

India. There is another sort of rice called the old hard table rice which is grown in the district of 24-Parganas only. Cuba is the only country in the world which consumes it. Owing to the prohibition of export to foreign countries the people who grow this rice have been hard pressed. If you do not allow the export of rice and the cultivators find that they are suffering a loss on their production they shall be under the painful necessity of reducing the area under cultivation, which would be disastrous. As a matter of fact, I know that when the price of jute came down, the cultivators began to grow less jute and took to other sorts of commercial products. Similarly, if export is not allowed, the cultivators of rice instead of cultivating rice will cultivate other commercial products.

There is another danger to which I beg to draw attention. The people of foreign countries are beginning to be habituated to the consumption of other sorts of rice. I admit that jute in Bengal has the monopoly; it is the cheapest fibre in the world, but so far as rice is concerned, Bengal has not the monopoly of rice. Even Burma has not the monopoly; there are other foreign countries which produce heavy quantities of rice. As will appear from a statement, the area under rice cultivation in Siam is estimated at 6,250,000 acres and the surplus available for export during 1922 at 1,400,000 tons. In Egypt, the area under rice cultivation is estimated at 302,000 acres, the weather was on the whole favourable and water supply sufficient. The yield of rice in Japan this year is 7,585,000 tons; so it will appear that there are other countries which produce rice and the foreigners who consume this sort of rice are going to be habituated to this variety of rice. If you continue to prohibit the export of rice, there will come a time when foreigners will decline to consume Bengal rice; as a matter of fact, I have some experience in the matter. In the case of old hard table rice in which the district of the 24-Parganas has a monopoly, Government did

not allow export for two years, however, on the representation of persons affected, and on the recommendation of the Government of Bengal, the Government of India were pleased to allow export of rice of 15,000 tons. You will be astonished to hear that not more than 3,000 tons had been exported because Cuba had become habituated to the consumption of Siam rice. So, if this state of things continue, there will come a time when the rice-industry of Bengal, nay of India, will be seriously affected. Two years ago famine raged in Siam and export was prohibited, but last year there was a heavy crop and the Government of Siam allowed the export of rice. Rice is produced in the United States of America also and the people there are going to be habituated to that sort of rice. The cultivators of fine rice sell off this variety to pay off their rent and other debts and purchase clothes and other necessities of life, but retain or purchase coarse rice for their own consumption. The Punjabis sell wheat for profit but purchase millet for consumption. ~~So if you do not allow the export of rice the trade~~ will be seriously affected.

There is a large Indian population in Ceylon, who are habituated to Indian rice, and it must be cruel to them if the prohibition of export of rice is continued. I know Ceylon produces half the quantity of rice it requires, and it depends upon India and Burma for the balance. We have also a large Indian population in Arabia, Natal and the West Indies. Will it not be a source of hardship on them if you do not allow export of rice for their consumption? Similarly, Java cannot be expected to supply India with sugar and Mauritius also with sugar in exchange for rice. Europe supplies piece-goods in exchange for rice, and thus the trade of the world would be seriously affected if export is not resumed at once. We depend upon other countries for the supply of certain goods and they are also dependent on us for the supply of rice. If you do not supply rice to them

they may retaliate. Thus it would go against the interests of India not to allow the export of rice. It may be said that we do not want piece-goods from Manchester. I wish the time may come when we may be self-supporting, when we may be able to prepare our clothes by charkas, but I must say that the time is not yet come. So long as it does not come and so long as India is not self-supporting in connection with the supply of piece-goods, we must depend upon Manchester and other foreign countries. It is not advisable that we should prohibit the export of rice unless there are special reasons to the contrary. Ninety per cent of the population of Bengal depend on agriculture directly and indirectly and 10 per cent only are middle class bhadrologs. The prohibition of the export of rice has thus benefited only 10 per cent of the population at the cost of 90 per cent.

It appears from the proceedings of the meeting of this Council held in February, 1921 that Babu Kishori Mohon Chaudhuri moved that this Council recommends to Government of India be moved to take such immediate steps as may be necessary to put a stop to the export of rice from India beyond such surplus quantities as may remain after meeting the demands of the country. He stated that only surplus quantities of Bengal rice should be allowed to be exported. I opposed him on another ground. I said that it was difficult to find out what the surplus would be, out on principle, I supported him and that resolution was practically unanimously accepted by the Council. So in accordance with the principle laid down by the Council I have moved this resolution that as we have got a surplus this year, we must move the Government of India for permission to export rice from Bengal. It may be asked that where are our facts to prove that we have got a surplus. The very facts that the prices have materially come down proves that we have got a surplus. It is a question of demand and supply; when the supply is more than the demand prices

come down. And as prices have come down it must be presumed that there is a surplus; otherwise they would not have materially come down. It is a question of economics.

I would like to draw your attention to some of the speeches made during the debates on this particular question last February. Babu Indu Bhuson Dutta, who supported that resolution, stated that rice should not be allowed to be exported from Bengal to the other provinces. Of course that was not accepted by the Council. He is also reported to have said that, "there are several people who are of opinion that the export of rice should not be allowed at all : this is too extreme a view to take." He himself admitted that the total prohibition of the export of rice would be too extreme a view to take. The contention of my friend strengthens my hands. I say that there is really a surplus of stock in this province, as the price of rice has gone down materially. The price may go down to such an extent that ~~the agriculturist~~ may be tempted to diminish the area under rice cultivation and grow other crops which may be more paying. That would be a real danger to the country. In many districts of Bengal, a sort of rice of fine quality is grown which is not generally consumed here, such as table rice, of the fine quality may be regarded as a surplus ; besides it is not needed for the requirements of the province, and so it may be easily allowed to be exported. My friend Babu Indu Bhuson Dutta has stated that, " it would be dangerous if the export of rice is not allowed at all. It would be dangerous if the cultivators reduce their area under rice cultivation." I beg to draw your attention to the observations made by some of the members of this Council on this question on the last occasion. Mr. Rhodes, a worthy representative of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce in this Council and now a member of the Legislative Assembly, said that, "so long as control exists and so long as trade is

hampered, there is no hope of resumption of pre-war condition." He has further said that, "the effect of the present restriction on the export of rice and wheat, causes the people to pay more for their clothes and for everything that they import. Then, Sir, the commercial community, both Europeans and Indians, strongly urged the Government of India to relax all control at the earliest possible date not only in the interests of commerce but chiefly in the interests of the people." I have quoted the observations of a leading member of this Council, and a representative of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce. Then, Sir, I will draw your attention to the remarks made By Raja Manilal Singh Roy who said that "nothing stimulated home production like export-trade." Then let me turn to the observations made by Kumar Shib Shekhareswar Ray who said that, "Government took an extraordinary measure in stopping the export of rice only to meet an extraordinary situation brought about by war and the failure of rice-crop in several parts of India, but circumstances are quite different now." That was his observation last year. If that was the circumstances ~~last year~~, certainly circumstances are more favourable for the export of rice this year. The Government of India will be quite justified, having regard to the present day conditions, in removing all restrictions on the export of rice from Bengal. If export is not allowed the result will be a considerable fall in the price of rice. Only a small section of the people will be benefited by this measure, a number of people who, as I have said, constitute only ten per cent. of the population. These people have other sources of income and the general rise of wages has bettered their position. Wages of labourers have materially increased during the last two or three years. It would be most improper to help these people at the cost of the cultivators. Some of my friends are under the apprehension that if we allow the export of rice, a heavy quantity of rice will be exported and thus prices will go higher.

I will simply state that export of rice from India alone ranges from 1.4 per cent to 2 per cent. It appears that in 1916-17, it was 1.4 per cent. I quote these figures from the Government Resolution on the High Prices Inquiry Committee, dated the 27th April, 1921. The export of rice in 1916-17 was 1.4 per cent; in 1917-18, it was 1.4 per cent; in 1918-19, it was 2 per cent; in 1919-20 it was 1.4 per cent. Even if we allow the export of rice, I do not think it will be more than 2 per cent. If we include Burma, it will not be more than 5 per cent; it is only in the case of wheat that it may reach the maximum, namely, 20 per cent. There is no reason why the quantity of rice to be exported will not materially be less than that in normal years, because of the depreciation in the price of foreign coins. Germany used to import heavy quantity of rice especially table rice.

At that time the exchange value of their coin was about 22 marks for one pound sterling; now it has come down to so low a figure as 860 marks for one pound sterling. You cannot expect Germany to import rice in heavy quantities so long as the price of the German marks does not appreciate. It appears from the resolution of the Government that it is admitted that, "such restrictions on the prohibition of export must tend to depreciate the prices obtained by the cultivators and must therefore injuriously affect them and the surplus stock that they have at their disposal." The Government also admit, "that a large surplus notoriously exists." Government are in a position to know the true state with regard to the existence of a surplus and they admit, "that a surplus notoriously exists, and that any artificial measure taken to prohibit the export of rice and food-stuffs must tend in the long run to decrease production and the cultivators taking to the cultivation of other commercial products. Exceptional circumstances may justify extraordinary measures, but the permanent retention of such measures must ultimately affect production in a manner which would be highly prejudicial to home consumers."

I would like to draw your further attention to the speech delivered in the Council of State on the 16th February by the Hon'ble Member in charge of the Commerce Department. This is what he said :—

"I may assure the Hon'ble Member who has moved this resolution that the Government of India are perfectly at one with him that the true interests of the country would be served by releasing and relaxing all restrictions on free trade with regard to food-stuffs at the earliest possible date. We realise much more than any body else can realise, that if we continue these restrictions upon exports indefinitely there would be a danger that the margin which at present is already very narrow and very small—the margin of production over consumption in India may be still further narrowed by driving agriculturists to grow crops—productive commercial crops, instead of food crops. We know that. We realise also that no Government machinery can ever advance the interests of the country by tinkering with trade. We realise that the country is losing a large amount of mobilised capital which might have come into it if only India and Burma were in a position to export to foreign countries food-stuffs in the same manner as they were able to do before the war."

A heated discussion followed several Members delivered speeches strongly supporting the resolution—

BABU AMULYA DHONE ADDY IN REPLY:—First of all, I am grateful to the Hon'ble Member in charge for his having kindly accepted my suggestion. It has been said that because I am a rice merchant, I have brought in this resolution. I beg to draw the attention of the House to the fact that during the last famine it was I who, as a member of the Calcutta Corporation, moved that the export of rice be prohibited altogether and I am grateful to the Calcutta Corpora-

tion as well as to the Government of India that my suggestion was accepted and export of rice was prohibited. Now I have come forward with the suggestion that the export of rice be resumed. What is the reason ? Because I find there has been a good harvest not only this year but during the last two years; because I find as a rice merchant, that there is a good surplus of rice in Bengal; because I find that the cultivators have been suffering much and that if the Government do not allow export of rice, the rice-industry of Bengal which is even now in its infancy will be killed ; because I find that the cultivators are unable to pay their rent, purchase their clothes and other necessities of life; and because I find that this is the proper time that the export of rice should be resumed, otherwise the cultivators will be under the painful necessity of parting with their stocks to the middlemen at very low rates.

Then I find that some of the members of this Council are ~~opposed to it~~, while others are strongly in favour of the proposal. ~~On examination~~, I find that it is only those members who reside in Calcutta and who are not in touch with the cultivators have opposed it, and some of them, I am really sorry to find, are connected with the jute trade, while others, who actually represent the cultivators, have supported it. Reference has been made to the Report of the High Prices Inquiry Committee, but I find that even this Committee was in favour of exporting surplus rice. Then I would draw the attention of the House to one concrete case. The Punjabis very strongly opposed the export of wheat some time ago and the Government of India were obliged to meet their wishes by prohibiting the export of wheat to foreign countries. What was the result ? The cultivators were obliged to reduce the area of cultivation of wheat as a result of which prices went up and outturn of wheat came down. There was a scarcity of wheat, and the same Punjabis who applied to the Government of India to relieve them by stopping the export of wheat, again

applied to that Government to import wheat and the Government of India have been obliged to import wheat from Australia in order to give adequate relief to them. I am afraid that if this suggestion is not accepted by the Council, the same state of things will happen in Bengal. The area of cultivation of paddy will come down and the result will be disastrous.

I entirely agree with some of my friends in this Council that there should be some restriction on the export of rice and that is the reason why I have from time to time suggested that the rate of duty on export, not only of rice but of other food-grains should be reasonable. But that is a different question. The question is whether the export of rice should be allowed or not. Some of my friends appeared to be under the impression that if we allow the export of rice now, the quantity of export will be very heavy, but I beg to submit that there are financial difficulties which stand in the way of heavy export at the present time, owing to the depreciation in the price of foreign coins.

Then, Sir, I feel not only for the cultivators of Bengal but also for the Indian population residing in foreign countries. Look at Ceylon, Half the population depends entirely on Indian rice, and it will be a cruelty to them if we prohibit the export of rice. That is also the case with Mauritius, Natal and the West Indies. (A Voice : They take Burma rice.)

But they are not habituated to Burma rice. That was the reason why, notwithstanding the restriction, 20,000 tons of Bengal rice were exported to Persian Gulf port thorough Karachi and a heavy quantity of Bengal rice to Ceylon and other countries through Madras. In normal times not more than 2 per cent is usually exported from Bengal and so we need not be afraid, if this suggestion is accepted by Government, that the export will be very heavy.

With these few remarks, I appeal to those who have the

interest at heart of the cultivators, and other persons connected with the cultivation of rice, who form 90 per cent of the population, to support my resolution.

The motion was then put and a division taken with the following result :—

The DEPUTY-PRESIDENT:—The Ayes are 35 and the Noes are 35. In a case like this, I think it is the duty of the Chair to give his vote in such a manner as to leave the question in status quo. I therefore, give my vote with the Noes. It is open to Babu Amulya Dhone Addy to bring forward his resolution for the decision of the Council at a subsequent session.

The motion was then lost.

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Supply Of Pure Cow's Milk

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I move that this Council recommends to the Government that a Committee, consisting of four official members to be elected by the Government and eight non-official members to be elected by the non-official members of the Council, be appointed to consider what steps should be taken for increasing the supply of pure cow's milk, and for developing agriculture in Bengal, and to submit a report as early as possible.

This is a question in which every person is interested, be he an Indian or European, Hindu or Muhammadan, and, Sir, invalids and infants are vitally interested in this question of milk-supply. I would, therefore, draw your attention to the memorial submitted by the All India Cow Conference Association to the Government of India for the appointment

of a committee to go into this matter. This Association consists of Europeans and Indians, Hindus and Muhammadans— an Association of which the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Greaves is the Vice-President, and the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Woodroffe is the President. It appears from the memorial that the number of cattle in India is quite inadequate, and that the number of bullocks for cultivation is also quite inadequate. In the case of the number of cattle, in Australia it is 259 per hundred of the population, in Uruguay in South America it is 500, while in India it is only 59. We require four pairs of cattle for the cultivation of 19 acres of land but we have not more than one pair of cattle for the same. The reason why the price of food-grains is so high, is that the outturn of crops in India is very meagre, and consequently prices have been going up from year to year. I will take the case of wheat. In Denmark the outturn of wheat is 33 bushels per acre. in Japan it is 32, in Egypt it is 29, while in India it is 11.5 bushels per acre. That is the reason why the price of wheat has gone up. Then in 1857, it was sold at 39 seers ~~per~~ rupee in 1890 it was 25, and in 1918 it was 5½ seers so it appears that owing to scarcity and the inadequate number of cattle, the price of food-grains has been going up. Now I will give some particulars about milch-cows. The number of milch-cows is also quite inadequate ; we require two pints of milk every day per head, but what is the supply ? Only one-eighth of what is required. It is a quarter pint. In England, we find that the supply of milk is 20 lbs. per day per cow, while in India it is not more than 2 lbs., that is the reason why the price of milk is so high. In 1857, milk used to sell at 4 mauuds a rupee, in 1890 it was 14 seers, and in 1918 it was 4 seers, and now we find especially in Calcutta, it is not more than 3 seers a rupee. In the Mufassal also, there is a scarcity of milk ; what is the result of this scarcity ? The vitality of the people of India has been seriously affected. The reports from the municipalities and district boards.

show that they are trying their best to improve the sanitary condition of the people by incurring heavy expenditure, but notwithstanding this expenditure the rate of mortality has been going up from year to year and it appears that the rate of mortality in India is 38 per thousand ; in New Zealand it is not more than 10, and in Norway it is 15. That is the reason why the rate of mortality from phthisis in India has gone up from 38.435 in 1902 to 1,00,192 in 1912. I would draw your special attention to the rate of infant-mortality. In New Zealand, it is 32 per thousand, in Holland 50, but in India 260.7, In Calcutta 386, in Burdwan 307 and in Birbhum 301. We also find that in Calcutta the rate of infant-mortality amongst the Anglo-Indians is 227 per thousand amongst Hindus 361, and amongst Muhammadans 449. It thus appears that amongst the Anglo-Indians who can afford to purchase milk, the rate of infant-mortality is not very high, but amongst the Muhammadans who are generally poor and who cannot afford to purchase milk at such a prohibitive price, the rate of infant-mortality is very heavy. That is the reason, Sir, why I suggest certain remedies for the consideration of the proposed committee. I do not mean to say that they must accept the suggestions without going thoroughly into the matter. What I do suggest is that we should have a committee to go through these suggestions. The first suggestion is the provision of pasture-grounds. In Great Britain, we find one-third of the area is reserved for pasture-grounds, but in Bengal it is one-seventeenth. As regards the grazing area per cattle in Bengal, it is not more than 37. It may be that Government has been taking certain steps, but I have gone through the Bengal Administration Report and the reports of mufassal municipalities. What do we find there? Practically no steps have been taken. The Gaekwar of Baroda has legislated to the effect that in every village the area of pasture-grounds should be one-tenth of the total area. What I would suggest for the consideration of the proposed

committee is that the local authorities should be authorised to provide pasture-grounds and stud-bulls and that the Government should be kind enough to make a substantial contribution towards the expenditure. It has been admitted by the Hon'ble the Member in charge, as will appear from the proceedings of this Council, that the number of stud-bulls is hopelessly insufficient in Bengal. It is really so. We find that the total number of stud-bulls is only 132 for the whole of Bengal. May I ask, Sir, whether it is sufficient? Certainly not. Then, Sir, I admit that under the Bengal Municipal Act, the local authorities have been empowered to provide stud-bulls. There is no such provision under the Local Self Government Act, no such provision even in the village Self Government Act. That is the reason why I suggest that the local authorities should be called upon to provide stud-bulls.

As regards the fodder crops, it is also insufficient. In the United States of America, we have one cow per acre, but in India it is very insufficient. In spite of this fact, the Government has been allowing export of a heavy quantity of fodder-crops from India to foreign countries without even levying a duty on these goods. It appears from the Maritime Trade Report of Bengal that oil-seeds of the value of 6 crores of rupees are allowed to be exported from Bengal to foreign Countries.

I would also suggest the provision of veterinary dispensaries. We all know the rate of mortality of cattle everywhere. It is most regrettable that in Bengal, even in Calcutta, there is not a single veterinary charitable dispensary. In the mufassal it is, as every body is aware, absolutely necessary that there should be veterinary dispensaries. What do we find? In the whole of Bengal, the total number of veterinary dispensaries is 31, and most of them are not charitable dispensaries. It is well-known fact that he have been getting milk of the worn-out and diseased cows. This is also one of the reasons why the rate of mortality specially infant

mortality is so very heavy. What I would therefore suggest is that Government may be pleased to increase the number of veterinary dispensaries.

Then, Sir, I would draw attention to the indiscriminate slaughter of cows. Well, I have no objection to the slaughter of useless cows or bullocks, but I beg to submit that cows are slaughtered not only for human consumption but also for the supply of hides and thus a heavy quantity of hides are exported from India to foreign countries; and I have noticed that whenever the price of hides goes up the number of Cattle slaughtered is also increased. Therefore it appears that the number of Cows slaughtered is proportionate to the price of hides and the greater the export of hides the greater the slaughter. Therefore, it appears that cows are slaughtered not only for human consumption but also for the supply of hides and that a heavy quantity of dried meat is exported from Bengal through Calcutta. As regards the export of hides, about 8 millions of them are exported from Bengal alone to the United States of America as well as to the United Kingdom. I admit, Sir, that cows should be allowed to be slaughtered on the occasion of the Muhammadan festivals. I know that some of the poor Eurasians of Calcutta eat beef and I also know that some of the poor Muhammadans take it, beef being cheaper than any other meat. My contention is this that we should take such steps as we can to increase the supply of milk as well as to increase the supply of beef. The third object is to develop agriculture. Unless and until we increase the cattle, we shall not be able to develop agriculture. There is another thing which stands in the way of improvement of cattle and that is the practice of phooka especially in Calcutta. Milch cows are wasted by the practice of phooka by goalas. The Director of Agriculture in his letter No. 965, dated the 29th of January, 1921, says that from the agricultural point of view, the matter is likely to prove disastrous as the slaughter of the best breed-

ing cows and of the calves reacts on the supply of plough cattle on which the whole agricultural industry in Bengal depends. As it is, good plough cattle are becoming more and more difficult to obtain and the prices are year after year rising higher and higher. In some parts of India, it may be possible to partially replace plough cattle by means of power tractors, but this is not possible in Bengal as the holdings are very small and the fields so irregular and small in size. This is the reason, Sir, that the proposed committee should go into the question as to avoid indiscriminate slaughter of cows and bullocks with a view to increasing the supply of milk and with a view to developing agricultural resources of the country as suggested by the Director of Agriculture. It is stated that only the useless cows are slaughtered. Though I am a Hindu I must say that I have not the slightest objection if the useless cows are slaughtered for human consumption, but I strongly object to the slaughter of useful cows, the prime cows, the milch-cows and the cows which are useful for breeding purposes. It appears from a report that in the district of Murshidabad aged cows are not slaughtered. In the District of Jessore and Malda, middle-aged cows are generally slaughtered. In the District of Darjeeling, the diseased and worn out cattle are not allowed to be slaughtered. So it appears that in certain districts it is the middle-aged cows which are slaughtered, it is the prime cows which are allowed to be slaughtered. Therefore, I would suggest that the committee should submit certain suggestions for the consideration of the Council so that useless cows and bulls may be allowed to be slaughtered and not the prime cows or the cows that are useful as are being done in some of the districts in Bengal. Then a large number of cows is exported. It appears from the memorial which I have already referred to, that the result of the increase of export from India has been the increase in the rise of food-stuffs. The question should be considered in that light. They are

not only exported for the purposes of being slaughtered but also for breeding purposes and our Government has been allowing them to be exported to America and other foreign countries without even raising some money by levying an export duty.

We have a law for the protection of wild animals, but no law for the protection of cows, the most useful animals in the world. Therefore, I suggest that the committee should be authorized to make suggestions for the protection of cows legally. As regards the slaughter of cows, I would suggest that the committee which would consist of Europeans and Indians, officials and non-officials, Hindus and Muhammdans, should go into the matter thoroughly. If the question, however, is raised here that this point should not be referred to the committee, then I have no objection, but I beg to submit that even Indian Chiefs like the Gaekwar of Baroda, the Maharaja of Kashmire have passed laws against the slaughter of cows in their States. It may be stated that these two Chiefs are Hindus, but what about the Nizam of Hyderabad. No cows can be slaughtered in his State where it is prohibited by law. Even the Amir of Afganistan has prohibited the slaughter of cows in his State. It appears that other provinces have already taken a lead in this matter. We find that in the Bombay Legislative Council in the year 1920, a resolution was moved and was accepted by the Government for the appointment of a committee consisting of officials and non-officials to submit a report regarding the protection of cattle. In the United Provinces Council a similar resolution was moved and the Hon'ble Mr. Chintamani, the Minister, sympathised with the resolution and promised to give it his best consideration. Then in this Council in 1919, our esteemed friend, Babu Kishori Mohan Chaudhuri moved a resolution for the appointment of a committee and I am very glad to find that the Government gave sympathetic assurance though I find nothing has been done as yet. I think that the

time has come when we should make an effort to improve the breed of cattle and thus reduce the infant-mortality in Bengal.

Therefore, Sir, I will not detain the council longer, but I will submit that this is a very serious and a vital question. Apart from the question of slaughter, upon which I do not insist that the committee should make any suggestion, I will submit that a committee should at once be appointed and arrive at a practical suggestion for the consideration of the Council in this respect. I hope and trust that this resolution will be accepted.

Babu Amulya Dhona Addy said in reply:—I am sorry that the Hon'ble the Minister in charge has opposed my resolution, and I am more sorry for the attitude which has been taken by some of my Muhammadan colleagues in this Council. I have moved my resolution not with a view to stop the slaughter of cows, but with a view to increase the supply of milk and to encourage the development of agriculture in Bengal. The suggestions which I make for the consideration of the committee are to increase the area of pasture grounds, the number of studbulls, the number of veterinary dispensaries in the mufassal, to prohibit the export of cattle from India to foreign countries and restrict the export of fodder. --

A member has said that at a meeting of the Calcutta Corporation I raised my voice against the slaughter of cows. On the contrary, as I have already said, I have not the slightest objection to the slaughter of useless cows and bullocks. One of my friends has stated that I have not mentioned buffalo's milk. The reason is that I have raised this question with a view to reduce infant-mortality. It is the cow's milk that is used by infants and not buffalo's milk; and with that object I have inserted the words "pure cow's milk" in my resolution.

My Muhammadan friends have stated that it will affect the sentiments of my resolution. I find that the rate of infant-mortality amongst the Muhammadans is much higher than that amongst the Hindus, and that the number of Muhammadans interested directly or indirectly in agriculture is much higher than that of Hindus. It is with a view to improving the lot of my Muhammadan brethren that I have moved this resolution. They are really killing themselves. The rate of infant-mortality amongst them, as I have already said, is much higher than it is amongst the Hindus. Even in regard to the supply of milk it will serve their purpose as it will also increase the supply of beef ; and unless we increase the number of cattle how can we increase the supply of beef ?

Then, it has been said that with a view to increase the area of pasture lands the zamindars should be appealed to. What I beg to submit is that it is the duty of the local authorities, and of the Government to do so. But as there is no provision in the Local Self-Government Act, I have suggested that we should refer the whole question to a committee for consideration. It has been stated that Government have taken the necessary steps. But may I ask what steps have been taken ? I have already drawn attention to the fact that the number of stud-bulls is only 132 in the whole of Bengal, and that is the reason why I have submitted that Government have taken no steps, the steps they ought to have taken. It is, therefore, necessary to appoint a committee consisting of experts of Government, of some Muhammadans, of some Europeans, to go through the question and make practical suggestions for the consideration of Government as well as of this Council. Have any steps been taken by Government to prevent the export of cattle from Bengal to foreign countries ? No ; nothing of the kind. Government are indeed responsible for the heavy infant-mortality. I may say that I have not the slightest objection

to having a Muhammadan majority on the committee, because it appears to me that they are more interested in the matter than their Hindu Brethren. These are the reasons why we should appoint a committee with a view to increase the supply of pure cow's milk.

The motion was then put and a division taken, with the following result :—The Ayes being 31 and the Noes 36, the Motion was lost.

CALCUTTA POLICE.

Mr. AJAY CHUNDER DUTT :—"This Council recommends to the Government that the principle be accepted that the cost of the Presidency police should no longer form a charge upon the existing revenues of Bengal, and that, in this view, the Council recommends the appointment of a committee consisting of nine persons, including at least two officials and four non-official members of this Council for the purpose of framing a scheme to give effect to the said principle."

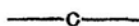
Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I oppose not only the original resolution but also the one for a committee as suggested by the Hon'ble Sir Henry Wheeler. I have much pleasure in seconding the amendment which has been moved by Rai Radha Charan Pal Bahadur. I understand he has suggested that in the resolution which has been moved by the Hon'ble Sir Henry Wheeler the word "possibility" should be substituted by the word "desirability." I beg to submit that if it is to be referred to a committee, the committee should inquire into the question of the desirability or

advisability of asking the Calcutta Corporation to pay for the maintenance of the Police of Calcutta. We are informed that the cost of the maintenance of the Presidency police is Rs. 35 lakhs per annum. It appears that one per cent of the rate of the Calcutta Corporation totals about Rs. 5½ lakhs, and therefore, if the Corporation is called upon to pay this sum they shall have to increase the rates which are at present 19½ per cent. by about 6½ per cent. Not only that. They are already committed to several schemes and for that purpose also they shall increase the rates further. The Calcutta corporation has just sanctioned a scheme for the improvement of the water supply costing Rs. 2 crores, and for the improvement of the drainage, I understand, they shall have to incur an expenditure of another crore of rupees. So far as the Calcutta Improvement Trust is concerned, it has already committed itself to the improvement of Barabazar, and the citizens of Calcutta shall have to pay additional rates and taxes for these improvements. The citizens of Calcutta pay a huge sum as income-tax. It appears from the answer which has just been given that, out of Rs. 4,39,30,978. Calcutta contributes Rs. 3,46,08,056. as income-tax. All the proceeds of stamps are utilised by the Government of Bengal and not a single farthing is paid to the Calcutta Corporation. Calcutta is the centre of commerce of Bengal, it is also the centre of industries. In other civilised cities which have been just referred to—I mean the cities of Europe—I understand that the police charges are met by the State and not by the local authorities. As in the case of the commercial cities of Europe similar is the state of things in Calcutta. I urge that the police charges should, on the same ground, be paid by the Government and not by the Corporation. It is well known to you that the Calcutta Corporation has to contribute a substantial sum towards the maintenance of the hospitals of Calcutta and in these hospitals not only the citizens of Cal-

cutta but also the people from the mufassal are interested. Government is primarily responsible for the protection of life and property of the people and therefore this charge should be met by the Government and not by the people. It may be said that the chowkidari tax is realised from the villagers ; I am opposed to it on that ground, but that is no reason why the citizens of Calcutta should be called upon to pay for their police.

With these remarks, Sir, I beg to submit that as Calcutta is the premier city of India and as Calcutta is the capital of the province of Bengal, this charge be met, not by the Calcutta Corporation, not even by the Government of Bengal but by the Government of India.

The Motion was carried.



Salaries of ministerial officers.

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I have much pleasure in supporting the resolution which has been moved by Babu Surendra Nath Ray on behalf of Sir Ashutosh Chaudhuri. I know that the prices of food-grains and other necessities of life have become very high, rather they have become prohibitive, and I know that these ministerial officers have been suffering much on this account, and I further know that their salaries are quite inadequate to meet their demands and, therefore, the sooner the necessary steps are taken for increasing their salaries the better for these clerks as well as for the public at large. But I find that some difficulty stands in the way and that difficulty has been admitted by Rai Mohendra Chandra Mitra Bahadur in his Note of Dissent where he has stated that,

"My greatest difficulty has been this: the financial position of the Government of Bengal is far from prosperous and the revision of the pay of the Ministerial Service has been taken up in a most unfortunate moment. I have taken some part in pressing upon Government the necessity of curtailing expenditure in all directions, to provide money for various urgent Reforms."

He has further stated in paragraph 6 of his Note of Dissent that,

"The increased cost involved in the recommendations of my colleagues is about Rs. 41½ lakhs per annum."

So it appears that if we accept the Note of Dissent of Rai Mahendra Chandra Mitra Bahadur there will be an increase of cost of Rs. 19½ lakhs over that recommended by the Committee. We all know that there has been a deficit of Rs. 2½ crores and at the last session this Council recommended further grants for sanitation and technical education, and there is not the slightest doubt that the Government of Bengal will be pleased to make suitable grants for sanitation and for technical education as well as for primary education during the next year, and therefore I think there will be a deficit of Rs. 3 crores or more next year. The only way to meet this deficit is further taxation and it is with the greatest reluctance that we shall have to give way. We should certainly do justice to these ministerial officers but at the same time we should do justice to the general taxpayer. The resolution which has been moved by Babu Surendra Nath Ray and which has been accepted by Government, is the wisest step that can be taken in the present circumstances. Let us recommend the suggestions made by the All-Bengal Ministerial Officers' Conference held at Bhowanipore the other day, and I hope and trust that these suggestions will be accepted by Government.

With these remarks, I beg to support the resolution

moved by Babu Surendra Nath Ray and I hope and trust that Government will be pleased to consider the suggestions of the Ministerial Officers' Conference favourably and grant relief to the poor ministerial officers.

The Motion was carried.

Travelling Allowances of Members.

Mr. AJOY CHUNDER DUTT :—I beg to move that “this Council recommends to the Government that one first class fare be allowed as travelling allowance to the members of the Bengal Legislative Council in future.”

Mr. J. CAMPBELL FORRESTER :—I move that “this Council recommends to the Government to accept the principle of payment of a salary to each member of the Council as adopted in every country having Parliamentary or Representative Institutions, and to fix that salary at Rs 3,000 a year in lieu of travelling and halting allowances.”

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I am surprised to learn that two first class fares are drawn by each of the mufassal members of this Council, and that 15 members have charged more than Rs 3,000 for allowances during the last financial year. I am strongly of opinion that they should not charge more than the actual expenses incurred, and, therefore I think it would suffice if they charged one first class fare only, as suggested by Mr. Ajoy Chunder Dutt, and I therefore strongly support his resolution. It has been stated by Mr. Forrester that the members of the House of Commons charge a fee of £ 400 per annum, but this system has been introduced only in 1911 at the instance of the Labour party and they attend not less than 170 days in the year

I may also be allowed to say that the Hon'ble Members of the House of Lords of the British Parliament do not charge any fees. But I beg to draw attention to the fact that before the Reforms Scheme was introduced, viz., in 1919-20, the total amount of the allowances drawn was Rs 1,23,000, but during the last official year it went up to Rs 3,47,000. At this stage would we be justified in increasing the amount by Rs 2 lakhs?

The next question is whether this matter should be referred to a committee. We have freely discussed this question and it is quite unnecessary to refer it to a committee. If it should be referred to a committee at all, it would go before the Retrenchment Committee already appointed by the Government.

My object in supporting the resolution of Mr. Ajoy Chunder Dutta is to set an example to the officers of the Government. The members of the Provincial Executive Service charge two first class railway fares when travelling; their salaries have already been materially increased by the Government, and they make it a source of profit; therefore, I think we should try our best to reduce these charges, but we cannot do that unless and until we do it ourselves, and thus set an example to them.

We offered our services to our constituencies, we assured them we would try our best to provide for sanitation, education and the development of industries. If in this way we increase the charges, it would be nothing but a breach of trust on our part.

I would draw your attention to another point. It has been said that the members of the Calcutta Corporation draw fees. I may be allowed to say that it is only the members of the General Committee and the sub-committees of that committee that draw fees, but they cannot charge if they do not attend the meetings from the beginning to the end;

members of the other committees of the Corporation do not charge any fees, and it is on the suggestion of this Corporation that it has been embodied in the proposed Municipal Bill, now under consideration, that no fees will be charged at all. If the commissioners of mufassal municipalities and members of the district boards can serve their country without charging any fees, would we be justified in charging double first class fares even if we travel in second class compartments ?

Both Motions were lost.

Municipal Dairy Farms, etc.

Babu Amulya Dhone Addy : " This council recommends to the Government that section 14 of the Calcutta Municipal Act be amended, so that the Corporation of Calcutta may be authorised to provide for--

(a) the establishment of municipal dairy farms and milk depots, the leasing of lands acquired by the Corporation under this Act, for the purpose of establishing private dairies, whether in or outside Calcutta and the transport of milk to Calcutta from any municipal or private dairy farm or milk depot ;

(b) the purchase and maintenance of stud-bulls, and such other measures as may appear to the Corporation to be desirable with a view to improve the local breed of cattle ; and

(c) the establishment of municipal grazing-grounds and the subsidisation, by such means as may appear desirable to the Corporation, of privately-owned grazing-grounds, whether in or outside Calcutta "

I admit that this has already been embodied in section 14 of the Calcutta Municipal Bill, and I also admit that this Bill is going to be introduced in this Council next session. I beg to submit that this part of legislation is the most urgent one and that no time should be lost in authorising the Calcutta Corporation to provide for pasture-grounds. In connection with the milk-supply of Calcutta, we all know how dear it is, and that is the reason why the Calcutta Corporation appointed a special Committee with a view to increase the supply of cows' milk, not to speak of pure milk in Calcutta. That committee made an inquiry into the present state of things, appointed an expert officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Matson, and accepted the report of that expert.

The expert recommended to the Corporation to have a pasture-ground at a short distance from Calcutta ; but I am sorry to state that though the Corporation have accepted that report, the Solicitor to the Corporation has expressed the opinion that, under the law as it stands, the Calcutta Corporation cannot incur any expenditure ; and that is the reason why the Calcutta Corporation has unanimously recommended that Government should take up this as a special and urgent legislation. With these words I commend this resolution and I hope and trust that Government will be pleased to take it up as an emergency legislation, so that the Corporation of Calcutta may be authorised to incur the expenditure required for providing a pasture-ground.

THE Hon'ble Sir SURENDRA NATH BANERJEA :—
The amendments embodied in this resolution find a place, as this resolution finds a place, as the mover has pointed out, in the Emergency Bill, which the Calcutta Corporation has submitted for the acceptance of Government. We have considered that Bill very carefully and we have decided to include it in the larger amendment of the Calcutta Municipal Act. It will be my duty to move the introduction of that

Bill as early as I can. I was in hopes of introducing the Bill in July next, but I am afraid that that expectation may not be realised. In any case, it will be my earnest endeavour to introduce the Calcutta Municipal Bill as early as I can; and these provisions will find a place in that Bill; and the Council will have the opportunity of discussing them. We all recognise the importance of the supply of pure milk; we also recognise the importance of the provisions which the Calcutta Corporation seeks to insert in the interests of pure food and of pure milk. But, as I have said we have decided that this Bill—the emergent Bill—should form part of the larger Bill—the Calcutta Municipal Bill; and therefore I accept the resolution, subject to one small modification. The mover recommends that these provisions should form part of section 14 of the Calcutta Municipal Bill; but of course, as the sections will be renumbered in the larger Bill; the section in question may not be number “14;” and that part of the resolution will have to be omitted. With this modification, I accept the resolution.

The President:—The resolution in the modified form runs as follows :—“ This Council recommends to the Government that the Calcutta Municipal Act be amended so that the Corporation of Calcutta may be authorised to provide for—

(a) the establishment of municipal dairy farms and milk depots, the leasing of lands acquired by the Corporation under this Act, for the purpose of establishing private dairies, whether in or outside Calcutta, and the transport of milk to Calcutta from any municipal or private dairy farm or milk depot ;

(b) the purchase and maintenance of stud-bulls, and such other measures as may appear to the Corporation to be desirable with a view to improve the local breed of cattle ; and

(c) the establishment of municipal grazing-grounds and

the subsidisation, by such means as may appear desirable to the Corporation, of privately-owned grazing grounds, whether in or outside Calcutta. "

The above Motion was put and agreed to.

Calcutta Municipal Bill.

More seats for Muhammadans.

BABU AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I beg to oppose the amendment of my esteemed friend, Maulvi A. K. Fazl-ul Haq, as well as that of Mr. Abdur Raheem. Sir, they have stated that the Calcutta Corporation should be the training ground for Muhammadans. I beg to submit that it should not be so. A body that incurs an expenditure of about two crores of rupees per annum should not be taken as a training ground for gentlemen who have not got sufficient experience in the management of such concerns. I admit that the Muhammadan population is about one-fourth of the total population of Calcutta, but the distribution of seats should not be in accordance with the amount of rates and taxes paid to the Corporation. It appears from the note which was submitted by the Corporation of Calcutta in connection with the Bill of 1917 that the Muhammadan voters were only one-tenth of the total number of voters in the whole city ; So it appears that though the Muhammadan population to the total population was 25.6 per cent the number of Muhammadan voters was 10 per cent only, and the percentage of Muhammadan votes to the total number of votes was 8.3 ; therefore, they are not entitled to get more than 9 seats. That was the reason why 9 seats were allotted in the Bill of 1917. However, the Corporation were more

liberal to them. In connection with the Bill of 1917, they suggested 11 seats; and so far as the Bill under consideration is concerned, the Corporation have suggested 13 seats, and this has also been accepted by the Select Committee. But as three municipalities are going to be amalgamated with Calcutta, the Government have thought fit to increase the number to 15; so it appears that the Government have been very liberal. However, my esteemed friend, Maulvi Syed Nasim Ali, has stated that he wanted justice, not liberality; and therefore, I am bound to say that instead of 15 seats, only 9 seats should be allotted to Muhammadans, because if we are to do justice to the Muhammadans we ought to do justice to other communities as well. In increasing the number of seats for Muhammadans it would be doing injustice to the non-Muhamadans. What about the Europeans of Calcutta? They have 20 per cent of the total voting strength. What about the Jews and Marwaris? Is it not a fact that the Marwaris have invested lakhs of rupees in landed property in Calcutta? Is it not a fact that they contribute very heavily to the municipal funds? What have we done for them? In 1918 the Corporation suggested that 4 seats should be reserved for the Mawaris of Calcutta; that suggestion was not accepted by Government. Is not that doing injustice? Not a single seat has been reserved for the Mawaris. They have the greatest interest in the municipality and it should be doing injustice to them if we are to be too liberal to the Muhammadans. With these remarks I oppose this amendment.

The Amendments for giving more seats to the mahomedans than what is in the Bill were then put and lost.

Special Representation for Bengal National Chamber of Commerce.

BABU AMULYA DHONE ADDY :— I move that in Schedule III to the list of "B—Special Constituencies," and in Schedule III A. C.— "Special Constituencies," namely :—

" Bengal National Chamber			
of CommerceNon-territorialTwo.	
Mawari Association " " "	
University of Calcutta " "one	
It is commerce that has made Calcutta what it is. If you			

take away trade and Commerce from Calcutta, it would be nothing but a misfussal city like Patna, Dacca or Burdwan. Therefore, the improvement of Calcutta is due to commerce, and that is the reason why Government has been pleased to allot a large number of seats to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, the Calcutta Trades Association, and the Port Commissioners of Calcutta. They have not only done that but also have increased the number of seats to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce. That is the reason why I beg to submit that certain seats should be allotted to Indian trade, Indian industries, and Indian commerce.

As regards the Bengal National Chamber of commerce, I may be allowed to say that their claims have long been recognized by the Government. It has been stated from time to time that it was nothing but one man show but circumstances have materially altered. It now consists of 200 members, most of whom are leading merchants and Indian gentlemen interested in industries. The Government has been pleased to allow this Chamber to be represented in several public bodies viz., the Calcutta Improvement Trust, the Calcutta port Trust, Standing

Waterways Committee, the Government Commercial Institute Board, Bengal Smoke-Nuisance Committee, Fire Control Committee, and similar public bodies. The Government has been pleased to allot seats to this Bengal National Chamber of Commerce, and the Marwari Association, in the Bengal Legislative Council. Not only that, the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce has been allowed to have a representative in the Indian Legislative Assembly. That is the reason why I beg to submit that certain seats should be allotted to represent the Indian trade, Indian commerce, and Indian industry in the Calcutta Corporation. It is always said that the members of these Chambers can stand for election through the general constituencies, but I beg to admit that as they are men of business, they cannot be expected to devote their time in canvassing especially as the franchise has been lowered from the payment of Rs. 24 per annum to Rs. 12 per annum. It has been extended also to hut-owners and it has been extended to sub-tenants and even to females. The number of voters in the general constituencies will be trebled. You cannot expect men of business to see all these voters. That is the reason why special seats should be allotted to these Chambers and that is the reason why special seats have been allotted to the Calcutta Trades Association as well as the Bengal Chamber of Commerce. It might be said, that some of these Indian merchants may be nominated by the Government to the Calcutta Corporation, but the total number of nominated members has been reduced from 15 to 10 and I do not think that there is any prospect.

The amendment was put and lost.

**Amalgamation of Maniktola and Cossipur—
Chitpur with Calcutta Municipality.**

BABU AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I am opposed to the amalgamation of Maniktola as well as Cossipore-Chitpur with the Calcutta municipality. I beg to submit that this Council should not be guided or rather influenced by the oratory of our esteemed friend, Babu Surendra Nath Mallik. I will simply draw your attention to the bare facts and figures. The ratepayers of these two municipalities have been enjoying the franchise of having two distinct municipalities since 1884, and unless and until we can prove that there are special reasons for the amalgamation of these two municipalities with Calcutta, we should not amalgamate them. I beg to submit that if it is desirable to amalgamate these two municipalities with Calcutta, certainly there are other municipalities adjoining Calcutta which should also be amalgamated. I mean the Tollygunge municipality, the Garden Reach municipality, and especially the South Suburban municipality. The rate of mortality in the latter municipality is very high and that from Cholera is the heaviest owing to the scarcity of filtered water. The supply of filtered water is about one gallon per head per day. If the object of our esteemed friend, Babu Surendra Nath Mallik, is to improve the sanitation of the adjoining municipalities, certainly the South Suburban municipality should be amalgamated with Calcutta.

It has been said that the Cossipore-Chitpur municipality is unhealthy ; but I beg to submit that the rate of mortality in this municipality is materially less than that of Calcutta. It appears from the Administration Report of the year 1921-22 that the rate of mortality there was 21 per thousand,

while in Calcutta it was 39.3 per thousand in 1920-21. That is the reason why Cossipore-Chitpur should not be amalgamated with Calcutta. It has been said that the Calcutta Corporation is in a position to incur the necessary expenditure for the improvement of Maniktala as well as Cossipore-Chitpur but it will appear from the Administration Report for the year 1920-21 that there was a deficit of Rs. 9,58,000 and, had not the closing balance been sufficient, the Corporation would have been under the painful necessity of increasing their rates. As regards the borrowing capacity of the Corporation, it has already committed itself to an expenditure of about Rs. 2½ crores for the improvement of water supply and that it shall have to incur an expenditure of about Rs. 1 crore for the improvement of its drainage. Then there are other dangers because there is a proposal to levy 2 per cent on the citizens of Calcutta to meet the police charge. Therefore, it is not advisable to incur any additional expenditure for the improvement of these two municipalities at the cost of the citizens of Calcutta. It appears from the note of the learned Chairman of the Corporation that we shall have to incur an expenditure of Rs. 90 lakhs for the improvement of water-supply, drainage, and lighting of these two municipalities. If that be the case, allowing for interest at 6 per cent and 2 per cent per annum for contributing to Sinking Fund, we shall have to spend more than Rs. 7 lakhs per annum. But what is the suggestion of the Corporation? To pay one lakh to the Maniktala municipality and another lakh to the Cossipore-Chitpur municipality. Is it sufficient? Not for good, but for ten years only. The Corporation shall have to incur this expenditure not for ten years but at least for thirty years, in order to pay off this loan. It has been said that we need not incur this expenditure in the course of two or three years. I admit it, but, however, we must incur this expenditure within a reasonable period. Then it will appear that the local

people of Cossipore-Chitpore are opposed to it ; their representatives are opposed to this amalgamation. The District Magistrate himself,, who is to a great extent responsible for the improvement of the sanitation of this municipality, is opposed to it. Therefore, is it right and just that we should trample down the views of the local people as well as their representatives in this way ? I would draw your attention to the report of the Government Committee. It will appear from that report that they are strongly opposed to the amalgamation of Cossipore-Chitpur with Calcutta. This Committee has taken the deposition of 67 witnesses. They have also taken into consideration the report of several public bodies and especially bodies interested, They have gone through this evidence and have come to this conclusion. I think that it is advisable to accept that recommendation. I admit that in the case of Maniktala they have recommended the inclusion within Calcutta, but their recommendation is a conditional one. They have stated that the Corporation must contribute at least Rs. 3 lakhs every year, but what is the decision of the Corporation ? What is the decision of the Select Committee ? They propose to contribute only a lakh for ten years only. Therefore, we must presume that under the circumstances the Government Committee has not recommended the inclusion of Maniktala within Calcutta.

Then it has been stated as soon as the municipalities are amalgamated with Calcutta, the Corporation will incur the heavy expenditure for the improvement of the sanitation of these two localities. Well, let us see what has been done in the case of the area which has been added in 1888. I am really ashamed of that, being a member of the Calcutta Corporation. When this area, especially the area to the west of Tolly's Nalla was amalgamated with Calcutta, we were assured that we would get a sufficient supply of filtered water. Notwithstanding the fact that the minimum pressure of filtered water is 40 feet under the law, what are we

getting? During mid-day we do not get a single drop of water and the pressure of filtered water ranged from 5 to 20 feet in wards 23 and 24. As regards the sanitation of ward 24, which my friend, Babu Surendra Nath Mallik, used to represent, the rate of mortality is the heaviest. This is the area which has been entrusted to the Calcutta Corporation in 1889. * Notwithstanding its assurance, the Corporation has failed to discharge the duties entrusted to it, that is the reason why I am most reluctant to make an addition of any other area to Calcutta because I am one of the sufferers, and I feel for them. It has been said that Cossipore-Chitpur is practically an integral part of Calcutta, but I find Beliaghatta and the Eastern Bengal Railway intervening. How can it then be called an integral part of Calcutta?

Then about housing accommodation. We have sufficient lands in the suburbs in the southern portion of Calcutta for housing accommodation and I am sure that, as soon as the Calcutta Rent Act is repealed the number of houses will materially increase.

Then, there is one more reason as to why some members of the Corporation appear to be anxious to amalgamate Cossipore-Chitpur with Calcutta—the existence of the overhead tank at Talla for which the Corporation is obliged to pay heavy rates to the Cossipore-Chitpur municipality. That is no good reason for amalgamation.

I will draw your attention to the sacred assurance of the Hon'ble the Minister in charge of the Department of Local-Government who at the time of the introduction of the Bill, stated that having regard to the feelings of the people of these localities and the sentiments of these people, it was not desirable that these municipalities should be amalgamated with Calcutta. Having regard to the said sacred assurances and the strong recommendation of the Government Committee consisting of experts I beg to submit that it is not at all desirable to include Cossipore-Chitpur in Calcutta.

The amendments were lost.

Improvement of Garden Reach Municipality

Mr. S. C. Stuart-Williams :— I move that to clause 96B the following be added, namely:—

“ and a sum of not less than a lakh of rupees on the execution of original improvement works within the area which formed the Garden Reach municipality at the commencement of this Act.”

BABU AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I strongly support the amendment of Mr. Stuart-Williams. I am sorry to find that Rai Dr. Haridhan Dutt Bahadur has opposed it. He is under the impression that the main portion of the Garden Reach municipality is the Docks. But I beg to submit, as has been pointed out by Mr. Deputy-President, the Docks consist of a very small portion of the Garden Reach municipality. So far as I know the major portion consists of huts belonging to the poor of that locality and the sanitary condition of that portion is very bad. The rate of mortality is very high and the finances of the municipality are in a very deplorable state. But in the case of the Cossipore-Chitpur municipality, there is a large number of jute presses, a large number of palatial buildings, and the rate of mortality in this municipality is much lower than even that of Calcutta, and the state of the finances of this municipality is also satisfactory as pointed out by the Government Committee. Notwithstanding this fact, the Corporation has agreed to contribute no less than a lakh of rupees per annum for Cossipore and it is most regrettable that a Member of the Calcutta Corporation has come forward and protested against the contribution of a lakh of rupees towards the improvement of a municipality which has already been entrusted by this Council to the Calcutta Corporation.

Grant to the Manicktola Municipality.

BABU AMULYA DHONE ADDY :— I am strongly opposed to the amendment which has been moved by Babu Hem Chandra Nasker as also the amendment moved by Mr. S. Mahboob Aley. The proposal is to make a contribution of at least three lakhs of rupees from the funds of the Calcutta Corporation for the maintenance of the Maniktala municipality in addition to their income. If we sanction that we shall have to make similar contribution to the Garden Reach municipality and to the Cossipore-Chitpur municipality, that is to say, we shall have to pay nine lakhs of rupees to these three municipalities in addition to their income. It means that the Corporation of Calcutta shall have to increase their rates by about $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent for the maintenance of these three municipalities. The other day I stated what the state of the finances of the Corporation was. I have stated that there was a deficit of more than nine lakhs of rupees. I have also stated that the borrowing capacity of the Corporation is going to be exhausted and even if we were to make any contribution to the adjoining municipalities the Corporation of Calcutta would be under the painful necessity of increasing the rates. Under the circumstances, I do not think it is advisable to accept the suggestion which has been made by Babu Hem Chandra Nasker. He is a municipal commissioner of the Maniktala municipality and so is Mr. S. Mahboob Aley. It is but natural that they should make such suggestions. But is it not advisable to take into consideration their present income? The present income of the Maniktala municipality is about two lakhs and I do not think they are justified in asking the Corporation of Calcutta to contribute three lakhs

for the improvement of that municipality. Under these circumstances I strongly oppose these two amendments.

The amendments of Babu Hem chandra Naskar and Mr. Mahboob Alew were lost.

Female Franchise.

BABU AMULYA DHONE ADDY:—I support the amendment moved by my esteemed friend, Rai Dr. Haridban Dutt Bahadur.

As the payment of municipal rates and taxes entitles a male person to vote, I fail to understand why the same payment should not entitle a female to vote at municipal elections. But I find that there are certain difficulties which stand in the way of entitling a female to vote. First of all, most of them are illiterate, secondly, some of the women. I am really ashamed to say, are of ill-fame; and thirdly, most of the females of Calcutta are either Hindus or Muhammadans who observe the purdah system. These are the difficulties which stand in the way of our granting franchise to women. It may be argued that in Madras as well as in Bombay the females are allowed to vote; but I submit that there is no such purdah system either in Madras or in Bombay. It may also be argued that in Europe the ladies are allowed to vote; but there, also, none of the ladies observes the purdah and most of them are literate. I must say that Heaven has entrusted different duties to men as well as to women. I am strongly of opinion that women are born mothers and therefore this franchise should not be thrust upon them.

What I mean to say is that specific duties have been entrusted to them. Sir, if this House is of opinion that women should be allowed to vote, I submit that a special constituency should be created for them. Looking at the practical aspect of the question. I do not think that the women, even if entitled to vote, would be in a position to return a woman councillor to the Corporation.

Even in England, the women who are entitled to vote form about one-third of the total number of voters, but how many are actually returned by them? It is not more than three of the 670 members in the British Parliament. If that be the case in England, I am sure not a single woman candidate shall be returned in the Corporation of Calcutta. Women are not expected to know the qualifications of the male candidates, and the women councillors will be in a better position to ascertain the grievances of the women of Calcutta. Therefore, I would suggest to have a separate constituency for the females of Calcutta, but at the same time I must say that one seat is quite insufficient for Calcutta and the added area, and I would therefore have four seats for them.

The Amendment was lost.

CALCUTTA MUNICIPAL BILL.

Tax on Bicycles.

BABU AMULYA DHONE ADDY:—I beg to move that in clause 3, sub-clause (12), line 5, the words "a bicycle" be omitted. It will appear from the definition that "carriage" includes a bicycle and that it will further appear that under Schedule VII of the Bill a license fee of Rs. 2. is

payable for each half-year for a bicycle. I beg to submit that there was a time when a bicycle was nothing but a luxury, but times have materially changed. It is only the poor clerks and even labourers who use bicycles now-a-days, and therefore, it would be a source of hardship if they are now forced to take a license for the use of a bicycle and pay a license-fee for the same. The opinion of the Licensing officer of the Calcutta Corporation is that it is very difficult to collect these taxes from these persons. Under the circumstances, I do not think that it is advisable to tax the persons who use bicycles. Tax the rich by all means and there is no objection, but do not tax the poor at large.

The Hon'ble Sir SURENDRA NATH BANERJEE :— On behalf of Government I desire to accept the amendment. I think that it would be a real hardship upon a very large class of poor people if we tax bicycles. So, I have great pleasure in accepting the amendment.

BABU AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I thank the Hon'ble the Minister in charge.

The motion was put and agreed to.

Power of Local Government.

BABU AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I move that in clause 17A in line 1, after the words "the Local Government may" the words "after consideration of any representation which may be made by the Corporation" be inserted.

It will appear that under clause 17A the local Government may annul any proceedings of the Corporation which they do not consider to be in conformity with the law. I

beg to submit that the local Government should be authorized to annul any resolution of the Corporation if it be inconsistent with the provisions of the law. But, Sir, the decision of the Government should not be an *ex parte* one. The Corporation should be given an opportunity to explain their conduct and their special reason for the resolution. I admit, Sir, that the present form of Government is a reformed one but justice demands that an opportunity should be given to the Corporation of Calcutta to explain the reasons for their resolutions.

Mr. S. W. Goode:—I do not think Mr. Addy will seriously urge that Government is going to take such steps as these without first inviting an explanation from the Corporation ; and I put it to him that in view of his long experience of the relations between the Corporation and the Government it is unnecessary to insert this amendment in the Bill as it stands.

On behalf of Government I accept the amendment.

The motion was put and agreed to.

Plural Voting.

Babu Amulya Dhone Addy:—Sir, I move that after clause 21 the following new clause be inserted, namely :—

Conditions of registration and qualification to vote.

“21A. (1) A person who shall be qualified as an elector under section 18 as being the owner of any premises shall be entitled to have his name registered on the electoral roll of every constituency where he owns the premises and shall be qualified to give one vote in each constituency in which he is so entitled.

(1a) Every such person shall also have additional votes according to the following scale :—

If the aggregate annual value of all the lands and buildings owned by him in the ward is not less than—

- Rs. 1,000 : one additional vote.
- Rs. 2,000 : two additional votes.
- Rs. 3,000 : three additional votes.
- Rs. 4,000 : four additional votes.
- Rs. 5,000 : five additional votes.

(2) A person who shall be qualified as an elector under section 18 as occupier of any premises, shall be entitled to have his name registered on the electoral roll of every constituency where he has got premises as occupier and shall be qualified to give one vote in each constituency in which he is so entitled.

(2a) Every such person shall have additional votes according to the following scale :—

If the aggregate annual value of all the buildings occupied by him in the ward is not less than—

- Rs. 1,000 : one additional vote.
- Rs. 2,000 : two additional votes.
- Rs. 3,000 : three additional votes.
- Rs. 4,000 : four additional votes.
- Rs. 5 000 : five additional votes.

3) A person living in his own house shall be entitled to the votes assigned to him as owner as well as to those assigned to him as occupier.

(4) A person qualified to vote under section 18 as licensee may, if he holds a license under class VII of Schedule V, give one vote for the ward in which he may be entitled to vote under this qualification.

(4a) If any such person holds a license under classes I, II, or III or class IV or VI of that Schedule, he may give

one two or three votes, as the case may be, in addition to the vote which he might give if he held a license under class VII of that Schedule.

(5) A person may give as many votes as he is entitled under this section combined up to a maximum of five additional votes in any ward ; provided that no person shall give more than six votes in any one ward."

All the provisions dealing with the qualifications of electors should be substituted by those under the existing Act, subject to minor modifications. "Under the existing Act a person is entitled to vote in proportion to the amount of rates and taxes, with a maximum of 11 votes.

He is entitled to vote for all the wards in which he may have lands and buildings. He need not reside in the ward or even in Calcutta. But under the Bill a person is entitled to only one vote whatever the amount of rates and taxes he may pay to the Corporation. Is it fair and equitable to take away the rights and privileges of a ratepayer who may pay heavy rates and taxes for his lands and buildings in Calcutta ? Why is it that no explanation has been given for the withdrawal of these privileges ? Is it not right and just that a person should exercise some control over the expenditure of the municipal fund in proportion to the rates and taxes paid by him ? Under the Indian Companies Act, a shareholder is entitled to vote in proportion to the number of shares held by him. Why should a person paying thousands of rupees as rates be placed on the same footing with a person who pays only Rs. 12. Why should a landlord be debarred from exercising a franchise which he has been enjoying indirectly since 1876 and directly since 1888 ? The system of plural voting as in existing Act has been introduced in 1888. It has worked very satisfactorily in Calcutta. Corruption in municipal election as in the mufassal is quite unknown in Calcutta. Men of business, men of intelligence and even the aristocrats of Calcutta come forward for gene-

ral election simply because of the system of plural voting, but I am sure the abolition of this system will lead to corruption and debar men like the above from offering themselves for election as in the case of election for the Bengal Legislative Council. I do, therefore, suggest that the election rules, subject to necessary modifications as embodied in Chapter V of the existing Act, be embodied in the Bill.

It should be presumed, and, in fact, it is more matter of common sense, that a person who holds property in different constituencies and pays therefore more than another person in the shape of rates and taxes to the Corporation, has a greater interest in the city than the latter, and therefore his anxiety must be more to see that the civic administration be conducted in a proper and efficient manner, so that he, at least, as one of the public, possessing large properties in different places of the city, should not suffer mal-administration by the municipal authorities, and therefore his natural feeling and impulse must be to see that able and deserving men are selected by election to conduct the affairs of the municipality. In other words, a person who pays Rs. 1,000 as rates and taxes would feel more interested in the election of representatives for the efficient administration of the municipality than one who pays only Rs. 12 as rates and taxes, and therefore it is natural and reasonable to expect that he should have larger voice in the election of representatives than one who pays a less amount of rates and taxes. But how can he have a larger and more effective voice in the matter, unless his votes are increased ? There is no reason why the provisions of sections 46 and 47 of the existing Act, which have worked so successfully all along, should be lightly set aside for the sake of a mere sentiment. The democratic principle of equality is no doubt good in its way, but to extend it to an administration which is principally concerned with health, sanitation and the amenities of life is carrying it too far, which may impair the efficiency of municipal

administration. Under the existing Act, an owner of properties in different wards, on the electoral roll of which his name is registered, has got a maximum total of 11 votes. If for any reason it should be thought that a person who is entitled to give 11 votes should not have such a number of votes then, the number may be reduced to 6 only, though he should be allowed to register his name in all the electorate rolls of the wards where he possesses property.

It has been alleged that plural voting gives undue influence to wealth, but as a matter of fact, even under the existing Act the total number of votes which the tenants are entitled to, is much more than what the landlords are entitled to. Under clause 18 of the Bill the landholders will be in a hopeless minority. It is desirable that the Legislature should do justice not only to tenants also to landlords.

It is regrettable that this sweeping change is thought to be introduced in the name of democracy, irrespective of all considerations like its great antiquity, its utility, and the fact that the system has worked so long smoothly and without clamour or complaint from any quarter whatever.

However, I beg to submit, as will appear from the amendment, that it has been divided into five parts. It will appear under subclause (1), the owners of lands and buildings have been referred to. It may be said, and it is said, that in the case of a system of plural voting it is the owner, it is the landlord who is especially benefited. I beg to submit that it is not a fact because, as will appear from subclause (2), occupiers are entitled to vote under the proposed system of voting. It is not only the landlords but tenants as well who would be entitled to give votes in accordance with the amounts of rates and taxes paid by them. Then, there is another class of persons who would also be entitled to vote in accordance with the amount of taxes paid by them—I mean the merchants, traders, and professional men.

Under the existing Act they are entitled to vote in accordance with the amount of taxes they pay. But under the Bill as it is they will be entitled to one vote only. Under subclause (3) they will be entitled to an additional number of votes in accordance with the amount of taxes paid by them. It will further appear that under the existing Act the maximum number of votes a person is entitled to give is 11 and he may give 11 votes not only in one capacity but in different capacities. So it will appear that my suggestion is a very moderate one. I have suggested that the maximum number of votes which a person should be entitled to give in all the capacities would be six. Therefore, I beg to submit that I am very moderate in my suggestion. I beg to submit that the British Indian Association has expressed its opinion that the system of plural voting should not be done away with because this is a system which has been in force in Calcutta indirectly since 1888, because on the representation of Calcutta Trades Association and other public bodies of Calcutta, the Hon'ble Sir Henry Harrison who was in charge of the Calcutta Municipal Bill of 1888 suggested that the system of plural voting should be legalized.

It was he who made the suggestion. It may be said that the British Indian Association consists of a large number of landlords of Calcutta but even the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce, which consists of Indian merchants and traders of Calcutta, have expressed this opinion. It will be most in equitable if a person paying Rs. 10,000 as rates and taxes, be placed on the same footing as a person paying Rs. 12. At present the payment of rates and taxes amounting to Rs. 24 per annum entitles a person to be a voter. We have lowered the franchise to the payment of Rs. 12 per annum. Not only that, at present it is only the tenants and the landlords who are entitled to vote, but as will appear from clause 18 of the Bill we have extended the franchise to sub-tenants. Any person occupying a portion of a house and paying a

rental of Rs. 25 per mensem is entitled to vote. I do not grudge it. I am very glad that on the suggestion of our esteemed friend, our worthy Chairman of the Corporation, Mr. Mallik, the franchise has been extended, and I congratulate the Corporation of Calcutta that on their suggestion the franchise has even been extended to females. I do not grudge that. On the contrary I am very glad that the franchise has been lowered and extended. What I beg to submit is that there is no reason whatever as to why the franchise, which has been exercised by the the landlords and tenants paying heavy rates and taxes, should be taken away. It is a right which they have been exercising indirectly, as I have said, since 1876 and directly since 1888—exercising to the entire satisfaction of the public at large. Why this right should be taken away from them, I fail to understand. It may be said that in the mufassal there is no system of plural voting, but is it not a fact that there is corruption in the elections in the mufassal? It may be said that in the case of election to the Bengal Legislative Council there is a system of one man, one vote, but may I ask whether it is a fact that the number of voters who attended at the last general election of this Council was very small? What was the reason? (A voice : Non-co-operation.) Yes, non-co-operation was one of the reasons, but not the chief reason.

(Here the member reached his time-limit and requested the President to give him five minutes more).

Mr. President :—I will allow you five minutes more, but before you sit down I want you to move amendments Nos. 54 and 178.

Babu Amulya dhona Addy :—It is said that in Great Britain there is the system of one man, one vote, but I beg to submit that one third of the councillors are aldermen who are not elected by the people at large, but are elected by the councillors. Then, Sir, in support of the system of plural

voting I would draw the attention of the House to the opinion of the Select Committee on the Bill of 1888. They said that plural voting distinctly recognizes the right of those who contribute most to the maintenance of the Corporation to a more potent voice in electing the governing body.

I beg to submit that in Belgium there is a system of plural voting : in the colonies there is a system of plural voting : in Stockholm, in Sweden, there is the same system, and not only that, the maximum number of votes which a person is entitled to is 100. So it will appear that my suggestion is a very moderate one. Then I would draw your attention to the opinion of the leading citizens of Calcutta of which, as I said yesterday, the Hon'ble the Minister Sir Surendra Nath Banerjea was the president. That Committee stated that if plural voting which had been introduced since 1888 was abolished, the interests of the property-holders were sure to suffer.

The Hon'ble Sir Surendra Nath Banerjea :—May I know what was that Committee ?

Babu Amulyadhane Addy :—The general Committee of the citizens of Calcutta held a meeting on the 9th of June, 1919, and Sir Surendra Nath Banerjea was the President. There I suggested that the maximum number of votes should be fixed at all and Sir Surendra Nath Banerjea thought that it should be 6.

I beg to submit that it has worked very smoothly and it should not be abolished, and if it is abolished, I am sure it will lead to corruption. That is the opinion of several public bodies of Calcutta. Some of my friends appear to be under the misapprehension that this system does not obtain in any other part of the world. I have already stated that in the Continent as well as in the Colonies there is this system.

I move that the proviso to clause 3 (47) be omitted.

I also beg to move that for clause 26 (4) the following be substituted namely :—

“(4) Every person qualified to vote may give all the votes to which he is entitled in any ward to any candidate in such ward or may distribute them amongst the candidates in such manner as he thinks fit.”

The amendments were put and lost.

Annual Value of Buildings.

SHAH SYED EMADADUL HAQ moved that in clause 131, proviso (i) line 12, for the word “ten” the word “fifteen” be substituted.

The Shah Sahib addressed the Council in Bengali in support of his motion.

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—In valuing a rented masonry building we have to take into consideration the gross annual rent at which it can be expected to let from year to year, and we deduct therefrom 10 per cent for repairs. In the case of huts also, Sir, we deduct 10 per cent. But my object is to give relief to the hut-owners by increasing the cost of repairs from 10 to 15 per cent. So that the valuation of a hut may be reduced to a certain extent. Sir, the definition of a hut has materially changed under the Bill. Under the existing Act, even a corrugated iron-shed is a hut, but under the the Bill, as it stands it is now regarded as a masonry building and, therefore, a small tiled hut or a gol-patha hut would be a hut under the definition of this Bill. Therefore, my object is to give partial relief to the owners of such structures. Then, Sir, the life of such a hut is less than

that of a masonry building ; and therefore, the cost of repairs is much more than in the case of a masonry building. The cost of building materials has materially increased. The wages of labourers have also increased, and therefore I would suggest to deduct from the gross rent 15 per cent as it is at present. But in the case of masonry buildings I do not like to have this concession. I feel for the poorest of the poor, and therefore, I make the suggestion that the rate may be increased from 10 to 15 per cent as the cost of repairs. This is the opinion of the Marwari Association and I make this suggestion so that relief may be granted specially to the hut-owners of the newly added areas.

The motion was then put and lost.

Assessment of Buildings of the partition.

Raja RESHEE CASE LAW :— I move that—

At the end of clause 137A ii) the following be inserted, namely :—

“Provided that by such separate assessment the total assessment for the entire premises shall not be increased.”

At the end of clause 137A (iii), the following be inserted, namely:—

“Provided that by such separate assessment the total assessment for the entire premises shall not be increased.”

In the proviso to clause 137A, line after the word “provided” the word “also” be inserted.

The object of the amendments proposed by me is to remove any ambiguity regarding the interpretation of the section and to give effect to the intention of division only

and not increase of assessment as expressed in the main clause of the section.

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I beg to support the amendment because under the existing practice the valuation cannot be increased ; and, therefore the Executive officer should not be authorised to take the opportunity of a partition for the purpose of increasing the valuation. It has been said that a dwelling house may after partition be used as a rented house. That may be the case with all other premises. Of course if a portion of a building is materially proved then, and then only, the Executive officer may be allowed to revise and increase the valuation, otherwise not.

The following motion was then put and a division taken with the following result :—

The Ayes being 35 and the Noes 31, the motion was carried.

Appeal to a Bench of Councillors & Aldermen

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I move that in clause 144 (1), sub-clause (1), line 2, after the word "appeal" the following be inserted, namely :—

"either to a Bench constituted for the purpose consisting of not less than three Councillors or Aldermen elected by the Corporation or"

There is a printing mistake. The words "who shall be elected" should be inserted after the word "Aldermen."

Mr. PRESIDENT :—Do you want these words to be added?

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—Yes, Sir. Under the existing Act, the assessment is made by the Chairman

and if a person is dissatisfied with that assessment, he has a right to object to the Chairman and if the party is dissatisfied with the decision of the Chairman, he has a right of appeal to the Court of Small Causes. My suggestion is this, that the party aggrieved should have a right of appeal either to the Court of Small Causes or to a Bench of councillors and aldermen who shall be elected by the Corporation. *It appears under sections 113 and 114 of Bengal Municipal Act, the person aggrieved has a right of appeal to a Bench of three municipal Commissioners elected by the Commissioners of that particular municipality. It further appears that even under the Calcutta Municipal Act, as well as in this Bill in the case of licence fees, an aggrieved party has a right of appeal to a Bench consisting of the Executive Officer as well as three Councillors or Aldermen elected by the Corporation. What I beg to submit is that if the councillors are allowed to hear appeals in the case of licence fees, why should not they be allowed to hear appeals in the case of fixing the valuation of lands and buildings of Calcutta? With reference to licence fees, I will draw your attention to Schedule V page 254, where it is said that any person dissatisfied with an order made under this schedule may appeal either to a Bench consisting of the Executive Officer or a Deputy Executive Officer and not less than three councillors or Aldermen to be elected by the Corporation, or to a Court of Small Causes having jurisdiction. My suggestion is this that when a person has a right of appeal in the case of license fees not only to a Court of Small Causes but also to a Bench consisting of councillors and aldermen elected by the Corporation, in the case of assesment of lands and buildings the person aggrieved should have a right of appeal not only to the Court of Small Causes but also to the Bench. Then it will appear that under the existing Act as well as under the Bill the councillors have been allowed to award compensation in several cases, viz., in the of fixing the land-value, in the set-back of build-

ings, etc. This duty has been entrusted to the councillors under the Bill. If the Executive Officer refuses the erection of a building, then the party aggrieved is entitled to get compensation and the amount of compensation is fixed by the councillors ; then in the case of demolition of insanitary buildings, this has to be done by the councillors ; and again, whenever a person feels aggrieved by the decision of the Executive Officer, he has a right of appeal to the Corporation. Under the existing Act, the power has been entrusted to the General Committee. So, it seems that if the councillors could be entrusted with such onerous duties, certainly they could be entrusted with the duty I have suggested. I find that in the Madras Municipal Act of 1920, the aggrieved person has a right of appeal to the commissioners. Even in England under the Corporation Act of 1882, the aggrieved person has a right of appeal to a Board. Then, Sir, the British Indian Association has said that the Executive Officer should be associated with two Councillors in the hearing of objections. The Marawari Association and the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce are also of the same opinion.

Mr. PRESIDENT :—There is nothing in the amendment about the Executive officer being associated with anybody. Your amendment is about a Bench composed of three councillors and aldermen. The Executive Officer does not come on in that fixture at all.

Bebu AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—Quite so, but my suggestion will appear to you to be more reasonable than the suggestion which has been made by the British Indian Association. What I beg to submit is that I do not want to interfere with the rights of the Executive Officer. Let him hear the objections of the parties aggrieved, but if a person is not satisfied with the decision of the Executive Officer then he should be allowed to submit an appeal to a Bench of Councillors. That is my contention. Even the Indian

Association have stated that there should be a different Board altogether consisting of four independent gentlemen who may be allowed to hear appeals against the decision of the Executive Officer. So, it appears that all the public bodies of Calcutta have expressed this opinion that there should be a Board to which appeals may be allowed and not to the Court of Small Causes, but my suggestion is very moderate. What I beg to submit is that the party may be allowed to exercise his own discretion. If he has confidence in the Court of Small Causes, he may appeal to it, but if he has confidence in the Bench, he must be given the option of appealing to the Bench. It is the Executive Officer who makes the assessment and it is he who is allowed to hear objections against his own decision; that is the greater reason as to why there should be a different body altogether. Under the Act of 1863, the party aggrieved had a right of appeal to a Bench of Justices of Peace. Then under the Act of 1876 it was laid down that the aggrieved party may appeal either to the Bench or to the Court of Small Causes. Thus it will be seen that from 1863 up to 1888, the party had the right of appeal to the Bench. It was only in the year 1888, on the suggestion of Sir Henry Harrison who was the Chairman of the Corporation at the time, that the Legislature allowed appeals only to the Court of Small Causes, but it was strongly opposed by Babu Kali Nath Mitter as well as by other Hon'ble members of the Council. Babu Kali Nath Mitter stated that the Bench had worked very satisfactorily and that though the party aggrieved had a right of appeal to the Bench as well as to the Court of Small Causes, he would prefer the Bench. Then, I may be allowed to say that the Bench is more competent to hear such appeals than the Court of Small Causes, because as regards land value, a judge of the Court of Small Causes cannot be regarded as possessing competent knowledge in the matter. Then, as we all know, there is great trouble incidental to litigation, unnecessary

expense in the hearing of appeals in the Court of Small Causes and it was only the other day that the court-fee had been increased by 50 per cent. That is the greater reason why some other authority should be created for the hearing of these appeals otherwise I am afraid that justice would be denied.

Then, Sir, it will appear from the explanatory note of this Bill that the Select Committee are not in favour of the suggestion because as I have stated there is corruption in mufassal municipalities. There may be black sheep everywhere, but that is no reason why this power should be taken away from the commissioners. I will draw your attention to the paragraph in the report of the Select Committee about this clause. They say—"The committee agreed that this proposal might lead to the grossest abuses." I do not suggest that the Court of Small Causes should be replaced by the Bench. What I beg to submit is that the party aggrieved may be allowed to appeal either to the Court of Small Causes or the Bench. I question the statement contained in the paragraph that this has led to corruption in the mufassal. Though I am not a commissioner of a mufassal municipality, I know some of them, and I have great confidence in them. I beg to draw the attention of the mufassal municipal commissioners who are members of this Council. It is an insult to them to make that statement. I am really sorry that some mufassal members were not members of the Select Committee, if they had been, they would have had an opportunity of expressing their views in the Select Committee. It was only the other day that we amalgamated Maniktala, Cossipore-Chitpur, and Garden Reach, with Calcutta, and under the Bengal Municipal Act, which is still in force in these areas, the residents of those localities are entitled to have their appeals heard by the Bench. As we have amalgamated these areas with Calcutta, the result would be that unless the House will be kind enough to

accept my suggestion, they will be deprived of the right which they have been enjoying since 1884. In the Bombay Municipal Act also I find that the party is allowed a right of appeal to the Bench. My suggestion is very moderate. I do not mean to say that the party aggrieved will first of all submit his appeal to the Bench and then to the Court of Small Causes but what I submit is he may have the right of appeal either to the Bench or the Court of Small Causes.

The amendment was put and lost.

Municipal rate on Vacant places.

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I move that in clause 154, line 3, for the word “sixty” the word “thirty” be substituted.

Under this clause when any land or building has remained unoccupied and unproductive of rent for a period of 60 or more consecutive days, then the Executive Officer shall remit one-half of the owner's share. If a land or a building is lying vacant for more than 60 days, then and then only, the owner is entitled to a remission of one-half of the municipal rates. My suggestion is that the period may be reduced from 60 to 30 days. It would be a source of hardship for the owner of a house which is lying vacant for even 50 days if he is called upon to pay a full owner's share of the municipal rates. He does not get any municipal services for the time being; and as soon as the premises are vacant, the supply of water is cut off to his great inconvenience and hardship. I admit that, if the premises are vacant for three or four days, or for a week or even a month—the owner may be called upon to pay the owner's share in full; but, Sir, if the house is vacant for, say

fifty days and if he is called upon to pay the owner's share of the municipal rates in full then it is not fair and equitable.

I find, Sir, that under section 187 of the Madras Municipal Act, the period is 30 days instead of 60 days. It may be said that that is a mufassal Act, but I find that in the Presidency of Bombay, under section 174 of the Bombay Municipal Act, the period is 30 days. If that be the law of Bombay, I fail to understand why it should not be so in Calcutta. It may be said that, under the Act, as at present existing, the period is 60 days, but I may be allowed to point out that it is really a source of great hardship to the owner and that is the reason why I make this suggestion.

The amendment was put and lost,

Tax on Vacant land.

Raja RESHEE CASE LAW:—I move that the proviso to clause 154 be omitted.

My reason for moving for omission of the proviso is that it would cause hardship in many cases. It is persons in poor circumstances or those who have title of limited ownership only, such as widows, trustees, etc., that are unable to build on their lands. It would be manifestly unjust to impose a penalty on them. Besides, Calcutta proper is already overbuilt and open spaces are a necessity. In case of the suburbs to be added, it would not be fair to deprive them of a relief which in the very beginning they will so much appreciate.

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY:—I have much pleasure in supporting the amendment of Raja Reshee Case Law. This proviso does not find its way in the Bill. Under this proviso if a land remains vacant for three years, the owner

will not be entitled to get remission of the owner's share of the municipal rates. This is the suggestion which was made before the Corporation by our esteemed friend Mr. Mallik, as the Chairman thereof. It was fully discussed at the Corporation and the Corporation has rejected it by an overwhelming majority of votes. Notwithstanding the fact our esteemed friend thought it fit to move this resolution in the Select Committee. It was also strongly opposed there. But it has been accepted by the majority of the members of the Committee with certain modifications. Sir, we do not find such a provision in any other Municipal Act of India and I do not think any special reasons have been given as to why this provision should be incorporated in the Bill. Of course the object of my hon'ble friend appears to be a noble one. He wants to encourage the erection of buildings—he wants to encourage house accommodation and reduce the rent of buildings in Calcutta. But I may say that this is not the proper remedy. There may be special reasons for the non-erection of buildings within the period of three years—the poverty the owner and the increase in the cost of building materials. I admit that very recently it has come down, but still it is higher than before the outbreak of the war. The cost of labour has also materially increased. We cannot therefore, expect the owner of land to erect buildings unless he can expect a reasonable profit out of it. The depression in trade is also responsible for the non-erection of buildings in Calcutta and bereavement in families may be another. The rate of interest on Government promissory notes has gone up to 6 per cent free of income tax. Under these circumstances you cannot expect a person to erect a building unless he sees the prospect of getting an income at least equal to the interest on the Government promissory notes.

I have already stated the reasons for the non-erection of buildings. We realize Municipal rates for the services done to owners of premises. What services do you render them

in connection with a vacant plot of land? Surely you do nothing—no water supply, no scavenging, nothing of the kind. The only service which is rendered in respect of this land if it abuts on a public street is the lighting of that street. Are you justified in forcing the owner of a vacant plot of land, to pay a full owner's share of municipal rates notwithstanding the fact that the land is vacant, notwithstanding the fact that no municipal services are rendered to him? It may be said that I am a landholder and, therefore, I am moving this resolution. I admit that I am a petty landholder but I am more a trader than a landholder and it is simply for the sake of justice that I am making this suggestion. Being a landholder I know the grievances of landholders.

. The amendment was put and lost.

Tax on Dogs.

Babu AMULYA DHOME ADDY :—I move that clause 176 be omitted ; if this motion be not carried I would move

(1) that in clause 176 (1), for the word "five" the word "two" be substituted ; and

(2) that in clause 176 (1). line 2 for the word "shall" the word "may" be substituted.

There is no tax on dogs under the existing Act and the License Officer of the Calcutta Corporation has stated that it would be very difficult for him to collect this tax. Therefore I do not think that it would be advisable to levy any tax on dogs. I am assuming for argument's sake that my suggestion will not be accepted by this Council and then I would suggest that the word "shall" be substituted by the word "may" because that is the recommendation of the Corporation of

Calcutta. Some members of the Corporation are of opinion that this tax should not be levied and that sufficient grounds have not been stated as to why it should be levied. Therefore they want to make an inquiry whether it would be advisable to levy this tax. That is the reason why the Corporation of Calcutta has suggested that this should be left entirely to the discretion of the Corporation. The Corporation should not be forced to levy this tax. I suggest also that for the word "five" the word "two" be substituted. Under the original Bill, the sum was two rupees and not five and it has been stated that this proposal has been made not with a view to get revenue out of it, but to have the registration of dogs. Now a sum of Rs 2 will suffice for the registration of dogs. I beg to submit that it is quite unnecessary, because if it be the object of the Committee to have stray or diseased dogs registered, then I may be allowed to say that there is specific provision to this effect in the Police Act and the Commissioner of Police has been entrusted with this duty. Therefore, it is quite unnecessary to have the registration of dogs. Then I beg to submit that the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce of which I am a member is strongly opposed to it. The British Indian Association has stated that the sum should be reduced to one repee.

Rai Dr. HARIDHAN DUTTA Bahadur :—What is it in Bombay ?

Babu AMULY DHONE ADDY :—I do not exactly remember, otherwise I would have quoted it. Therefore, I beg to submit that this section should be omitted altogether and that there should be no tax on dogs secondly, it is very difficult to collect this tax, thirdly, the matter should be left entirely to the discretion of the Corporation ; and fourthly, the amount should not be more than rupees two as provided in the original Bill.

The amendment was lost.

Destruction of Dogs.

Babu **AMULYA DHONE ADDY** :—I move that in clause 177 (5), the words “either, (a) to be destroyed, “or” be omitted.

It will appear from the sub-clause that if no person satisfies the Corporation that he is the owner or keeper of such a dog, or pays the said tax on dog with costs, the Corporation may cause the dog either to be destroyed or to be sold. What I beg to submit is that I have not the slightest objection to the sale of such a dog, but I strongly object to the destruction of an animal for the non-payment of the tax. The dog is a very useful animal and plays an important part at night. It is better than even a constable and, therefore, simply on the ground of non-payment of the tax, it is not advisable to destroy a dog. It is said that the object is to destroy a stray dog or a diseased dog. I have not the slightest objection to this. There is a specific provision to that effect in the Police Act. The Commissioner of Police has been authorised to destroy such a dog, but if the dog be not a diseased one and if it be not a stray one, but simply if the owner of the dog have neglected to pay the tax, would the Corporation be justified in causing the destruction of such an useful animal. The Marwari Association took strong exception to this. They are strongly of opinion that it would be an inhuman act on the part of the Corporation and therefore they are opposed to it.

I am very glad that the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce of which the Hon'ble Raja Reshee Case Law is the President and which consists of men of business of Calcutta, are strongly opposed to it. The British Indian Association also hold the same view. I strongly object on

the ground that it would be an inhuman act on the part of the Corporation to destroy such a dog.

Mr. S. W. Goode :—I strongly sympathize with the dog. It is placed in an awkward position in being made liable to be shot for its master's parsimony, but I am afraid that the alternative is not acceptable. If you throw a lot of dogs on the market at once, they will command no price. Unless Babu Amulya Dhone Addy can guarantee that these dogs will find purchasers, I am afraid there is no other remedy except to adhere to the Bill.

The motion was then put and lost.

Tax on petroleum.

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I move that clauses 184 and 185 be omitted.

We ought not to levy tax on petroleum because the existing law on the subject is nothing but a dead letter in the existing Act which provides for it. The Corporation of Calcutta has not been allowed to levy this tax in Calcutta. The Government of India is strongly opposed to it. However, assuming that the Corporation gets the previous sanction from the Government of India still I submit that this tax should not be allowed to be levied because it will be a tax on the poor. Sir, there was a time when kerosene oil was a luxury, but nowadays it has become necessary to the poor who use it for lighting purposes. So I appeal to the Hon'ble the Minister on behalf of the poor that this chapter be omitted altogether.

Mr. S. W. Goode :—This section is similar to a section in the Act of 1889, and provides that a transit duty on petro-

leum passing through Calcutta should be levied on it. As a matter of fact it has never been put into force, and, it is quite possible that it will never be put into force, and, it is quite possible that it will never be. But there is no harm in retaining it in the Act.

The motion was put and lost.

Clause 181.

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I move that in clause 181, lines 2 & 4 the words “owner of” be omitted.

Under this clause the Corporation may require the owner or occupier of a building or a place of business to forward a list of names of persons exercising or carrying on a profession, trade or a calling, etc. Sir, as we are all aware, buildings are leased out to tenants and the tenants also lease them out to sub-tenants. Therefore, it is difficult for the owner of such a building to ascertain the names of persons who carry on business there. He may be an absentee landlord and in that house there may be 30 to 40 persons carrying on business. The only person whom the owner is expected to know is the tenant and not his sub-tenants. So it would be hardship if the owner is called upon to give this information and in default is dragged before the Criminal Court. Moreover, there is no such provision in the existing Act.

SHAH SYED EMDADUL HAQ addressed the Council in Bengail in support of the motion.

Mr. S. W. Goode :—On behalf of Government I beg to accept the amendment.

The motion was then put and agreed to.

WATER SUPPLY.

Babu AMULYA CHONE ADDY :—I move that the proviso to clause 220 be omitted.

Under this clause the pressure of filtered water shall be continuous and not less than 40 feet and under the proviso the Corporation by a resolution of two-thirds of Councillors may authorize a lower pressure in any case, where, owing to causes over which the Corporation have no control, or by reason of other circumstances, it is impracticable to secure the pressure of 40 feet. Sir, I admit that there are certain safeguards in it. I beg to submit that under the existing Act the minimum pressure of filtered water is 40 feet. Sir, supply of filtered water is to be continuous. But I beg to draw the attention of the House to the real state of things. In the Southern part of Calcutta, specially in the area lying to the west of Tolly's Nullah, the supply of filtered water is not continuous, and we do not actually get a single drop of water during mid-day, when it is urgently required, and even in the morning when the pressure is at its height, the maximum pressure is only 15 feet. While in the area south of the Boat Canal there is no pressure at all. Therefore, I submit that it should be made incumbent on the Corporation to keep up the minimum pressure of filtered water. Therefore, is it equitable that the Corporation should realize the full rate but should not provide for adequate supply of it to all? In certain localities there is even no supply of filtered water.

Mr. PRESIDENT :—I do not quite follow the hon'ble member's reference to the area on the other side of the Boat Canal to the present motion.

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—Yes, Sir. The area to the south of the Boat Canal is a part and parcel of

Calcutta. Sir, there is no such complaint in regard to the northern part of the town. The minimum pressure should be 40 feet still the Corporation has failed to discharge its duty, and by the inclusion of these words it will be inclined to do so all the more. I have represented the non-official view of the question. Now I draw your attention to the official opinion viz., the opinion of the Secretary of the Public works Department of the Government itself. It says :—

“The minimum pressure equivalent to 40 feet, which is the same as that laid down in the existing Act, which was framed 20 years ago, when there were few buildings more than two stories in height, is insufficient to meet present conditions. Further, the proviso in the last paragraph of the clause renders this “minimum” meaningless. At the present time the pressure in many of the filtered water-mains is not more than 20 feet ; and in some as low as ten feet and less. The result of the qualifying clause would be that the pressure of 40 feet instead of being treated as a “minimum” would come to be regarded as a “maximum”.

Therefore, having regard to the non-official opinion and also having regard to official opinion the opinion of experts—I beg to submit that this proviso should be omitted altogether. The Corporation should be enforced to keep up a continuous supply of filtered water with a minimum pressure of 40 feet in every part of Calcutta, otherwise the rate of mortality from Cholera will go up further and further.

The Hon'ble Sir SURENDRA NATH BANERJEE in course of his reply in the debate said—“As regards the amendment of my friend, Babu Amulyadhane Addy, the existing law gives the Corporation power to reduce the pressure. The General Committee has that power and now we are only tightening up that power by making it obligatory upon it to see that the reduction of the pressure has been approved of by a two-thirds majority of the