpose, however, in this communication to advance any arguments in favor of fixed values being substituted for the present system of appraisement, but only to suggest that it is likewise a question in connection with the tariff which importers generally would be gratified by His Honor taking into early consideration.

Memo: of Tariff and Market values.

			Percent market rate.	Loss.	Net.	Tariff rate.		Difference
	Hrs. or.	Rs.	As.		Rs. As. P.	As.	Rs. As.	A. P.
Grey Shirtings..	7 0	5	6 7	p. ct.	5 0 0	11 p. 10.	5 11 p. 10.	11 0 p. 10.
Grey Madapol.	3 0	2	6 7	"	2 1 8	13 "	2 7 "	2 0 "
Moh. Yarn .. No. 40	0	6	5 1	"	0 5 9	12 "	0 6 2	0 0 "

*From Govt. of India to Govt. of Bengal.*

*Calcutta, the 25th February, 1868.*

In reply to your letter of the 15th instant, No. 570, I am instructed to state that the Government of India concurs in the necessity for an immediate revision of the tariff valuations of British Piece Goods, and considers it should be based on the averages of the last six months.

2.—I am accordingly to suggest that a small Committee be at once formed by the Government of Bengal to make a temporary adjustment of the tariff upon Cotton Goods of every description except Bleached and Fancy Goods.

3.—The work would, perhaps, be done promptly by a Committee consisting of a member of the Board of Revenue, the Collector of Customs, and a gentleman nominated by the Chamber of Commerce, and the revised valuations recommended by such a Committee might be fixed for one year, subject to further revision, if necessary, at the end of that time.

4.—In proceeding with the duty the Committee might be required to bear in mind that recent advices show an improvement in the value of fabrics, and throw considerable doubt on the estimate of increased cotton cultivation in the United States. This was probably held in view by Mr. Crawford when he recommended that the revision should be delayed until the production of the Budget; that time has, however, now arrived, and the revision should, therefore, be completed without delay.

*From Govt. of India to Govt. of Bengal.*

*Calcutta, the 27th February, 1868.*

With reference to my letter of the 25th instant, No. 1217, I am directed to state that it would be an advantage if the Committee were to review in the light of the experience gained during the past year the Import Tariff Schedule attached to the Customs' Duties Act.

2. The following omissions have been brought to the notice of the Government of India, and the present opportunity should be taken of introducing the requisite entries into the specification of dutiable articles:—

*Unwrought Cotton.*—Accidentally omitted in the Import List; see separate Revenue Proceedings, September 1867, Nos. 56-58, herewith sent.

*Steel Rails.*—To be put under the head of Railway materials, assessable at one per cent.

*Angle and T. Iron.*—To be put under the one per cent. duty rate.

*Thread in Reels and Cords.*—At Rupees 2-8 per gross reels of one hundred yards; a proportionately lower valuation for shorter lengths on the same principle as a higher valuation for longer lengths.

3. Other anomalies of a somewhat similar character may, perhaps, be found, and if the attention of the Committee were given to the matter, all requisite amendments could be at once effected.

*To the Junior Secretary to the Govt. of Bengal.*

*Calcutta, the 14th March, 1868.*

We have the honor to acknowledge the receipt, on the

12th instant, of your letters to our address, dated 6th instant, appointing us, with Mr. Henderson, to form a Committee for the purpose of revising the existing tariff on cotton goods.

2. The Committee were to have met yesterday, but Mr. Henderson was too ill to attend, and the Committee therefore, met to-day.

3. Mr. Henderson had previously sent the accompanying statement to Mr. Crawford, from which the Lieutenant-Governor will perceive that, speaking for the Chamber of Commerce in Calcutta, Mr. Henderson thinks that there is no necessity now for revising the existing tariff. The prospects of the cotton market are now much changed since the letter of the Chamber to the address of the Government was written; and, with reference to the rise in the price of cotton and piece goods since that date, and to the uncertainty of the crop now on the ground, Mr. Henderson is of opinion that the tariff should remain as it is, and that when the market becomes more settled the tariff may be revised if necessary.

4. Mr. Crawford has heard similar statements regarding prices, &c., from several merchants with whom he has spoken on the subject.

5. Under these circumstances we have thought it right to lay the matter at once before the Lieutenant-Governor. In the meantime we have refrained from entering upon the consideration of the other matters mentioned in the 2nd paragraph of the letter of the Government of India, No. 1269, dated 27th ultimo, as it is possible no enquiry into them will be considered necessary, should that upon

the Import Tariff Schedule be postponed, as suggested by Mr. Henderson.

We have, &c.,

E. T. TREVOR.

J. A. CRAWFORD.

When the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, following the lead of the Bombay Chamber, called attention in November last to present tariff values as fixed in 1867, with a view to their reduction in consequence of the great fall in cotton and cotton manufactures, the statements then brought forward in favor of a revision of the existing tariff values were no doubt fully warranted by the altered position of the raw material.

Supplies of cotton, particularly from America, had largely increased, and there seemed no reason to doubt that from other countries shipments of the staple would be continued on an average scale. The article was in consequence rapidly approaching its normal price before the American War, and values of cotton manufactures fell in sympathy; indeed, such was the anxiety evinced to realize that many importers in this market were selling largely for arrival at about the rates current before the American War, thinking, no doubt, that by so doing they were acting judiciously for their own interests or those of their constituents.

The cotton market, however, has not followed the course laid down for it in November last. Supplies from America have not been so large as were generally anticipated; from other countries they have been rather under

than over those of the year previous; and with the prospect of a reduced cultivation in the States, cotton has for sometime past been attracting considerable attention, and not only have stocks been reduced to a minimum in England, but prices have been rapidly advancing, fair Bengal having risen from 4½d. to 7½d. per lb., and other descriptions nearly in proportion.

Values of piece goods in the Indian markets have advanced considerably during the same period, or since the application of the Chamber of Commerce for a revision of the tariff values, and the present market values of Grey Goods are now generally *above* the rates fixed by Act XVII. of 1867.

As the difference between the market and tariff values is at present so slight, and the course of the cotton market so uncertain, I am of opinion that no modification is at present desirable, for it would, I think, be almost impossible at present to arrive at a satisfactory basis for the settlement of fixed values alike fair and equitable to the Government and the importer.

I am quite of opinion that Act XVII. should be revised and modified as early as possible, and I would take the liberty of suggesting that as soon as the value of cotton is again steady, the present Committee be then requested to take up the question of revised tariff values for cotton piece goods.

M. HENDERSON.

CALCUTTA,  
The 13th March, 1868. }

*From Govt. of India to Govt. of Bengal.  
Calcutta, the 28th March, 1868.*

In reply to the communication from your office, No. 933, dated the 19th instant, I am desired to state that, under the circumstances explained, the proposed revision of the existing tariff on cotton goods may be postponed.

The consideration of the other matters mentioned in paragraph 2 of my letter No. 1259, dated the 27th February, 1868, may also be deferred.

**Indian Consolidated Customs Act—Enforcement  
of Sections 33 and 34.**

In the month of February last, your Committee received a letter from the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce and Manufactures, enclosing copy of the following Memorial, addressed to the Secretary of State for India, on the subject of a notification published towards the close of last year in the *London Gazette*, intimating the future strict enforcement of certain Sections of the Customs Act, which up to that time had remained in abeyance, and requesting that its prayer should be actively supported:—

THE MEMORIAL.

RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH,—That the attention of this Chamber has been called to the notification by the Right Honourable the GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA in Council regarding the strict enforcement of Sections 33 and 34 of the "INDIAN CONSOLIDATED CUSTOMS ACT" of

1863, which appeared in the *London Gazette* of 22nd November, 1867.

That, according to the notification, a true specification of all goods imported in their respective vessels will be required from all masters and commanders of vessels; and it is intimated that masters and commanders of vessels, who shall be unable to enter in their reports or manifests a true specification of all goods imported in their respective vessels, in consequence of their neglect or failure to obtain a full and detailed description of all such goods in their respective Bills of Lading before the shipment of such goods, will be liable to the penalties laid down in the 34th Section of the above-mentioned Act, such penalty not exceeding 1,000 rupees.

That your Memorialists desire to represent the great inconvenience and the utter inutility of the requirement now made. It imposes on Shipowners and Shipmasters in this country the duty of requiring from Merchants and Shippers detailed information as to the contents of every package which may be shipped. It imposes on the Merchant or Shipper the duty of disclosing, before shipment, to the Shipowner (who may be, and often is, a rival in trade) the precise nature and quantity of the goods which are being exported. As regards the inutility of the requirement, it is only necessary to remind you that, on every shipment of goods, the Shippers must pass entries at the Custom-house in this country containing a full specification of all the goods so shipped; and this process has to be repeated, and the invoices exhibited, before the goods can be passed through the Custom-house on their arrival in India. For fiscal purposes at Calcutta more minute

particulars are required than can be supposed to be within the knowledge of almost any Shipmaster—in some descriptions of goods the weights of the specific goods must be given; in others (Yarns for instance) the various counts, whilst in most others the *value* is requisite. For fiscal purposes, therefore, the additional specification in the ship's manifest is altogether unnecessary. It is equally so for statistical purposes; and your Memorialists are unable to see that any result will follow from the enforcement of the regulation, except a great complication of mercantile forms.

Your Memorialists, therefore, respectfully ask that you will be pleased to reconsider the regulation, and direct the notification to be recalled.

And your Memorialists will ever pray.

Although convinced that the Glasgow Chamber laboured under a misapprehension as to the actual requirements of these Sections, and that the words a *true specification* were simply precautionary against explosive or inflammable articles being entered in a ship's manifest as "merchandise," and were not intended to enforce a disclosure before shipment of the precise nature and quantity of such articles as Piece Goods, Yarns, &c., your Committee considered it expedient to place the question beyond doubt by asking the Collector of Customs to interpret the law. In his reply, fully confirming the Committee's opinion, he suggested a further reference to the Board of

Revenue, the correspondence with which Department is printed below for information and record :—

*From Chamber of Commerce to Board of  
Revenue, L. P.  
Calcutta, the 11th March, 1868.*

A copy of a Memorial from the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce and Manufactures to the Secretary of State for India has been forwarded to this Chamber, requesting its support of the protest therein contained against the strict enforcement of Sections 33 and 34 of the Indian Consolidated Customs' Act, (notice of which was published in the *London Gazette* of 22nd November, 1867) on the ground of the requirement being useless and inconvenient.

The Committee feeling satisfied that the Glasgow Chamber had misinterpreted the notification, as regards the "specification" of goods exacted, referred to the Collector of Customs for his understanding of these two Sections, and the following is a quotation from his reply :—

" I can only give the Chamber my own impression of what is meant, and that is that it shall be distinctly stated in every manifest what the contents of the cargo

" are under some *distinct term*, such as

" 300 bales piece goods,

" 50 hhds. beer,

" 100 cases wine,

" it being quite immaterial how many bales are Turkey Reds, Mull Mulls, Jaconets, Prints, or any other class of piece goods; and how much is Champagne, Sherry,

" &c., in the case of wine; and so on. The object is to " exclude such a term as *merchandise*, (which may mean " Piece Goods, or Gunpowder, Acids, Sulphur,) and the " equally vague term of *sundries*."

The Collector has suggested, however, in order to avoid any possible doubt on the question, that the Board of Revenue should be requested by the Chamber to confirm these views, with which object I now have the honor of addressing you.

*From Board of Revenue to Chamber of  
Commerce.*

*Calcutta, the 19th March, 1868.*

With reference to your letter of the 11th instant, I am directed to state that the Collector of Customs, Calcutta, has clearly and correctly stated the purport of the notification issued in the *London Gazette* of the 22nd of November last.

2. I am further directed to submit for the information of the Chamber of Commerce a copy of a letter No. 1167 C., dated the 7th instant, which has been addressed to the Government by the Board on the subject of the objections raised to the notification in question by the Glasgow Chamber.

*From Board of Revenue to Govt. of Bengal.*

*Calcutta, the 17th March, 1868.*

With reference to your Memorandum No. 705, dated

the 26th ultimo, forwarding for report a memorial to the address of the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for India, from the Chamber of Commerce and Manufactures of the City of Glasgow, remonstrating against the strict enforcement of the provisions of Sections 33 and 34 of the Indian Consolidated Customs' Act of 1863, as announced in the notification published by the Government of India, and also in the *London Gazette* of the 22nd of November last, I am directed to state that it is apparent from a perusal of the memorial that the Members of the Chamber of Commerce at Glasgow are at present unaware of the grounds on which the publication of the notification was deemed necessary; and further that they have formed an exaggerated conclusion as to the character of its requirements.

2. The information which the law requires Masters of ships to enter in their manifests, and to which special attention was called in the notification, was not insisted upon for either fiscal or statistical purposes. As in England, all commercial and trade returns in this country are compiled from the full data contained in Bills of Entry. Nor is a detailed description of the contents of each case or package required by either the law or the terms of the notification. In the words of the Act "a true specification of all goods imported" is to be entered by the Master of a vessel in his manifest, and according to the approved form in which such returns are to be made a true description of the particular sort or kind of merchandise contained *in each case or package in detail* is requisite. The use of such loose terms as "merchandise" or "sundries" in the manifest is prohibited, but all that the Master is called upon to report is the genera-

nature and character of the contents of each case; a detailed description of either weights or quantities was not required.

3. The facts which drew attention to a laxity in the procedure prevalent in the Custom House, and to the necessity of enforcing the requirements of the law were mentioned by the Collector of Customs in his letter No. 337, dated the 2nd of October, 1866. In that communication the Collector stated that two boxes loosely described in the ship's manifest as containing merchandise had accidentally exploded while in transit to the Custom House; and that it was then for the first time discovered that they contained in the one instance lucifer matches, and in the other inflammable acids.

4. Under the Indian Customs' Act all goods, other than those of an inflammable and dangerous character, are required to be taken to the Custom House for examination and appraisement, and Section 54 of the Act authorizes Masters of ships to call upon the Custom House authorities to receive and take charge of all goods which may not be cleared before the expiration of fifteen days after the entry of any vessel, or at any earlier period, if so specified in the Bill of Lading. The strict enforcement of the provisions of Section 34, therefore, is clearly necessary for the general protection of the property stored in the Custom House, and for the safety of the buildings themselves.

5. To meet cases in which the Master of a ship may be unable to specify the contents of any box or package, the Collector of Customs has been directed to open all

such in some open place without the Custom House premises, and on no account to receive them within the building. This precaution, together with the strict enforcement of the penalties of the law in all cases in which Masters of ships are unable to specify the character of their goods, or enter an erroneous description in their manifests, will, the Board believe, insure the general security of both public and private property within the port.

6. The original recommendation made by the Chamber of Commerce, that Lucifer Matches and every description of combustible and explosive article should be brought under the operation of Act III of 1865, was supported by the Board, but whether the Government are pleased to legislate further in this direction or not it is still necessary that the presence of all such inflammable articles, and the cases in which they are contained, should be noted by Masters of vessels in their manifests.

**Defective working of the Customs' Act,  
No. VI. of 1863.**

The expediency of revising this Act is generally recognized, and has become more than ever apparent to your Committee from a perusal of two cases lately submitted to them by members of the Chamber.

It would appear that during the storm of November last a cargo boat with 119 bales of Piece Goods to the consignment of Messrs.

Carlises, Nephews and Co. was sunk in the river ; —93 bales were afterwards recovered by various means, and each lot as it arrived in the Custom-house was sold and duty levied thereon in the usual manner. The remaining 26 bales were totally lost, and although the consignees were willing to tender to the Collector of Customs the same evidence as has been considered sufficiently conclusive to enable them to recover the value of the goods from the under-writers, the full import duty was demanded under Section 49, which Section your Committee contend is totally inapplicable to the case in question.

An appeal was made to the Board of Revenue, but, after the usual delay of two or three months, it was rejected, not under the Section referred to by the Collector, nor indeed under any Section whatever, but chiefly because "the alleged loss of the goods has not occurred in the actual presence of the Police, or the Officers of Customs." With due respect for the opinion of the Board, the Committee have no hesitation in saying that if, according to the present Act, the mercantile community have to depend for protection to their goods during the occurrence of a cyclone on the observations of the Police or the Officers of Customs, it is time that the Act was altered, and another law passed bear-

ing upon the question at issue. Meantime the case has been submitted to the Government of Bengal, and it is to be hoped His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor will take the last paragraph of the Chamber's letter into his favorable consideration.

Another instance which came before your Committee was the retention of sundry bales of Grey Jaconets by the Collector of Customs under Section 27 of the above Act. Without discussing the merits of this particular case, or more than casually adverting to the fact that these goods remained unsold for a considerable period after they were taken over on account of Government, and were disposed of afterwards *privately*, at a loss, and in contravention of the Act, which directs that, after the transfer, the Collector "shall then cause the goods to be sold by public auction *after due notice in the Official Gazette*," the Committee would simply point out the injustice and hardship to which all classes of the community are exposed by the excessive powers vested in the most subordinate Officer of Customs, at whose dictum, though unsupported by evidence, property may be confiscated, and the greatest possible inconvenience and annoyance caused to respectable merchants by the appraisers' ignorance of the value of those articles

for which a specific tariff rate has not been fixed by Government.

The Committee are decidedly of opinion that it is inequitable for the legislature to compel importers either to surrender their goods at a valuation which the appraiser may consider to be under their proper value, or to pay duty on the value as estimated by this official; and the Committee believe that if goods so detained were to be taken over at the appraisers' valuation, or even an approximation thereto, cases such as the one referred to would be unknown.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of Bengal.  
Calcutta, the 26th March, 1868.*

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce direct me to request you will bring to the notice of His Honor, the Lieutenant-Governor, a late decision of the Board of Revenue with regard to a claim for import duty preferred by the Collector of Customs under the following exceptional circumstances.

2. A consignment of 119 bales of Manchester goods to Messrs. Carlises, Nephews and Co. of this city was, on the 1st November last, transferred from the ship *Saint Lawrence* to a cargo boat for the purpose of being landed as is usual at the Custom House Wharf. During that night's cyclone the boat in question was sunk, and of the 119 bales 93 have been recovered, and *reduced* duty (as provided for in the case of damaged goods) has

been paid thereon, while the other 26, so far as can be ascertained, have been totally lost. On these latter the Collector of Customs claims *full* import duty.

3. In order to dispose of the damaged bales with as little official delay as possible, Messrs. Carlises, Nephews and Co., complying with the 184th. Section of the Customs Act, immediately deposited the entire amount of the duty payable on the sound value of the consignment with the Collector, "subject to a deduction for the damaged condition in which a certain portion of the goods are, and for the total loss of such bales as shall not be recovered from the wreck of the cargo boat."

On subsequent application a refund for the damaged bales was allowed, but it was refused for the bales lost under Section 49, which provides that—

"If any goods entered in the Report or Manifest shall not be found on board of the vessel, or if the quantity found be short, and if such deficiency be not accounted for to the satisfaction of the Officer in charge of the Custom House, the Master or Commander of such vessel shall be liable, in addition to full duty, to a penalty not exceeding twice the amount of Duty chargeable on the missing or deficient goods, if they be capable of being assessed therewith; or if they be not, to a penalty not exceeding five hundred Rupees for every missing or deficient package of unknown value."

The Collector, however, for reasons best known to himself, does not appear to have demanded the payment of any penalty.

4. Replying to their appeal, the Board of Revenue

inform Messrs. Carlises, Nephews and Co. "that the law contains no provisions for refund of duty paid on goods entered for home consumption and lost in transit to the shore, and that though it is very possible they have lost the goods, as stated by them, there is nothing to show that they were irretrievably lost, and have not since passed into consumption," and, consequently, that their application for a refund is rejected.

5. This seems to the Committee of the Chamber a most unjust decision, as, in the first place, the Custom House officials have no right to take advantage of a deposit made in conformity with Section 184, previously alluded to, to claim duty on goods never received; nor can the return of such a deposit be regarded as a "refund of duty paid;" and, in the second place, the Committee think, and they feel satisfied His Honor will agree with them, that, setting aside altogether the high commercial standing of the firm certifying to the total loss of the bales, evidence sufficiently conclusive to enable merchants to recover from underwriters ought to be perfectly satisfactory to the Customs' Department.

6. The amount involved in the case under notice is not very serious; but, in the interests of underwriters and the commercial community generally, the Committee of the Chamber consider it incumbent on them to lay the facts before His Honor, the Lieut.-Governor, and to solicit the exercise of his authority in reversing the decision of the Board of Revenue. If no deposit had been paid, no duty would have been demanded, as at least one instance on record proves; and if, as the Board states, the law contains no provision for repay-

ment claimed under similar circumstances to those detailed, the Committee are of opinion that the omission should be rectified as speedily as possible.

**Time allowed for application for Refund of Export Duty on short Shipments and Re-lands.**

The Chamber's action in this matter has resulted in the framing of the following Bill, which received the assent of His Excellency, the Governor General in Council, on the 2nd April.

It will be remembered that Section 132 of the Consolidated Customs' Act (No. VI of 1863) authorizes the refund of export duty levied upon goods not shipped, or on goods shipped and afterwards re-landed. The privilege, however, was accompanied by a condition that the application to re-land should be made, or notice of non-shipment given, before the vessel left port. The Chamber, as related in former Reports, represented that the Section was practically a dead-letter owing to the impossibility, under the present system of business, of conforming to the stipulation; and the present Bill, accordingly, extends the time within which the application or notice may be made, or given, to three clear working days after the vessel has left port.

No. 10 of 1868.

*A Bill to amend the Consolidated Customs' Act.*

Whereas Section 132 of the Consolidated Customs' Act (No. VI of 1863) provides

*Preamble.*

that no refund of duty levied upon goods not shipped, or upon goods shipped and afterwards re-landed, shall be allowed unless application to re-land shall have been made, or notice of non-shipment shall have been given, before the vessel on which such goods were intended to be shipped, or from which they were re-landed, shall have left the port: And whereas it is expedient to extend the time within which such application or notice may be made or given; It is hereby enacted as follows:—

Amendment of Act No. VI of 1863, Section 132.

1. For the proviso contained in the said Section the following shall be substituted:—

Provided that no such refund shall be allowed unless application to re-land shall have been made, or notice of non-shipment shall have been given, within three clear working days after the vessel on which such goods were intended to be shipped, or from which they were re-landed, shall have left the port.

2. This Act may be called the "Consolidated Customs' Act Amendment Act."

Short title.

**Proposed alteration of Section 52 of the Customs' Act; and suggestions to remedy the existing evils attending the landing and shipping of goods.**

On the 4th January last the following comman-

nication was addressed to the Government of Bengal, requesting that the alterations suggested by your Committee in their last report, and confirmed at the half-yearly meeting in December, might be favorably entertained by Government, and Section 52 altered to correspond with the views of the Chamber. It was supposed some action would be taken on the subject when the annual Budget was read, as changes in Customs' laws are generally passed at that season; but finding that no steps have been taken towards complying with the recommendations submitted, a second letter was forwarded on the 20th April, to which no reply has been received. It is satisfactory to note that the proposed alterations meet with the approval of the Chambers at Bombay and Madras, both of which have promised to support the measure through their respective Governments; and the Committee hope that these important changes may soon be made.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of Bengal.  
Calcutta, the 4th January, 1868.*

The inconvenience frequently experienced by the operation of Section 52 of the Consolidated Customs' Act having been prominently brought to the notice of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce some few months ago, it was resolved to appoint a Sub-Committee, representing both the Shipping and Importers' interests, to inquire carefully into the subject and report to the

Chamber any alterations they might consider expedient, either in the Section referred to, or any other Section of the Act, in view to increasing the facilities of the port, and mitigating the inconveniences complained of.

The sub-Committee have lately submitted the result of their deliberations, which has been approved of and adopted by the members of the Chamber at their half-yearly Meeting on the 11th ultimo; and I am now instructed by the Committee to solicit His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor's favorable and early consideration of the recommendations suggested, which are as follows:—

Section 52 provides that if the consignee of any goods does not take delivery of them within 15 working days after date of ship's entry, the Master of the vessel shall be at liberty to land them at the Custom House.

The operation of this clause is found in practice to be often attended with the greatest inconvenience, because importers who are anxious to receive their goods as soon as possible cannot get delivery of them in consequence of consignees of cargo, ready to be discharged, not removing their packages as they come to hand, and if the Captain lands them before the expiration of 15 days from date of ship's entry he cannot have them held by the Custom House for freight and charges due thereon to the ship.

This compulsory delay further entails a very serious addition to the heavy expenses ships coming to the port have to meet, any diminution of which would greatly benefit commerce.

It has, therefore, been proposed that the time prescribed

by the Customs' Act should be reduced from 15 to 5 days,—a limitation which, in the words of the Report, "would in no respect alter the position of the Master, agent of the ship, or consignee of the goods from that which at present exists, except that, instead of having to wait 15 days before being able to get rid of the cargo, the result would be that the vessel could proceed with her discharging after 5 working days from date of entry, and the consignee of the goods would have only that length of time, instead of 15 days as at present, to decide what disposition he intended to make of his goods, and to prepare entry papers accordingly."

"This seems to the Committee," and their opinion has been endorsed by the Chamber, "to be ample time in all ordinary cases; and not only will the despatch to the ship be a great object, but it will also tend to place merchandise in the hands of such importers as are anxious to obtain prompt delivery much sooner than the existing law permits."

Another proposition in the Report alluded to, regarding duty-paying imports sent to the Custom House, for which the Committee of the Chamber venture to claim His Honor's special attention, is as follows:—

"In order to avoid the great delay, risk of damage, and confusion resulting from having to send all import goods liable to duty into the Custom House premises, which are at times greatly crowded and incapable of receiving them as fast as landed, the Committee are of opinion that a change in the law should be made, giving an importer authority to land and send an invoice of goods direct to his own godowns, or elsewhere, less a

sufficient number of packages representing in value the estimated amount of duty chargeable. These should be sent to the Custom House for appraisement as at present, and could be selected by numbers on the packages, or taken promiscuously from the entire parcel, under directions from the Custom House authorities to the Preventive Officer on board the vessel. The effect to the importer would be a considerable reduction in cooly and hackery hire, decreased liability to damage from frequent handling, and a saving of time in obtaining possession of his invoice; while the Revenue would be sufficiently protected from loss by having goods in hand representing in value the full amount due for duty, and the uncertainty as to which packages would be taken for examination would be a guard against fraud. At the same time if only 10 per cent. or 20 per cent. of the quantity of merchandise now daily received in the Custom House premises were sent there under the new system, it would not only put a stop to the overcrowding and complaints as to want of accommodation, which are now so rife, but would also probably result in a reduction of the staff at present employed at the Custom House, and lessen the expenses incurred in the collection of duties."

It is deemed unnecessary to enlarge on the advantages which will accrue from the adoption of these recommendations, as the Committee feel satisfied they will be sufficiently apparent to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor without further comment to ensure his favourable consideration and support; and they venture, therefore, to express the hope that early steps will be taken by the Government of Bengal for carrying these important changes into effect.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of Bengal.  
Calcutta, the 20th April, 1868.*

"I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to request the favor of your informing them if any action has as yet been taken regarding the letter they addressed to you on the 4th January, submitting, for the consideration of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, the expediency of amending the 52nd Section of the Consolidated Customs Act."

**Relaxation of the Port Rule of Calcutta, issued  
in November, 1864.**

At the date when the last report was written no reply had been received from the Government of Bengal to the Committee's letter of September 20th, 1867, pointing out the hardships which, in some cases, resulted from the strict enforcement of the above-mentioned rule; but it will be seen from the following communications that the Government of India, acting on the suggestion of the Chamber, has modified it to a certain extent, and sanctioned a relaxation which, it is believed, will give great satisfaction to masters of vessels leaving this port at the seasons specified.

*From Govt. of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce.  
Calcutta, the 11th February, 1868.*

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your let-

ter of the 20th. September last, submitting the recommendation of the Chamber of Commerce for a relaxation, in certain cases, of Rule 26 of the Revised Code of Rules for the Port of Calcutta, requiring that vessels within the limits of the Port shall have their topgallant masts and yards on deck during certain periods of the year.

2. In reply, I am directed to forward for the information of the Chamber the accompanying copy of a correspondence, from which it will be seen that, on the recommendation of the Lieutenant-Governor, the Governor General in Council has sanctioned the following addition to the Rule above quoted:—

*"Ships about to leave the Port may, however, after they have left their moorings and dropped down to Garden Reach, be allowed to send their topgallant masts and yards aloft twenty-four hours before they leave Port."*

3. A Notification on the subject will be issued in the *Calcutta Gazette* for general information.

*From Offg. Master Attendant to Govt. of Bengal.  
Calcutta, the 4th October, 1867.*

With reference to memorandum No. 4089 of 28th ultimo, and the accompanying communication, herewith returned, from the Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce, I have the honor to report, for the information of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, that it is not, in my opinion, advisable to comply fully with the recommendation contained in the letter above quoted.

2. The Cyclone of 1864 was preceded by none of the

usual signs of an approaching gale, and there were no less than twelve ships which had applied to be hauled out of their moorings on the day the Cyclone actually occurred, which is an usual and indeed almost constant occurrence just before the commencement of the Doorga Poojah holidays.

3. The presence of twelve ships with their topgallant masts on end in the moorings on the occurrence of a Cyclone would, in my opinion, render the rule under discussion practically useless, as it is well known that catastrophes like that of October 4th, 1864, do not occur by all the vessels being simultaneously driven from their moorings by the force of the wind, but by the parting from her moorings, perhaps, of a single ship, which fouls a second whose cables are already scarcely able to hold her on, and part immediately the extra strain is applied to them. The two ships then fall on the top of those to leeward of them, and the result is that, from the breaking adrift of one vessel, the whole of the ships in the tiers to leeward of her are carried away from their moorings, and the wreck and confusion become general.

4. For these considerations I am not prepared to advise that the rule should be relaxed in the case of ships in the moorings, but I think that ships about to leave the port might be allowed twenty-four hours to send their topgallant masts and yards aloft, provided they left the moorings and dropped down to Garden Reach before commencing to do so.

5. The working of the rule is made as little burdensome as possible; thus, at the commencement of the period; say the 1st of October, any ship that is going away be-

tween that date and the 6th inclusive, is, on application, permitted to keep her masts on end with the mast ropes rove ready for striking. At this present the number of ships so exempted from the operation of the rule is 27. The number so exempted on the 1st of May last was 16; and, similarly, at the end of the two periods during which the rule is in operation, no ship arriving within three or four days of the end of the period is compelled to strike her topgallant masts.

6. Too much stress, I consider, is laid upon the difficulty of sending topgallant masts up on the passage down the river. Large ships are sometimes three and even four days getting to sea, and the masts can surely be sent up while at anchor during that time, and if the demoralized state of the crew is brought forward as a ground of difficulty, that can scarcely be admitted as a reason for jeopardizing the safety of the Government moorings, and the shipping generally.

7. It used to be common to send topgallant masts down at sea in gales of wind, and the masts would be sent up again when the weather moderated, whilst the ship was still rolling in a heavy sea.

*From Govt. of Bengal to Govt. of India:*

*Calcutta, the 13th December, 1867.*

I am directed to forward herewith a copy of the papers noted on the margin, from which it will be perceived that the Chamber of Commerce have objected to Rule 26 of the Code of Rules for the Port of Calcutta, which requires that all vessels within the limits of the Port

shall have their topgallant masts and yards on deck during certain periods of the year, and have recommended a relaxation of the rule in favor of vessels ready to leave the Port.

2. The Master Attendant, who was consulted, is also, it will be perceived, in favor of a relaxation of the rule, though he does not advise such relaxation in the case of ships in moorings, but only in the case of those which have quitted their moorings and dropped down to Garden Reach.

3. In view of all the circumstances of the case the Lieutenant-Governor desires to recommend that the following clause may be sanctioned as an addition to the rule in question.

"Ships about to leave the Port may, however, after they have left their moorings and dropped down to Garden Reach, be allowed to send their topgallant masts and yards aloft twenty-four hours before they leave Port."

#### **Detention of the Overland Mails in Bombay.**

The Committee having noticed that on two or three occasions, when the overland mails were landed at Bombay too late for the ordinary train leaving there at 6-30 p. m. they were detained until the following evening—on one occasion 21 hours, and on another 17½—to the great annoyance and inconvenience of the public, immediately

called the attention of Government to the matter with a satisfactory result, as will be seen from the annexed correspondence:—

*Chamber of Commerce to Government of India.  
Calcutta, the 16th March, 1868.*

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce direct me to request you will do them the favor of stating the cause of the great and apparently unnecessary detention of the overland mails in Bombay.

By reference to the Telegraph Gazette of the 22nd February you will notice that the English mail steamer was signalled at Bombay at 4-20 p. m. of the 21st idem, and, allowing 5 hours for her arrival in harbour, the mails would have been landed about 9-30 p. m.; but they were not despatched until the following evening by the ordinary half past six train, or 21 hours after arrival.

Again on the 6th instant, the steamer was signalled at 8 p. m.; the mails were probably landed at 1 a. m. of the 7th, but were detained until half past six p. m. or about 17½ hours.

The Committee conclude that these delays were unnecessary from the fact that the mail of the 18th February, delivered in Calcutta this morning, was signalled at Bombay on the 11th instant at 9 p. m.; and was forwarded by five o'clock *Express* the following morning. If in this and other instances reasonable despatch was found practicable, surely similar railway arrangements might always be effected for the public convenience.

It will be satisfactory to the Committee of the Chamber to learn that His Excellency the Governor General in Council has been pleased to issue such strict orders on this subject as will prevent a recurrence of the delays experienced.

*From Govt. of India to Chamber of Commerce.  
Calcutta, the 21st April, 1868.*

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your Secretary's letter, dated the 16th March, 1868, complaining of the detention of two Overland Mails in Bombay.

2nd. In reply I am to state that the circumstances of the detentions have been ascertained. The mails that were delayed were extra mails conveyed to Bombay by Government Transports, and the cause of the delay is not attributable to the Post Office.

3rd. I am to add, however, that arrangements are in progress which will obviate delay in the despatch of the mails on arrival at Bombay.

Copy forwarded to the Director General of the Post Office of India, with the request that special trains may be employed whenever there is a probability of their reaching Jubbulpore in time to catch the train the day previous to which the mails would be forwarded, supposing they were despatched from Bombay by the ordinary train.

**The Textile Manufactures and Costumes of the  
People of India.**

The Committee print for information the cor-

respondence they have had with Government regarding the disposal of the valuable work compiled by Dr. J. Forbes Watson, Reporter on the products of India to the Secretary of State for India in Council, on this subject.

The volumes in question contain 700 *working samples* of cotton, silk, and woollen textiles of native manufacture obtained from various places in this country, and are all accompanied by details respecting the length, breadth, and weight, &c., of the *pieces* of which they originally formed a part; the object of the collection being to promote, encourage, and facilitate trade operations between India and England.

Only eighteen sets have been printed, seven of which have been presented to India, and the remaining nine are retained in England, the idea being, as the key to the work states, to "enable the agent in India to refer the merchant or manufacturer at home to a certain specimen, and ask him to produce an article as like it as possible, or with such alterations as he may see fit to suggest. And so, in like manner, they may enable the merchant of one part of India to deal with the merchant of another, when, through an examination of these volumes, he learns that an article is made there which will suit his customers."

As the accomplishment of these intentions de-

pend entirely on the convenience of reference to the collections, your Committee applied to Government to have them deposited in the Chamber, and pledged themselves to their safe-keeping. His Excellency, the Governor General in Council, however, seemed to consider the Indian museum a more accessible and fitting place, but your Committee pointed out that the Chamber was in the centre of the commercial quarter of Calcutta, and that the placing of the volumes in the museum was practically to render them useless, and to defeat the object of their compilation.

No final reply has, as yet, been received, but the Committee doubt not that the reasonableness and equity of their request will be duly acknowledged, and that before another general meeting is held the library of the Chamber will be enriched with this valuable addition.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Private Secretary to  
His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.  
Calcutta, the 28th January, 1868.*

Some days ago a book entitled "The Textile Manufactures and Costumes of the People of India" was received by me from Dr. J. Forbes Watson, India Museum, London, addressed to the Library of the Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta, but without any letter of explanation.

On examining the volume the Committee find that it is

the key to a collection of 700 working specimens of cotton, silk and woollen textiles of native manufacture obtained from various parts of India, which have been executed at considerable trouble and expense by the India museum, and prepared in twenty sets of eighteen volumes each; that seven of these sets are to be distributed in India, of which one set is intended for Calcutta; and that certain conditions are attached to the gift, which are as follows:—

1st. That the set should be assigned in trust to the chief commercial authorities in each selected place, who should be required to make it easy of access to agents, merchants, and manufacturers, resident and non-resident.

2nd. That the permanent protection of the work should be provided for by placing it in the charge of a proper and responsible person, or persons, in a suitable building.

3rd. That the requisite facilities for consulting the work should be afforded, subject, however, to the condition that under no circumstances shall any of the volumes be removed for purposes of exhibition or reference: and

4th. That access to the work be given to any person bearing an order to the effect signed by officials as enumerated.

The Committee further learn that these conditions have been agreed to by the Chambers of Commerce of Belfast, Bradford, Glasgow, Halifax, Liverpool, Manchester, &c., and that a set of the volumes in question has been presented to each of these institutions; and that, under the instructions of the Secretary of State for India in Council, seven sets have been forwarded to the respective

Governments for deposition in Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, Kurrachee, &c. Under these circumstances the Committee of this Chamber direct me to request you will kindly signify to His Honor, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, their ready acquiescence in the conditions imposed, and their desire to be constituted the guardians of this valuable work in Calcutta.

*From Govt. of India to Govt. of Bengal.  
Calcutta, the 10th March, 1868.*

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 821, dated the 15th ultimo, forwarding a communication from the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, dated the 25th January, in which it is requested that Dr. Forbes Watson's work on the Textile Manufactures and Costumes of the people of India may be placed in the custody of the Committee of that Chamber.

2. The application is based on a paragraph (15) in Dr. Watson's memorandum, recommending that the books should be assigned in trust to the Chief Commercial Authorities in the selected places. This para.: I am directed to state, was not overlooked by the Governor General in Council when he considered the question of the best place of deposit for these books. But as there are no such Chief Commercial Authorities at most of the places in India for which the collections were designed, as enumerated in para: 12 of the same memorandum, and as it was desirable that the measures for the custody of these valuable records should be of an uniform character, it was considered expedient that the sets should be deposited in the various museums at the

places indicated, where they are fully accessible to all persons.

3. The Governor General in Council believes that these arrangements fulfil the intentions of the Secretary of State to whom they have been reported, and that they will also be convenient for the commercial and general public.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of India.  
Calcutta, the 25th March, 1868.*

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce instruct me to address you with reference to your letter No. 1229, dated the 10th instant, to the Junior Secretary to the Government of Bengal, a copy of which has been forwarded for their information.

The request preferred by the Committee that Dr. F. Watson's work on the Textile Manufactures and Costumes of the people of India should be placed in their custody is declined on the ground that there are no Chief Commercial authorities at most of the localities in India for which the collections were designed, and that it has been considered expedient to deposit them in the various museums at the places indicated, in order that the provisions for their safe-keeping should be of an uniform character.

Against this decision the Committee of the Chamber respectfully appeal, and they trust His Excellency in Council will admit on good and sufficient grounds, which are these :—

1st. At four out of the seven places in India to which sets of these collections have been assigned, commercial

interests are represented by Chambers of Commerce, viz: at Calcutta, Madras, Bombay and Kurrachee.

2nd. Six of the 13 sets reserved for Great Britain have been presented to the Chambers of Commerce of Belfast, Bradford, Glasgow, Halifax, Liverpool, and Manchester; and the other seven have been variously deposited in museums, Mechanics Institutes, &c., thus showing that no necessity for uniform arrangements exists, so long as the conditions accompanying the gift are complied with:—and

3rd. The object of the work being to increase the interchange of commodities between this country and Great Britain, it should be deposited in the place most easy of access, and affording the greatest facilities to agents, merchants, and manufacturers, which the Chamber, being in the centre of the commercial quarter of Calcutta, assuredly is, and the Indian museum, with equal certainty, is not.

Dr. Forbes Watson in presenting the Chamber direct with the key to this valuable work clearly indicated *his* idea as to the most fitting place in Calcutta for its deposit, and the Committee submit with all deference that a body representing some 60 firms in the largest emporium of Eastern commerce has, at all events, an equal right to be entrusted with a collection intended to benefit trade as the Chambers of Commerce before enumerated.

As the present disposal of the volumes is practically to render them useless as works of reference, and to defeat the advantages intended by the compiler, and likely otherwise to accrue, the Committee of the Chamber will be favored by your pressing a reconsideration of their request on His Excellency the Governor General in Council.

### The Budget for 1868-69.

The annual Financial Statement of the Government of India was submitted to the Council of His Excellency, the Governor General, by the Right Hon'ble W. N. Massey on the 14th March. The Budget estimates for the year ending March 31st, 1868,—made up March 5th, 1867—showed a deficit of £557,522; but as opium yielded £1,100,450, and the License Tax £158,000, more than the late Financial Minister had anticipated, these sums, together with about £225,000, derived from Land Tax, Customs, &c., in excess of the estimated receipts, converted the deficiency into an actual surplus of £355,390, notwithstanding an expenditure of £48,460,000, or £1,120,000, more than was expected. A loan of £1,000,000, for Public Works was contracted during the past year to cover the estimated deficit of £557,522, and that has left an unexpended balance of £442,478, to be added to the surplus of receipts over expenditure, making a total of about £800,000 in hand to commence the current year, the estimates for which, to March 31st, 1869, give an income of £48,586,900, and expenditure of £48,343,000, showing a further surplus of £243,900, and obviating, it is supposed, the necessity for a loan during the current year. The Budget must on the whole be considered satisfactory, showing as it

does the elasticity of the Indian Revenues, but it is to be regretted, that expenditure has increased nearly in the same proportion as receipts. Mr. Massey pointed out that, it had been necessary to augment the pay of many officials owing to the enhanced cost of the necessaries of life; that two petty wars had been maintained during the past few years; and that there were other causes of an exceptional nature which had tended to bring about this effect; the public, however, are led to infer that aside from the requirements of public works—which are capable of absorbing *any amount* of money—a check may be expected to the yearly increasing disbursements of the Government.

#### The Act for Taxing Professions and Trades.

No small surprise was occasioned when the Finance Minister announced his intention to re-impose the License Tax in a modified form under the above title, as, prior to the delivery of his annual statement, it was currently anticipated he would yield to the voice of public opinion, and gracefully abandon a measure so obnoxious to all classes of the community, especially as it is believed by those most competent to judge that the receipts from opium during the current year will be largely in excess of the estimate. Mr. Massey, however,

contended that the Government could not afford to part with any existing source of income, and called upon the official members of the Viceroy's Council to support, in defiance of all national protests, an unpopular impost by which it was calculated that half a million would be added to the Empire's revenue of 50 millions!

In the face of the Right Honorable gentleman's threat of resignation, and the declared inclination of the Government to listen to any remonstrances, your Committee deemed it inexpedient to urge further the arguments against which, while disregarding them, Mr. Massey acknowledged he had no defence to make in strict equity. On one point, however, it was necessary to apply for information, viz. :—as to the incidence of the tax on Companies, the Section of the Act referring thereto not being defined with sufficient clearness. The Financial Department, in its reply given below, has set this question at rest; and in doing so has enunciated a novel idiosyncrasy in political economy by which the profits a Company earns in one country are made tributary to the revenues of another!

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

*Calcutta, the 18th April, 1855.*

As the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce fully represented their views regarding the License Act on its

initiation it was not their intention to submit any further remarks on the remodelled Bill which has recently received the assent of His Excellency, the Governor General in Council; but such universal uncertainty seems to prevail as to the interpretation of the 4th. Section that they are compelled to request you will do them the favor of stating what is to be considered as constituting an agency or branch of a company liable to a tax of Rs. 500, within the meaning of the Act?

The Committee understand that all companies have the option of paying a composition tax of Rs. 500 on each of their agencies, or of being assessed at the rate of one per cent. on the dividend declared during the year; accordingly it is supposed that in the event of no dividend being paid, no tax will be levied.

So far as Indian companies are concerned these rules may, to a certain extent, operate satisfactorily if their unequal incidence is disregarded; but it is difficult to comprehend how the Act proposes to deal with English companies having a number of small agencies scattered throughout India, and other parts of the world.

Take, for instance, the Albert Life Assurance Company, a very large Institution with its head office in London, and three principal, besides about 125 minor agencies in India. As probably by far the greater portion of this company's earnings are derived from England and places other than India, it seems unreasonable that 1 per cent. of their declared dividend should be paid to the revenue of this Empire; and if it was elected to pay Rs. 500 for each agency they would contribute upwards of Rs. 60,000 to

the State. Such a disproportionate application of the law was, of course, never contemplated, as with many companies it would practically amount to a prohibition on free trade by compelling them to shut up the greater number of their branches.

Again there are others with two or three agencies (whose shares like those of the company above quoted, are all held in England) not in a sufficiently prosperous condition to pay Rs. 500 for each, as exemplified in a letter written by the local agents of an Insurance Company to the Committee, wherein they state that the whole "business at present on our books is comprised in but a few policies, as this branch was only recently opened, and Rs. 500 will actually eat up *one-third* of the gross premiums, not including commissions, advertising, &c." The Section of the Act under notice, therefore, if the Committee interpret its reading correctly, requires modification, as it would check enterprise in a large degree, without any corresponding advantage to the Exchequer.

It has been suggested that possibly the intention, though unexpressed,<sup>1</sup> was to levy a tax of one per cent. on the proportion of the declared dividend earned in India in the case of English Companies with Indian agencies, but the experience of the Committee, and the enquiries they have made seem to show that it would be impossible to determine this amount with any accuracy.

The Committee deem it unnecessary to multiply examples as they feel satisfied that the cases

already cited will sufficiently illustrate the expediency of having the fourth Section of the law more clearly defined, and the incidence of the tax on companies thereby set at rest.

*From Govt. of India to Chamber of Commerce.  
Calcutta, the 28th April, 1868.*

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 18th. instant, on the subject of the operation of Section 22 of Act IX of 1868, in regard to the assessment of Joint Stock Companies.

2. In reply I am to observe that there appears to the Governor General in Council, no doubt, as to the meaning of the Section 22. Every Joint Stock Company described in that Section has now the option of paying Rs. 500 for each of its branches or agencies situated in British India, or of paying one per cent. on the dividend declared by the Company during the year ending the 31st. March 1868. It does not matter whether the dividend was declared in England or in India, or elsewhere, the one per cent. will be charged on the entire dividend of the Company.

3. The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce are right in supposing that in the event of no dividend having been declared, the Company could claim exemption from the tax.

4. With regard to the case put of the Albert Life Assurance Company, it may be true that an assessment of Rs. 500 per agency on each of 125 agencies would be a heavy tax, but it is not shown that one per cent. on the

dividend of the Company would be an inequitable assessment. The exact position of this Company is not, of course, known to the Government of India, but assuming that it is correctly described in the Investor's Manual of the *Economist* of January 25th. 1868, the capital of this Company is £500,000, of which only £75,000 is paid up. The latest dividends appear to have been at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum, amounting therefore to £3,750. The tax at one per cent. on this amount would be Rs. 375. The Governor General in Council is not prepared to admit *prima facie* that this is a very heavy tax for a Company which has three large branches at the Presidency towns (as evinced by the number and importance of their boards of management at those towns) and upwards of one hundred branches in other parts of India.

5. In conclusion I am to state that the Governor General in Council is not prepared to propose any alteration in the law, until it be better shown that its operation will involve real hardship.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Govt. of India.  
Calcutta, the 30th April, 1868.*

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 2558, dated the 28th instant, replying to the request preferred by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, for information regarding the assessment of Joint Stock Companies, under the 22nd Section of Act IX of 1868.

2. It is duly noted from para. 2 of your communication, that every Joint Stock Company described in

Section 22 has the option of paying Rs. 500 for each of its branches or agencies; or one per cent. on the dividend declared by the Company during the year ending March 31st 1868, whether the dividend is declared in England, in India, or elsewhere. The Committee of the Chamber concurred in the opinion of His Excellency, the Governor General in Council, that no doubt could exist as to the meaning of the Section referred to in the case of *solely* Indian Companies; but they confess they did not see in the wording of the clause such a clear interpretation in respect of Companies declaring dividends in other countries as was apparent to His Excellency, and they are, therefore, pleased to have the question so decidedly set at rest.

3. The exact position of the "Albert Life Assurance Company" is as much unknown to the Committee of the Chamber as to the Government of India, and it was only selected for mention to illustrate more clearly the points on which information was desired; had the views of Government regarding the working of the law in such cases been understood, as they now are, any reference on the subject would have been unnecessary, and the Committee need hardly point out that it was because a general doubt seemed to exist as to the position of Companies under the Act, situated like the "Albert," that allusion was made to that institution.

4. While agreeing with His Excellency that under the reading of the law as set forth in your letter in course of acknowledgment, the Tax payable by the "Albert" is not excessive, the Committee do not alter their opinion that the *principle* which makes a Company pay one per

cent. on a dividend earned in other countries, and on which taxes may have been elsewhere levied, is peculiar; and it was this which the Committee wished to draw attention, to as "unreasonable," and not the "hardship" in any particular instance; neither can they see anything in their letter of the 18th instant, to lead the Governor General in Council to think they consider Rs. 375 "a very heavy tax" for a large and flourishing Company to pay.

Tendering you the Committee's thanks for your explanation.

#### Revision of the Stamp Act of 1862.

Your Committee are unable to record any progress since last General Meeting in this matter. Reports have been contributed from the presidencies of Bombay and Madras, as well as from Bengal, and it is understood that a member of the Supreme Legislative Council has undertaken the task of compilation during his residence in Simla, so that on the return of the Government to Calcutta, the amended law may be brought into force without delay.

#### Relet Charters.

A question having been raised during the last six months as to whether in the case of a ship originally chartered at a certain sum per ton, and

afterwards relet at an advanced freight, payable on completion of loading, the freight difference was payable on the net weight taken in, or a deduction should be made as a reasonable allowance for loss of weight, it was submitted to the members of the Chamber for expressions of opinion: The majority having decided in favor of the advanced freight being paid on the net weight put on board, this ruling was adopted by your Committee, and placed on the records of the Chamber for future guidance.

**Light House on the Great Basses Rock, Ceylon.**

The Committee have nothing to add to the remarks on this important subject published in their last report; the following correspondence, however, is recorded as the latest information which they have been able to obtain respecting it.

*From Superintendent of Light Houses to Under-Secretary of State for India.*

*Calcutta, the 28th June, 1867.*

With reference to your letter of the 7th June 1867, and enclosure from the Board of Trade, and in continuation of my letter dated 10th instant, on the subject of the Light House on the Basses Rocks off Ceylon, I have the honor to report that I yesterday had the honor of a conference on the subject with the Deputy Master of the

Trinity Corporation, assisted by Mr. Douglas, the Engineer to the Corporation, and I am authorized to state that my opinions, as regards the feasibility of the work, were entirely concurred in, while my proposals and designs for carrying it out were generally approved.

2. I am aware that the Secretary of State for India last year discountenanced the idea of India being put to any pecuniary expense in regard to this work, but as there can be no doubt of its value, both to the local and the general Trade of India, Sir Stafford Northcote may possibly consider it desirable to render such other assistance as may be required, while I should be glad to undertake the superintendence of the work, should it be considered that my services could be advantageously employed in that direction.

*From Board of Trade to Under-Secretary of State for India.*

*London, the 6th June, 1867.*

With reference to previous correspondence respecting the erection of a Light House on the Great Basses Rock, Ceylon, I am directed by the Board of Trade to acquaint you, for the information of Sir Stafford Northcote, that after conferences upon the matter between representatives of this office and the Colonial Office, the designs of Colonel Fraser have been referred to the Elder Brethren of the Trinity House for their opinion, and also for that of their Engineer Mr. Douglas, whose great experience in the construction of Light Houses renders his advice of peculiar value; and I am to request that Colonel Fraser may be instructed to place himself in com-

munication with Mr. Douglas, if the Elder Brethren should think such communication desirable.

*From Under-Secretary of State for India to  
Superintendent of Light Houses.*

*London, the 7th June, 1867.*

I am directed by Sir S. Northcote to transmit, for your information, the accompanying copy of a letter from the Board of Trade, and, with reference to what is therein proposed respecting a Light House on the Great Basses, to request that you will place yourself in communication with Mr. Douglas, Engineer of the Trinity House, in the event of your receiving from the Elder Brethren an intimation of their desire that you should do so.

*From Govt. of India, P. W. D. to Govt. of India,  
Military (Marine) Dept.*

*Calcutta, the 3rd February, 1868.*

In reply to Colonel Burne's memorandum No. 66, dated 30th January 1868, the undersigned has the honor to forward a copy of the papers which contain the latest information possessed by this Department on the subject of the erection of a Light House on the Great Basses off Ceylon, which, it is supposed, is the Light House referred to by the Chamber of Commerce.

#### **Light-houses at the Sandheads.**

The report of the Light-house Committee, together with the remarks and recommendations of His Honor, the Lieutenant-Governor thereon,

are still under the consideration of the Viceroy in Council, and, consequently, the erection of the proposed works has not yet commenced. These Light-houses will be an important advantage to the port, and it is to be hoped His Excellency will see fit to sanction the necessary expenditure at an early date.

#### **District Charitable Society.**

On the accepted invitation of the Committee of this Institution, your President and Vice-President were appointed *ex-officio* Vice-Presidents; and, in future, the gentlemen elected for the time being to fill these respective offices in the Chamber will also be *ex-officio* Vice-Presidents of the District Charitable Society.

#### **The Cyclone of 1867.**

Another of these disastrous storms visited Calcutta and its vicinity on the night of the 1st November last, and caused great loss of life, and damage to property; fortunately, however, owing to the direction of the wind, the shipping in the river escaped with comparative impunity, although a large number of country boats were swamped.

In co-operation with His Honor, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, your Committee immediately initiated a Fund for the relief of the sufferers, as your President in his last address informed you ; and the amount of Rupees 90,976 was speedily subscribed by the public, and *doubled* by Government, the Committee of the Orissa Famine and Orphan Relief Fund kindly undertaking its proper disbursement.

This calamity had the effect of calling attention to the inefficiency and imperfect working of the Meteorological Department, and a Committee was appointed to consider, amongst other details, the best and readiest means for warning the inhabitants of Calcutta on the approach of a storm. It was proposed that certain signals should be exhibited at the Chamber of Commerce, and other public Institutions, on receipt of intelligence from the Meteorological Reporter ; and your Committee, being communicated with early in February last, immediately undertook to provide the necessary signals, and to have them duly hoisted.

The Meteorological Committee promised to forward a description of the proposed signals and their use in the course of a few days, but up to the present time nothing further has transpired, and unless the Lieutenant-Governor takes the

matter in hand, the next Cyclone will probably find Calcutta as unwarned and unprepared as ever.

#### Excess Measurement on Sales of Jute.

The Committee record in their Report the ruling of the Chamber regarding the measurement of Jute, as announced by the President at the last General Meeting, viz. :—that the average measurement of the entire parcel specified in the shipping order, whether the quantity is a full cargo, or otherwise, must be taken ; and that the master of a vessel has no right to claim freight on the excess of any day's shipment without admitting as a set-off the under-measurement of shipments on other days.

#### New Members.

Messrs. A. Walker and G. Fournier,  
 „ J. Thomas and Co.,  
 „ Huber and Co.,  
 „ E. D. Latapie and Co.,  
 „ Balmer, Lawrie and Co.,  
 „ Ullmann, Hirschhorn and Co.,  
 „ Wienholt Brothers,  
 „ Macknight and Co.,  
 „ John Atkinson and Co.,

Mr. S. H. Robinson, Captain J. Paterson, *Superintendent of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company*; Mr. R. Stevenson, *local Agent of the Hong-Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation*, Mr. S. Cochrane, *Manager, Agra Bank, "Limited,"* Mr. Elias S. Gubbay and Mr. G. M. Blacker have been provisionally elected, by the Committee, members of the Chamber; Messrs. Grindlay and Co. and Mr. R. Macallister, *Agent of the Tudor Company*, have also been re-admitted as members, subject to the usual confirmation.

#### Members retired.

The Committee record the retirement from the Chamber of Messrs. Mosley and Hurst, through dissolution of partnership.

#### Funds of the Chamber.

The half-yearly balance of the funds of the Chamber amounts to Rs. 978-3-9, exclusive of the reserve of Rs. 10,000 in 4 per cent. Government Securities.

HENRY CROOKE,

*President.*

CALCUTTA. Y  
30th April, 1868. Y

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## APPENDIX.

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[illegible]

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

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# SCHEDULE OF COMMISSION CHARGES,

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

1. On the sale, purchase, or shipment of Bullion, Gold Dust or Coin ... 1 per cent.
2. On the purchase (when in funds) or sale of Indigo, Raw Silk, Silk Piece Goods, Opium, Pearls, Precious Stones, or Jewellery ... 2½ "
3. On purchasing ditto when funds are provided by the Agent ... 5 "
4. On the sale or purchase of all other goods—the commission in all cases to be charged upon the gross amount of sales, and in regard to purchases upon both cost and charges ... 5 "
5. On returns for Consignments if made in produce ... 2½ "
6. On returns of Consignments if in Bills, Bullion, or Treasure ... 1 "
7. On accepting Bills against Consignments ... 1 "
8. On the sale or purchase of Ships, Factories, Houses, Lands, and all property of a like description ... 2½ "
9. On goods and treasure consigned, and all other property of any description referred to Agency for sale, whether advanced upon or otherwise, which shall afterwards be withdrawn; and on goods consigned for conditional delivery to others and so delivered, on invoice amount at 2s. per rupee. half com.
10. On making advances or procuring loans of money for commercial purposes, when the aggregate commission does not exceed 5 per cent ... 2½ per cent.
11. On ordering, or receiving and delivering goods, or superintending the fulfilment of contracts, or on the shipment of goods, where no other Commission is derived ... 2½ "

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

22. On effecting Insurances, whether on lives or property ...  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.
23. On settling Insurance claims, losses, and averages of all classes, and on procuring returns of premium ...  $2\frac{1}{2}$  "
24. On drawing, purchasing, selling, or negotiating Bills of Exchange ... 1 "
25. On debts or other claims when a process at law or arbitration is incurred in obtaining them ...  $2\frac{1}{2}$  "
- Or if recovered by such means ... 5 "
26. On Bills of Exchange returned dishonored ... 1 "
27. On collecting House Rent ...  $2\frac{1}{2}$  "
28. On ship's Disbursements ...  $2\frac{1}{2}$  "
29. On realising Bottomry Bonds, or negotiating any loan on *respondente* ...  $2\frac{1}{2}$  "
30. On granting Letters of Credit ... 1 "
31. On sale or purchase of Government Securities and Bank or other Joint Stock Shares, and on every exchange or transfer not by purchase from one class to another ...  $\frac{1}{2}$  "
32. On delivering up Government Securities and Bank or other Joint Stock Shares, on the market value ...  $\frac{1}{2}$  "
33. On all amounts debited and credited within the year (less the balance brought forward) upon which no Commission amounting to 5 per cent. has been charged ...  $\frac{1}{2}$  "

⌘ Brokerage when paid is to be separately charged.

A. D. SHEKLETON,

*Offg. Secretary.*

TONNAGE SCHEDULE for the Port of CALCUTTA, adopted at the General Meeting of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, held on the 28th May 1850. The Schedule came into operation from 1st January 1850.

ARTICLES.	Cwt. per Ton Nett.	Cubic feet per Ton.
Aloes, in Bags and Boxes ...	20	.....
Alum in Ditto ...	20	.....
Aniseed, in Bags ...	8	.....
Arrowroot, in Cases ...	.....	50
Asafoetida, in Bags and Boxes ...	20	.....
Appari, in Boxes ...	.....	50
Bark, in Bags ...	8	.....
Bees' Wax ...	20	cnt gross.
Barkia ...	20	.....
Betel-nut ...	20	.....
Books ...	.....	50
Borax or Tincal ...	20.	.....
Brimstone ...	20	.....
Bullion ...	at per cent.	.....
Cake-lac, in Bags ...	16	.....
Camphor, in Cases ...	.....	50
Cardamoms, in Robins ...	8	.....
" " Boxes ...	.....	50
Cassia, in Boxes ...	.....	50
" " in Bags ...	12	.....
China Root, in Bags ...	.....	11
" " Boxes ...	.....	50
Chiretta ...	.....	50
Cigars ...	.....	50
Gloves, in Bags ...	8	.....
" " Boxes ...	.....	50
Coals ...	20	.....
Cochineal ...	.....	50
Coffee, in Bags ...	18	.....
" " Casks ...	16	.....
Coral, Rough ...	20	.....
Cotton, in Bales of 300 lbs. each, 5 to the } ton, not to exceed ...	.....	52
Cowries ...	20	.....
Cutch, in Bags ...	18	.....
Dates, Wet ...	20	.....
" " Dry ...	16	.....
Dholi ...	20	.....
Elephants' Teeth in Bulk ...	20	.....
Furniture ...	.....	30

ARTICLES	Cwt. per Ton Nett.	Cubic Feet per Ton.
Garlic and Onions	12	.....
Ginger	16	.....
Gram	20	.....
Gums, in Cases	50	.....
Gunny Bags and Gunny Cloth	50	.....
Gunjah	50	.....
Hemp in Bales of 300 lbs. each 5 to the ton, not to exceed	52	.....
Hides, Buffalo, or Cow, Curled	14	.....
Hoofs, Horn Shavings and Tips	20	.....
Horns, Cow, Buffalo, or Deer	20	.....
Indigo	50	.....
Jute in Bales of 300 lbs. each, 5 to the ton, not to exceed	52	.....
Lac Dye	50	.....
Lard	20 cwt gross.	.....
Linseed	20	.....
Mace	50	.....
Machinery	20	.....
Metals	20	.....
Mirabolans	16	.....
Molasses	2 punches or 4 hlds.	.....
Mother o' Pearl, in Bags	20	.....
" " Chests	20	.....
Munjed	50	.....
Mustard or Rape Seed	20	.....
Nutmegs, in Cases or Casks	50	.....
Nux Vomica	16	.....
Oats	16	.....
Oil, in Cases	50	.....
" " Casks	4 hogsheads.	.....
Opium	per chest.	.....
Paddy	16	.....
Peas	20	.....
Pepper, Long	12	.....
" Black	14	.....
Planks and Deals	50	.....
Poppy Seed	20	.....
Patcheck	10	.....
Raw Silk, in Bales	10	.....
Rattans for Dunnage	20	.....
Red Wood, Ditto	20	.....
Rhen, in Bales, per Ton of 5 Bls. not exd	52	.....
Rice	20	.....
Roping in Coils	50	.....
" Lines and Twines, in Dundles	16	.....

ARTICLES.	Cwt. per Ton Nett.	Cubic Feet per Ton.
Ram, in Casks	2 punches or 4 hlds.	.....
Safflower, in Bls. p. Ton of 5 Bls. not exd.	52	.....
Sago, in Cases	50	.....
Sal-amouac, in Bags	20	.....
" " Boxes	20 cwt. gross.	.....
Saltpetre	20	.....
Salt	20	.....
Sapan Wood for Dunnage	20	.....
Sealing Wax, in Cases	50	.....
Seed-lac, in Cases	50	.....
" " Bags	16	.....
Senna,	50	.....
Shells, Rough, in Bags	20	.....
Shell-lac, in Cases	50	.....
" " Bags	16	.....
Silk Piece Goods	50	.....
Skins	14	.....
Soap, Country, in Cases	50	.....
" " Bags	15	.....
" " Bar	20	.....
Stick Lac, in Cases	50	.....
" " Bags	16	.....
Sugar	20	.....
Tallow, in Cases or Casks	20	.....
Tale	20	.....
Tamarinds, in Cases or Casks	50	.....
Tapioca	50	.....
Tea	50	.....
Teel Seed	20	.....
Timber, Round	40	.....
" Squared	50	.....
Tobacco, in Bales	16	.....
Tortoise Shells, in Chests	50	.....
Turmeric	16	.....
Wheat	20	.....
Wool	50	.....

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

A. B. SHEKLETON,  
Offy. Secretary.

CALCUTTA,  
18th March 1865.

## MEMBERS OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Apear and Co.  
 Argenti, Schilizzi and Co.  
 Atkinson, Tilton and Co.  
 Atkinson, John and Co.  
 Balmer, Lawrie and Co.  
 Barton, Daynes and Co.  
 Degg, Dunlop and Co.  
 Blacker, G. M.  
 Borradaile, Schiller and Co.  
 Camin, Lamouroux and Co.  
 Carlises, Stephens and Co.  
 Colvin, Corrie and Co.  
 Crookes, Rome and Co.  
 Choisy, F., *Manager, Comptoir  
 D'Escompte de Paris.*  
 Cochrane, S., *Manager, Agra Bank,  
 Limited.*  
 DeSouza, Thos. and Co.  
 Dierschmidt, Grob and Co.  
 Ernsthausen and Oesterley.  
 Ewing and Co.  
 Elliott, John and Co.  
 Fergusson, J. H. and Co.  
 Foinaro and Buni.  
 Gisborne and Co.  
 Graf and Benziger.  
 Graham and Co.  
 Grindlay and Co.  
 Gubbay, Elias S.  
 Henderson and Co.  
 Henderson, George and Co.  
 Hoare, Miller and Co.  
 Huber and Co.  
 Jardine, Skinner and Co.  
 Kettwell, Bullen and Co.  
 Kelly and Co.  
 Ker, Dods and Co.  
 Kanoels, H., *Agent, Baracca Com-  
 pany.*  
 Latapie, E. D., and Co.  
 Lyall, Rennie and Co.  
 Macalister, R., *Agent, Tudor Com-  
 pany.*  
 Mackillop, Stewart and Co.  
 Mackinnon, Mackenzie and Co.  
 Mackenzie, Lyall and Co.  
 Macknight and Co.  
 Moran, W. and Co.  
 Mohendranath Bose.  
 Manockjee Rustumjee  
 Ogbourne, C. H., *Manager, Albert  
 Life Assurance Company.*

Patterson, Captain J., *Superinten-  
 dent of the P. and O. Steam Na-  
 vigation Company.*  
 Pearce, Marrie and Co.  
 Pehmoller, G. and Co.'s Successors.  
 Playfair, Duncan and Co.  
 Petruccchino, E. E. and Co.  
 Peel, Ross and Co.  
 Preston, Alfred.  
 Ralli Brothers.  
 Ralli and Mavropani.  
 Ram Gopaul Ghose and Co.  
 Robert and Charriot.  
 Reid, J. M., *Agent, Chartered Mar-  
 cantile Bank of India, London and  
 China.*  
 Rentiers and Co.  
 Robinson, S. H.  
 Rose and Co.  
 Savers, R. O., *Manager, National  
 Bank of India.*  
 Schilizzi and Co.  
 Schroeder, Smith and Co.  
 Schneider, J. P.  
 Schoene, Kilburn and Co.  
 Shand, Fairlie and Co.  
 Smith, D. A. and Co.  
 Smith, Samuel, Sons and Co.  
 Smith, W. H., Barry and Co.  
 Scrymgeour, J. S., *Agent, Oriental  
 Bank Corporation.*  
 Stevenson, R., *Agent, Hong-Kong &  
 Shanghai Banking Corporation.*  
 Thomas, J. and Co.  
 Turner, Morrison and Co.  
 Toulmin, L. W. and Co.  
 Ullmann, Hirschhorn and Co.  
 Walker, A. and G. Pommier.  
 Wattenbach, Heigers and Co.  
 Weniolt Brothers.  
 Whyte, J. A., *Agent, Chartered Bank  
 of India, Australia and China.*  
 Whitney Brothers and Co.  
 Williamson Brothers and Co.  
 Wiseman, Smead and Co.  
 Watson, Green and Hart.  
 Weskine, C.  
 Wolff, Wilmaus and Co.  
 Yale, Andrew and Co.  
 Young, Gray and Co.

## MOFUSSIL MEMBERS.

Becher, Wm.—*Gorkhaty, Assam.*  
 Gale, John—*Pundoul.*  
 Hamilton, Brown and Co.—*Mirza-  
 pore.*  
 Hay, J. O. and Co.—*Azyah.*  
 Howard Brothers.—*Mirzapore.*  
 Kenney, Thomas.—*Solganoodia.*  
 Toddy, Findlay and Co.—*Mothevia.*

RULES AND REGULATIONS  
OF THE

## BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

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

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

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

*Fifth*..... That the subscription of firms and banks shall be 16 rupees per mensem, of individual members 10 rupees per mensem, and of mofussil members 32 rupees per annum.

*Sixth* ... That any member of the Chamber whose subscription shall be three months in arrears shall cease to be a member, and his name shall be removed by the Committee from the list of members after one month's notice of such default.

*Seventh*... That the business and funds of the Chamber shall be managed by a Committee of seven Members, consisting of a President and Vice-President and five Members, to be elected annually at a General Meeting of the Chamber in the month of May; the President, or, in his absence, the Vice-President being ex-officio Chairman of the Committee, and in the absence of the President and Vice-President, the Committee to elect its own Chairman. Four to form a quorum.

*Eighth*.... Annual elections of President, Vice-President, and members of the Com-

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

*Ninth*... That parties holding powers of procuration shall, in the absence of their principals, be eligible to serve as members of the Committee.

*Tenth* ... Two members of a firm or representatives of a bank shall not serve on the Committee at the same time.

*Eleventh*. That the Committee shall meet for the purpose of transacting such business as may come within the province of the Chamber at such times as may suit their convenience, and that the record of their proceedings be open to the inspection of

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

*Twelfth.* That all proceedings of the Committee be subject to approval or otherwise of General Meetings duly convened.

*Thirteenth.* That a half-yearly report of the proceedings of the Committee be prepared, printed, and circulated for information of members 3 days previous to the General Meeting, at which such report and proceedings of the Committee shall be submitted for approval.

*Fourteenth.* That the Secretary shall be elected by the Committee; such election to be subject to confirmation at the next ensuing General Meeting.

*Fifteenth.* That General Meetings of the Chamber shall be held at such times as the Committee may consider convenient for the despatch of business.

*Sixteenth.* That any number of members present shall be held to constitute a General Meeting, called in conformity with the Rules of the Chamber for the despatch of ordinary business.

*Seventeenth.* That on the requisition of any five members of the Chamber, the President, or, in his absence, the Vice-President, or

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

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

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

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

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

*Twenty-second.* That strangers visiting the Presidency may be admitted by the Commit-

tee as honorary members for a period not exceeding two months.

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

