

REPORT
OF THE
BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
FROM 1st MAY TO 31st OCTOBER 1869.

R

REPORT

OF

THE COMMITTEE

OF THE

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

From 1st May to 31st October 1869.

Calcutta:

PRINTED BY CONES AND CO, No. 10, LOLL BAZAR.

1869.

INDEX.

SUBJECTS.	Report Page.	Appendix Page.
Port Fund ...	1	.....
Port Improvement Trust ...	2	.....
New Jetties ...	25	.....
Alteration of the 52nd Section of the Customs' Act }	31	.....
Landing and Storage of Gun- powder at Moysapore }	35	.....
Cotton Frauds' Act ...	36	.....
European Vagrancy Act ...	44	.....
Overland Mail via Bombay ...	45	.....
Overland Postage ...	50	.....
Telegraph Station between Cal- cutta and Atcheepore }	60	.....
Efficiency of the Pilot Service ...	67	.....
The Preventive Service ...	73	.....
Customs—(Examination of packages at the Custom House) ... }	81	.....
Ships' Stores ...	83	.....
Port Canning ...	84	.....
Proposed Reform in the Standards of Weights and Measures in British India ... }	91	.....
Danking Clearing House ...	95	.....

INDEX.

Summers.	Report Page.	Appendix Page.
Communication with China via } Assam ... }	95	.....
The Sea-face of the Soonderbunds ..	96	.....
River and Weather Reports ...	97	.....
New Members ...	98	.....
Members retired ...	98	.....
Funds of the Chamber ...	98	11
Schedule of Commission Charges...	.....	111
Tonnage Schedule for the Port of } Calcutta ... }	.....	VI
Members of the Chamber ...	.....	IX
Rules and Regulations of the Chamber	.....	X

*Proceedings of the Half-yearly General Meeting
of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce held on
Wednesday, the 8th December 1869.*

The President—the Hon'ble J. R. Bullen
Smith—having taken the Chair addressed the
meeting in the following terms :—

The report of the Committee for the half-year ending 31st October has been in the hands of members of the Chamber since Saturday last, and, if such be the pleasure of the meeting, may be taken as read ; otherwise I will, before going further, ask the Secretary to read it in your hearing. (The report was taken as read.) Before moving the adoption of the report, I will, in accordance with what has been the custom of my predecessors in this chair, run briefly over the leading topics on which the Committee have been engaged since we last met together. First comes the *Port Fund*; and it is matter of much regret to me that I am not in a position to speak as fully as I could wish regard-

ing it, but I think you will understand that the report of the Commission having only just gone in to the Lieutenant-Governor we are scarcely yet justified in making it matter of public discussion. In addition to what is mentioned in your Committee's report, I can only now further add that I believe the necessity which existed for enquiry will be found fully justified, and that it will be shown this Chamber did not without good grounds ask the Lieutenant-Governor to suspend the threatened increase to the Port dues till more was known about the Fund, and its real position ascertained.

Port Improvement Trust.

The Committee congratulate the members of the Chamber that this important matter has made some substantial progress during the past six months. In the body of the Report you will find the official papers which have passed on the subject, and I presume the necessary legislation will soon be carried through the Bengal Council. From the orders of Government it will be seen that the two leading principles for which this Chamber has all along contended have been freely admitted, and that the new Trust is to start an absolutely separate institution from any other

existing body, while the functions of all the members are to be executive and not only consultative in reference to the non-officials, as was at one time contemplated. The number of Commissioners fixed by the Government of India, *etc.*, seven, is perhaps hardly large enough to admit of as full a representation as might be desired, but from a small compact body such as is proposed more vigorous and prompt action may be anticipated than generally attends the proceedings of large unwieldy Committees. Looking to the fact that the funds required for the purposes of the Trust will probably be advanced by Government, we can scarcely grumble at the full control demanded generally on behalf of the local Government, but you will observe that the Committee have asked for some modification of that part of the orders of Government which fixes a period of 30 years for the repayment of all advances. Much will of course depend upon the working head of the Trust, who, I doubt not, will be carefully selected; and I do hope that such of our own non-official community as may be invited to join the Board will not hesitate to do so, and cheerfully give the benefit of their practical knowledge and experience towards the successful carrying out of an undertaking so long desired.

New Jetties.

As regards these I can add but little to what is contained in the report; all four have of late been working, and although there have been hitches and delays, amoying no doubt, but still hardly separable from the inauguration of a new system, I think, on the whole, the works must be pronounced a success. Pending the constitution of the River Trust the jetties are being worked by Government, and in estimating the cost of doing so the Board of Revenue included a large yearly item for rent of land. To this your Committee at once objected as being altogether at variance with the orders from the Government of India, and I am happy to say that, since the report was printed, we have received a communication from the Lieutenant-Governor agreeing in the view taken by your Committee, and ordering the item to be struck out. Before leaving the subject of these jetties, I feel it my duty to state thus publicly how cordially and zealously the Collector of Customs has exerted himself to make all the new arrangements run smoothly; indeed I do not hesitate to say that had he shown less interest in the matter, and given to the details less of his personal attention, and indeed actual presence,

things would not have gone on so well as they have.

Section 52 of the Customs Act, which has so long been felt as a grievance, and so often called forth remonstrance, has recently been altered as mentioned in the report,—a concession which will, I am sure, be highly appreciated by all those members of the Chamber who have to do with the discharge of ships.

Mail from Bombay.

Since the paras. of the report relating to the monsoon allowance of time given to the mail steamers were in type, we have heard that under the existing contract the postal authorities in England cannot compel the P. and O. Company to forego any part of the allowance, but that an attempt would be made to induce them to do so voluntarily.

Cotton Frauds Act.

We now come to a topic on which I am aware there is among us a good deal of difference of opinion, but I trust all will approve of the course adopted by the Committee so far, which leaves them perfectly free to

take action later on should it appear desirable. I think you will all see how singular and inexpedient it would have appeared to find this Chamber begging for special cotton legislation from which the Bombay community, after actual trial, were seeking to be delivered. I confess I was not prepared to find such strong opposition in Bombay, as, till a comparatively recent date, opinion there was not very clearly declared, but you will observe from the letter of the Bombay Chamber that very forcible terms are made use of in condemning the Act, not the one now under the consideration of His Excellency the Viceroy, but the less stringent enactment which has been in operation for several years. Indeed the Bombay Chamber roundly state that any improvement that has been effected is attributable to the individual effort of Collectors and others and not to the Act. Within the last week this Chamber has received some interesting papers from the Government of the North-West bearing upon cotton cultivation, and in these the great preponderance of opinion, both official and non-official, is much opposed to legislative interference. Among the strongest opponents I find Messrs. Hamilton, Brown and Co., of Mirzapore, Messrs. Cohen Brothers of Meerut, and Mr. Gilmore of Agra,

all of whom are actively engaged in the trade, and know well its requirements. It is, to my mind, impossible to set aside all this mass of opinion from those most interested, and if we turn to the Central Provinces and the Berars, I think we find fresh reason for not advocating the extension of the Cotton Frauds Act. In no district I believe has more been done than in the above Provinces, both as regards extension of area and improvement of quality, and yet the Act has never been in force there, but in Mr. Rivett-Carnac they have had the good fortune to get a Cotton Commissioner who has entered zealously into the spirit of his appointment and brought to bear upon his work an amount of energy, tact, and discretion which have ensured success, of which any of you who will read through his most interesting report will find abundant proof. However, as I have already mentioned, your Committee have not adopted one side or other, but decided to wait the issue of the memorial from Bombay now before the Viceroy. While saying this I would venture to add, speaking strictly in my individual capacity, that I should much regret to see the extension of the Cotton Frauds Act to this side of India. I would view with alarm any step which would tend to relax the *cautem emptor* by which

we have been so long guided, and I would hesitate much before asking Government to interfere between buyer and seller. Then, supposing this special legislation to be given to Cotton, where is it to stop? Cotton does not occupy with us the all important place it does on the Bombay side, and with what equity could the Legislature refuse us an Act to meet false packing and other malpractices in Indigo, Silk, and other valuable articles? To my mind, the principle seems altogether unsound, and while I would thankfully accept Government assistance in the form pointed out in paragraph 16 of the Bombay correspondence, I should much regret to see this Chamber applying for a penal enactment.

And now, Gentlemen, I would allude to two other topics which, although not mentioned in the report of your Committee, claim at least a passing notice in a meeting like the present ;—I mean the *opening of the Suez Canal*, and the *late financial announcement* on the part of Government.

As to the first we have yet but scanty information, but we do know that what for years past has been a project has now become an established fact ; the Canal has been opened from end to end, and a considerable fleet of vessels is assembled at

Ismailia. What the practical working of this great undertaking may be we cannot yet say, but we must all feel pleasure in this new triumph of engineering skill, and await with peculiar interest the great change which it may bring about in our trade with Europe.

The second topic I have alluded to, *viz.*, the state of the finances of the Empire, leaves no room for congratulation, but much the reverse, the moderate surplus expected for the current year having given place to a serious deficit. The original announcement made by the Government and the subsequent explanations given by our Finance Minister in his place in Council have informed the public so fully as to the causes of this deficit, that I need not take up your time by dwelling thereon. I may, however, remark, in passing, that to him who for so many years worthily occupied this chair has been certainly assigned a very full share of responsibility, more probably than he either expected or will relish ; but to us, who knew him well, and valued him much, it can only be matter of satisfaction to learn, on such excellent authority, the high store set upon his opinion by others than ourselves. Unusual as has been the procedure adopted by Government in the present emer-

gency, I think that procedure carries with it the full approval of this Chamber, as it has done of the public at large. Government has taken the public frankly into its counsels, and has received in return an amount of confidence and support which is in itself a gain. It is felt that a difficulty so freely communicated and so manfully grappled with is already partially overcome; that amidst present disappointment there is yet a good germ of hope and assurance for the future. As to the immediate remedies proposed, one, the increase to the Income Tax, each of us will very soon appreciate for himself by the practical process of payment. In another, the increase to the salt duties in Bombay and Madras, members will recognise a source of income suggested by the Chamber two years ago, but then frowned upon and ignored; and I believe that another of our suggestions, made at the same time and recently alluded to by the Hon'ble Mr. Cowie in Council, *viz.*, a succession and probate duty, in some form, will also shortly be availed of. It may seem somewhat incongruous to speak at a time of need like the present of remission of taxation in any form, but I think you will all agree that in preparing his Budget of ways and means for the coming year our Financial Minister will find himself bound to

consider how far, in justice to the commerce of the country, he can continue the present export duties, notably that on rice, which has of late occupied so large a share of public attention. I shall not dwell on this subject, because I believe there are those in this room much more conversant with the details of the rice trade than I am, and who will be able at once to speak from facts and figures in a way I am not at present prepared to do. I may say, however, that the views of this Chamber as to the inexpediency of these grain duties have been on more than one occasion pressed on Government, and that they, two years ago, drew from Mr. Massey a pledge that this particular form of taxation would be modified whenever it appeared to be operating injuriously on trade. In our opinion the time has come when this pledge should be redeemed, and your Committee have been considering whether as regards British Burmah a postponement of action even till March next will not be too long, and whether they should not at once support the mercantile community of that Province and Arracan in asking for a measure of relief which would become available for the rice season now opening. True, any such concession would involve an addition to the apprehended deficit, but this must be

considered a small evil compared with the trade of a Province which appears to be at stake, for we all know how difficult it is to win back any trade that has once been diverted into other channels. I am not prepared, and probably none of us are, to say absolutely that the removal of the existing duty on rice would enable British Burmah to compete successfully with Bangkok and Saigon, but it appears to me that in the mere existence of such keen competition we find ground for abolishing the impost, inasmuch as the article taxed is no longer surrounded by the conditions which alone can justify export duties. It may be (although I hope not) that from natural and other advantages Siam and Saigon can produce rice more cheaply than Arracan and Pegu, in which case fair competition must take its course, but we may at least reasonably claim that the latter Provinces shall not be unduly weighted in the race by a heavy export duty.

Mr. Reinhold then rose, and said that the Report which had been laid before the members, and upon which the President had commented, touched upon many important topics. He would follow the President by making a few remarks upon the topics alluded to. He was glad to see so

many proposals made for the improvement of the port, and the several other improvements which had been spoken of, but after what the President had stated, he would refrain from making any observations at present on that score. In regard to the Cotton Frauds Act, he felt himself bound to express his dissent from the opinions of the President. He had taken a great interest in the question, and had made himself acquainted with most of the correspondence which had been published on it both in Bombay and Calcutta, but from all he had read the greater part of those who argued against the Bill were men who had more to do with ships than cotton. The maxim of *caveat emptor* he did not accept unconditionally in a case like what the Cotton Frauds Act aimed at; the process in a Civil Court in the Mofussil is generally of a slow and tedious nature, the European merchants will seldom resort to it when fully occupied with other business, unless in cases of a grave nature; natives in such cases will be left unpunished, and a penal enactment would deal more swiftly with such a case; but the opinion expressed by the President was to wait, and he would therefore refrain from making any further comments on the subject at present. Then in regard to the proposed

Hooghly Bridge, he regretted to find that in the report no notice had been taken of it, and no mention made of any action having been taken in regard to it. This work had been long delayed, and it was a matter which affected the interests of the whole mercantile community of Calcutta. A great deal depended upon its completion, and men whose opinions were held in the highest respect had recommended it. From the statistical tables which had been published and returns made, it appeared that from 23,000 to 30,000 people cross the river daily. There could not be a doubt that the completion of such a project would be conferring a great boon upon the people of the city. He would strongly recommend that the committee should not lose sight of it. With the advancement of engineering science the question of constructing such a bridge has long been settled, and if a permanent structure cannot be agreed upon at once, let us have the Floating Bridge first, and test the actual traffic; but looking at the fact that in every metropolis and great trading centre in Europe as well as in America, the tendency is to bring works like Railways into the very heart of the city, and the same must be come to here sooner or later; the longer the matter is deferred the

greater the expense. It can scarcely be believed by any one acquainted with Western progress, that at the very base of a great Railway net work proposed to be further largely extended, the barrier should remain unbridged which separates the metropolis from the traffic, and, to say the least, very materially impedes it. The Chamber has so fully written on this subject that he would not add further argument, but would hope that if the Port improvements are to be carried out, as we expect they will be, the danger of cyclones, frequently urged against the scheme, will not affect us more than similar natural visitations that are experienced by works of this kind in other countries. He therefore hoped that the Chamber will not allow the matter to drop out of sight. The question of cyclones had been raised, but he thought fears from them would be reduced to the minimum if a good bridge were constructed; besides, if the argument was carried to this extent, it would be tantamount to saying that no body could live in stone-built houses for fear of an earthquake.

He was pleased to see the Government have resolved to make a change in the weights and measures and in such a liberal spirit; it will be a most gratifying change, because commerce above

all other considerations has long enough suffered from the great diversity of weights and measures all over the country.

X As regards the export duty on rice, it was all very well to increase it for a time when the Government was under great financial pressure, but when it practically came to a point that it would crush an important branch of trade, upon which places like Akyab, Bassien and even Rangoon were almost exclusively depending, and which affects ourselves a good deal too, he thought that merchants should make a stand against these encroachments. Prospects of merchants have of late not been very bright; profits become small as we get nearer brought in contact with Europe through telegraph communications, and works like the Suez Canal; we can therefore hardly afford to lose an important branch of our business, an opinion in which he hoped all merchants will concur. At present the finances of the country are at a low ebb, and it was not expected the Government would give up the duty voluntarily. With regard to the financial question, he begged to remind them that two or three years ago, after the famine in Orissa, when large remissions of revenues were made, and extraordinary expenditure going on, it had been suggested at the

meeting of the Chamber of Commerce that the Government should meet this by a loan. At that time money was going a begging in England at 2 per cent for good investment, and the Government of India stood in a favorable position as borrowers. When the Abyssinian War broke out money was raised in this country, and at what rate we may infer as outside merchants only from the fact that the Bank of Bengal kept the discount at 9 and 10 per cent when in the Bazar it was about half the figure; and this was the institution in which the Government was a shareholder, and by its Charter bound to aid commerce and industry of the country. As far as we could see, they did the same for which Bombay had been severely criticised and blamed, by lending all their money to a shareholder, and the only difference was that the debtor on this side could pay eventually. Mr. Dickson, the Secretary of the Bank of Bengal, was publicly thanked for the manner in which he relieved the Government from its pecuniary embarrassments; the Directors of the Bank ought to have been invested with the Star of India for their exertions. (laughter.) He had no intention of casting any aspersions on the Government in these matters, but the merchants were first affected, and were the first to suffer by these

financial measures. Taxes have pressed heavily upon them, and at the same time with imperial taxation there had been a very heavy local and municipal taxation. It was, in fact, a very heavy taxation they had to bear, while trade had been exceedingly stagnant.

Mr. Eldridge said that, after listening to the eloquent remarks which had fallen from the last speaker and the President on the subject of the export duties upon rice, he had very little to add. From his own experience, however, he always found that merchants of Calcutta, either owing to climate, or some other influence, required spurring, or something of the sort, to stimulate them in their endeavours. Mr. Reinhold had referred to the very inadequate remuneration which merchants in India received compared with what they do at home. They have no such appreciative public here as they have in England; and it seemed to him that what little they now got was likely to be still further reduced from the position which the Government hold in regard to the export duty upon rice. It was hardly necessary for him to enter into the objections raised against that duty. The principles, he believed, were well known. They would all remember that when Mr. Wilson put a tax of one rupee a

maund on saltpetre, it was found that the revenue from that article alone had increased considerably; it then decreased very markedly, and it was soon found necessary to abolish the duty altogether. It was only now that the trade was regaining some portion of its former dimension. These duties were ruinous to the order and trade of a country. The Indian Government have no excuse for raising this duty, because India is not the only rice-producing country in the world. There were Cochin China and Siam that produced rice; to say nothing of America, which, apart from supplying her own States, now supplies foreign countries. Although labor was very cheap in India, there were other questions to be considered and remembered. In the chief rice ports that article formed the staple food of the population, and they were there subject to very heavy taxation. He referred to the ports of Rangoon, Bassein, and Calcutta. Though bearing in mind the financial position of the country, he agreed with the President that a representation should be made to the Government on the subject to ask them to give up the duty upon rice, as it was much better to do that than to allow the trade to come to a standstill. He looked upon it very much in the light of the Surgeon who did not hesitate to cut off a man's limb for the purpose

of saving his life ; and it is not too late even now to save a very valuable trade to India. They had it recorded that Mr. Massey, in his financial statement for 1867, promised that at any time, if this duty was found to be obnoxious and pressing too heavily upon the people, it should be abolished ; and judging from the applause which greeted the President's remarks that the duty on rice exported from Rangoon should be done away with, he thought that the whole of the members of the Chamber were unanimous on the subject. He was confident that their Committee would make an immediate appeal to the Government for the reduction of this duty. He was glad that the subject had been so prominently brought forward, because some difficulty always existed in bringing forward the question in Committees. It was certainly very gratifying to find such an unanimous expression of opinion on the subject at a public meeting.

Mr. Colvin said that he would not inflict upon the meeting any lengthy remarks in reference to the export duty on rice. In his opinion, it was nothing more than a barrier against an artificial source of wealth. He suggested that instead of waiting for replies to communications addressed to Government, always a very long matter, they ought

to lose no time in going up to the Government after the approaching festivities, in the form of a deputation composed of the merchants of Calcutta, who might wait upon His Excellency the Viceroy, and represent to him the views of the Chamber on the subject.

The Chairman said that he had great pleasure in finding that the members had expressed their opinions so freely on the various topics, especially that referring to the important question of the rice duties. What had now taken place he was sure would stimulate the members of the Committee to adopt more active measures in regard to these matters. The suggestion thrown out by the last speaker was a very excellent one, as the case required immediate action. In regard to the remarks made by Mr. Reinhold on the Hooghly Bridge, the Committee had not mentioned it simply because they had nothing new on the subject to lay before the Chamber. They had not been able to obtain any definite information, although Mr. Leslie, the Engineer, had called upon him, and had told him that he had heard in a demi-official way that the tolls to be collected from it were to be conceded for a period of 20 years. But no official communication had been received from the Government, and he believed he was correct in

saying that they had received no communication from the home Government as to the permanent Railway Bridge. There was one other matter which he had to notice, and that was that the Chamber were soon going to lose the services of Mr. Graham, who had for a long time served on the Committee, and who intended to leave the country in a few months. Mr. Graham had served long and faithfully, and it was necessary that a successor should be nominated in his room. He did not think that there was anything more to be put before the Chamber.

The following resolutions was put to the meeting, and carried unanimously :—

Proposed by the Chairman,

Seconded by Mr. H. Reinhold,—

“That the Report of the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce for the half-year ended 31st October 1869 be received and adopted.”

Proposed by the Chairman,

Seconded by Mr. F. G. Eldridge,—

“That the Committee’s conditional election of Messrs. Shav, Jameson and Co, and E. D. I.

Ezra, Esq., as members of the Chamber of Commerce, be confirmed.”

Mr. Graham said he had a few remarks to make in regard to the manner in which the voting affected the members of Committee. At present members voted for gentlemen without knowing whether they were willing to serve on the Committee or not, and it not unfrequently happened when they voted for the appointment of a gentleman, that he declined to accept the office. He was of opinion that if a certain number of members, who were willing to serve, were nominated for election it would be far better and save disappointments.

The Chairman was of opinion that the suggestions made by the last speaker had a great deal of truth in them. A great many did not feel disposed to vote, without some indication that those for whom they voted would serve, and it was rather tantalising for members to find their nominees decline to serve. In his opinion, the best method of meeting the suggestion would be to refer it to the Committee, who would consider the scheme most likely to meet with the approval of the Chamber generally, and then submit it to the members.

Mr. Eldridge, while fully concurring in the views expressed by *Mr. Graham* in the matter of voting, said that there was but one objection as to the way in which the votes were to be taken, and that was that the merchants of Calcutta were a very modest class of men, and if any of them were asked to serve, they would most likely decline to do so, and on the other hand, if any one accepted the office, and the nomination was not carried into effect, it would perhaps give offence to the nominee. If, however, those who were willing to serve sent in their names to the Committee, that would be an excellent arrangement.

The third resolution was as follows :—

Proposed by *Mr. B. D. Colvin*,

Seconded by *Mr. H. Reinhold*,—

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

Mr. Hutchinson said that this was the first time he had the honor of addressing the Chamber, and his reasons for refraining hitherto from doing so was that there were many better able than himself to comment on the many important subjects which engaged the attention of the Chamber.

From the conversation he had himself with members, and his own experience, he did not think that there was any gentleman who had taken so much pains in the interests of the Chamber as *Mr. Graham*. He would take this opportunity of proposing a vote of thanks to that gentleman, for the services rendered by him to the Chamber (hear, hear). He would also embrace this opportunity of making a few remarks with reference to the manner in which the Chamber of Commerce had been talked of, even by some of the members of it, out of doors. He had often informed them that the remedy lay in their own hands. Why did they not move in the matter themselves, instead of talking in the manner they did? It was all very well for them to say that *this* was to be done, or *that* was to be done, but he would like to know why they did not do it themselves. Those who talked so lightly generally took no trouble themselves. They don't take half the trouble they ought to in any matter relating to the Chamber. They were all very deeply indebted to *Mr. Graham*, and if all took the same interest in the Chamber as *Mr. Graham* had taken the affairs of the Chamber would be far different. He concluded by proposing a vote of thanks to *Mr. Graham* for his services during many years.

Mr. Reinhold said that, with reference to voting, he was of opinion that half of the members of the Committee should go out every year; at any rate, two ought to go out by rotation. This was a mere suggestion on his part, and, if it were carried out, the other members would have an opportunity of acquainting themselves more with the working of the Chamber which he thought would increase the general interest and influence of the Institution.

The Chairman said that he fully saw the force of all that had been suggested by *Mr. Hutchison*, as the Committee ought only to be the mouth-piece and executive of the Chamber; the more freely the members generally imparted their views on all subjects, the more effectually could the Committee carry out the general working of the Chamber. He cordially agreed in the expression of the vote of thanks which had been paid to *Mr. Graham* for his services on the Committee.

The resolution having been put and carried by acclamation, *Mr. Graham* said that he was exceedingly obliged to *Mr. Hutchison* for the resolution put by him, and for the manner in which it had been received by the Chamber. He had experienced great pleasure in having been associated

with the gentlemen of the Committee for so many years.

The Chairman said that there was one more point of which he had been reminded by the Secretary, and that had reference to the proposed illumination in honor of the arrival of His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh. Money had been voted, and all the preliminaries settled, in communication with the Directors of the Bonded Warehouse, to illuminate the Bonded Warehouse; but the Insurance Offices had stepped in and had put a veto upon it, as they objected to having the building lighted either with oil or gas; consequently the matter had to be dropped, and the Chamber of Commerce would be all in the dark.

After the usual vote of thanks to the chair, the meeting terminated.

H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE HALF-YEAR
ENDED 31ST OCTOBER 1869.

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

Port Fund.

The proposed increase to the Port Dues on shipping occupied a prominent place in the proceedings of the last half-yearly meeting of the Chamber, and it was then announced that the Lieutenant-Governor had agreed to the appointment of a Special Commission to investigate the accounts of the Port Fund, and the system under which it had been managed. The President and Vice-President of the Chamber were appointed Members of that Commission, whose report, after being unavoidably delayed much beyond the time originally expected, has very recently gone in to Government, and will, the Committee trust, in due time, be made public. Without unduly an-

icipating the contents of that report, the Committee may say that they understand the Commission have not recommended any addition to the Port Dues, and that they have made certain suggestions for the future working of the Port Fund which they deem fair and equitable to all concerned, and which, if adopted by Government, will, they believe, put the Fund on a satisfactory footing, and ensure its future good working without adding to the burdens already borne by the shipping frequenting the Port.

Port Improvement Trust.

In their last Half-yearly Report the Committee submitted copy of a representation made by them to the Governor General in Council, which was in fact a very full resumé of the action taken by them from time to time in connection with this important matter. The subject seems to have received prompt attention, and in July the Committee received, through the Bengal Government, the orders of the Government of India for the reconstitution of the Trust, accompanied by a request from the Lieutenant-Governor for any suggestions the Committee might wish to make in regard to the carrying out of the same. In some respects these orders differ from the views

put forth by the Government of Bengal, and on certain points also from the opinions entertained by the Committee, but on the whole they are such as must give satisfaction to all interested in the matter, affording as they do good hope that the Trust will be re-established, at no very distant date, with a constitution free from some of the defects which were so apparent in the former organization, and such as is likely to ensure the success of the important object for which it is designed. For the convenience of members the official documents above referred to, together with the Committee's last communication to the Government of Bengal, are given at the close of this paragraph. It will be seen that, in availing themselves of the Lieutenant-Governor's request for suggestions, the Committee have only touched upon some of the more prominent points involved in the orders of the Government of India, such as the number of members composing the Trust, the financial responsibilities with which it is to start, and the mode of reimbursing the Government of India for monies advanced. In limiting their remarks to these and a few other topics, the Committee did not wish it to be understood that in all other respects the orders of the Government of India have their entire approval. It seemed to them however that there has

been already too much time lost, that the great object is to have the undertaking set on foot, and that they would best serve the commercial interests of the Port by refraining from present pressure of their own views on minor points, in the belief that when a little practical working has shown where and how changes may best be made, the Government will not be found unwilling to consider a case fairly stated and to modify the orders now issued.

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

Fort William, the 14th July, 1869.

With reference to the correspondence as per margin, I am directed by the Lieutenant-Governor to forward herewith, for the information of the Chamber, a copy of my letter No. 3199, dated 31st May last, to the Government of India, in the Public Works Department, and of a Resolution in that Department, No. 415C, dated 5th current, regarding the fresh constitution of the Calcutta Port Improvement Trust, and to state that the Lieutenant-Governor will be obliged by any suggestions which the Chamber may wish to offer in regard to the manner of giving effect to the instructions received from the Government of India.

Letter No. 1199 of 21st February 1868, to the Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce, Letter No. of 10th March 1868, from Olig. Billo.

From Government of Bengal, in the Public Works Department, to Government of India, Public Works Department.

Fort William, the 31st May, 1869.

Referring to Colonel Dickens' letter No. 87C. of the 13th February 1868, relating to the conditions to be observed in constituting a fresh agency for the improvement of the Port of Calcutta, and offering certain observations for the consideration of the Lieutenant-Governor, I am desired to observe as follows:—

2. The Lieutenant-Governor would much prefer that the Bill should be drawn without any attempt to limit the exercise of executive functions to the Chairman or head of the new body, or to give that officer any right to defer action pending reference to the Local Government in cases in which he might differ from his colleagues. His Honor thinks that to leave to the other Members no functions beyond such as may be purely consultative, would be eminently calculated to deter merchants and business-men, generally, whose co-operation is very essential, from consenting to serve in the Commission.

3. The Lieutenant-Governor sees no objection to abstain from fixing the number of Commissioners beyond defining that there shall be as many Commissioners, not being less than three, as the Local Government may, from time to time, deem proper. He is, however, of

opinion that the Commission should include a considerable non-official or mercantile element, on account of the importance of the measure as regards this class of interest, and the benefits to be derived from the support and advice of highly interested and well qualified administrators in working a measure of this nature.

4. The Lieutenant-Governor does not consider that the enactment of compulsory clauses, such as Nos. 47 to 51 of Act X of 1866, should be reserved till its necessity becomes apparent; he thinks that, if it is possible to suppose that future legislation might become necessary, it will be wise to anticipate it. Future legislation could only be necessary to defeat conflicting interests which were springing up, and consequently would not be effected without considerable friction and opposition. Legislation now will render the birth of any such interests impossible, and as it will only be adopting the actually existing law, probably no one will object.

5. In reference to the concluding paragraph of Colonel Dickens' letter, I am to remark that the Lieutenant-Governor believes that the hypothesis on which the whole project rests, is that ships do need works such as are contemplated, and he does not understand how there can be doubt regarding the point whether the real convenience of the ships needs such works or not.

6. The Lieutenant-Governor does not fully apprehend the bearing of the remark that "the best way to make the trade pay for the works 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."

7. The schedules of tolls should not only cover all current charges of working and interest on the capital, but should provide a certain sinking fund for repaying the capital expended. This is contemplated in the present Act, and any losses at first would thus be covered without any tax on the commerce of the port beyond the contemplated tolls. As regards the tolls being general eventually, I am to remark that it is proposed to occupy the whole extent of river bank within the limits of the Port for the purposes of the Act, and no goods could, therefore, be landed without paying the tolls, the whole shipping of the Port would pay.

8. If the remark under discussion alludes to possible failure in the objects and works, the Lieutenant-Governor would observe that any enforced payment to cover a failure would doubtless be felt to be a hardship. It is not to be supposed that a large measure of this sort can be carried out without experience shewing that improvements are necessary, and that the original measures might have been more perfect; but allowing for such failures (if they can be so called), which are incidental to all new

projects, such as this, of adapting the customs of other parts of the world to a locality peculiar as regards its river and its method of transacting business. His Honor cannot anticipate losses or the failure of the measure. If, however, such were to occur, he considers that it would be better to allow the whole community, i. e., the general revenues, to pay than to restrict payment to merely the mercantile community.

9. The Committee of Justices, under the Bengal Act X. of 1866, having ceased to act, the Lieutenant-Governor would propose, with the consent of the Governor-General in Council, to repeal that law at once, and at the same time to make provision for levying tolls on the new jetties and other works of improvement which are now nearly completed. The use made of these jetties may possibly be of some assistance in pointing out the exact shape which the Port Improvement arrangement should ultimately take. The Lieutenant-Governor would propose to give power to the Local Government, under the Act now immediately suggested in supersession of Act X. of 1866, to appoint Commissioners for the management of the new jetties, and their appurtenances, including of course, the collection of the dues to be levied for their use. The Act should also probably contain a provision corresponding with that of Section 47, Act X. of 1866.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce, No. 1190, dated 21st February 1868.
From Chamber of Commerce to Government of Bengal, dated 10th March 1868.

Governor-General in Council, copy of the letters noted on the margin.

10. I am to enclose, for the information of the

No. 3200.

Copy of the above, and of the letter to which it is a reply, together with a copy of the Lieutenant-Governor's Minute, dated 2nd December 1867, forwarded to the Assistant Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Legislative Branch, for early attention with reference to paragraph 9 of the above letter.

Orders by the Government of India, in the Public Works Department,—(No. 415C., dated Simla, the 5th July 1869.)

ORDER—Ordered that a copy of the following Resolution be forwarded to the Government of Bengal for information and guidance.

Also to the Financial Department, with copies of the paper read, for information.

Calcutta Port Improvement Trust.

Read again the following papers:—

Letter from the Government of Bengal, No. 67M., dated 20th December 1867, with enclosures.

Letter from the Government of Bengal, No. 144, dated 11th January 1868, with enclosures.

To the Government of Bengal, No. 87C, dated 13th February 1868.

Read also—

Letter from the Government of Bengal, No. 3199, dated 31st May 1869, with enclosures.

RESOLUTION.—In February 1868 the views of the Government of India on certain points connected with the constitution of a Trust for the Improvement of the Port of Calcutta in lieu of that formed under Bengal Act X. of 1866 were communicated to the Government of Bengal, and the reply of that Government, giving the opinions of his Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, and enclosing a letter containing those of the Chamber of Commerce on the various points advanced by the Government of India, having now been received, have had the careful consideration of the Governor-General in Council and the result of the deliberations of His Excellency in Council is as follows :—

2. It was proposed by the Government of India (Public Works Department No. 87C., dated 13th February 1868) that the executive functions of the Trust should, as far as possible, be exercised by the Chairman, the duties of the other Members being purely consultative. This is objected to by His Honor the Lieutenant Governor and by the Chamber of Commerce, on the ground that any such restriction would be likely to have the effect of deterring Members of the Commercial Community from consenting to serve on the Commission. On further consideration, the Government of India is willing to concede this point, as the object that was in view, namely, the maintenance on the part of the Government

of a complete control over all the proceedings of the Trust, may be better attained otherwise, as described more fully below.

3. As regards the number of which the Trust is to consist, the Governor-General in Council is of opinion that there are valid grounds for fixing the total number of Trustees. His Excellency in Council considers that the number suggested by the Chamber of Commerce is too large, and would propose to fix the number at 7, of whom three would form a quorum for the transaction of business.

4. The Governor-General in Council is unable to see any reason for departing from the opinion before expressed as to the objectionable nature of the Sections 47 to 51 of Bengal Act X. of 1866, which gave certain compulsory powers to the Trustees, and as regards the application of these clauses excepting to boats and inland country vessels; this opinion is supported by that of the Chamber of Commerce. His Excellency in Council, however, thinks there has been some misconception of the intentions of the Government of India on this subject. It is at once conceded that a power to regulate the landing and shipping of goods in the port is necessary. But instead of such a power as is given by Act X., which extends to ordering the discharge of the cargo of any vessel in the Port at any jetty or wharf of the Trustees, whether it is desired by the ship-owner or consignee or not, all that appears to be wanted is the right to regulate the places for landing and shipping goods of various kinds,

or for loading and unloading vessels of various kinds, and prohibiting the landing or shipping of goods otherwise than in accordance with such regulations. This power is already possessed, to a great extent, by the Local Government under Clauses 59 and 60 of the Customs (Act VI. of 1863,) for Custom-house purposes. What is needed for the purposes of the Trust might be authorized to be provided for in their Bye-laws, subject to the approval of the Local Government.

5. As regards the position to be given to the Trust financially, which is referred to in paragraphs 5 to 8 of the Government of Bengal letter No. 3199, dated 31st May 1869, there would also seem to have been some little misapprehension of the views of the Government of India. The intention was that, inasmuch as all operations of the Trust would virtually be based upon Government credit, the Government must have absolute security that the interest on all money advanced to the Trust directly by the Government, or borrowed by the Trust, should be duly discharged and the capital paid off, as the case might require. The income to be derived from the works and conveniences provided by the Trust would, of course, form the proper source from which to meet all such payments; but if, under any circumstances, this fund should not suffice to cover all the *obligatory* charges, then the shipping and trade of the port, *in behalf of which the operations are exclusively carried out*, must be regarded as responsible for any shortcomings, and the deficiency must be made good by a general rate of some sort. This the Government of India continues to consider an essential

part of the arrangement, from which it cannot recede, and it cannot give its assent to the opinion expressed in the latter part of paragraph 8 of the Bengal Government letter to the effect that the general revenues should bear the loss involved by any failure in the measures undertaken.

6. But whilst it is necessary carefully to guard the interests of Government and of the general tax-payer in this way, it is manifestly desirable that no undue charge shall be put upon the trade of the port during the earlier years of the operation of the Trust, and in this view the Government of India will readily accede to an arrangement such as is contemplated in paragraphs 10 and 11 of the letter of the Chamber of Commerce, by which the burden of the financial responsibilities of the Trust shall be fairly distributed over a series of years, in a manner that shall avoid an inequitable charge being made upon persons who cannot possibly benefit by the works, &c.

7. The Government of Bengal proposes to pass an Act at once, repealing Act X. of 1866, and giving to the Local Government power to appoint Commissioners for the management of the new jetties, now nearly completed, including the collection of dues. This Commission is apparently intended to be merely temporary, until such time as the new Trust be organized. The Government of India sees no reasons why the Act constituting the permanent Trust should not be passed during the next cold season, and it would appear objectionable to create any new body which would last only six months. The

Government of India considers that it might be sufficient to pass an Act repealing Act X. of 1866, and declaring the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal to be the representative of the old Trust, and that all the powers conferred under the old Act might be exercised by the Government through such person or persons as it might appoint. This course is suggested for the consideration of His Honor, and possibly may be that which was intended. The powers conferred under this Act should, however, in the opinion of the Governor-General in Council, be strictly limited so as not to extend beyond the 30th April 1870, by which time the permanent body should be formed. His Excellency in Council thinks it essential that a positive pledge shall thus be given that no further delay, beyond what is essential, should be allowed to occur in placing these operations on a proper footing.

8. The Government of India is further of opinion, on various considerations, which is unnecessary to detail, that the final Act constituting the new Trust should be passed in the Council of the Lieutenant-Governor, the draft being submitted for the previous perusal of the Government of India. His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor will doubtless understand that, on account of the large financial considerations involved, it is necessary for the Governor-General in Council to see that the powers of control thought essential by the Government of India are properly secured, and that the provision made for the protection of the State in respect to the loans made for the port improvements is complete and sufficient.

9. Having thus disposed of the more special points which have been referred to in the papers now before the Government of India, the Governor-General in Council will proceed to record the conclusions to which he has come as to the general system under which the new Trust should be definitively constituted and its financial relations with the Government should be settled.

10. The Trust should, in the opinion of the Governor-General in Council, be generally placed on the basis of giving to the Government of Bengal a complete power of control over all its proceedings, and over the appointment and removal of all its Members. The Local Government should be able to exercise a power of *veto* on all the proceedings of the Trust, and to require the Trust to give effect to any instructions issued for its guidance.

11. The Board of Commissioners would act as Trustees of Government, for whom they would hold the property made over for their administration; and the powers given to them should, consequently, be so limited as to prevent their taking up a position of hostility or opposition to the Government, or from attempting to exercise any rights, or make any claims, in opposition to the orders or decisions of the Government.

12. All details of the system of conducting the business of the Board may, therefore, probably be best left to be settled in communication with the Local Government, by which also would be regulated the accounts and returns to be kept and published, and the system of

audit to be adopted. For purposes of financial control, the agency of the Public Works Account Office would apparently be suitable and sufficient. All the expenditure of the Board should be under the complete control of the Government, and the Local Government would determine, at its discretion, the extent to which any independent power of expenditure should be entrusted to the Board. The Local Government would dispose of all estimates for works, &c. up to two lakhs of Rupees, above which the previous approval of the Government of India would be considered necessary.

13. As regards the employment of establishment, the Government of India will leave it to the Government of Bengal to suggest rules under which salaries to be paid from the funds of the Trust shall be fixed and sanctioned; but in this matter the Board should be placed under the full control of the Government, subject to any discretionary power given them by the rules thus to be laid down.

14. No lands assigned to the Board should be sold or alienated, or leased for a term exceeding, say ten years, without the sanction of the Local Government.

15. No powers of levying tolls, wharfage, or other fees, rents, rates, &c. should be assigned by the Board to any other party without the special sanction of the Local Government.

16. The works that may be carried out by the Board appear sufficiently well defined under Act X. But it seems worth considering whether power may not also be

given to undertake the working of steam tugs both in the port and river, as it is not unlikely that the Board might eventually have steamers; and, if so, it would be desirable to have the means of rendering them profitable when not required for the special purposes of the Trust. Also whether general powers to carry on any operations which may tend to the improvement of the port, or of the arrangements connected therewith, so as to effect the greatest possible good for the trade, may not be given, subject only to the approval of the Local Government. Under the proposed constitution of the Trust such a course would be attended with no risk.

17. The powers given in Section 56 of Act X appear to the Government of India to be hardly sufficient to provide for all that is necessary in respect to the levy of tolls, rates, &c., and the schedule B. annexed to the Act is plainly not wide enough. These points should be reconsidered, and the propriety of leaving the fixing of the rates to the Local Government may also be suggested.

18. Attention should be given to the definition of the limits of the port for the purposes of the Trust. It will probably be desirable to allow the Local Government the power of extending these limits by notification, irrespective of the port limits as fixed under Act XXII of 1865, to which the action of the Trust is limited by Act X. Such a power as is above suggested would give the means of stopping any attempt being made to erect conveniences just beyond the existing limits of the port, which might be injurious to the interests of the Trust.

19. It is also a point for consideration whether the right to erect works, such as those which the Trust will undertake, below high watermark should not be vested exclusively in the Board, unless the previous sanction of the Local Government were obtained; and whether the Local Government should not be authorized to prescribe conditions for the construction and use of any such works carried out under its sanction. Possibly such a power may exist in a more or less complete degree under the Customs Act.

20. The Government will transfer to the Board, for management, the portion of the Strand Bank made over to the old Trust, with all the jetties and other works that have recently been erected. No rent or other charge will be made for such land, &c., excepting as hereafter provided.

21. The whole sum expended by the Government on all the works made over to the Board will be placed to their debit in an account with the Government; but no charge will be made for land, or for any works, &c., transferred on which expenditure has not taken place since 1850. The sum, if any, remaining at the debit of the Justices under Act X excluding all rent charged for land, will also be debited to the new Trust.

22. The Board will be bound at any time, on the requisition of the Government, to re-transfer to the Government any portion of the land, works, &c., now to be made over to the Trust, which it shall be declared is required for a public purpose, on payment by the Govern-

ment of the sum now debited to the Trust, if any, for such land or works, together with any actual sum expended subsequently for any improvement made to such land or works, set off by any corresponding deterioration. But no claims shall be entertained in such cases for any enhancement of value or price on any account whatever. Land provided free of cost to the Trust shall be surrendered without payment.

23. The Board will be bound to pay to the Government interest on the whole sum thus to be debited to the Trust, and from time to time remaining unpaid, at the rate of 4½ per cent. per annum, together with the whole of the Capital, in instalments to be spread over 30 years. The Government of India will be prepared so to arrange for the discharge of the interest and instalments of Capital as to relieve the Trust from the obligation to make such payment at an unduly heavy rate until the works to be undertaken come into operation.

24. The claims of the Government on account of interest and instalments of Capital shall be a first charge against the revenues of the Trustees, and the Board shall be authorized and bound to levy such rates on the shipping and boats entering the port of Calcutta, or on goods landed or shipped there, whether at the works of the Trust or not, as shall be required, in addition to the ordinary income of the Trust derived from all other sources, and after paying all the other necessary charges of the Board to supply the sum due to the Government under the last clause. The rates so to be levied shall be adjusted as nearly as possible to make good any deficiency

of the ordinary income, but any residue remaining after discharging the claims of the Government may be applied to the general purposes of the Trust.

25. The Board would be empowered to borrow from time to time, for expenditure on the purposes for which it will be constituted, such sums as the Government shall approve, subject to any rules or orders as to the manner or terms of so borrowing as shall be approved by the Government of India, which will also exercise a discretion as to whether the loans shall be made in the open market or to be taken from the Government. In the latter case, the current rate of Government loans of the day would only be charged.

26. The general objections described in paragraphs 23 and 24 will be also applicable to all sums payable as interest or instalments of Capital under paragraph 25; and alike whether the debt be to the Government or to other persons.

27. On the general principles above announced, the new Act should, in the opinion of the Government of India, be framed, the object being to secure an Administrative Trust strictly subordinate to the Government in all essential, but having ample executive powers for the proper performance of the business entrusted to it.

From Bengal Chamber of Commerce to Government of Bengal, Public Works Department.

Calcutta, 5th August, 1869.

I am desired by the Committee of the Chamber of Com-

merce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 4125 of the 14th ultimo, forwarding copy of your letter of 31st May last to the Government of India and of the Resolution of the Governor-General in Council regarding the fresh constitution of the Calcutta Port Improvement Trust.

2. The Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor having invited the Chamber to submit any suggestions which they may wish to offer in regard to the manner of giving effect to the instructions received from the Government of India, the Committee have attentively considered the subject, and the following remarks are communicated in reply to His Honor's reference.

3. His Excellency the Governor-General in Council considers that the number of members who shall form the Commission or Board of Management as suggested by the Chamber,—*viz.*, 15—is too large, and proposes to fix the number at 7,—3 forming a quorum for the transaction of business: but beyond limiting the number of the Board, the Resolution is silent as to its personal composition, no provision being made as to the extent to which Government shall be represented or the Municipality and Mercantile and Trading Communities recognised. Assuming, however, that the previous views of Government in this respect are understood, though not expressed, to be adhered to, in that case the representatives of Government would form an excessive majority of the Board and the non-official element would, in the opinion of the Committee, be inadequately represented.

The Committee are of opinion that the number proposed by the Government of India would leave a very narrow latitude for the exercise of independent judgment or action on the part of non-official members, and on that ground they recommend that the Board should be constituted on the basis proposed by the Lieutenant-Governor, *viz.*, four Government servants, the Chairman of the Municipality, and five members of the Mercantile and Trading Communities, as affording a more equitable adjustment of consultative and executive power. Failing to have their original nomination adopted the constitution of the Board as above would be satisfactory to the Committee.

4. The 13th Section of the Resolution has reference to employment of needful establishment and the payment of proper salaries; but it does not touch the question of remunerating the members of the Board for their services,—a point which was not overlooked in framing Act X of 1866, the 10th Section providing for the payment of salaries and allowances to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, and fees to the other members for attendance at meetings for transaction of the business of the Trust; and the Committee recommend a liberal scale of remuneration, not only as an incentive to personal interest in the proceedings of the Board, and their steady application to the work which they undertake to perform, but as compensation for the very considerable amount of time and labour which they will probably have to devote to their duties.

5. The 21st Section of the Resolution declares that *the whole sum expended by the Government on all the*

works made over to the Board will be placed to their debit in an account with the Government; but no charge will be made for land or for any works, &c., transferred, on which expenditure has not taken place since 1850. The sum, if any, remaining at the debit of the Justices under Act X, excluding all rent charged for land will also be debited to the new Trust.

The Committee request His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor will be pleased to submit for the consideration of the Governor-General in Council that in their opinion that Section would operate prejudicially to the interests of the Trust, inasmuch as it would obviously throw upon the revenue of the Trust charges of an exceptional character altogether unconnected with its organization.

The new Trust should, in their judgment, start clear of all liabilities, except the expenditure incurred upon those works which are now in course of construction, and which were sanctioned as a measure of partial relief to the trade of the port in anticipation of the more comprehensive operations likely to be undertaken by the Trust: and that beyond these charges there should be no retrospective liabilities.

The Lieutenant-Governor may remember that when the Trustees under the old Act were invited to accept the transfer of the River Strand Bank they declined the offer, because it was accompanied by the condition to discharge a very heavy unadjusted liability of the Strand Bank Rent Fund, embracing items *for improving the Eden Gardens, draining the Maidan, protecting public*

Tants, &c. &c.; and His Honor will no doubt bear this in mind when reviewing the charges with which it is proposed to debit the new Trust.

6. The Committee do not consider $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum an unfair charge upon the funds advanced by Government for the purposes of the Trust; they believe that the Trust will be well able to bear that charge upon its capital, but they question the expediency of now fixing a period of 30 years for the discharge of its liabilities, whether by instalments or otherwise; they think this should be left an open question to be determined hereafter according to the circumstances of the Trust, and not to be insisted on at present as a primary condition of its formation.

7. The 24th Section of the Resolution provides that rates shall be levied on goods landed or shipped whether at the works of the Trust or not; this appears an arbitrary order, and the Committee would be glad to see it cancelled: they have little doubt of the utility of the general improvements of the port having a sensible influence on the local traffic and of the facilities for landing and shipping being generally availed of; they consequently deprecate any interference with the manner in which that traffic may be preferentially conducted, and suggest that it be optional to use the works of the Trust or not just as it suits the convenience of the public.

8. There are other points in the constitution of the Trust proposed by the Supreme Government which do not accord with the views already expressed and still

entertained by the Committee of the Chamber, but as it is of paramount importance that the organisation of the Trust should be proceeded with without any further prolonged discussion, the Committee are not prepared to press their opinions, in the full assurance that should it hereafter appear expedient to introduce any material alterations which the practical working of the Trust may suggest the Government will not fail to adopt them.

9. The Committee close their remarks by recording the satisfaction with which they receive the Viceroy's orders that the new Trust shall be created forthwith, and that its operations, on a proper footing, shall come into force not later than the 1st May of next year.

New Jetties.

The Committee have much pleasure in recording, that pending the constitution of the new Trust, an instalment of the improvements expected from it has become available to the Trade of the Port in the shape of the new Screw Pile Jetties, one of which was officially notified as ready for use immediately after the holidays. The charges to be levied on goods landed at the Jetties have been framed in correspondence with the Committee by the Collector of Customs, and do not, in the aggregate, vary much from those now paid on goods landed in the ordinary way by cargo boats,

but it is hoped that hereafter when the whole of the Jetties are in full and regular work reduction will be feasible. The Collector has also made sundry alterations in the mode of paying duty, as well as arrangements for the speedy appraisement of goods—as per letter at foot—which entirely commend themselves to your Committee, as likely to prove convenient to the consignees of cargo, and afford full scope to the working and capabilities of the Jetties. These, owing to their limited number, are at present only available for the discharge of import cargo of a general nature, to the exclusion of Salt and Railway materials and export business of every kind. It will be readily conceived therefore that the benefits of this accommodation are as yet only partially felt, and that until a vessel can both unload and load at the Jetties, the system must be regarded as incomplete. The Committee cannot however but consider even the present accommodation as an immense improvement on anything which has previously existed in the Port. To the consignees of cargo it is an unmixed gain, as they have now a certainty of receiving their goods within a comparatively short period after the ship's entry and, what is of more importance, free from the rough usage and frequent damage which under the most favorable circumstances were more or less the accompaniments of the old system. The

ship is also even now a great gainer, getting rid as she does of all her general cargo with regularity and despatch, with an absolute exemption from all the harassing delays of waiting for boats, selecting packages, and searching for consignees of goods *to order*, which obtained under former arrangements. In the meantime the Jetties are being worked entirely by Government, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal having by Legislative enactment taken the place of the defunct River Trust, pending the organization of the new Board, under the control and management of which these works will hereafter naturally fall.

From Collector of Customs, Calcutta, to Chamber of Commerce.

Dated the 21st July 1869.

I have the honor to forward a list of goods, which I am prepared to pass on out-pass subject to certain examination and to full duty being paid in every instance beforehand; and I request that you will circulate the list together with the following remarks to the Committee and Members of the Chamber of Commerce:—

List No. 1.—Comprises such goods as will be passed without examination on invoice.

List No. 2.—Includes such Goods as will be passed on examination of five per cent.

2. The Custom House would of course have the right of calling for the production of any five cases by number and mark. But this, I fear, would be but little in advance of the practices hitherto in force. It would constantly happen that the remaining 95 per cent. would be delayed in delivery, because all the numbers comprising the total would not be forthcoming, and there might also be delay in finding the five selected and called for by the Custom House.

3. To remedy this, I have after careful consideration of the matter come to the conclusion that the best way would be, in place of selection by number, to rule that 10 per cent. be landed. The duty having been paid as before stated on the full quantity as per invoice, the out-pass would issue for 90 per cent., with orders to send the remaining 10 per cent. to the Custom House; and I purpose in order to facilitate early closing of the transaction as regards examination to take for delivery at the Custom House the first ten cases, bales, &c.

4. In order, however, to make this system work satisfactorily to all parties, it will be necessary that Bills of Entry should not include a variety of Goods, for instance, the different kinds of tariffed Piece Goods should be entered in separate Bills of Entry, and Twist should not be entered with Piece Goods. It is obvious that if there are several kinds of goods in one and the same invoice and only one Bill of Entry is made for all, the first 10 per cent. to land might include only the part consignment of one class, and there would be no cases representing the other classes.

5. So far, therefore, importers and consignees should, I think, assist the Custom House, as also in stating the total values at the rates, and the amount of duty tendered. If importers fill in these particulars themselves, there remains only the duty of checking them, and any error on either side can be rectified before delivery of the 10 per cent. retained for examination.

6. I trust I have made myself sufficiently clear on the subject.

The advantages to importers will simply be these that they will be able to receive as soon as the ship can deliver 90 per cent. of their goods, and they will not have to wait for report wharf, or till some of the goods are landed; and the probabilities are that the first ten per cent. sent to the Custom House will be also passed from it almost as soon as the last of the 90 per cent. in course of direct delivery from the ship.

**Duty being paid in every instance on the full
Invoice quantity beforehand.**

LIST No. 1.

**GOODS TO BE PASSED WITHOUT EXAMINATION ON
INVOICE.**

Railway and Telegraph materials and stores.
Unwrought loose metals.
Combustibles.
Acids.
Felt.

Pitch.
Tar.
Dammer.
Rosin.

LIST No. 2.

GOODS TO BE PASSED ON EXAMINATION OF 5 PER CENT.

Beef and Pork in casks.
Beer in wood.
Flour in casks and bags.
Cordage.
Crown Glass.
Red Lead.
White Lead.
Nails, of all sorts.
Paints, of sorts, and paint oil.
Kerosine and Shale oil.
Shot.
Turpentine.
Tin Plates.
Spelter Sheets.
Spices in bulk.
Piece Goods—tariffed.
White and Colored Twist.
Canvases in bales.
Quicksilver.
Yellow and other metals in packages.

J. A. CRAWFORD,
Collector of Customs.

Alteration of the 52nd Section of the Customs' Act.

This subject has again been before the Committee during the past half-year, as it became evident that with the commencement of work at the new Jetties some change in the Section would be more than ever necessary. In the month of August, a short Act was passed by the Legislative Council of the Government of India, empowering the Local Government, at discretion, to shorten from time to time the number of landing days allowed by Section 52, as it now stands; and believing that, in dealing with the subject under said authority, the Lieutenant Governor felt himself somewhat fettered by the apparently different views put forward by the Committee of the Chamber and that of the Trades Association, the former deemed it well to invite the latter to a conference on the question. The invitation was promptly accepted by the Committee of the Trades Association, and a meeting was held on the 9th September, the propositions made and agreed to at which will be found in the accompanying memorandum.

The points raised in discussion between the Committee of the Trades Association and the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce were as follows:—

1st.—As to delivery of goods.

It is urged by the Association that while an endeavour is made to bind Consignees of cargo to *take* delivery within a stipulated time no provision exists by which a vessel is bound to *make* delivery; that some reasonable time should be fixed upon, say 21 working days, within which a ship shall be bound to deliver: that by limiting the time during which goods may be detained on boardship, consignees of merchandise will be placed in a fairer position than they now occupy.

The Committee of the Chamber had no objection whatever to the proposition, which they thought not unreasonable, comparing it with the advantages a ship has in compelling consignees to take delivery within a stipulated period.

2nd.—As to the notice that should be given to Consignees who fail to remove goods as they come to hand on boardship, the Association in the 8th para: of their letter to Government of Bengal propose that the master of a ship shall have the power (by special provision in the Act) to discharge at consignees' risk if goods are not removed within 24 hours of special notice by circular or by advertisement that they are at hand and ready to be delivered.

The Committee of the Chamber approve of this suggestion, and under the circumstances consider it unnecessary to press for a reduction in the number of days now allowed under the Act. It was agreed by the Committee of the Association that to meet the numerous cases where Bills of Lading being "to order" the agents of the ship have no means of ascertaining the consignee, a notice in

the *Exchange Gazette* addressed to the holders of the Bill of Lading of such and such goods, giving the marks and other particulars, shall be held equivalent to a notice to the consignee by name, and shall entitle the Captain to land the goods, if to hand, within 24 hours after appearance of said notice, irrespective altogether of the number of working days the vessel may have been in port.

3rd.—As to landing charges.

The Association contend that some arrangement should be arrived at under which the charges levied for landing packages should be controlled; they complain of the exorbitant rates insisted upon Agents' ship-sircars, before they will release the goods landed by them, and recommend the adoption of a schedule of rates regulated by the rates charged by the Landing and Shipping Companies.

The experience of the Committee of the Chamber does not entirely confirm the statement of the Association in this respect, and instances are not uncommon in which ships and their Agents have debited themselves with a portion of such charges owing to the difficulty and trouble experienced in their collection. The Committee do not however look upon such landing charges as a legitimate source of profit to either the ship or landing sircars, and approve of the proposal of the Association that the same shall be levied in accordance with the Landing and Shipping Companies' rate of the day for similar goods, said rate to be binding on both parties.

4th.—Upon the question of damages to packages landed by ships externally in good condition but actually damaged

in the course of landing, the Association are of opinion that means should be devised whereby the losses constantly sustained may be obviated.

The Committee pointed out that when the system of Jetties comes into operation the amount of damage by landing would probably be reduced to a minimum, but under the present condition of things losses by damage were unavoidable; the difficulty of fixing the liability was great, because the contents of a case may have been damaged before shipment at a Home port and the master of a ship protects himself by the usual clause in Bill of Lading. It would be impossible to say where the damage occurred, but where it was proved beyond doubt that the damage was caused by the ship the remedy was obvious.

5th.—The matter of the new Jetties was then discussed, and the mode of working same, as proposed by the Collector of Customs, communicated to the Committee of the Association, who entirely agreed with the Committee of the Chamber that in regard to ships discharging at the Jetties no number of days can be given, but that all Consignees, Merchants, and Traders alike must be prepared to take delivery of their goods from the Jetty, sheds within 12 hours, or have them taken to the Custom House at their expense and risk.

When these resolutions were submitted to the Lieutenant-Governor, His Honor pointed out that the power proposed to be given to the

master of a ship, under No. 2, involved a greater alteration of Section 52 than the Local Government was authorized to make, and that this recommendation could not therefore be complied with. A notification has since appeared, reducing the landing days from 15 from date of entry as originally set forth in Section 52 to 10 days in the case of ships discharging at the ordinary moorings or in the stream, and to 2 days in the case of those availing of the new Jetties. The Committee have received with much satisfaction the part of the notification relating to the case of ships unloading at the Jetties, as they have all along felt that anything which would interfere with the rapid discharge of goods as fast as they came to hand in the ship's hold, would materially affect the working of the Jetties, both as regards the return to be derived from them by Government and the convenience and accommodation fairly expected of them by the public.

Landing and Storage of Gunpowder at Moyapore.

During the current year a complaint having been made of excessive detention to a vessel having on board, a large quantity of Government powder and ammunition, the Committee wrote

to the Marine Department, suggesting that in the case of such Ordnance Stores arriving in large quantities in a ship having a specially constructed magazine, the Pilot might bring the vessel up without stopping to discharge at Moyapore. The Officiating Master Attendant wrote in reply that he could not accede to the suggestion of the Committee, and must abide by existing regulations, as he was of opinion that even in cases where the Moyapore Magazine cannot accommodate the whole arrival, it is safer to discharge at that place and bring the powder up in cargo boats than to let the whole come up in the ship's magazine within the limits of the Port and there break bulk.

Cotton Frauds' Act.

In the month of July last, the Committee received from Messrs. Cohn, Feilmann & Co. a communication supported by the signatures of many influential firms, renewing their proposal that immediate steps should be taken to procure a Cotton Frauds' Act for Bengal and the North Western Provinces. Before taking action on or replying to this application, the Committee deemed it advisable to ask the Chamber of Commerce in Bombay what was their opinion

of the Act existing in that Presidency after some years' experience of its working, and reference was made accordingly. The reply of the Bombay Chamber was of the most unfavorable nature as regarded the beneficial working of the Act, which was spoken of as *worthless for the purposes it was expected to serve and powerless to effect good*, while a distinct opinion was conveyed to the effect that the Bombay Chamber was opposed to a Cotton Fraud's Act for all India. Upon receipt of this reply from Bombay, the Committee addressed Messrs. Cohn, Feilmann & Co. as follows:—

Calcutta, 7th August 1869.

In continuation of my letter of 27th ultimo, I beg to hand you copy of answer from the Bombay Chamber to the Committee's reference regarding the Cotton Frauds Act, and you will gather from that reply and from the letter to the Madras Chamber that the experience of the working of the Act on the Bombay side does not encourage the Committee to proceed in the matter of applying for a similar legislative enactment for Bengal and the North Western Provinces.

They will wait for the result of the Bombay Chamber's meeting referred to in their letter; and if it is adverse to the continuance of the Act, it would be idle for this Chamber to ask for what Bombay after lengthened experience disapproves and rejects; but the Committee think well

of the suggestion contained in the 16th paragraph of the reply to the Madras Chamber and will be prepared to act upon it hereafter.

From Bombay Chamber of Commerce to Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

Bombay, 28th July 1860.

I am in receipt of your favor of 20th instant, requesting the views of this Chamber on the working of the Cotton Frauds Act in force in this Presidency and as to the expediency of applying that Act to the rest of India.

We received some weeks ago a letter of a similar character from the Madras Chamber, and a copy of my reply to that letter, which I herewith enclose, will perhaps give you all the information necessary for your purpose.

I may add that since the letter was written the views of the members incline still more strongly against the continuance of the Act, and in all probability a general meeting of the Chamber will be held presently for the purpose of giving a public expression of opinion on the point as to whether the repeal of the Act should be moved for or not.

From Bombay Chamber of Commerce to Madras Chamber of Commerce.

Bombay, 14th June 1860.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 3rd instant, requesting to be informed as to the

opinion of this Chamber on "the working of the Cotton Frauds Act, the assumed effect on the character of the Cotton and the ascertained influence on the extent of cultivation, and whether this Chamber still approves of the introduction of a Cotton Improvement Act with the joint object of improving the quality and promoting the growth of the Cotton."

2. In reply I am directed by the Committee of Management to inform you that you are under a misapprehension when you infer "comparative indifference" on the part of this Chamber on the question of the working of the "Bombay Cotton Frauds Act," merely on the ground that you found little information on the subject in the Chamber's report for the year 1867-68.

3. Up to the close of the official year 1867-68, no report on the working of the Cotton Frauds Act for that year had been published by Government, and it was not deemed expedient to publish the opinions expressed on the subject by the Members in the absence of all action on the part of Government in reference to the views that had already been laid before it by the Chamber.

4. Early in the present year a new Cotton Bill was introduced into the Local Legislative Council intended as an improvement of the Act now in force, but many of the provisions were of such an objectionable character that this Chamber remonstrated against them in a letter addressed to the Select Committee of the Council appointed to consider the Bill.

5. The Bill, as revised by the Committee, has been

published, but no farther proceedings have been taken in the matter, though no doubt it will come on for renewed consideration when the Council meets at Poona a few weeks hence.

6. There has been a growing conviction amongst the Members of this Chamber, for sometime past, that the Cotton Frauds Act is worthless for the purposes it was expected to serve when it was called into existence, and they would probably ere this have moved for its repeal but for the fear on the part of some of the Members that bad consequences might result from such a course.

7. In the report of this Chamber for 1866-67, at page 101, you will find a letter addressed by the Chamber to Government in reply to a reference from the Punjab as to the expediency of introducing an Act in that province similar to the Bombay Act, which expresses substantially the views of this Chamber on the subject at the present moment.

8. The condition of affairs in reference to the adulteration of Cotton in this Presidency in former days seems to have been special and peculiar as compared with other parts of India.

9. More than forty years ago, when the East India Company was still a trading Company, Regulations were passed for the suppression and punishment of Frauds in connection with the Cotton Trade in Guzerat.

10. When from 1847 to 1850, there was unusual demand in England for India Cotton, adulteration and frauds

in the trade were common, and these Regulations, when rigorously put in force under the orders of the Collectors, were found most effectual in securing their repression.

11. These Regulations, which in the first instance were only applicable to the Mofussil, were by an Act of the Government of India in 1851 made applicable to Bombay, and this state of the law continued till 1862.

12. In that year the enormous demand for Cotton to meet the wants of the manufacturers in Lancashire and the high-price paid for it, had the effect of bringing to market every available bale, with adulteration to such an extent that it was supposed only fresh legislation of a more stringent character would put a stop to it; hence the Act of 1863.

13. We are now in the fifth year of this Act and all the excitement of former years passed away, yet so powerless is the Act to effect good, that the Chamber was lately under the necessity of addressing Government on the subject of various forms of adulteration carried on in Guzerat apparently with perfect impunity, and to suppress which the Inspectors appointed under the Cotton Act seem perfectly powerless and helpless.

14. There has been improvement in the Cotton cultivation of this Presidency within the last few years, but it is attributable to the interest taken in the matter by Collectors and other servants of Government, and in no way to the action of the Cotton Frauds' Act.

15. The Act has had no effect whatever on the extent of cultivation, a matter entirely regulated by the question of price.

16. This Chamber highly approves of Government doing all in its power for the improvement of Cotton cultivation, but no Act on the subject is necessary; the appointment of a Cotton Commissioner, with suitable assistants, in each Presidency, with the countenance and support of Government given through its servants in the Revenue Department from the Collector downwards, is sufficient for every useful purpose.

17. You are in error in supposing Mr. Rivett-Carnac is the Cotton Commissioner for this Presidency: our Cotton Commissioner is Dr. Forbes, who was appointed to that office in 1863 by the Secretary of State, he was before that well known amongst us for his successful conduct of the Government experiments in the South Mahratta country for the introduction of a species of Cotton grown from New Orleans Seed, and it is to his persevering energy that we are mainly indebted for the Cotton grown in the Dharwar district from acclimatized New Orleans seed known as Saw Ginned Dharwar.

18. Mr. Rivett-Carnac is the Cotton Commissioner for the Central Provinces and Berars, and was appointed in 1866, while Sir Richard Temple was still Chief Commissioner of the former: the Cotton Act does not apply to these districts but Mr. Carnac, without the aid of the Cotton Act, has been able to render important services to the Cotton trade of this part of India.

19. This Chamber is opposed to a Cotton Act for all India, and its views on the subject will be found at page 57 of the Chamber's report for 1867-68.

Subsequently an Amended Cotton Frauds' Act was introduced into the Council of His Excellency the Governor of Bombay, and which, although passed, met with strong opposition, culminating in a memorial to His Excellency the Viceroy, praying him to withhold his assent from the Bill. The result of this Petition is not yet known, but should the prayer of the memorialists be granted, the Committee of this Chamber are of opinion that any action on their part towards obtaining for this side of India a measure after practical trial so emphatically condemned by the greater portion of the European and Native trading community in Bombay, would be idle and inexpedient. Should, however, His Excellency the Viceroy take the opposite course, and the Bill passed in Bombay thus become law, it may then become matter of consideration for the Committee whether they should not apply for a similar enactment, in view of the strong fears, expressed by many that with through Railway communication between the two Presidencies, we, on this side, should, in the absence of such a provision, find ourselves flooded with the adulterated Cotton which could not be made merchantable in the territories where the law may be in force.

European Vagrancy Act.

The Act to provide against European vagrancy received the Governor General's assent on the 18th September last. When the Bill was introduced into the Legislative Council, the early attention of the Committee was given to the subject, and after having well considered the general provisions of the proposed enactment they communicated their views to Government, especially on those points which concerned the masters and owners of vessels. Some of the clauses of the Bill were strongly objected to, particularly the 17th which provided as follows :—

“ Every master of a British sailing ship, who, on being tendered or paid such sum as the Local Government shall from time to time appoint, refuses to receive on board his ship any vagrant whom the Local Government requires him to take on board for the purpose of being deported under provisions hereinbefore contained :

or who fails to keep and detain such vagrants on board his ship for the voyage for which the vagrant is shipped,

or who fails to give a subsistence to such vagrant, or to provide him with a proper berth or

sleeping-place effectually protected against sea and weather,

shall be liable, on conviction before a Magistrate, in addition to payment of the sum last aforesaid (if it has been paid to the master) to a fine not exceeding five hundred rupees.”

In this and other respects, however, the Bill has been materially modified ; and the Act, which is partially in operation now and will be completely in force on the 1st January 1870, appears well adapted to realise the important object which it is intended to accomplish.

Overland Mail via Bombay.

The Committee of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce are of opinion that two days longer are allowed to the Peninsular and Oriental Company for the transmission of the overland mail from Bombay to England in the S. W. monsoon than the necessity of the case requires. From the last week in May till the end of September the mail is despatched on the afternoon of every Tuesday, instead of Saturday as is the case throughout the fair season. The reason of this change is that it is considered expedient to secure the arrival of the Indian mail in England about the same

time all the year round, and to do this it is said to be necessary, in allowing for the force of the S. W. monsoon, to give a four days' allowance to the mail steamer to enable her to reach Aden at the contract date, which is 12 days from Bombay. It appears however from information laid before the Bombay Chamber that the passage of the mail steamers to Aden occupies on an average only $9\frac{1}{2}$ days, that the longest time occupied on the passage during last year was 10 days 22 hours, and that frequently the passage was accomplished in $8\frac{1}{2}$ days. From this statement it appeared to follow that the mail is despatched at least two days earlier than is necessary, and attention is drawn to the importance of gaining two days in commercial correspondence between England and India. It was also stated that complaints from passengers had been communicated to the Bombay Chamber regarding the tedious character of the passage from Aden to Suez in the monsoon months, during which the steamers reach the former place before the contract time, and, after delay at that port, proceed up the Red Sea at a lower rate of speed than usual, in order that they may not reach Suez much before the contract time, the effect of which is that the passage between those two places is rendered more tedious and uncomfortable at the most trying time of the year. For these and

other reasons the Committee of the Bombay Chamber proposed to move that next year the time be reduced from four to two days, and that the steamers be despatched from Bombay during the S. W. monsoon on Thursdays instead of Tuesdays.

Your Committee forwarded the foregoing representation to the Director General of the Post Office, observing that while the suggested modification would be, obviously, a convenience to the community of Bombay, it might disadvantageously affect the mail service in connection with the Madras and Bengal Presidencies, and that they would not be inclined to adopt the views of the Bombay Chamber if their proposal was likely to disarrange the general transmission of overland correspondence which, as at present conducted, seemed to be satisfactorily provided for. From the reply of the Director General it would appear not improbable that the suggested change would be attended with the consequences apprehended by the Committee.

The Bombay Chamber having received a copy of the Director General's letter will not at present proceed further in the matter.

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

Simla, the 2nd September 1869.

In reply to your letter of the 21st August, I have the honor to observe that I am not at present in a position to give an opinion respecting the feasibility of reducing the monsoon allowance between Bombay and Suez from four to two days. I shall however place myself in communication with the London Post Office on the subject and inform your Committee of the result.

2. But I may at once offer remarks on the effect which such an alteration would have on the overland mail dates in Calcutta and Madras.

3. It is probable that before the next monsoon the Great Indian Peninsula Railway will be open to Jubbulpore, and this will, I expect, admit of a whole day's reduction in mail transit between Calcutta and Bombay, so that if the proposed alteration of Bombay dates were carried out next monsoon, the overland mails would be closed at Calcutta every Monday. But at the same time there is a certain amount of doubt regarding this prospect, for I believe it to be the opinion of some that the new line should be allowed to stand the test of a monsoon before it is opened, and if for this or any other reason the opening of the new line be deferred, the proposed alteration of the steamer dates would throw the Calcutta date

for closing the overland mails on a Sunday. This would probably be regarded by the Calcutta public as a serious drawback, but it is one of which your Committee will be almost better able to judge than I am.

4. Again if the proposed alteration of the Bombay steamer dates be carried out next monsoon, the Madras overland date will possibly fall on a Sunday. It is proposed during the ensuing cold weather to change the Madras and Bombay route from the present line via Bangalore, Belgaum and Poona to a line via Gooty, (the terminus of the N. W. line of the Madras Railway) Rairchore and Goolburga (to which the S. E. extension of the G. I. P. Railway is expected to open in January next). I am not yet quite certain whether it will be possible under this arrangement to convey the mails to Bombay in 2½ days, that is leaving Madras on Monday evening, and arriving at Bombay on Thursday in time for the steamer which under the proposed arrangement would leave Bombay on Thursday. If it be found impossible to do this, the mails must be despatched from Madras (say) on Monday morning, which would practically throw the Madras overland mail date on Sunday.

5. It will thus be seen that the proposed alteration, if carried out next monsoon, *might under certain contingencies* throw the Calcutta and Madras overland mail dates on a Sunday, though my hope is that it would not do so in either case.

Overland Postage.

The Madras Chamber re-opened the discussion of the question of overland postage in a letter dated 11th June last, copy of which and of the correspondence to which it gave rise will be found below.

The information obtained by that Chamber as to the practical results of the higher scale of postage appeared to justify the conclusion that so far as Madras was concerned the revenue had been prejudiced by the new rates, the increase being at the same time felt as an additional burden on trade; and an opinion was expressed that, if the experience of the other Chambers in India and Ceylon pointed in the same direction, a unanimous movement might be successful in obtaining a reduction to the scale of postage which existed prior to the change that took place early last year.

Your Committee at once placed themselves in communication with the Director General of the Post Office; they were of opinion that sufficient time had lapsed since the introduction of the higher rates of postage to test the accuracy of the conclusions upon which they had been based, and

to ascertain if the practical working of the new regulations, after 16 months' experience, did not confirm the general belief that the tendency of the change had been to decrease the amount of correspondence between Great Britain and her Eastern Dependencies, and consequently to diminish the anticipated revenue. It was, at the same time, suggested that the investigation instituted by the Madras Chamber should be followed up by similar inquiries on this side of India, with the view—if the expediency of such a measure could be fairly established—to make a fresh appeal to the Lords of H. M. Treasury against the continuance of the present tariff of overland postage.

The replies of the Director General do not however support the conclusions at which the Madras Chamber arrived with respect to the postal results in their own Presidency; and the general tenor of the correspondence does not encourage the hope that the existing tariff of rates will be disturbed.

From Madras Chamber of Commerce to Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

Madras, 11th June 1869.

Shortly after it had been officially intimated, in the

early part of last year, that the Home Government had determined to raise the rates of overland postage between England and India from the 1st April, this Chamber addressed the local Government and memorialised the House of Commons, urging the inexpediency and severity of the new rates and praying for a reconsideration of the subject. The Local Government forwarded a copy of the Chamber's letter to the Secretary of State, who in acknowledging its receipt on the 4th February of the present year, enclosed a copy of a letter from the Lords of the Treasury, and an extract from another letter from the same authorities, to the effect that "my Lords see no reason to depart from the opinion" that "it would not be advisable to disturb the present rates of postage which were settled after the whole matter had received the most attentive consideration." As the Post Office is made the most use of by the mercantile section of that community, it is believed that any further action that may be taken with the hope of inducing a return to the old rates will come legitimately within the scope of the duties of the Chamber of Commerce.

It seems to this Chamber that the only argument that can be expected to prevail with the Lords of the Treasury in re-opening the question, would be unquestionable proof that the enhancement of the rates has not, so far, been followed by an increase of revenue; and in order to ascertain in what respect the new tariff has affected local correspondence, the Chamber solicited the Madras Postal authorities to place them in possession of statements showing the comparative weight of the English

mails in and out during the last three years. The Postmaster General obligingly complied with this request, so far as the records of his office enabled him to do, and the Chamber have now before them data which if not quite complete are yet adequate to justify the conclusion that, so far as Madras is concerned, the revenue has been prejudiced by the new rates.

As to our outward mails to Europe, the Chamber find that the weight was as follows:—

April to March	1866-67	1867-68	1868-69.
Via Galle ...	lbs. 2,461	2,072	0
„ Bombay...	„ 335	659	1,879
	<hr/> 2,796	<hr/> 2,761	<hr/> 1,879

Taking the mean of the rates via Marseilles and via Southampton at 8d. in 1867-68, and 11d. in 1868-69, then the reduction in the weight of 852lbs. in the latter year as compared with the former would show a decline in revenue of £ 186.

As to "Papers" which include Circulars, Market Reports, &c., the outward mails contained:—

April to March	1866-67	1867-68	1868-69.
Via Galle ...	lbs. 2,715	2,072	0
„ Bombay ...	„ 257	894	2,682
	<hr/> 2,972	<hr/> 2,966	<hr/> 2,682

At 3d. the 8 oz. this would show a decline in the revenue from letters of, say, £ 12.

. Lastly as to books, the figures are :—

April to March	1866-67	1867-68	1868-69.
Via Galle ...	lbs. 1,319	1,242	0
" Bombay...	" 27	176	776
	1,346	1,418	776

The postage being 4d. per 4 oz. this would show a loss of £ 43 in 1868-69, as compared with the immediately preceding twelve months.

Thus from letters, papers and books per outward mail the revenue was at least £ 241 less in 1868-69 than in 1867-68, while the decrease in the weight of the three descriptions of packages was 1,808 lbs. or 16 cwt. in favor 1868-69.

The Post Office records of the inward mails are incomplete, but, so far as the Chamber can judge, they give the following approximate results via Galle and Bombay.

April to March	1866-67	1867-68	1868-69.
Letters, papers, books, lbs.	51,751	49,555	30,118.

say 19,437 lbs. or 8 tons 16 cwt. less in 1868-69 than in 1867-68. This, at a postage all round of only 3d. per oz., would be equivalent to a loss of revenue of £ 3,887 against 1868-69.

At first sight it would seem that against this apparent loss of revenue on both inward and outward mails there may be set the gain in the reduction in the dawk establishment that should seem practicable by the diminution of the bulk and weight of those mails. But since the Galle route was dispensed with in March 1868, and a weekly mail from and to Bombay substituted for the fortnightly one the dawk establishment has had to be increased to perform the extra work required of it.

With these figures before them this Chamber cannot but conclude that the anticipation of an increase of revenue from the new rates entertained by the Home Government has not yet been realised. The prejudicial influence of those rates must however have chiefly affected purely private correspondence, for from statements communicated to the Chamber by the greater number of mercantile firms here, it appears that their expenditure on mails to Europe was increased by 24 per cent in 1868-69, as compared with 1867-68. This increase has of course been an additional tax on trade. It is felt that should the experience of your own and the other Chambers in India and Ceylon point in the same direction as does that what I have been directed to communicate to you, a good case will have been made out for a fresh appeal to Parliament.

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

Simla, the 5th July 1869.

In reply to your letter of the 24th June, I have the

honor to observe that the Madras Post Office statistics therein referred to strike me as obviously inapplicable to the object for which they were obtained.

2. I understand them to represent the weight of mails exchanged between the Madras Post Office and Europe in the three years 1866-67, 1867-68 and 1868-69, and they probably shew the result with approximate accuracy : but such a comparison is quite worthless for the object in view, as will be seen from the following remarks.

3. Prior to the establishment of the weekly service via Bombay, the great bulk of the European mails from places in the Madras Presidency passed through the Madras Post Office and were there made up in direct packets for Europe, the mails from Europe destined for places in the Madras Presidency being similarly received in the Madras Post Office, and thence distributed over the Presidency. But since the establishment of the weekly service via Bombay, the transmission of such mails *through the Madras Post Office* has ceased in respect of the greater portion of the Madras Presidency. For instance, covers for England originating in (say) Bangalore were formerly sent to the Madras Post Office, and included in its packet to London (forwarded by steamer from Madras) : these covers are now sent direct from Bangalore to Bombay, and included in the Bombay Packet. Similarly covers for Bangalore were formerly received by steamer at Madras and forwarded thence to Bangalore, but they are now received at Bombay and for-

warded direct to Bangalore, without of course passing through the Madras Post Office.

4. It is clear therefore that the exchange of mails between the Madras Post Office and Europe must necessarily have been vastly diminished under the new system ; such diminution however is no evidence whatever of the diminution of correspondence, but results from the alteration of route. And the existence of some such disturbing cause is apparent even from the figures given for Madras, for they shew a decrease not merely in letters (the postage on which was raised) but in newspapers and books (the postage on which was not raised.)

5. I have no precise statistics available on the subject, and, owing to the recent destruction by fire of all the records of the Bombay Post Office, there may be some difficulty in obtaining them. I shall endeavour however to get them.

6. Meantime I may state my opinion that the result will be found to be the opposite of that contemplated by the Chamber, for it must be remembered that under the former arrangements the greater portion of India, (N. W. Provinces, Punjab, Sind, Central Provinces and Bombay) had practically only a bi-monthly mail ; and that though Bengal and Madras had nominally a mail four times a month, the dates of despatch and receipt by the two different routes were so badly arranged as to make the four mails of very little more advantage than two mails.

7. The comparison will, therefore, be between the results of a regular weekly mail for the whole of India, and those of a service which gave to some portions of India a bi-monthly Mail and to others a mail four times a month: and the comparison will be still further complicated by the fact that during 1867-68 extra steamers were run between Bombay and Suez.

8. It seems to me obvious that the statistical results will be of almost no value as respects the point on which the Chamber desire to have information, viz, whether the enhanced postage rates have tended to repress the extension of correspondence which ought otherwise to have followed the enlarged opportunities held out by the new mail service. That point must I fear remain a matter of opinion.

9. I may mention for the information of the Chamber, that on learning the final decision of the Home Authorities against any reduction of the present postage rates, I suggested for the consideration of Government whether a general reduction of 1d. per ½ oz. might not be proposed in lieu of the special rates now allowed for officers' letters. My own opinion is that these special rates for officers' letters, while causing a great amount of trouble to the Post Office, are of very little real benefit* to the classes for whom they are intended, and are certainly a source of endless vexation and irritation to the large class of Military Officers in Civil employ whose correspondents in England, forgetting that they are not entitled to the privi-

* The requirement of the countersignature of the commanding Officer or head of a department gives rise to much inconvenience and the penalties which follow irregularities of address &c., cause annoyance.

lege, send their letters underpaid, and thus render the addressees in India liable to heavy payments not only of the deficiency but of fines for underpayment.

10. This opinion will probably be made the subject of enquiry, and I have no knowledge as yet what the result will be, but should the enquiry bear out my impression, I would hope that any proposal to abolish the special privileges of Military Officers will be coupled with a renewed request for a reduction of the rate of postage charged to the public generally.

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

Simla, the 3rd September 1869.

In continuation of my letter No. 1246, dated the 5th July, I beg to state that the aggregate weight of letters sent from India to England by British Packet was about 18 per cent more in 1868-69 than in the previous year. I have not yet got the returns of the weight of letters sent by French Packet. Of course there will be a falling off under *this* head, as the improved British Packet service via Bombay almost entirely superseded the French Packet service via Galle, but the correspondence sent by French Packet was never large, and if the whole had been swept away by the improved Bombay service, the net increase would still be about fifteen per cent.

2. I may add that the aggregate increase of 18 per

cent above referred to is made up of an increase of about 14 per cent. via Southampton, and 20 per cent. via Marseilles. Had the enhanced rate of postage pressed very heavily on people in India one would have expected to find a larger increase by the Southampton route than by the Marseilles route. And indeed this is the case as respects correspondence from England to India by British Packet which has increased altogether by about 10 per cent, the Southampton increase being 15 per cent, and the Marseilles increase 6 per cent.

3. As already stated in my previous letter, the increase of correspondence is due to the more frequent and regular mail service, and this increase might have been much greater had the postage rate not been increased. In fact it is impossible to tell from these statistics how far the increased rate of postage has checked the development of correspondence which would otherwise have followed the more frequent and regular mail service. But I think it is evident that the enhancement of rates has been more felt in England than in India as evidenced by the comparatively high rate of increase in the correspondence sent from that country via Southampton.

Telegraph Station between Calcutta and Atcheepore.

Notwithstanding the favourable recommendation by the Government of Bengal of the Chamber's proposal for an additional Telegraph Office

between Atcheepore and the southern limit of the Port—for reasons which have been already fully stated in previous Reports—and the fair prospect of that proposal being sanctioned by the Supreme Government, the Committee were much disappointed by the following communication from the Director General of Telegraphs :—

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

Dated Simla, the 18th of May 1869.

I am directed by the Right Honorable the Governor General in Council to enquire whether, in the event of a Telegraph Office being sanctioned for Hangman's Point, the Chamber of Commerce at Calcutta are prepared to guarantee a sum sufficient to defray the extra expenditure that will be incurred.

2. If an office is to be established at Hangman's Point, which is to afford the same benefit as the other river offices, its establishment alone will cost Rupees 350 a month.

3. In addition to the monthly charge there will be a primary outlay for four miles of double line at say Rs. 600 per mile = ... Rs. 2,400
The purchase or building of a house at ... „ 13,500
Instruments, tables, &c. ... „ 500
Boats, oars, &c. ... „ 250
And probably other expenses ... „ 600
vide memo. annexed,

4. I take this opportunity to say with reference to the statement in your letter of 13th February to Bengal Government "That the river lines were not established and are not maintained solely for commercial interests, &c.," that since these lines

* Consequent on the frequent rupture of cables by ships anchors the line to Madras has been directed via Haussange and Nidaspore.

have become a 'branch' instead of a part of the general system, and the mails and troops to and from England travel via Bombay, their value to the Government is almost nil and they would certainly be abandoned were it not for their value to the trade of Calcutta.

5. These river lines cost the State Rs. 10,000 annually not including the share of superintendence, direction or of expense of relieving signallers. It simply represents the difference between pay of establishments and receipts from messages and gazette; and to show of how little value they are to Government. I give the average number of messages transmitted over them:—

Private messages	..	..	... 38
Service messages	...	...	... 0
Marine Department messages (for port)	...	...	... 24
Observatory reports (for benefit of Calcutta)	...	...	... 45

6. On consideration you will therefore doubtless see that I have not taken a narrow view of the subject, and that it would not be just to draw on the general revenue of the country for the payment of a service which is of direct pecuniary value to the merchants of Calcutta and to them alone.

7. It is difficult to support the continuance of the present expenditure on these lines, and therefore it is impossible to suggest that it should be increased.

Memorandum.

All offices on the Hooghly are manned for "working by day only." An office at Hangman's Point would have exactly the same amount of work to do as regards reporting the passing of vessels as any other office on the river, and as it is presumed we must be in a position to deliver telegrams on board ship we must keep a boat there. The office would therefore in all respects be the same as that at Atcheepore.

This is the establishment at Atcheepore—

1 Telegraph Master	...	... 101
Allowance	...	... 20
1 Signaller	...	... 87
1 Signaller	...	... 66
1 Peon	...	... 6
2 Watchmen at G	...	... 12
1 Manjoe	...	... 7
4 Boatmen at G	...	... 20
1 Sweeper	...	... 5
Contingencies*	...	... 25

Total Rs. ... 350

I am not aware of any house at Hangman's Point available or suitable for an office. Probably one would

* Wear and tear of instruments, stationery, sulphate of copper, &c.

have to be built. The sanctioned estimate for that about to be commenced at Atchepore is Rs. 13,360.

Our line does not go within four miles of Hangman's Point. We should therefore have to construct a double loop of four miles in length of new line to bring Hangman's Point into circuit between Calcutta and Atchepore.

(Sd.) F. G. TEALE,

Offg. Dy. Director-General of Telegraphs in India.

In reply to this reference, involving, as the Committee thought, a most unusual departure from the ordinary course adopted by Government, it was represented that the Chamber was not prepared to give the required guarantee; that the funds of the Institution were subscribed solely for its own purposes; and that to guarantee the cost of a public establishment available to the entire commercial community, only a section of which contributed to the support of the Chamber, was altogether beyond the Chamber's power. At the same time the Committee expressed the regret with which this reference had been received, and trusted that a question affecting the interests of a trade which contributed so liberally to the general revenue would be reconsidered. That they were not disappointed in their expectation that there

had been some misapprehension in the matter the following letter will show: and they believe that the additional telegraph service applied for will not be withheld.

Memorandum from Government of India, Foreign Department,—(No. 484, dated Simla, the 13th July 1869.)

Copy forwarded to the Government of Bengal, with reference to their Secretary's letter, dated 9th March 1869, No. 1020.

From Government of India, Foreign Department, to Director General of Telegraphs in India,—(No. 483, dated Simla, the 13th July 1869.)

I am directed by His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor General in Council to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated 15th June 1869, No. 139, relative to the question of establishing a Telegraphic Office at a place below Garden Reach.

2. His Excellency in Council is very desirous of meeting the wishes of the Chamber of Commerce and of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, and he thinks it quite possible to effect this, object without incurring the expenses noted by you, which are disproportionate to the requirements of the case.

3. So large a sum as Rupees 13,500 need not be spent on either the erection or the purchase of a house. It will be sufficient to rent a piece of land and to run up a house with raised floor, mat sides and a tiled roof, at a cost of a few hundred Rupees. You might, however, first enquire whether it would not be possible to hire a house of the kind indicated, at a moderate rent.

4. The monthly expenditure need certainly not extend to Rupees 350. A Telegraph Master on Rupees 121 a month is not required. Two signallers with one chowkedar, a peon and a sweeper ought to be ample for such an office, which it is intended shall only work by day or, say, from 6 or 7 A. M. to 6 or 7 P. M. If boats cannot be hired when wanted, and it is absolutely necessary to keep a boat as part of the establishment, a small dingy with three boatmen and a manjhee ought to be sufficient.

5. You are requested to re-consider the question of an establishment, and to submit one on a much more moderate scale, for the approval of His Excellency in Council. You can refer to the Government of Bengal, to whom a copy of this letter will be forwarded, as to the erection or purchase of a building at moderate cost, or as to any other matters of detail. As the signallers will not work by night, they need not be expected to reside at the office.

6. It may be expedient to fix a particular and exceptional Tariff for all messages forwarded through this office. It should cover boat hire, and it might be considerably in excess of ordinary messages.

7. The Telegraph Station must be known by some other designation than that of "Hangman's Point." Probably the native name of the Reach, or the nearest village, might be adopted.

8. You are requested to take these suggestions into early consideration, and to submit a plan for the establishment of a Telegraphic Office, on trial for a period of two years, with any other suggestions that occur to you as likely to facilitate the object in view.

Efficiency of the Pilot Service.

A previous Report placed members in possession of the action taken by the Committee on the question of the efficiency of the Pilot Service of this Port, and the conclusion of the Chamber's correspondence with the Government of Bengal is now recorded

From Government of Bengal to Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

Calcutta, the 4th May 1869.

I am directed to invite your attention to the 3rd paragraph of the letter from this Office, No 4387, dated the 5th September 1868, and to request that you will be so good as to state, for the Lieutenant-Governor's information, whether the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce

are still anxious that a Special Commission should be appointed to enquire into the efficiency of the Bengal Pilot Service.

From Chamber of Commerce to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 20th May 1869.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1757 of 4th instant.

The numerous groundings of vessels in 1867-68 led the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to suggest for the consideration of the Honorable the Lieutenant-Governor whether a Special Commission should not be appointed to enquire into the efficiency of the Pilot Service under its existing constitution; and they were informed in reply that His Honor had come to the conclusion, after a reference to the Master Attendant, that there was not then any strong ground for the appointment of such a Commission, but left it open to the Chamber to state if they still wished to press for the proposed inquiry; a copy of the Master Attendant's letter reporting on the Chamber's representation was at the same time forwarded for the Chamber's information.

It would appear that His Honor was influenced to that conclusion by the Master Attendant's report, in the 5th paragraph of which Captain Reddie stated that as "a Commission had sat so lately on the Pilot Service he did

not see what further particulars could be elicited by having another."

This was the first intimation the Committee had received of the existence of such a Commission, and as they were anxious to learn how far the *question of efficiency* had been taken cognisance of they applied for a full Report. Copies of that Report, of the letter of the Officiating Master Attendant commenting on it, and of the Resolution of the Lieutenant-Governor, were furnished to the Chamber, who are now once more invited to state whether they are still anxious that the Special Commission applied for by them should be appointed.

All these papers have been attentively considered; they treat fully of the matters submitted by the Pilot Service, and are all more or less interesting as bearing on the position, prospects and grievances of a generally well deserving class of public employes. But the Committee of the Chamber are unable to find in any of the points discussed by the Commission the slightest connection with the question submitted by them to the Government of Bengal, *viz.*, the *efficiency of the service*: the Report of the Commission, the letter of the Officiating Master Attendant, and the orders passed by the Lieutenant-Governor, do not touch that question at all; consequently these documents are of no avail to the Chamber for their purpose.

It seems essential in the interests of the large and valuable properties entrusted to the care of pilots that

the services of professional men of high efficiency should always be available, that all legitimate encouragement should be extended with the view to secure such efficiency, and all needful care taken to maintain it unimpaired.

The old Bengal Pilot Service had long enjoyed a high reputation for skilled and scientific seamanship, a thorough knowledge of the capricious character of the river they have to deal with, for courage and prudence and other qualifications befitting their profession ; but notwithstanding all these acquirements and advantages, there was a strong feeling some years ago that the pilotage services of the port would be materially improved if, what was called, the covenanted system were extinguished and replaced by a free open competitive service ; and the Chamber of Commerce had such strong convictions as to the expediency of introducing the change that they cordially supported the new system, which came into operation some ten or twelve years ago, and has gradually almost entirely superseded the old establishment.

The new plan has had a fair practical trial ; and if on a thorough investigation of its experience it can be shown that anticipated results have been realized, that on the whole the service has satisfactorily performed its work, and the professional abilities of its Members proved to be not inferior to those of the olden school, nothing could be more reassuring to the public generally, and especially to commercial and shipping interests, or more creditable to the service itself.

If on the other hand the inquiry establishes the fact that instead of improvement and increased efficiency there has been a gradual degeneration, that the free service exhibits a lower order of ability and skill in the class of men who now enter it, it would be the obvious duty of Government to consider how it could best modify the arrangements under which the pilot establishment is recruited, and its strength kept fully equal to the exigencies of the public service, or whether if greater inducements were held out a higher or more competent class of men could be induced to join.

The Committee have not overlooked the Master Attendant's testimony in favor of the officers on the licensed list ; Captain Reddie states, " I think the accompanying tabular statement will show that the men who have entered the service in the licensed list are quite equal to those belonging to the old service, and that the number of groundings has as often happened to men of old standing as to youngsters," and he specifies the number and grade of the officers of the two classes who were in charge of the vessels when they grounded, or came into collision, or were wrecked.

This authoritative declaration of an experienced judge of the qualifications and conduct of the service under his own immediate control is justly entitled to all respect ; and it is to be hoped that the Master Attendant's estimate of the comparative merits of the old and new services has been carefully formed.

It is beyond the Committee's ability so to analyse the

statement upon which the Master Attendant has based his remarks as to arrive at a conclusion confirmatory of Captain Reddie's opinion or otherwise; but the tabular statement strikes them as affording barely sufficient evidence in support of his assertion. Taking the *accidental* cases, which form two-thirds of the recorded casualties, the question is not whether as large a proportion of them occurred to old hands as to younger pilots, but whether they were of a nature which could not by any degree of skill have been avoided by the former, and whether they were such as were directly attributable to the want of skill and seamanship on the part of the latter.

To estimate the efficiency of the service generally merely by a comparison of the *number* of accidents happening to one class or the other appears a scarcely satisfactory test: but if the particular circumstances connected with the numerous groundings have been fully investigated by the Master Attendant and his opinion was based upon the results of a careful inquiry that would of course satisfactorily establish his conclusion; and if His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor is content to confirm Captain Reddie's view, the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce will not press for the Special Commission applied for.

*From Government of Bengal to Chamber of
Commerce.*

Calcutta, the 21st June 1869.

In reply to your letter dated 20th May, I am directed

to inform the Chamber of Commerce that the Lieutenant-Governor has, since the receipt of your letter, given his careful attention to the question under discussion; and has arrived at the conclusion that the view held by Captain Reddie is correct, and that the members of the Pilot Service who have been admitted under the new system are in no way inferior in professional ability to those of the old service, and that the former have done their work on the whole no less satisfactorily than the latter. This view is also strongly held by Captain Howe, the present Officiating Master Attendant.

Under these circumstances, with reference to the last sentence of your letter under reply, the Lieutenant-Governor does not consider it necessary to appoint a Special Committee to enquire into the question.

The Preventive Service.

Members will learn from the correspondence that follows that they have been in communication with the Collector of Customs regarding the fees payable to Preventive Officers for their attendance before and after the prescribed working hours, as well as the constant removal of officers from one ship to another, and their prohibition to mess with the officers of vessels on board which they were doing duty. On the first point the Committee can at present only express their hope that it will not be lost sight of when the re-distrib-

bution of the salaries of the whole service,—which it is presumed means a liberal increase of pay,—comes under consideration ; the second has been satisfactorily disposed of by the Collector's action ; and in respect of the third, the Committee see no reason why the order prohibiting the messing of Preventive Officers with commanders of ships should not be withdrawn.

From Chamber of Commerce to Collector of Customs.

Colcutta, 24th August 1869.

It has been represented to the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce that the fees authoritatively levied by Preventive Officers for attending the receipt and discharge of cargo before and after the hours prescribed by existing regulations are excessive and totally disproportioned to their regular pay ; that the scale of such fees should be modified, and a reduced rate of remuneration for such services sanctioned by Government.

2. The hours during which a Customs Officer is at present bound to attend to work on board ship are from 8 A.M. to 5 P.M. ; and if he superintends the receipt or delivery of cargo earlier or later he is entitled to the following fees :—

From 6 to 8 A. M.	...	...	1 Rupee.
From 5 P. M. to sunset	...	...	1 "
For any time from sunset to midnight	5	5	"
For any time from midnight to sunrise	5	5	"

3. So that assuming an officer is willing to work out of regular hours, and attends continuously as above his fees will amount to 12 rupees, which is considered an unduly high charge compared with the rate at which his services are retained by Government.

4. The convenience to a ship is undoubtedly material by adopting a plan which facilitates her despatch, but whatever that result may be it cannot be taken as a proper means for measuring an officer's remuneration which should rather be fixed relatively to his regular pay for regular work, and in proportion to the number of extra hours he is actually employed.

5. If an officer is willing to work out of hours he consents to do so, not solely for the advantage of the merchant or of the ship, but likewise for his own individual benefit ; and if the Government consider him liberally paid at the rate of say 5 rupees for a day's work of 9 hours (and that is over the average rate of pay for the service) it is not unreasonable to regard a fee of 12 rupees for attendance during the remainder of the 24 hours as a disproportionate and excessive charge.

6. It is therefore submitted that fees for extra work should not exceed 8 annas per hour from sunset to 10 p. m., and one rupee per hour from 10 p. m. to 5 a. m., 8 rupees for the entire extra attendance being the maximum amount.

7. While on this subject the Committee would draw your attention to recent orders which prohibit Preventive

Officers from messing with the officers of the ship to which they are attached; this appears an unnecessarily harsh measure, and the Committee hope you will permit the re-introduction of the former practice in this respect, which so far as they are aware has not been attended with disadvantage to the revenue service, while it was undoubtedly a boon and saving of expense to the officers in question.

8. Another point for your consideration is the constant shifting of officers from one vessel to another.

Section VIII of Act XIV of 1836 provides that one or more officers may be sent on board any vessel at any time, and the officer so sent shall remain on board by day and by night until the vessel shall leave the port, or until it be otherwise ordered by the Collector.

The obvious reading of the concluding portion of that Section is that the Collector may remove officers when their attendance is not necessary, so as to meet the requirements of commanders or their agents who may apply for their withdrawal with the view to relieve their vessels from the charge for officers when import cargo has been fully discharged and the ship is in no hurry to take in her export cargo, or goes into Dock for repairs, or lays up or for other good and sufficient reasons.

The constant changing of officers causes obstruction to business on board; and as disputes frequently arise between shippers, consignees, and the officers of a ship,

the absence of the officer who was cognizant of the circumstances which led to these differences and who would naturally be the disinterested party for reference and settlement, might lead to serious inconvenience to all concerned. It seems also obvious that if the officer is changed several times during the discharge of a ship, great difficulty may be experienced in clearing up her letter of call, as it will be impossible to fix the responsibility of mistakes on any one of the number employed.

Unless therefore there is any pressing necessity for the change which has been lately introduced in this respect, and which in your judgment is essential to the protection of the revenue, and the general efficiency of the preventive system, the Committee trust you will on reconsideration revert to the long established practice of not withdrawing an officer from a vessel until she is ready to leave the port.

*From Collector of Customs to Bengal Chamber
of Commerce.*

Calcutta, 27th August 1869.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 24th instant, in which you make the following proposals:—

First.—To reduce the fees payable to Customs Preventive Officers for work before and after hours as well as for night work.

Secondly.—To allow Customs Preventive Officers to mess with the officers of the ships to which they are posted.

Thirdly.—To discontinue the practice of changing officers when once posted to ships.

With regard to the first proposal I observe your calculations are based on the average daily pay of the officers, or at least a trifle above the average daily pay of the whole service, but as the pay of the whole service is shortly to be increased, the question now being before His Honor the Lieutenant Governor, the average now assumed will not hold good.

In my opinion the least remuneration which should be given to an officer for working all night ought to be double that of his day pay; but with an impending re-distribution of the salaries of the whole service I do not think any practical good can result from discussing this question at present.

With regard to the second question, I observe that you style the orders prohibiting Customs Preventive Officers from messing with ships' officers as "recent." The orders have been in existence ever since the first formation of the service in 1837, and they have been only reiterated of late—in consequence of mutual recrimination between a Customs officer and the Commander of a vessel—the latter expelling the officer from the cuddy for alleged improper behaviour, and the former complaining of expulsion,

because as he alleged he would not allow the Commander to land goods without proper authority.

With regard to the third point I beg to inform you that your remarks are out of date.

First of all I would point out that Act XIV of 1836 was repealed so far back as May 1863, and any arguments based on it necessarily fall to the ground.

Secondly, the system of changing officers has been discontinued from the 18th instant.

When it was first of all proposed to have a weekly relief, I put on record my views against it; my objections being overruled, I was obliged all the more loyally to carry out the order in that it was contrary to my own views. On the 11th instant I once more urged the inexpediency of continuing a system which was of no benefit to the Government, and which entailed needless vexation to all parties concerned. This representation was successful and the order is no longer in force.

From Chamber of Commerce to Collector of Customs.

Calcutta, 3rd Sept. 1869.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to thank you for your prompt acknowledgment of their reference of 24th ultimo.

They learn with satisfaction that the order which

directed the constant change of Preventive Officers has been withdrawn, and that this result is attributable to your own representations against a practice which while it yielded no advantage to the Government was attended with considerable inconvenience to all concerned.

The Committee accept your correction of the error made in quoting a Section of a repealed Act; at the same time they bid me point out that although Act XIV of 1836 has been repealed the provisions of its 8th Section were embodied, almost word for word, in the 41st Section of the present Act VI of 1863; consequently the basis of their argument was substantially accurate.

The Committee notice your reply on the subject of Preventive Officers messing with officers of ships to which they are attached.

What they meant by *recent* orders prohibiting that practice was that, though the prohibition may have existed since the organisation of the Preventive Service in 1837, the rule has been in abeyance for years, and the observance of the prohibition only lately enforced.

The circumstances however which gave rise to the reiteration of the order appear of so exceptional a character that the Committee cannot but regret that an isolated instance of disagreement between the Commander and Preventive Officer should be held as an occasion sufficient to deprive the entire service of an accommodation which its members have hitherto been permitted to regard as a *quasi* privilege.

In placing before you the question of fees for extra work performed by Customs Officers on boardship the object of the Committee was not only to urge a reduction of charges which they considered excessive, but also to amend their unequal incidence, for it is obviously open to objection to pay a man for an hour's work the same sum he would be entitled to charge for 4 or 5 hours, and the Committee hope that if the scale of remuneration for over-time work is considered in connection with increased salaries this point will not be lost sight of.

The Committee learn with much pleasure that it is contemplated to raise the pay of the Preventive Service; it will be a great boon to a class of generally well deserving employés whose remuneration by Government has scarcely been commensurate with their duties and responsibilities.

Customs.

Examination of packages at the Custom House.

The Committee's attention having been called to an order issued by the Board of Revenue to the Collector of Customs by which a very heavy percentage of imported merchandise was required to be opened for examination—viz., 50 per cent. of cases containing haberdashery, apparel, stationery, jewellery, guns and rifles, and 20 per cent. of

cases containing provisions, wines, beer, and spirits—the matter was submitted to the Government of Bengal, as an unnecessarily harsh and vexatious measure.

The Committee represented that a great number of packages containing, chiefly, the articles above specified were imported through agency houses for private use, and that in a large majority of instances they were intended for transmission up-country; the opening so large a percentage of such packages imposed a risk of loss and damage to which it was hardly fair to expose the owners when *bona fide* invoices could be produced for the satisfaction of the Collector, or when the declaration of contents and value by a respectable consignee should suffice to pass the goods without examination.

With regard to provisions, beer, wines, and spirits, the Board's order was attended with the greatest inconvenience: and as applied to the last article it was inexplicable, for no object could be gained by opening cases the contents of which were liable to the highest rate of duty.

The general result of the order would be found in increased expense, greater risk of theft and breakage, and intolerable inconvenience to trade.

The Committee's letter having been referred by the Lieutenant-Governor to the Board of Revenue their order was modified to the extent specified in the concluding paragraph of the Board's reply, dated 10th July 1869.

"For the reasons stated in the same letter, the Board are of opinion that the enforcement of the new rule generally as proposed by the Collector would be harsh and unnecessary, they have therefore withdrawn their sanction to the rule, and have directed the Collector to return to the previously existing practice as already reported in regard to the examination of wines and spirits."

Ships' Stores.

The orders issued by the Board of Revenue regarding ships' stores are as follows:—*That masters of ships are to be required to enter in their manifests a full and true specification of all stores; that duty is not to be levied on such stores as may be consumed on board during the ship's stay in port; and that, ordinarily, stores are not to be placed under seal and lock on board, unless it appears to the Collector that the quantity of such stores is excessive and beyond the quantity which is necessary for the use of the ship during its stay in the port, in which case the Collector will direct the surplus stores to be placed*

under seal and lock for subsequent entry in the outward manifest of the ship.

The Committee consider these orders very reasonable; and under the discretion allowed to the Collector, by the concluding clause, that officer has ruled that stores for a month's consumption should be exempt from the process of locking up on board. This point was referred to the Committee, who suggested an estimate of consumption for six weeks instead of a month, as the former was nearer the average of a ship's stay in this port: but whether stores are left out for six weeks or for four only cannot be material, for in all cases of necessity the Collector would no doubt immediately sanction a further supply being served out. The recent movement by ship masters appears to have taken place under some misapprehension; and as their proposed reference to the Chamber has not been made, the Committee presume that the matter has been satisfactorily explained to the parties interested.

Port Canning.

It will be in the recollection of members that in the early part of the year the Directors of the Port Canning Company represented to the Go-

vernment of India the desirability of suspending, for five years, the port charges on shipping resorting to that place and giving them the use of Government moorings free of charge, and the grounds upon which that representation was made are set forth in the following letter:—

From the Directors of the Port Canning Land Investment, Reclamation, and Dock Company Limited, to Secretary to the Government of India.

Calcutta, 20th March 1869.

We beg respectfully to bring to the notice of His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor General of India in Council the peculiar fitness of Port Canning as an Auxiliary Port, cut out by nature, and testified as such by accumulative scientific evidence and demonstration. We humbly trust that the late visit of His Excellency to the Port has satisfied him that the natural advantages, which Canning possesses as a Port, are worthy of recognition and encouragement. Relying on the disposition of His Excellency to promote the expansion of commerce in Bengal, we beg to submit, for His Excellency's consideration, the desirability of making Port Canning a free Port; that is, of suspending, for a time, the Port charges on shipping in Canning and giving ships the use of the Government moorings, free of charge.

The Port Canning Company have expended large sums of money in the protection of the Mutlah foreshore, and are willing to take upon themselves the charge of protecting the foreshore of the Biddiadhurree, so necessary for the safety of the town, if that foreshore is made over to them. The Company have also at a large outlay of capital constructed iron jetties on an improved principle along the two foreshores, within the limits of the new Port, and they have laid down a tramway round a portion of the town, so as to connect the Biddiadhurree with the Canning terminus of the Eastern Bengal Railway; all which works are intended for the development of Canning, as a Port for shipping, to which the approach is easy and quick by the Mutlah; and if His Excellency should be pleased to accede to our wish, we are willing in the interests of the public to allow the use of our jetties and tramway, free of charge, during the time that Canning shall be a free Port, which time we venture to suggest should be a period of five years.

If His Excellency will confer the boon solicited, we feel persuaded that important aid will thereby be given to the development of commerce, and that the concession will result in no actual loss to the Government, as the South Eastern State Railway, which largely pays its expenses, will become remunerative to the State.

In connection with this subject, we would suggest that the Railway rates should, while Canning is a free Port, be continued on the present scale, in order to give

confidence to the shipping and mercantile classes in Europe and India who may be interested in the Port.

We have, &c.,

(Sd.)	WILLIAM SWINHOE,	} Directors.
"	WM. J. JUDGE,	
"	SHAM CHURN MULLICK,	
"	PEARY CHUND MITRA,	
"	A. SMITH LEISK,	

This communication was referred by the Government of India to the Government of Bengal, and by the latter to the Chamber for expression of opinion upon the proposition; and the views of the Chamber were communicated in the following replies.

*From Chamber of Commerce to Government
of Bengal.*

Calcutta, 23rd June 1869.

The Lieutenant-Governor has been pleased to refer to the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce the representation made to the Government of India by the Directors of the Port Canning Company, who apply for the suspension of all port charges and the free use of Government moorings in that port for the space of five years, and His Honor requests, in your letter of 21st

April, the Committee's opinion as to the advisability of making that concession.

Your letter of the 10th instant repeats that request.

In reply I am desired to express the Committee's regret at not being able to submit any definite answer.

As far as their own action in the matter is concerned, I am to state that both your communications were duly placed before the Members of the Chamber with a special request, on each occasion, for early replies to admit of the question being dealt with by the Committee.

But the representation of the Port Canning Company's Directors has raised a question which unfortunately comes before the Government and the commercial public at a moment most inopportune for its consideration; for while on the one hand those who are directly interested in the prospective prosperity of the Muttah scheme are applying for extraordinary concessions, the shipping interests of the Port of Calcutta are, on the other hand, threatened with an addition of 100 per cent. to the heavy port dues already levied.

The question thus assumes so embarrassing a position that it is doubtful if the proposed enhancement of the Calcutta Port Dues does not influence Members of the Chamber, generally, to a desire to ascertain the decision of Government regarding that measure in the first instance; and to postpone till then the discussion of the representation of the Directors of the Port Canning Company.

*From Chamber of Commerce to the Government
of Bengal.*

Calcutta, 28th July 1869.

In continuation of their acknowledgment, dated 23rd ultimo, of the correspondence received under cover of your letter No. 1620 of 21st April, the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to communicate, for the information of the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor, the following expression of their opinion upon the proposal of the Directors of the Port Canning Company as submitted to the Government of India in their letter of 20th March, viz., the suspension for a period of 5 years of all port charges leviable on vessels visiting Port Canning.

That proposal has been made in the belief that the development of Canning as an auxiliary port would be materially promoted by such a concession; and on that ground, mainly, the Directors have urged upon the consideration of His Excellency the Governor-General in Council the desirability of making Port Canning, temporarily, a free port.

The suggestion appears to be almost identical with that which was made by Mr. Commissioner Chapman, in the 8th para. of his letter dated 14th May 1868 to the Government of Bengal, as an alternative measure contingent upon the determination of Government to attempt once more *artificially* to create the Port—an operation which he feared would be attended with an enormous outlay of public money.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have given their careful attention to the Directors' proposal, and considered it in all its probable bearings on a port the condition of which it is desired to place on a more satisfactory footing; and they are of opinion that, looking to the past and present trade of Canning, and to the great disadvantages under which ships resorting to it now, and will for some time, labour, its declaration as a free port will not have the effect desired by the Port Canning Company: they do not believe that the exemption from port charges will induce shipping to visit that place, give an impulse to trade, and cause commercial activity to circulate where stagnation now prevails,—prospective results which the Directors confidently look for, but the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce are unable to share their hopes in that respect.

Assuming, however, that, with the aid of the State bounty applied for, substantial progress and positive improvement actually attended the Directors' efforts to advance the object of their enterprise, the Committee would nevertheless hesitate to advocate the proposed exemption, on the ground that those advantages would obviously be gained at the expense of Calcutta, aggravating the difficulties with which its shipping has already to contend, and which are threatened to be largely increased by the proposed enhancement of our local port dues.

A feeling has been strongly expressed recently in opposition to that enhancement, and, with reference especially to the declared purpose of Government in that

respect, it rests with His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor to consider what bearing the suspension of port dues at Canning would be likely to have on the question of the revenue derivable from the port of Calcutta, raised as it is, in the opinion of the Chamber of Commerce, from sources already drawn upon to the fullest extent they can bear.

Proposed Reform in the Standards of Weights and Measures in British India.

The Committee's last report contained copy of a despatch from the Government of India to H. M. Secretary of State in which they strongly urged the early modification of the present standard of weights,—the question of measures being left for future consideration. The conclusions arrived at and recommended for adoption were, briefly, that the new unit of weight should be a *seer*, equal to the kilogramme, or 2·205 lbs. *avoirdupois*; that a system of decimal multiples and sub-divisions of the unit of weight should be accepted as a fundamental part of the new scale to be recognised by law; that the new system of weights should be brought into general use as speedily as possible, without, however, being forced on any class of the community unless they were prepared to accept it; and that the new standard should be authoritatively adopted in all Depart-

ments of the Government, by the Municipal Bodies, and on all the Railway lines.

The following reply from H. M. Secretary of State for India conveys the views of His Grace the Duke of Argyll, as well as that of the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade and of the Royal Standards Commission.

INDIA OFFICE,

London, the 10th June 1869.

To His Excellency the Right Hon'ble the Governor General of India in Council.

MY LORD,—The despatch of your Excellency's predecessor in Council, dated the 6th of November, No. 163 of 1868, relative to the introduction in India of the metric system in connection with weights, has been considered by me in Council.

2. I forward herewith copy of a letter dated 27th March 1869, from the Board of

* Nos. 6 (with postscript), 7 and 15 of 1867, and No. 16 of 1869.

† The second report of the Standards Commission, with numerous appendices, will shortly be presented to Parliament. Copies of it will be forwarded to the Government of India.

standards Commission.†

Trade, to which Department a reference was made upon the subject, and also copy of a memorandum by the Warden of the Standards, with six copies of each of the printed papers noted on the margin,* issued by the Stan-

3. I consider that your Lordship's predecessor in Council acted with due judgment in limiting the reform for the present to weights, and I approve of the adoption of the kilogramme as the new unit of weight, in preference to the English pound.

4. The propositions submitted in the 11th paragraph of the despatch under reply have my approval, and I accord my assent to them.

5. I desire to be furnished with a report on the operation of the new system, after a fair period has been allowed for the experiment.

I have the honor to be,

My LORD,

Your Lordship's most obedient humble Servant,

ARGYLL.

From Thomas Gray, Esq., to the Under-Secretary of State for India.—No. C. 217, dated London, the 27th March 1869.

I am directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th ultimo, transmitting, by direction of the Duke of Argyll, for the opinion of this Board, copy of a despatch from the Government of India with the correspondence, which has passed respecting the proposed revision of the weights in use in India.

In reply, I am to request that you will state to his Grace that my Lords have consulted the Warden of the Standards on the subject, and I am to transmit herewith a copy of his reply (and enclosures) which contains the views of the Royal Standards Commission in the matter, and to state that my Lords entertain a favourable opinion of the course proposed by the Indian Government.

(From the Warden of the Standards, no date given.)

My views upon the general question of the introduction of the metric system of weights and measures into the United Kingdom are fully set forth in the accompanying paper No. XVI., laid by me before the Standards Commission, and particularly in the Resolutions suggested at pages 42-3, which have since been unanimously agreed to by the Commission, and will form the basis of their second report.

As to the question of the introduction of the metric system into India, whether of weights only or of measures also, I can say little more than is stated at page 14. Many of the arguments and facts which are applicable to the introduction of the metric system into the United Kingdom apply with equal strength to India, and should therefore be as conclusive in favor of the metric system. Indeed, the necessity for the change in the existing system is far greater in India, in regard to the extensive diversity of the fundamental units, as compared with their actual uniformity in the United Kingdom.

It must, however, remain for the Indian authorities, with their special knowledge of the feelings, habits, and customs of the Natives, to decide how far it may be expedient, or even practicable, to introduce the metric system throughout India. My own view is that, if practicable, the whole *metric system* should be introduced at once.

Banking Clearing House.

A proposition for such an establishment, regulated according to the system prevailing in London, was submitted to your Committee, who were prepared to give it their support, but finding the Banking community, whose interests (at first) it would naturally most benefit, were not unanimous in their views as to the desirability or necessity of such an establishment, your Committee did not deem it advisable to proceed further in the matter at the present time.

Communication with China via Assam.

This subject was fully dwelt upon in the Chamber's last Report: and on the present occasion the Committee have only to state that since Mr. Cooper left Calcutta for Assam, [with the view of exploring a route from the frontier Station of that Province to the city of Bathang on the

confines of the North-West of China, they have received frequent communications from him, the last of which, dated from Sadya 29th October announces his purpose of starting thence on his journey towards the end of November. Mr. Cooper had succeeded in persuading a Khampti Chief to accompany him through the Mishmee country to his destination. This Chief had lately returned from an expedition to the Thibetian Frontier with the view of communicating with the French Missionaries at Bathang, and his services to Mr. Cooper as a guide will be of much value. The Committee hope their next Report will contain an account of the successful issue of Mr. Cooper's travels.

The Sea-face of the Soonderbunds.

The measures usually adopted by the Marine Department for exploring the sea-face and searching the accessible parts of the Soonderbunds with the view to ascertain the fate of missing vessels, or of those that may have been known or presumed to be wrecked in the Bay of Bengal after a Cyclone, and of rescuing human lives and recovering valuable property, have lately been the subject of free and frequent discussion by the press; and as the question of the efficiency and

sufficiency of those measures has been well ventilated, the Committee will not burden this report with the voluminous correspondence that has already been published for general information.

River and Weather Reports.

Under the operation of an order issued by the Government of India last July the usual daily announcement in the Telegraph Gazette of the depth of water in the Ganges at Benares and Mirzapore has been discontinued, as well as the occasional publication of reports of the state of the weather in the Upper Provinces. Formerly these were transmitted as free messages, and, as such, published for general information; but from the 1st August they have been excluded from the free list; and on a representation as to the general utility of that practice with a request for its restoration, the Committee were informed that the list of free messages had been carefully revised, that these additional reports were obviously for the benefit of the mercantile community and could not be supplied as heretofore except at the cost of those who were interested in their publication.

New Members.

Messrs. Shaw, Jameson and Co., and E. D. I. Ezra, Esq., have been admitted, by the Committee, as Members of the Chamber subject to the usual confirmation.

Members Retired.

Messrs. Young, Gray and Co., Baboo Mohendronauth Bose, C. H. Ogbourne, Esq., Manager of the Albert Life Assurance Company, and Messrs. J. O. Hay and Co., of Akyab—(mofussil members)—have retired from the Chamber.

Funds of the Chamber.

The half-yearly balance of the Funds of the Chamber amounts to Rs. 1,419-13-1, exclusive of the Reserve of Rs. 12,000 in 4 per cent. Government Securities.

J. R. BULLEN SMITH,

President.

CONES AND CO., No. 19, LOLL BAZAR.

APPENDIX.

FUNDS OF THE CHAMBER.

Statement of the Funds of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce from
1st May to 31st October 1869.

To Office Rent	Rs. 500 0 0	By Balance of 30th April 1869—	Rs. 2,919 11 2
" Establishments	7,955 10 0	" Cash in hand of Bengal Rs.	2,919 11 2
" Charges General	5,255 1 0	" " in hand	5,255 1 1
	14,413 11 0		5,255 1 1
" Cash paid for 4 per cent. Govern- ment Paper for Rs. 1,000	1,955 11 3	Government Paper	10,000 0 0
	16,368 6 3		13,504 12 4
" Balance—		" 4 per cent. Government Paper	2,000 0 0
" Cash in Bank of Bengal..	3,344 0 0	" " do do do do do do do do	2,000 0 0
" " in hand	1,075 13 1	" Subscriptions	9,633 0 0
	1,419 13 1	" Receipts from Price Current	5,251 16 0
Government Paper	12,000 0 0	" " in hand	250 0 0
	13,419 13 1	" per cent. Govt. Paper for	4 3 0
		" " do do do do do do do do	4 3 0
		" " do do do do do do do do	14,534 7 0
			Rs. 29,730 3 4

* Exclusive of Rs. 1,141 on account of Mr. Cooper.

CALCUTTA,

31st October 1869.

E. E.

H. W. I. WOOD,

Secretary.

iii

SCHEDULE OF COMMISSION CHARGES,

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

- On the sale, purchase, or shipment of Bullion, Gold
Dust or Coin ... 1 per cent.
- On the purchase (when in funds) or sale of Indigo,
Raw Silk, Silk Piece Goods, Opium, Pearls, Pre-
cious Stones, or Jewellery ... 2½ "
- On purchasing ditto when funds are provided by
the Agent ... 5 "
- On the sale or purchase of all other goods—the
commission in all cases to be charged upon the
gross amount of sales, and in regard to pur-
chases upon both cost and charges ... 5 "
- On returns for Consignments if made in produce ... 2½ "
- On returns of Consignments if in Bills, Bullion, or
Treasure ... 1 "
- On accepting Bills against Consignments ... 1 "
- On the sale or purchase of Ships, Factories, Houses,
Lands, and all property of a like description ... 2½ "
- On goods and treasure consigned, and all other pro-
perty of any description referred to Agency for
sale, whether advanced upon or otherwise, which
shall afterwards be withdrawn; and on goods
consigned for conditional delivery to others and
so delivered, on invoice amount at 2s. per rupee. half com.
- On making advances or procuring loans of money
for commercial purposes, when the aggregate
commission does not exceed 5 per cent ... 2½ per cent.
- On ordering, or receiving and delivering goods, or
superintending the fulfilment of contracts, or on
the shipment of goods, where no other Commis-
sion is devised ... 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 ... $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.
13. On *del-creole* or guaranteeing the due realization of sales ... $2\frac{1}{2}$ "
14. On the management of Estates for Executors or Administrators ... $2\frac{1}{2}$ "
15. On chartering ships or engaging tonnage for constituents for vessels to proceed to outports for loading ... $2\frac{1}{2}$ "
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 ... $2\frac{1}{2}$ "
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 ... $2\frac{1}{2}$ "
20. On realising inward freight, inward troop, Emigrant, or Cabin passage money ... $2\frac{1}{2}$ "
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... $2\frac{1}{2}$ "
- 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 claiming 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 *respondentia* ... $2\frac{1}{2}$ "
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.

H. W. I. WOOD,

Secretary.

vii

ARTICLES.		Owt. per Ton Net.	Cubic Foot per Ton.
Garlic and Onions	...	12	.....
Ginger	...	16	.....
Gum	...	20	.....
Gums, in Cases	...	.....	50
Gunny Bags and Gunny Cloth	...	50	.....
Gauze	...	50	.....
Hemp, in Bales of 300 lbs. each 5 to the ton, not to exceed	...	.....	52
Hides, Buffalo, or Cow, Cured	...	14	.....
Horns, Horn Shavings and Tips	...	20	.....
Horns, Cow, Buffalo, or Deer	...	20	.....
Indigo	...	50	.....
Iron, in Bales of 300 lbs. each 5 to the ton, not to exceed	...	.....	52
Lac Dye	...	20	.....
Lard	...	20 cwt. gross.	.....
Linsseed	...	20	.....
Place	...	20	.....
Stochilony	...	20	.....
Metals	...	16	.....
Mirabolams	...	20	.....
Molasses	...	2 poundsons of 1 hhd.	.....
Mother of Pearl, in Bags	...	20	.....
" Chests...	...	20	.....
Mustard or Rape Seed	...	20	.....
Nutmegs, in Cases or Casks...	...	.....	50
Onions	...	16	.....
Oats	...	16	.....
Oil, in Cases	...	.....	50
" Casks	...	4 hogsheads,	.....
Opium	...	per cask.	.....
Paddy	...	16	.....
Pean	...	20	.....
Pepper, Long	...	20	.....
" Black	...	14	.....
Plaster, in Deals	...	20	.....
Pompy Seed	...	20	.....
Putelech	...	20	.....
Raw Silk, in Bales	...	10	.....
Refiners for Dummage	...	10	.....
Red Wood Ditto	...	20	.....
Rhea, in Bales, per Ton of 5 Bds, not exdng	...	.....	62
Rice	...	20	.....
Roping in Coils	...	.....	60
" Lines and Twines, in Bundles	...	16	.....

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.

CALCUTTA,
18th March 1868.

[illegible]

Mackinnon, Mackinnon and Co.
 Mackenzie, Lyall and Co.
 Macleay, Anderson and Co.
 Mearns, W. and Co.
 Mauchiede Rustonjee.
 Mayne, Mayne and Co.
 Playfair, Duncan and Co.
 Peacocking, E. B. and Co.
 Pease, Pease and Co.
 Prestige, P., *Agent of the Eastern
 Bengal Railway Company.*
 Price, John and Co.
 Preston, Alfred.
 Richardson Lewis and Co.
 Rids, Rids.
 Rids and Mayersjian.
 Ross Gopaul Ghose and Co.
 Russell, Russell and Co.
 Road, J. M. Agent, *Chartered Mercan-
 tile Bank of India, London, and
 India.*
 Renton and Co.
 Reorgan, S. H.
 Reorgan, T. M., *Managing Director of
 the Bengal Coal Company.*
 Rose and Co.
 Schiller and Co.
 Schlegel, Rute and Co.
 Schuster, Smith and Co.
 Schneider, J. P.
 Schone, Kirbinn and Co.
 Shaw, F. and Co.
 Shaw, James and Co.
 Smith, D. A. and Co.
 Smith, Samuel, Sons and Co.
 Sanyingene, J. S., *Agent, Oriental
 Bank Corporation.*
 Sanyingene, J. S., *Agent, Hong-Kong
 Shanghai Banking Corporation.*
 Sanyingene, J. S.
 Turner, Merriss and Co.
 Todman, L. W. and Co.
 Todman, H. H. and Co.
 W. Stembich, Heilwig and Co.
 Wendell Brothers.
 W. Stembich, *Agent, Chartered Bank
 of India, Australia, and China.*
 W. Stembich, *Agent, Chartered Bank
 of India, Australia, and China.*
 Williamson Brothers and Co.
 Wiseman, Mitchell, Reid and Co.
 Wood, Green and Hart.
 Woking, C.
 Wolff, Williams and Co.
 Wood, Andrew and Co.

Becher, Wm.—*Gowhatly, Assam.*
Gale, John.—*Pundoul.*
Hamilton, Brown and Co.—*Mirzapore.*

- Howard Brothers.—*Mirzapore.*
Todd, Findlay and Co.—*Moulmein.*

x

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 autho-
rities, 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,
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

xi

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

Fifth..... That the subscription of firms and banks
shall be 16 rupees per mensem, of indi-
dual 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 Com-
mittee from the list of members after one
month's notice of such default.

Seventh.... That the business and funds of the Cham-
ber 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 Meet-
ing of the Chamber in the month of
May ; the President, or, in his absence,
the Vice-President being ex-officio Chair-
man of the Committee, and in the ab-
sence of the President and Vice-Presi-
dent, the Committee to elect its own
Chairman. Four to form a quorum.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



