

Commissioners present and under the special circumstances set forth in the section.

For these reasons I am unable to accept the amendments which have been moved.

The motion was then put and lost.

Supply of Water to Occupiers.

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I move the following :—

(1) “ That in clause 225, lines 3 and 4, for the words ‘fifteen hundred’ the words ‘two thousand’ be substituted.

(2) “ That in clause 225, proviso (a), line 4, for the words ‘twenty-five, or more than fifty the word ‘twenty’ be substituted.

Under the existing Act a person is entitled to 4,000 gallons of water per every rupee of the water-rate paid, but here it is stated that a person gets only 1,500 gallons for every rupee of the consolidated rate paid. The clause corresponds to the law under the existing Act. But I beg to submit that the quantity of water which a person is entitled to get should be increased. So I would suggest that it should be increased from 1,500 to 2,000 gallons per rupee. I submit that Calcutt's is a hot climate and the Hindus consume more water than Christians for they have to observe religious ceremonies month by month. These people are obliged to consume water and also to pay tax in addition to the water-rate. The Corporation has already sanctioned a scheme for improving the water-supply and I do not, therefore, see any reason why the extra quantity should not be allowed.

As regards amendment No. 374, I suggest to substitute for the words "twenty-five or more than fifty" the words ' twenty gallons.' Sir, under the existing Act there is no restriction, neither a minimum nor a maximum. Sir, a person is entitled to get sufficient quantity of water in accordance with the valuation of his property. But, Sir, the Corporation has resolved that the minimum supply may be 20 gallons per head irrespective of the valuation of the property. What is the result ? The people of the northern division of Calcutta have been getting sufficient filtered water at the cost of the people of the southern division.

Sir, if we accept the suggestions contained in the Bill on this subject the result would be that the pressure of filtered water in the southern division will be materially less than what it is even now. It may be said that the supply of filtered water is going to be increased very soon, but, Sir, it will take not less than seven years. Within these seven years, the people will not get any increased supply of water. At present there is no such maximum as regards the supply. It is only based on the valuation of the property. Then why do you put down a maximum limit of water-supply ? Now there is no maximum, no limit, regarding amount of rates and taxes.

If we increase the supply of water from 20 to 85 gallons per head it will be an injustice to the people of the southern part of Calcutta. If we put a restriction and fix a maximum at 50 gallons it will be doing injustice to those persons who have been paying heavy taxes.

Mr. S. W. Goode :—It is always a pleasure to be able to agree with Mr. Addy and we seldom have that pleasure. He says that Chetla would suffer if the free allowance per head is raised and I entirely agree.

All the amendments under this clause ignore the fact that the present Act gives 4,000 gallons of water to a person per rupee of water-rate. Now the water-rate is levied at 5 or 6

per cent and the consolidated rate at $19\frac{1}{2}$ per cent ; so 1,500 gallons for every rupee of the consolidated rate is worth rather more than 4,000 gallons for every rupee of the water-rate. Actually, therefore, a householder will get a more liberal allowance of water under the present Bill, even when the allowance is determined by the first part of this clause. But in practice it will be per capita ration which will ordinarily govern free allowance.

The motion was then put and lost.

CALCUTTA MUNICIPAL BILL.

Filtered Water for Ships.

BABU AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I move that for clause 233, the following be substituted, namely :—

“233 (1) Filtered water for domestic purposes on ships for the time being lying in the Port of Calcutta may be taken free of charge from public standposts or from any taps on the Port Commissinoers' premises which ships may be allowed to use.

(2) The Corporation shall on demand supply every ship leaving the Port of Calcutta with a reasonable supply of filtered water for use on the voyage at such price not exceeding five rupees for every thousand gallons as the Corporation may determine.”

I beg to draw your attention to the fact that the suggestion embodied in my amendment are also the suggestions of the Calcutta Port Trust as well as of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce. The drafting of the clause as it stands is defective. It has been rightly pointed out by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce that sub-clause (2) should

be enlarged by substituting the words "lying in the port of Calcutta" for the words "leaving the jetties or the Docks of the Commissioners for the Port of Calcutta" and by inserting the words "while in the Port and" after the word "use" in line 4. That is their suggestion, Sir, and I need not repeat them.

As regards the last part of sub-clause (2) of the Bill, the maximum rate that can now be levied upon the Port Commissioners is Rs. 5 per 1,000 gallons, and in the Bill revised by the Select Committee there is no limit. So I beg to submit that when the cost of filtered water is only 4 annas per 1,000 gallons if Rs. 5 is charged upon the Port Commissioners it will suffice. I am afraid that if the Corporation raise the rates further, it will affect the commerce of Calcutta.

SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT, DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT (Mr. S. W. Goode):—As regards sub-section (1) we would propose that the words "at the jetties or in the Docks of the Commissioner for" be omitted and that the clause run thus :—

"Filtered water from public stand-posts may be used free of charge, for domestic purposes on ships for the time being lying in the port of Calcutta".

As regards sub-clause (2) we are prepared to accept the amendment of Babu Amulya Dhone Addy as it stands.

The motion (1), as amended was then put and agreed to.

The motion (2) was then put and agreed to.

Building within Street-alignments.

BABU AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I move that clause 304 (3) and (4) be omitted.

These sub-clauses are new. They are not in the existing Act. Under these sub-clauses, no person shall erect or add to any building between a street alignment and the building line without first obtaining the permission of the Corporation to do so. First of all, I, will state the difference between a street alignment and a building line. A street alignment is an alignment for the widening of an existing street and no person is allowed to erect any building or make an addition to an existing building without the express permission of the Corporation. The Corporation has a right to acquire it and widen a street. At the same time the person or persons affected have a right to get adequate compensation for the acquisition of that plot of land. But a building line is quite different from a street alignment. It is a line for the erection of buildings and no person is allowed to erect any building line between a street alignment of the existing street and the building line. The owner of that plot of land, apart from the question of any building in that strip of land, has no right to claim any compensation for the refusal of the Corporation to grant sanction for the erection of a building. So, it appears that in the case of refusal of sanction for the erection of a building between a street alignment and the existing street, the party is entitled to get compensation, but in the case of a building line, the party is not entitled to get any compensation. It may be said that it may be required to widen the street in course of time, but I may be allowed to say that even in the case of street alignments which were prescribed years ago, I do not think there is any chance of the streets being widened in accordance with street alignments even after 10 years. In the case of building lines, I

do not know whether the Corporation will ever be in a position to widen the streets in accordance of keeping open spaces. I beg to submit that the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce and the British Indian Association have expressed the opinion that the purdahnashin ladies prefer open spaces at the back of a building and not in front of it. Therefore the enforcement of this open space between the building line and the existing street will be a source of great hardship and will reduce the market value of land unnecessarily. With these remarks I beg to move that these two sub-clauses which relate to building lines be omitted altogether. It may be said that the amendment for the omission of the definition of a building line has not been accepted by this Council, but that is no reason as to why, in the absence of specific provisions, these sub-clauses should not be omitted.

The motion was then put and lost.

EXEMPTION FEE.

Rai MAHENDRA CHANDRA MITTRA Bahadur :— I move that in clause 312 (4), in line 5, for the word "two-thirds the word" one-half" be substituted.

My reason for this amendment is that we find that by the opening out of a new road, the owner of the adjoining land is benefited as well as the public. I find from the report of the Building Commission which was presided over by Mr. Justice Trevelyan, that half of the cost of the improvement was realized from the owner. In these circumstances, I submit that it would be a bare act of justice if we fix one-half instead of two-thirds.

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I have much pleasure in supporting this amendment. The mover has very justly pointed out to us that the Calcutta Building Commission—a Commission which was appointed by Government and was presided over by the Hon'ble Justice Trevelyan—recommended that one-half of the increment in value should be realized from the owners of the adjoining lands. I also find, on reference to the proceedings of the meeting of this Council while the Calcutta Improvement Bill was under discussion, that this is also the law in England. As will appear from section 61 of the London County Council Improvement Act of 1899, it is only one-half which is realized from the owners of the adjoining lands. Under section 58 of the Tower Bridge Improvement Act of 1897, that is the law. Under the Town Planning Act of 1899 that is also the law. Now, what is the reason that the whole amount should not be realized from the owners of adjoining lands and buildings? The reason is obvious; by the opening of a road it is not only the owners of the adjoining lands and buildings who are specially benefited, but the public at large are also benefited. By the opening of a road we improve the sanitation of the locality, and there is also a legal obligation on the Corporation to open up roads. The owners of lands and buildings in a congested area have a right to call upon the Corporation to open up roads. Therefore it is right and just that not more than one-half of the increment in value should be realized from the owners of the adjoining lands or buildings. I am really sorry to find that Shah Syed Emadadul Haq has not moved his amendment No. 445. Had he done so, I would have supported it, because it requires the special sanction of the Government to authorize the Corporation to acquire surplus lands. Under the Act of 1888, there was a restriction to the authority of the Corporation in the acquisition of surplus lands; in the case of surplus lands of more than one hundred feet in depth the speci-

al sanction of the Government was necessary. But under the law as it is, there is no such restriction ; the Corporation of Calcutta is authorised to acquire surplus lands irrespective of depth. I am sorry to inform you that it is not only to recoup the cost of construction of roads but also to make profit that surplus land and even ancestral dwelling houses are acquired. Take the case of the Lansdowne Road extension. The length of the road is 1,200 feet ; $5\frac{1}{2}$ bighas of land were necessary for the opening of the road, but 24 bighas of land were acquired, and $18\frac{1}{2}$ bighas of land were acquired not only to recoup the cost of the construction of the road, but also to make a profit out of it. It will appear from the estimate which was prepared by the Surveyor himself that the estimate profit was Rs. 12,000. It may be said that it is to the interest of the public and to the interest of the Corporation itself that the surplus lands were acquired but at the same time, should the Corporation trample down private rights in this way ? It may be also said that the whole of this amount is not going to be realized from the owners of the lands—it is only two-thirds of the increment in value. I beg to submit that this concession is not a real one. It is apparent. If you do not exempt these lands from acquisition you shall have to pay the statutory allowance of 15 per cent and it will take at least two years to execute that improvement work. We shall have also to pay interest on the amount invested in the acquisition of those lands, and taking the interest at 6 per cent per annum, in two years it will be 12 per cent ; then for the loss of earnings the Corporation shall have to pay compensation ; therefore about one-third of the increased value of the land will be lost by the acquisition by way of statutory allowance, by way of interest for two years, and by way of compensation for the loss of earnings. Therefore it will appear that this concession that appears in the Bill and which is at present allowed by the Corporation is no concession at all ; it is an

apparent one simply to throw dust in the eyes of the public at large. Therefore the suggestion that has been made by Rai Mahendra Chandra Mitra Bahadur is a sound one ; he does not mean to say that no exemption fee should be realized , what he says is that the owners of these lands, especially of these ancestral dwelling houses, should be given relief to the extent of 50 per cent on account of the improved value of the land. With these words, I beg to support this amendment.

The amendment was lost.

Width of a Street.

BABU AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I move that for the proviso to clause 315 (2), the following be substituted, namely :—

“ Provided that the Corporation may allow a private street to be made or laid out of a width of less than 20 feet.”

It will appear from the provisions of clause 309 that the width of a projected public street shall not be less than 40 feet and that because the provisions of this Act as regards the width of a public street shall apply in the case of private streets. It will appear that under this definition even a common passage is a private street. If there is a passage leading to four of five houses even belonging to the same person, it is a private street. But under clause 215 the width of this common passage is to be 40 feet. But there is a proviso under which the Corporation may allow a private street to be made of a width less than 40 feet but not less than 20 feet; and if the street is less than 200 feet in length, the maximum width of such street may ordinarily be taken to be 30 feet

instead of 40 feet. What I beg to submit is that in the case of a private street the Corporation should be authorized to reduce the width even to less than 20 feet. I admit that there should be some restriction in the case of width of private streets. Suppose a person has a big plot of land, generally a common passage of 5 to 7 feet in width. This might increase the congestion of the locality and that is the reason why some provision should be made. At the same time, if under this clause the width of a street is 40 feet, that will debar a person from developing his own property. That is the reason why the number of private streets which have been constructed under the existing Act is very limited. What I submit is that we should have some provision under which the owners of private properties might be encouraged to construct private streets. What is done by the Calcutta Corporation itself in the case of back lands? The Corporation keeps a passage leading to the back land, but the width of that passage is not 30 or 40 feet as contemplated by this Bill but is only 8 feet; but if a private person keeps such a passage, the width of that passage is to be 20 to 40 feet. There are several amendments under the clause. Rai Fanindra Lal De Bahadur has suggested 15 feet and Dr. Pramathnath Banerjea has suggested 12 feet. So it will appear that my suggestion is very moderate. What I beg to submit is that it should be left to the discretion of the Corporation to fix the width of the street, and in special circumstances the Corporation may be authorized to reduce the width of the street to even below 20 feet.

The motion was put and lost.

Relaxation of Building Regulations.

BABU AMULYA DHONE' ADDY :—I move that in clause 329A proviso (i) be omitted.

Under section 391 of the existing Act it is left to the discretion of the General Committee to make any relaxation whatever in the case of additions to, or alterations of, an existing building. In the case of a new building a person must comply with all the building regulations, but in case of additions to, or alterations, of existing buildings it is left to the discretion of the General Committee to make any relaxation and the reason is obvious, because under the Act of 1888 the building regulations were nominal. Under that Act a person intending to erect a building had to keep a back space of only 4 feet and at the side an open space of 4 feet only, but under the Act of 1899, that is, the existing Act, very stringent regulations have been prescribed. In the case of a dwelling house he has to keep a very big open space the minimum of which is 10 feet. Therefore, in the case of additions to, or alterations, of existing buildings and the buildings erected before the existing Act came into force with the sanction of the municipal authorities under the Act of 1888, it would be a source of hardship. That is the reason why the Legislature have authorized the General Committee of the Corporation to make relaxations of the building regulations in the case of those houses. But you will find that under clause 329 the Corporation will be divested of these powers. It says that in the case of such additions no relaxation is to be made. However, on my representation, the Select Committee were good enough to make some relaxation as would appear from rule 96 of Schedule XVI. Under this rule the Corporation may make relaxation, but even this power of relaxation has been restricted. Rules 30 and 32 may be relaxed so as to prevent the demolition of any material part of

any masonry building in existence, but sufficient space is required to be kept open under that rule. Rule 29 may be relaxed provided the buildings conform to the provisions of rule 23 and 30. So it will appear that even the power of relaxation of the Corporation has been taken away except in these matters. I protested at the meeting of the Select Committee and as it is the unanimous recommendation of the Corporation of Calcutta, I think I may be justified in pressing this before this House.

As regards the second proviso I have not the slightest objection. On the contrary I must admit that it is a sound one. It runs as follows :—

“Such relaxations are not likely to prejudicially affect the sanitation or ventilation of the building or other buildings in its vicinity.”

Therefore, if the addition or alteration does not prejudicially affect the sanitation or ventilation of the buildings, then the Corporation may be authorized to make relaxations. Not only that. It says if it does not affect the sanitation not only of the building in question but also of other buildings in its vicinity, then relaxation may be made; then where is the harm in giving this power of relaxation to the Corporation of Calcutta—a Corporation which will consist of the representatives of the people, a Corporation which will consist of 12 representatives of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and such other public bodies ?

Now, the question is whether this power of relaxation has been abused by the General Committee or not. I may say that it has not been abused. As a member of the Buildings Sub-Committee of the Corporation for the last 15 or 16 Years, I may be allowed to say that in a very small number of cases such relaxation has been made. It is on the strong recommendation of the City Architect or of the Chairman of the Corporation that such relaxations are allowed and even in certain cases their recommendations have not

been accepted by the Sub-Committee. That being the case, why should the Corporation be deprived of the right which they have been exercising since 1899. It is very difficult to comply with all these building regulations especially in the case of building which has been in existence before 1888 and even in the case of a building which has been erected with the previous permission of the municipal authorities under the Act of 1888.

As regards the added area, I mean Maniktala, Cossipore-Chitpore, and Garden Reach, it will be a source of great hardship. Practically there are no building regulations, they have constructed buildings at heavy cost and now, if they are called upon to comply with all the stringent building regulations in the case of additions to, or alterations of, the existing buildings, will it not be a source of great hardship to them? In the case of the city proper it might be said that the buildings were constructed in accordance with the building regulations under which the people were forced to keep certain open spaces. So it will not be so great a hardship to them if they are now asked to comply with the proposed regulations, but in the case of the newly added area it will be so. There are other classes of buildings. In the detached area it will appear that under rule 24 of Schedule XVI a person going to erect a building in a town area shall have to keep an open space of two-thirds of the total area. Now, if certain localities in these newly added areas are declared as detached areas, certainly they will be a source of great hardship. If they are called upon to comply with rule 24 of Schedule XVI to leave an open space of two-thirds of the entire area, it would be a source of greatest hardship to them. Leave it to the discretion of the Corporation. If you have any confidence in them you must give this discretionary power to them, If you have no confidence, abolish the Local Self-Government.

The Motion was lost.

Bustee Regulations.

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I beg to move that in clause 354 (3), line, for the words “six months” the words “one year” be substituted.

It would appear that under the bustee regulations the bustee-owner is called to open out roads, and remove huts or portions thereof for the improvement of the bustee, but the period within which he is to do this work is only six months. I may say that this is the present law, and that is the reason why it is impossible for a bustee-owner to comply with the municipal requisition, and the result is that he is dragged before the municipal magistrate and heavily fined. Now, Sir, in the suburban area tenants are not generally tenants at will, they erect buildings on leaseholds which are, instead of monthly tenancies, yearly tenancies, but in case the bustee-owner does not manage to remove the huts, he is under the painful necessity of instituting suits against the tenants for ejectment, but before instituting such suits he serves a notice to quit, but in the case of a yearly tenancy, the period of notice must be six months, so it is impossible for a person to comply with the said municipal regulation within six months. Apart from that he has to incur heavy expenses for the construction of streets and other works. It may be said that in the Select Committee some concession has been made, namely— “within six months after the date of such notice or within such further time as the Corporation may from time to time allow.” I admit this is a concession, but why should a person be at the sweet will of the Corporation of Calcutta, when it is well-known, as a matter of fact, that he cannot be expected to comply with the requisition within a period of six months.

If a person is willing to erect masonry building on his

bustee land by the removal of huts, he will not be allowed to do so; he is enforced to open out roads at his own cost for the convenience not only of his tenants but of the tenants of the bustees adjoining his own. What I beg to submit is is that he should be paid adequate compensation for this. But under sub-clause (7) adequate compensation will not be paid. Under this sub-clause the Corporation shall compensate the owner of such land for any such area that is included in the street which is in excess of one-seventh of the entire area of the land which ceases to be included in the bustee. That is to say, only a portion of the amount of compensation will be paid to him. I think, Sir, he ought to be fully compensated for the damage or loss that he will suffer for opening up certain portions of his land for roads which will not benefit his own tenants but those of the adjoining bustees.

The amendment was lost.

Prohibition of Slaughter of Cows.

RAI MAHENDRA CHANDRA MITRA BAHADUR:—
I beg to move—

(1) that for clause 388 (2) the following be substituted, namely,

(2) The Corporation may, at any time, prevent, restrict or regulate the slaughter of any kind or class of cattle in a municipal or private slaughter house in Calcutta as may seem to them proper,

(ii) that in clause 388 (2), line 6, for the words

“ in a municipal or private slaughter-house of such kind or class of cows and calves as may to them seem proper ”

the following be substituted, namely :—" of any kind or class of cattle in the municipal slaughter houses," and

(iii) that for clause 3 (63) the following be substituted, namely,—“Slaughter-house.”

(63) “Slaughter-house’ means any place used for the slaughter of such cattle, goats, kids or pigs as the Corporation may allow”.

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY:—I beg to support the Rai Bahadur’s first amendment which also stands in my name. I also move that if this motion be not carried, then in clause 388 (2), lines 3 to 5, the words “by a resolution in favour of which not less than two-thirds of the members present and voting have voted” be omitted.

I further move that to clause 389(1), the following proviso be added after the existing proviso :—

“provided also that the Corporation shall not grant license for sale of meat of such kinds or classes of animals as the Corporation have prohibited from slaughter.”

First of all I will explain my position as to why I beg to move these amendments. It will appear from a representation which has been made by the All-India Cow Conference Association as well as the Cow Protection Society that they have suggested the following amendment to the Bill, “that the Corporation may at any time prevent, restrict or regulate the slaughter of any kind or class of cattle in the municipal slaughter-house in Calcutta as may seem to them proper.” I will first of all state that this All-India Cow Conference Association consists not only of Indians but also of Europeans ; not only of Hindus but also of Muhammadans. The Hon’ble Justice Sir John Woodroffe was the President and the Hon’ble Justice Greaves is the present President of this Association. It will appear that the object of this representation is not a political one. It is also not a religious one, but is simply an economic one. That is the reason why

the Cow Protection Society has also made this representation. The Hon'ble Justice Sir Aushutosh Mookherjee is the President of this Society and Mr. Ashraf Ali Khan Chaudhury is the Vice-President. He is a cousin of the Hon'ble the Minister in charge of Agriculture, the Hon'ble Nawab Sayid Nawab Ali Choudhury. Had it been a religious one, I am sure he would not have joined this Association and I may be allowed to say to my Muhammadan brethren that I would not have taken it up. I admit that I am a Hindu but had it been a religious question, I would not have moved the prohibition of slaughtering of Cows only. What about bullocks ? I do not object to the slaughter of bullocks. In Calcutta 90,000 bullocks and cows used to be slaughtered. Out of this 90,000, 60,000 are bullocks. Also 10,000 calves used to be slaughtered. I have never raised my voice against the slaughter of these bullocks. Therefore, it will be apparent that, had I considered it a religious one, I would not have moved these amendments. Simply on economic grounds I have brought forward this matter. With regard to pregnant cows, about 700 pregnant cows used to be slaughtered in Calcutta. It was on the suggestion of Dr. Pierce, the learned Health officer of the Calcutta Corporation, that the Corporation has prohibited the slaughter of pregnant cows and as regards the calves, it was on the suggestion of our esteemed friend, Mr. Jones—I am really glad that he is now a member of this Council—the editor of the statesman and Friend of India, who is really a friend of India, that the Corporation has prohibited the slaughter of calves, with the exception of those which are used for vaccination purposes. Now it will appear that this is purely an economic question, and the special reason why I advocate this measure is to increase the supply of milk and develop agriculture. Is it not a fact that the prices of food-grains have increased during the last few years ? What is the reason ? Shortage of cattle. Is it not a fact that the price of milk has become too dear ? There

was a time when we used to get milk even at 40 seers a rupee, but now in Calcutta we cannot get even $2\frac{1}{2}$ seers for a rupee. What is the result ? The result is disastrous. The shortage of milk supply is one of the principal reasons for the high rate of mortality in Calcutta. So far as tuberculosis is concerned, in 1902, the number of deaths from this disease was 38,000, and in 1917, it has gone up to 100,000. So far as general mortality is concerned, in New Zealand the rate of mortality is 10 per 1,000 ; even in Japan it is 21 per 1,000, but in India it is 38 per 1,000. As regards infant mortality in India it is 260 per 1,000 and so far as Calcutta is concerned it is more than 300 per 1,000. It was 386 per 1,000 in 1920 and the rate of infant mortality is much higher amongst Muhammadans than amongst Hindus, not to speak of Anglo-Indians. Therefore, if any step is taken for reducing the rate of infant mortality in Calcutta, it is the Muhammadans who will be more benefited. If any step is taken for the development of agriculture, it is the Muhammadans again who will be specially benefited, and if any step is taken to reduce the prices of food-grains, it is they who would be more benefited because most of them are very poor. That is the reason why I have suggested that we must take the necessary steps for reducing the rate of infant mortality, for reducing the prices of food-grains especially in Calcutta. It may be said that there are other steps also which may be taken, viz., provision of pasture grounds, stud-bulls, establishment and maintenance of veterinary dispensaries, prohibition of the export of cows from India to foreign countries. I am grateful to the Government, especially to the Hon'ble the Minister in charge of this Bill, for his having accepted these suggestions of the Corporation and for having already provided them in the Bill now under consideration. But that is not enough. You must take the radical step by which we can reduce the rate of infant mortality. Had it been the case that these cows are slaughtered simply for the supply of food

to the poor Anglo-Indians and Muhammadans of Calcutta, the case would have been quite different. But as a matter of fact, cows are slaughtered not only for human consumption but also for the supply of dried meat which is exported in large quantities in Burma. Not only that. A very large number of cows are slaughtered in Calcutta for the supply of hides which are exported in heavy quantities to the foreign ports. It will appear from the administration reports of the Corporation of Calcutta that whenever the price of hides goes up, the number of cows slaughtered also goes up. And whenever the price comes down the number of cows slaughtered also comes down.

Then, Sir, had it been a religious question, the leading Muhammadan gentlemen of India would not have taken part in it. I would draw your attention to the memorable speech of Mr. Mazharul Haq, as the Chairman of the Reception Committee of the All-India Cow Conference Association who, at the meeting held at Patna in 1919, strongly urged that the slaughter of cows should be prohibited. Then Hakim Ajmal Khan, as President of the All-India Moslem League, in the year 1919 at the meeting held at Amritsar, declared that the only step which should be taken for reducing the rate of mortality in India is the prevention of the slaughter of cows,

In the year 1921, on the 7th of February, I put a question to the Hon'ble the Minister in charge of Local Self-Government as regards the high prices and scarcity of milk and also about the rate of infant mortality, and he was kind enough to say that Government were aware that the scarcity of good cow's milk was one of the causes of high infantile mortality. Then, Sir, it was stated that the local bodies were taking the necessary steps, as it was their duty to do so. That is the reason why I have suggested that the Corporation of Calcutta should be authorized to prohibit the slaughter of cows or certain classes of cows.

This question was raised in 1921 in the House of Lords by Lord Tenterdum, and the then Under Secretary of State—I mean His Excellency Lord Lytton, who is our present Governor and of whom we are proud—was kind enough to give a reply that this question was entrusted to the Ministers under the Government of India Act. That is the reason why I appeal to the Hon'ble the Minister in charge of agriculture to take the necessary steps, so that the rate of mortality, especially infant mortality in Calcutta, may be reduced.

Then, even the Amir of Afghanistan, who is an ideal Muhammadan, has been kind enough to legalize to the effect that the slaughter of cows should be prohibited. His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad has also prohibited the slaughter of cows in his own Dominion, and in Bengal, several municipalities have also prohibited the slaughter of cows and calves. It may be said that most of the Commissioners there are Hindus but what about the Amir of Afghanistan and His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad? Are they not true Muhammadans? What is our object in prohibiting the slaughter of cows and not bullocks? It is with a view not only to increase the supply of milk, but also to increase the supply of beef though in course of time. That is the reason why she-goats are not slaughtered by the Hindus. The flesh of he-goats is their food. But in order to keep the supply of goat's flesh, they do not slaughter she-goats. It may be said, and it has been said by our esteemed friend Maulvi Syed Nasim Ali, for whose opinion I have high regard—that this legislation will interfere with private rights. Is it not a fact that building regulations have been enacted in the Bill? Is it not a fact that these regulations will trample down the rights of private persons? Take the case of acquisition of land under the Land Acquisition Act. Is it not an infringement upon private rights—certainly it is, but it must be done because it is absolutely necessary.

(At this stage the member reached the time-limit.)

I shall be very grateful if you would kindly allow me five minutes more.

Mr. President :—Amulya Babu, you had a full quarter of an hour and in that time you have made a very long speech. You have taken us to New Zealand, Japan, and other places.

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—Sir, I have got another amendment and I hope to compress my remarks as much as possible.

Mr. PRESIDENT :—I shall allow you only a minute more and you should try to compress your remarks as much as possible.

BABU AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—Very well, Sir. The Corporation, as I have said, has already prohibited the slaughter of calves and pregnant cows ; and if this clause be omitted altogether, the Commissioners will be in a false position, because, in order to legalize it, the Select committee have made this provision which is a very reasonable one. There are many safeguards, for instance, there is the provision of two-thirds majority. My object is to increase the milk supply. The recommendation of the Select Committee is a very cautious one and I would appeal to my Muham-madan friends to accept it as a compromise.

The amendments were put and lost.

Tax on Landholders.

Babu Surendra Nath^{*} Mullick moved an amendment for license-tax on landholder.

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I oppose the amendment. I fear it will probably be said that I do so because I am one of the landlords. But Sir, being one of them, I know their grievances. The question is whether such a tax should be levied upon them or not. It will appear from the schedule that under the existing Act a vakil of the High Court of Calcutta is to pay a license fee of Rs. 50 irrespective of his income, and even if his income be more than Rs. 50,000 he is to pay only Rs. 50. However, our esteemed friend Mr. Malik who was a leading member of the Alipore Bar, sought to redress their grievances and he said that as there were a large number of vakils whose income was only nominal the amount payable by them might be reduced. As will appear from the schedule of the Bill, in the case of those vakils who do not pay any income tax, the amount has been reduced from Rs. 50 to Rs. 25 per annum. Therefore, Sir, as voicing the grievances of the landholders I cannot but oppose the amendment.

Sir, the landholders of Calcutta have already been suffering much owing to the operation of the Calcutta Rent Act. It may be said that the Act would last for another year only, but there is no knowing that it will not last for ever. I do not find any such provision in the Madras Act, Bombay Act or any Municipal Act in any of the provinces of India or even in the English Country Council Act. The Acting Chairman says that even the hawkers will have to pay a license fee of Re. 1 per annum. I am strongly opposed to it and I am really sorry that my objection has been disallowed by the Select Committee. So far as this is concern-

ed, it was thoroughly discussed in the Select Committee and was rejected by an overwhelming majority of votes. Sir, the landholders of Calcutta pay very heavy rates and though the maximum rate is 23 per cent and I am afraid that, in course of time, the Corporation shall be under the painful necessity of increasing the rates. In addition to this consolidated rate the landholders have to pay a transfer duty of 2 per cent. I beg to submit that the money which they invest in land and buildings is investment money. If a man invests a lakh of rupees in buildings and has to pay this tax, in addition to his income-tax and municipal rates, it will be a source of great hardship to him. But if a man invests his money in loans on landed property or any other business he shall have to pay income-tax.

The Aye being 1 and the noes 50, the amendment was lost.

Tax on Newspapers.

BABU AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I beg to move that in Schedule V, rule 1, item 10 be omitted, and that in Schedule V, rule 1, item 26 be omitted.

It will appear from this Schedule that the proprietor of a newspaper periodical or journal would be called upon to take out a license and pay a fee of Rs. 50 or Rs. 100 per annum. I beg to submit that there is no such provision under the existing Act. A newspaper is an organ through which we are in a position to ascertain the views and grievances of the public at large, and it is also through these newspapers that people also know the views of the Government. These papers help not only the people but also the Government, therefore it is not desirable that the proprietors of these

newspapers should be taxed ; some of these papers, so far as I know, are not paying ; therefore, apart from the question of the amount of taxation, I beg to submit that it is highly objectionable, and it is on that principle that I object to it.

The amendment was put and lost.

Water Supply.

Babu JATINDRA NATH BOSE moved that clause 248 (1) (a) be omitted.

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—First of all I would support the amendment No. 396, and if it is not carried, then I would insist on my amendment No. 326, and if it is not carried, then I would insist on my amendment No. 599, but I must strongly oppose No. 393.

I fail to understand as to why the water supply should not be cut off from a house which is unoccupied. Because in the case of a vacant holding the supply of filtered water will be nothing but a mere waste and, further, as soon as a house is vacant, it would be the proper duty of the Corporation to cut off the water supply from that house. As regards sub-clause (b), I beg to submit that it should be omitted altogether. Under the sub-clause "the Corporation may cut off the water connection if (in the case of a bustee the owner, or (in other ca se) the occupier, of the premises fails, for 15 days after the due presentation of a bill or the due service of notice, to pay any sum due to the Corporation from him in respect of such permises," that is to say, if a person fails to pay any rates and taxes, due from him, then the water conection will be cut off not in respect of such prēmises for which he fails to pay rates and taxes, but in respect of other premises. Suppose a person has got a landed property

in Ward No. 1 and he resides in Ward No. 25. If he does not pay the rates and taxes in respect of his property in Ward No. 1, then the Corporation may cut off the water connection from his dwelling house situated in Ward No. 25. I submit that it would be a source of great hardship on him. The Indian Association have expressed the opinion that "it would be barbarous to cut off the water supply on the ground of the failure of the owner to pay rates and taxes. Then, Sir, there are other measures which can be taken by the Corporation. If he does not pay the rates in respect of any premises, the Corporation can bring a suit against him for default and can attach his moveable property for the arrears. But, Sir, let the Corporation take whatever coercive measures they may take under the law, let not the Corporation cut off the water connection on the ground of the failure on the part of the owner to pay rates and taxes in respect of those premises or any other premises. In the case of a bustee, who is to suffer? It is not the bustee owner. But if the bustee owner does not pay municipal rates and taxes he will not suffer. It is the poor hut owners, the poor people who will suffer. If you do not supply the filtered water to the bustee people, the result would be rather disastrous. Cholera will break out; and, as we all know the death-rate is already very high in bustees, it will go up further. Then, Sir, when the Calcutta Municipal Bill of 1899 was under discussion all the hon'ble Indian members of the Council strongly opposed the proposal and suggested that this clause should be omitted altogether. They strongly pointed out that it would be dangerous to cut off the water connection if the owner fails to pay the rates. The Bill may not be duly presented to the person concerned. I know of several cases in which notice is not properly served, so as to enable the owner to contest the amount of the Bill. Suppose Rs. 500 is the Bill presented to him for not filling up an insanitary tank and the owner contests that amount may not be due from him. The

Corporation under this sub-clause may cut off the supply of filtered water from his dwelling house. I have already drawn attention to the fact that, if the Corporation cut off the water supply of building in respect of which he is in arrears, there may be some justification. But if a person has got 100 houses and if he pays rates in respect of 99 houses but be in arrears for one house which may not be due to neglect on his part, would the Corporation be justified in cutting off the water supply from his very dwelling house on this ground ?

With these few words I strongly support my amendment and oppose the motion for omission of sub-clause (1) (a).

The motion was carried.

REMOVAL OF HUTS WITHIN STREET ALIGNMENTS.

BABU AMULYA DHONE ADDY :— I move—

(i) That in clause 356, sub-clause (1), line 2, for the words “five years” the following words be substituted, namely :—

“seven years in the case of a golpata hut and ten years in the case of a tiled hut ;”

(ii) That in clause 356, sub-clause (1), line 7, for the words “owner of the land or the owners or occupiers” the “owner” be substituted, and

(iii) that in clause 356, sub-clause (2), lines 4 to 6, all the words beginning with the words “but such compensation” be omitted.

Sir, this is a new section and there is no such provision either in the existing Act or in the Bombay Municipal Act

or in any other Municipal Act of India. It clearly shows that there is going to be one law for the rich and another for the poor. Under this clause the owner of a bustee is called upon to remove huts within five years so as to comply with bustee street alignment lines. In the case of masonry buildings, if a person happens to be the owner of a block of masonry buildings he cannot be called upon to remove his buildings or any portion thereof which falls within the alignment of a street unless he is paid adequate compensation for the removal of his buildings and for the acquisition of his lands. But if he happens to be the owner of a block of huts and if some of the huts fall within the alignment of a bustee street or even hut alignment line, he can be called to remove those huts or portion thereof within five years. Sub-clause (2) says—

“When a hut has been removed under the provisions of sub-clause (i), the Corporation shall pay to the owner thereof such compensation as they may consider to be reasonable.

It is alright, Sir, up to this point, but I would draw attention to the words “but such compensation shall in no case exceed the value of the hut less the value of the materials thereof.” I suggest that this portion should be omitted altogether. There is no such provision in the case of masonry buildings. In the case of masonry buildings the owner is paid compensation for the acquisition of land as also compensation for the removal of any portion of masonry buildings. But in the case of huts the owner of the land or the owner or occupier of the huts is called upon to remove the huts or portion thereof and the compensation which will be paid to the owner of the huts will be quite inadequate.

Then, as regards the period, in the original Bill the period was seven years, but the Select Committee have reduced it to five years. Is it to be presumed that the life of a hut is

only five years ? Of course in the case of a golpata hut it may be five or six years. But what about tiled huts ? Is the life of a tiled hut only five years ? Certainly not. I would draw attention to the very defective wording of this clause. It says that the Corporation may require the owner of the land to remove the hut. I may say here that the owner of the land may not necessarily be the owner of the hut. It is the tenants who are the owners of the huts. Therefore, the owner of the land should be called upon to remove the hut. How can you expect a person to remove a building which does not belong to him ? Then again this clause calls upon an occupier to remove the hut. How can you expect him to remove a hut which does not belong to him ? What interest has he except to live therein for a few days only ? How can you call upon him to vacate ? So it appears that this clause is not only defective but highly objectionable. Under this clause you call upon the owner or occupier to remove the hut and you will pay him only such compensation as shall in no case exceed the value of the materials. Why will you not pay the value of the materials ? It may be argued that the owner gets the materials. But what is the value of the materials ? Further, I may point out that this clause has been objected to by several public bodies of Calcutta. Therefore, I suggest that this clause be omitted altogether and if it is retained then it should be improved in the terms as set forth in my amendment.

The amendment was put and lost.

Compensation for the destruction of huts.

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY:—I move that in clause 433 (2), line 2, the word “substantial” be omitted.

Under this clause if the Health Officer is of opinion that the destruction of any hut is necessary to prevent the spread of any dangerous disease, he may take measures for having such a hut destroyed. Under sub-clause (2), compensation shall be paid by the Corporation to any person who sustains substantial damage by the destruction of such hut. What I object to is the word “substantial.” If a hut is destroyed for the prevention of the spread of any infectious disease, the owner of such a hut (who may be a very poor man) would not be entitled to get any compensation for its destruction unless the damage be a substantial one. I fail to understand why he should not be entitled to any compensation for the destruction of a hut unless the loss is a substantial one. Is it because he is a poor man? In the case of masonry building, if the Corporation insists on its removal for any purpose, the owner is entitled to full compensation. Why make this invidious distinction between a poor man who happens to own a hut, and a rich man who owns a masonry building? The word “substantial” is a vague term. Who will find out whether the damage is substantial or not? The Health Officer or his subordinate will decide whether the damage is substantial. I know of cases in which no compensation was paid to poor men for the destruction of their huts simply on the ground that the damage was not substantial. I therefore appeal on behalf of the poor to grant compensation for the destruction of their huts, however trifling the amount may be.

Mr. S. W. GOODE :—In a former clause of this Bill it has been provided that compensation amounting to the value

of the hut, less the value of the materials thereof, should be awarded when huts are demolished. I think that might be a reasonable compromise in the present case. Government would be prepared to move that the clause be amended as follows " Compensation shall be paid not exceeding the value of the hut, less the value of the materials thereof "

It has been pointed out by a friend of mine—it is one of the travesties of hasty legislation—that it will be improper to insert the words " value of the hut less the value of the materials thereof " because ex-hypothesi the materials would have been destroyed. We would, therefore, accept the amendment in this form—" Compensation not exceeding the value of the hut shall be paid by the Corporation to any person who sustains loss," omitting the word " substantial." I understand that Babu Amulya Dhone Addy will accept this suggestion.

The modified amendment was then put and agreed to.

Fee For Building—Surveyors.

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I move that in the table appended to clause 478 after the entry relating to section 311, sub-section (1), the following new entry be inserted in columns 1, 2, and 3 respectively, namely :—

1		3	4
Section 323, Sub-section (2)	Prohibition on Licensed building—surveyor demand- ing or receiving more than the prescribed fee	Two hundred and fifty rupees.	

It will appear from clause 322 that the Corporation have been authorized to grant licenses to building-surveyors and in the next clause they have been authorized to prescribe a scale of fees which may be charged by these surveyors. But there is no penalty clause under which these surveyors may be punished for their charging more than the prescribed rate. There is a similar provision in the case of licensed plumbers where the Corporation may prescribe a scale of fees and if a plumber charges more than that fee he is liable to criminal prosecution. There is a specific provision to this effect under the Act. I fail to understand why no such provision has been made in the case of licensed building surveyors. Most probably it is an oversight, and in order to rectify it, I make this suggestion for the consideration of the House.

Mr. S. W. Goode :—I was prepared to argue that the amendment was quite unnecessary first because a person from whom an excessive fee is demanded might refuse to pay it, and secondly, because the license of the building surveyor may be cancelled if he acts improperly. But I admit that there is great force in the analogy to which Babu Amulya Dhone Addy has drawn our attention and I would, therefore, accept the proposal.

I would accept it with the change that the penalty should be Rs. 100 which is what we provided in the case of licensed plumbers, and the words "in the absence of a written contract" be added after the words contained in the second column.

The amended motion was then put and agreed to.

Tax on Palanquins.

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I move that in Schedule VII, Item No. 11 be omitted.

Under this item a license fee of Rs 2 is to be imposed every half-year. I admit that it is a small amount, but I object to it on principle as it would be a tax on labour, and I want to show my sympathy for the poor labourers.

Mr. S. W. Goode ;—Sir, I would be prepared to accept the amendment, but with a slight modification, that is, we will omit "palanquins" but would retain "rickshaws".

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I accept the modification,

The amended motion was then put agreed to.

A REGISTER OF PREMISES.

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I move that to Schedule XV, after rule 8, the following new rule be added, namely :—

"9. The Corporation shall keep a register of all alterations made by them in the names of streets and in the numbers of houses therein, and such register shall be kept in such a form as to show the date of every such alteration, and the name of the street and the number of the premises previous to such alteration as well as the new name of the street and the new number of the premises. It shall be lawful for any person to inspect such register and to take a copy of any portion thereof upon payment of such reasonable fee as the Corporation may from time to time determine."

In this connection I would draw the attention of the Council to the note of Babu Bepin Chandra Mallik which he submitted to the Corporation and which will be found in the Corporation minutes. The numbers of premises are generally changed by the Corporation and I have received serious complaints from many gentlemen about these not being kept in a proper form in the Corporation offices.* Therefore I move this amendment.

Mr. S. W. GOODE :—I am afraid this proposal would entail a great deal of labour on the Corporation and the hon'ble member should remember that already in the Corporation Proceedings we have got a record of the changes in the names of streets. If the Corporation has to record all these details of the changes in numbers which may be consequential upon the changes in the names of streets, it would, as I have already said, entail a great deal of labour on the Corporation. It seems to me that it would be a very simple matter for the owner of the property to keep a history of the premises himself. Why should he depend on the Corporation for this ?

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

The Ayes being 39 and the Noes 25, the motion was carried.

CALCUTTA MUNICIPAL BILL.

Conclusion.

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—I beg to give my fullest support to the Bill as amended by this Council. Sir, when this Bill was introduced here and especially by the Hon'ble the Minister in charge of Local Self-Government, who is really the father of agitation for Home Rule for India, I was under the impression that this Bill would be an ideal one, but I am sorry to find that it has still certain defects. I admit, Sir, that the existing Act is a highly defective one. I admit that material improvements have been made in the Bill. I admit that bustee, street, and building regulations have been materially improved. I admit that steps have been taken under which the Corporation will be in a position to improve the quality of milk, oil, and other food-stuffs, I also admit that the Corporation is going to be authorized to establish veterinary charitable dispensaries, dairy farms, etc., I also admit that the constitution provided for the Corporation of Calcutta is going to be materially improved. Under the existing Act there are three municipal authorities. But under the Bill the Corporation will be the supreme authority. Under the existing Act the Chairman is a municipal authority, he is not bound even to accept the suggestion of the Corporation but under the Bill as amended by the Council the Chairman will be nothing but the Executive Officer of the Corporation, and is bound to obey the orders of the Corporation. But, Sir, notwithstanding all these improvements, I beg to submit that injustice has been done to 4 classes of persons.

Though the franchise has been lowered and extended but the right of plural voting which has been enjoyed by the landholders since 1888 is going to be abolished. Then, Sir,

injustice has been done to the Indian merchants and traders of Calcutta. Though the number of seats allotted to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce has been increased, I am sorry to say that no seat has been allotted to the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce.* Thus invidious distinction has been made between European merchants and traders and Indian merchants and traders of Calcutta. I also find that injustice has been done to the non-Muhammadans of Calcutta, and though the Muhammadans contribute only one-tenth of the total municipal revenue of Calcutta, 16 seats have been allotted to them. It is a case of glaring injustice to the non-Muhammadans of Calcutta. I also find that injustice has been done to the poor infants of Calcutta. The Corporation has not been authorized to prohibit or even to restrict the slaughter of calves or pregnant cows, though it was with a view to increase the supply of milk, the dearth of which is well-known to everybody. The rate of infant mortality in this city is one of the heaviest in the world. Notwithstanding these cases of injustice, I must say that material improvement has been made to the Bill and, Sir, I may be allowed to say that most of the suggestions of the Corporation as well as of my humble self have been accepted by the Government and I take this opportunity of thanking from the bottom of my heart Mr. Goode for his having kindly given so patient a hearing to our suggestions and for accepting those suggestions which appeared to him to be reasonable.

I have pointed out the defects, because I am strongly of opinion that these are the defects of the municipal law as it is going to be enacted ; and I hope and trust that in course of time the Hon'ble the Minister in charge will be convinced of my arguments and will introduce a Bill for the amendment of the law. Sir, I have the greatest confidence in him as he is my political guru and it is through his exertions that the municipal law has been materially improved. Sir, with these remarks I strongly support this Bill.

Appendix A.

To

THE HON'BLE FINANCE MEMBER,
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit the following note for your favourable consideration :—

Under the statutes of 1833 & 1858 all the revenues raised in any province from whatever sources it might have been raised, belonged to the Government of India and the Local Governments got what they were allowed by the Supreme Government. This division of revenue was known as the financial settlement which used to be made from year to year, then in some provinces were made for 5 years and in other provinces for less periods. This division was at the absolute descretion of the Government of India and every province was allowed certain sum as was supposed in the opinion of the Government of India to be its due. The result showed that there had been inequalities in the revenues distributed by the Government of India. Under this system, our province always was under a great pressure of financial difficulties and our ordinary dole was supplemented by the Supreme Government by occasional grants in matters of greatest need and urgency, but this was few and far between. With the reform proposal, it was inevitable that that system was to be abolished and that each province would be made independent in the matter of finance.

In order to effect the desired separation of Central from Provincial Finance the Montagu Chelmsford Report (Chapter VIII para 203) proposed that the central exchequer should receive the whole of the Income Tax, and the revenue from general stamps and Customs, and the Provincial Govern-

ments should retain the entire receipt from land revenue, irrigation, excise and judicial stamps. To meet the deficit in the Imperial Revenue, it was proposed that every province should pay to the Government of India 87% of the additional revenue which it got under the rearrangement. In assessing this, the authors of the report met with a serious obstacle in the disparity, which already exists between Local Governments in the pitch of their revenues and the scale of their expenditure—a disparity deep-rooted in the economic position of the different provinces, their revenue history and the tale of their oft-revised financial arrangement with the Central Government. (Chapter 1 of Meston Committee report preamble).

Their ultimate choice fell upon an assessment in the ratio of the gross surplus which they estimated that each province would enjoy under the new allocation of resources. They advised that the whole question should be investigated by the Statutory Commission after ten years' working.

But on the earnest representation by the Government of India for an earlier treatment of the matter, the Meston Committee was appointed to investigate the matter. Before the Meston Committee, the Finance Committee of the late Bengal Council proposed that the share of the Government of India in land revenue should remain as it was, with the responsibility of that Government regarding famine—relief and that duties on exports and revenues from non-judicial stamps be made provincial and that the deficit in the Government of India was to be met by proportionate contribution from each province.

The proposal of the Meston Committee practically endorsed the distribution of revenues proposed in the Montagu Chelmsford report except that "Non-Judicial Stamps" was made provincial. The report also proposed a new proportion regarding the contribution to be paid by each Local Government to the Central Government.

By this new proposal Bengal which was most adversely affected by the new adjustment and had to begin with a heavy deficit, was to pay permanently the largest share in the deficit of Government of India.

Standara of Contributions.

Province	Per cent cotribution to deficit.
Madras	17
Bombay	13
Bengal	19
United Provinces	18
Punjab	9
Behar & Orissa	10

The Finance Committee as aforesaid lodged a strong protest against this Meston Committee's report. Important Associations like the British Indian Association, the Indian Association, the National Liberal League, the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce, the Marwari Association, the Marwari Chamber of Commerce also sent in representations. The late Council also expressed their dissatisfaction and pressed for the adoption of the views put forward by the Financial Committee as aforesaid.

The joint Parliamentary Select Committee made certain modifications but main points were not conceded and in a hurry, adopted the Meston Committee report as amended by them. The Committee however, recognised the financial difficulty of Bengal and commended it to the special consideration of the Government of India. This Council in February last passed a resolution on this point and the Government of Bengal also sent a strong representation for the same.

For detailed account see "C"

This Council, in the February session, unanimously passed the following resolution :—

" This Council recommends to the Government that the Government of India be approached immediately with the request that the early effect be given to the following recommendation contained in the second report of the Parliamentary Joint Select Committee i. e. " The Committee desire to add their recognition of the peculiar financial difficulties of the Presidency of Bengal, which they accordingly commend to the special consideration of the Government of India."

Well, this resolution was passed a few days before the presentation of the Budget under the shadow and apprehension of huge deficit in our financial position, and this fear was realised, for we are in a deficit of 2 crores of rupees. The worst, still is that this deficit is to be a permanent feature of our Budget, unless the Government of India comes to our rescue as recommended by the Parliamentary Committee.

The resolution passed by this Council was forwarded to the Government of India with recommendation by the Bengal Government but no reply as yet. It is bare justice which we want and demand. The justice of our cause has been acknowledged by the British parliament and the recommendation of the Joint Parliamentary Committee is therefore binding upon the Government of India. The delay the Supreme Government is making is disastrous. The shape which the financial assistance is to take, has been placed before the Government of India by the public bodies, the press and the Bengal Government. Our popular Minister, the Hon'ble Mr. P. C. Mitter while Secretary of the National Liberal League, in his excellent memorial submitted facts and figures which can not be challenged and has not been challenged even by the Government of India.

Contributions to the Government of India from Bengal under the heads of customs and income tax are several times

higher than those of all other provinces including even Bombay and though the Land Revenue in Bengal is permanently fixed and therefore inexpansive and is lower than the Land Revenue of other big provinces, and though Bengal contributes more to the Imperial exchequer on the heads of income-Tax and custom duties yet Bengal has been made to pay the largest percentage to meet the deficit of the Supreme Government.

Proposals are therefore made to make income-tax raised in this province allotted to it wholly or partly or export duty on jute made provincial. This jute industry is purely a Bengal industry and the income-tax derived from firms purely confined to Bengal can be ascertained without difficulty, it may be that some special forms of returns may be necessary.

The logic of this demand is simply unanswerable, it would be mere waste of time to go into details on that score here over again.

N. B. It has been ascertained that the export duty on jute will be about 2 crores just to meet our deficit. In the Montagu Chelmsford report Income-Tax is proposed to be made wholly Imperial for (1) maintaining a uniform rate throughout the country and (2) because in case of ramifying enterprises with their business centre in some locality, the province in which the tax is paid is not necessarily the province in which the income is earned.

To this, the reply is as follows :—

As to the first ground, that objection can be met if the legislation regarding the tax is kept in the hands of the Central Government. As to the second ground, that is no doubt complex but the difficulty is not unsurmountable. The difficulty is in respect of firms having business centres in more than one province, but this question can be confined so far as Bengal is concerned to certain Mines in Behar and Tea gardens in Assam, the managing agents of all these concerns are the same and located in Calcutta.

That is a question of apportionment between Bengal, Behar & Assam which can satisfactorily be ascertained and determined by these provinces among themselves and that can not be the reason why the income-tax levied from those firms and the income-tax as a whole should be made imperial source of revenue.

Again the Bengal Government submitted certain returns on the income-tax levied upon business firms having head quarters in Calcutta, but having coal fields in Behar and tea gardens in Assam. About 80% of the local revenue is derived from Bengal and only about 20% outside Bengal. So, if the Government is disposed to locate the income-tax in the different provinces, it can do so without much difficulty.

I want to make one suggestion more, the Government of India was also in deficit and there is no prospect of better days unless strictest economy is practised all round. My suggestion is that duties may be imposed on the export of new produces that are exported from our country to foreign countries. That will minimise export and stimulate home-industries on those produces and at the same time bring in some additional revenue to the Government. See "A."

In this connection I beg to point out that the prohibition of the export of food-grains or control over it does not always conduce to the welfare of our country.

Take one instance only that of rice, I have been in the rice-business throught my life, in fact it is my hereditary business i.e. export of rice chiefly old hard table rice. In the prewar days and some years before it, there was no restriction to export, on the contrary there was export on large scale; inspite of that heavy export, price of rice was much lower than that at present. Therefore it can easily be seen that the high price of rice is not due to export. The statistics will show that the production is not now on the whole less than before, rather in the increase every year. (See "B") So, if all restrictions to the export of food-grains be with-

drawn and duty is imposed on the export of food-grains, this will curtail export and bring in some revenues and at the same time benefit the growers by exporting the surplus which the country does not require.

Let the duties, hereby proposed, upon the export of raw produce for manufacturing purposes and those on the export of food-grains be made imperial sources of revenue. Then there will be no difficulty in allocating the same to the different provinces and the Central Government may give up income-tax to Bengal.

"A"

Export of Indian Merchandise.

	1920.	£bs.
Rice		8345258
Wheat		722735
Lac		3199927
Coal		270237
Groundnut seeds		1666298
Cotton Seed		1385616
Linseed		580054
Sesumum		1077900
Rape		1520183
Wool raw		935261
Cotton raw		9803544
Bones	"B"	582073

General Summary.

	1904-05		1912-13	
	Rs. in lakhs		Rs. in lakhs	
Wheat raised (in 1000 tons)	7582	,,	9853	,,
Rice " "	22423	,,	28484	,,
Cotton " "	3791	,,	4610	,,
Jute* " "	7400	,,	9843	,,

Injustice done to Bengal under the old system.

“C”

Under the old system—

1. Bengal (in 1920) with a population of 45 millions was allowed by the Government of India, an income of Rs. 8 crores and 95 lakhs, while Bombay with a population of 19 millions was allowed an income of Rs. 13½ crores. Madras with a population of 41 millions with an income of Rs. 10½ crores—the United Provinces with a population of 47 millions with Rs. 11½ crores—the Punjab with a population of 20 millions with Rs. 7½ crores and Burma with a population of 82 millions with Rs 7½ crores.

2. Comparing the sources of revenue controlled by the Bengal Government it appears that the total revenue raised in 1919-20 was Rs. 31¼ crores, in Madras it was Rs. 20 crores, in the United Provinces, it was Rs. 13¼ crores. It will thus be seen that although Bengal raised the highest amount of revenue absolutely as well as proportionately to population, it was paid the minimum amount to meet its own administrative needs. The result was that in Bengal, more than any other province, the needs of sanitation and education have been systematically starved. This was the initial injustice under which Bengal was suffering before the reforms and the reforms did not right the wrongs.

Under the Reform Scheme.

Montague Chelmsford Report—

In chapter VII the question of changing the system of financial relations between the Central and the provincial Governments so as to make the Provincial Governments independent of the central Government for the means of provincial development is dealt with.

The principle laid down (in para 201) is that an estimate should at first be made of the scale of expenditure required for the up-keep and development of the services which clearly appertain to the Indian sphere, that resources with which to meet this expenditure should be secured to the Government of India and that all other revenues should then be handed over to the Provincial Governments which would thenceforth be held wholly responsible for the development of all provincial services.

But without proper enquiry, as to the actual needs of the Imperial and Provincial Governments, the authors of the report, simply maintained the main heads of revenue which were derived between the Central and Provincial Governments. So, Bengal, though suffering under the old system, suffers more by the new arrangement also.

The excise revenue is made Provincial and so also land revenue.

Land Revenue is made provincial on the ground that its assessment and collection are intimately connected with administration in rural areas. Irrigation is made provincial as this should materially follow Land Revenue.

But why should income-tax be made Imperial? Is it because as they say, it is necessary to maintain a uniform rate throughout the country and because the income is not derived from an industry confined in one province only? But as regards other Imperial heads such as customs, salt & nothing is said as to why it was necessary to be Imperial.

Now as to Land Revenue—

Land Revenue in Bengal is permanently settled or reassessed.

The revenue derived from these sources in different provinces are :—

In 1919-20.

	Imperial Share Rs. in lakhs	Provincial Share Rs. in lakhs	Total Rs. in lakhs
1. Bengal	130	166	296
2. Madras	305	305	610
3. Bombay	217	372	589
4. United Provinces	396	261	657
6. The Punjab	157	151	302

Excise.

	Imperial Share Rs. in lakhs	Provincial Share Rs. in lakhs	Total Rs. in lakhs
1. Madras	234	335	568
2. Bombay	nil	395	395
3. Bengal	nil	187	187
4. United Provinces	49	14	63
5. The Punjab	55	55	110

**Major irrigation including land
revenue to irrigation.**

	Imperial Rs. in lakhs	Provincial Rs. in lakhs	Total Rs. in lakhs
1. Madras	55	55	110
2. Bombay	21	21	42
3. Bengal	1½	1½	3
4. United Provinces	25	101	125
5. Punjab	214	214	428

N. B.—All these heads are now provincial, but Bengal's income under these heads is far less than that of the other provinces.

**Now take the case of income-tax
1919-20.**

	Imperial Rs. in lakhs	Provincial Rs. in lakhs	Total Rs. in lakhs
1. Bengal	763	88	851
2. Madras	82	39	121
3. Bombay	602	122	724
4. United Provinces	57	25	82
5. The Punjab	26	20	46

Thus heads of revenue selected to be made Provincial are those in which Madras, the United Provinces and the Punjab greatly benefit, but Bengal is the greatest loser, and income-tax which was formerly divided, is now made wholly Imperial, as the amount raised in Bengal is very high.

YOURS TRULY,

Appendix B.

*Minutes of the Proceedings of an Adjourned Meeting
of the Corporation of Calcutta, held at the Central
Municipal Office, on Saturday the 31st May,
1919, at 4-30 P.M.*

1. RICE PROBLEM IN CALCUTTA :—The Corporation were asked to further consider the following resolutions moved by Mr. James Wyness, President of the Markets Special Committee, at the meeting of the Corporation held on the 29th instant.

(1) That the Corporation do address the Government of India, through the Government of Bengal, on the difficulties of the present situation as regards the price of rice

and other food-stuffs and suggest for their consideration whether by some substantial reduction in the extra provincial or maritime exports or by arrangement for concerted purchase for other provinces or by commandeering of stocks or by any other means the present alarming wholesale prices of rice in Calcutta cannot be reduced.

(2) That as regards retail prices, the figures submitted do not point to any profiteering, but the Corporation are of opinion that further special investigation should be made by their officers before the position is accepted.

The above resolutions were moved at the instance of the Markets Special Committee, and were still under discussion when the meeting adjourned.

Babu Priya Nath Mallik said that this was a matter upon which there were no two opinions. He thanked with all his heart Mr. Wyness President of the Markets Committee, for coming forward on behalf of the poor and middle classes who were in absolute difficulties. He was aware that there were people even in Calcutta who did not get more than one meal a day. He had been told by Babu Amulya Dhone Addy that there were various reasons why there had been this rise in the price of rice. He remembered the two famines in Bengal and he could assure the House that the price of rice on those occasions did not rise to what it was now. Then the price was not more than Rs. 6 per maund. Now they could not get the coarsest rice at less than Rs. 8 per maund while ordinary rice was Rs. 9 per maund. How could the poor pay Rs. 8 and Rs. 10 per maund for rice and live in Calcutta? There was the same trouble in the mofussil. The principal reason for this difficulty was that export had not been stopped while the freight for Burma rice had been increased from Rs. 5 to Rs. 22 and had now been reduced to Rs. 20. Apparently the Home Government had been wrongly informed that there was a bumper crop in Bengal. He had opportunities of going over most portions of Bengal

in his professional capacity and he had seen that there had not been a bumper crop but a failure of the crop in many places. The failures of the Government to prohibit export of rice as well as the people being forced to cultivate jute in place of rice, had brought about this catastrophe. It was a catastrophe because rice which was the staple food of the people, could not be had at a reasonable price. The resolution moved by Mr. Wyness should be carried.

Babu Amulyadhane Addy thanked the Markets Committee and specially its worthy President for having drawn the special attention of the Corporation to the abnormal price of rice in Calcutta and having taken the initiative in making suggestions for a representation to Government so as to reduce the price of rice. Mr. Wyness had made certain suggestions for the consideration of the Government. These suggestions appeared to him to be vague. The suggestions of this corporation were expected to be practicable as this Corporation consisted of the leading members of the mercantile community of Calcutta. The first suggestion made was to have a substantial reduction in the extra provincial exports namely, to have further restriction in the export of rice from Bengal to other Provinces of India. He was sorry to state that he objected to that suggestion. The condition of the other provinces was more deplorable than that of Bengal. From the Indian Trade Journal it would be found that the crop in Bengal was 23 per cent less than last year, Madras 35 per cent less, the United Provinces 47 per cent less and the Central Provinces 60 per cent less. It might be said that charity began at home and that they should see that the price of rice in Bengal, especially in Calcutta, was reasonably reduced and should not consider the grievances of the people of other Provinces. He submitted that if they made further restriction in the export of rice from Bengal to other Provinces the result would be that other Provinces would also make further restriction in the export

of other food grains from those Provinces into Bengal. He would give two instances.

Take the case of wheat. A very small quantity of wheat was grown in Bengal. The Calcutta Gazette showed that during the last official year 37 lakhs of maunds of wheat were imported from the other Provinces into Calcutta and a certain quantity was exported to foreign countries. In the case of gram and pulses, 33 lakhs of maunds were imported from the United Provinces and other Provinces into Calcutta. Notwithstanding the present restriction in the import of these food grains from other Provinces into Calcutta, the price of wheat in Calcutta had gone up to Rs. 7 per maund and in the case of gram from Rs 5-8-11 to Rs 7 per maund. The result would be that the suffering of the people of Bengal would be more than at present.

But there was another suggestion made, namely that a substantial reduction should be made in maritime export. He wanted to go further. The proposal was that they should restrict the export of rice to foreign countries. He submitted that they should prohibit it altogether. That was why he moved an amendment that a representation be made to the Government to prohibit the export of rice from Burma and India to foreign countries. Of course, as suggested by the Markets Committee representation should be made to the Government of India through the Government of Bengal. He gathered from page 27 of the Indian Trade Journal published by the Government of India that a very heavy quantity of rice used to be exported from Burma to foreign countries. In 1918 from January to May the total quantity of rice exported from Rangoon to foreign countries was 7,05,000 tons. The quantity had been materially reduced so that the suggestion of the Markets Committee had already been given effect to by the Government but notwithstanding that a very heavy quantity had been allowed to be exported from Rangoon to foreign countries. As would appear from the Indian Trade

Journal from the 1st January last up to the 24th May, 2,21,000 tons of rice had been allowed to be exported from Rangoon alone to foreign countries. That corresponded to 55 lakhs of maunds during the last four months and certainly the quantity would materially go up during the next four months. That was coarse rice. That was the rice consumed by Indians during famine. There was a great deficit in the rice crop in India this year and there was a bumper crop in Burma. Burma was the only country which could meet the deficit in India. Was it advisable in the circumstances to allow the export of rice from Burma to foreign countries? He was an exporter of rice but he must say on behalf of Bengal that it was not advisable at present to allow the export of rice from Burma to foreign countries. A certain quantity of rice was allowed to be exported to Australia. There might be some justification for that because they had got wheat from Australia. A certain quantity of rice was exported to Java. There was some justification for that also because they got sugar from Java. Sugar was a luxury to Indian while rice was a necessity. He did not find any justification for the export of Burma rice to the Straits Settlements. There was no justification whatever for the export of Burma rice to Europe as it was not used there for human consumption but for the manufacture of starch and for distillation purposes. Was it advisable in the circumstances to allow the export of rice from Burma to Europe for the manufacture of starch and for distillation purposes instead of the import of this rice into India whose people were starving for want of it? Even from Bengal a certain quantity had been allowed to be exported. During the last four months 49,000 tons of rice had been exported from Calcutta alone to foreign countries. Bengal rice was consumed in Europe but it was a luxury there whereas it was a necessity of life in India. He therefore moved as an amendment (1) "That a representation be made to the Government to prevent the export of rice

from Burma and India to foreign countries." He had five amendments in all and he asked that each one may be put separately.

The second amendment was (2) "That a representation be made to the Government to permit the import of Burma rice for consumption in Bengal." They would be astonished to hear that not a single grain of Burma rice was allowed to be consumed in Bengal. It passed through Calcutta and the public were under the impression that a certain portion of it was consumed in Bengal but that was not a fact. It was exported to the Provinces other than Bengal. That was the reason the price of coarse rice in Bengal had so materially gone up. In Bengal coarse rice was formerly not more than Rs. 5 per maund. Now it was not available in Calcutta and the price had gone up to Rs. 7 per maund. There was no competition, and the absence of competition with Burma was responsible for the high price especially coarse rice in Bengal. It might be said that the price in other Provinces was higher. It was absolutely necessary that the Government should allow the import of Burma rice which was the cheapest rice in the world for consumption in Bengal. If they were favoured with that, the price of rice suitable for consumption of the poor would materially come down, not less than a rupee in a day. No reason had been given why they should not purchase Burma rice here. He asked for the reason and was informed that was the government order.

The third amendment was (3) 'That a representation be made to the Government to reduce the rate of freight on rice from Burma to Calcutta.' This was a technical question and it should be referred to a Committee but the question was a very urgent one and they should not make any delay in their submission to Government. The problem was an exceptionally complex one and the solution was extremely difficult, if not impossible. The rate of freight on rice from

Rangoon to Calcutta was Rs 5 per ton before the war. It went up to Rs. 22-8-0 per ton during the war. That was natural because there was a scarcity of tonnage throughout the world. Eventually it was reduced by Rs. 2-8-0. The present rate of freight on rice from Rangoon to Calcutta was Rs. 20 per ton less a rebate of Rs. 2, so that the rate was Rs. 11. In the case of Bombay it was last year Rs. 65 per ton. This year, it had been reduced to Rs. 35 per ton. In the case of Singapore the rate was Rs. 87 per ton. It had been reduced to Rs. 27-8-0 per ton. In the case of Penang it was Rs. 84-8-0 per ton. It has been reduced to Rs 25 per ton. What was the meaning of that ? The rate of freight had been materially reduced in the case of Bombay and foreign countries but as regards Calcutta there had been no reduction at all but an increase from Rs. 16 to 20. That was one of the reasons why the price of rice in Calcutta was so high. If the Government do reduce the freight on the rice from Rangoon to Calcutta as had been done in the case of Bombay, Singapore and Penang, the rate at which rice was sold in Calcutta would be materially reduced. The shippers themselves were not responsible for this abnormal rate of freight but it was under the orders of the Home Government that they had fixed the freight. That rate had been fixed by the Home Government. Therefore they would make a representation thorough the Government of Bengal to the Government of India for the reduction of the rate of freight from Rangoon to Calcutta so that they might get Rangoon rice in Calcutta at a cheap rate.

The fourth amendment was 4) "That a representation be made to the Government to make the decision of the Director of Civil Supplies appealable to a Committee consisting of officials and non-officials to be appointed by the Government." This was a delicate question but they should make a frank expression of their opinion. After the outbreak of war a Director of Civil Supplies was appointed for Bengal. A

respectable European merchant Mr. Beadel, senior partner of Messrs. Becker Gray and Co., was appointed to the post, and an Advisory Board composed of representatives of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce was also appointed to advise him. Mr. Beadel, however, was relieved of his duties and the Advisory Board discharged. Now the work had been entrusted to a civilian. He failed to understand why the decision of the Director of Civil Supplies should not be made appealable either to the higher authorities or to a Committee consisting of representatives of the people and especially of the mercantile community. That would create a greater confidence in the officers of the Government.

The Chairman :—Is that with regard to the price of rice ?

Babu Amulyadhoni Addy :—Yes, Sir. Without the license of the Director of Civil Supplies, you cannot import rice from one Province to another.

Continuing Babu Amulyadhoni Addy said that the decision of an officer, however eminent he might be, should be made appealable to a higher officer or a court of justice. He was opposed to the suggestion made by the Markets Committee, namely, the commandeering of stocks. That was not practicable in Calcutta. Under martial law that was done in the Punjab, articles were enforced to be sold at a certain rate and that was why when stocks were exhausted, shopkeepers refused to import any more and the people suffered. The stock of rice in Calcutta was very limited. It had been said that the retail dealers had been profiteering unreasonably. In this connection he drew attention to the note of the Vice-Chairman on this subject and referred to the last paragraph of that note which stated :—“ It will be seen from one of the graphs that there is no excessive or unreasonable profiteering by retail dealers, the margin between wholesale and retail prices being very narrow. It is therefore hardly

possible to improve the situation in Calcutta by bringing the sale of rice under control."

Dr. S. K. Mallik :—The Vice Chairman says nothing about the wholesale dealers.

Babu Amulyadhona Addy : The resolution moved by Mr. Wyness is general and is applicable not only to retail but to wholesale dealer.

Continuing Babu Amulyadhona Addy said that it appeared from the Calcutta Gazette that the wholesale price of Coarse rice ranged from Rs. 7-4-0 to Rs. 7-14-0 per maund while the retail price was Rs. 7-8-0 to Rs. 8-2-0 per maund so that the difference in price between the retail and wholesale rate was only four annas per maund.

The fifth amendment was (5) "That steps be taken for the purchase and retail sale of Burma rice in Calcutta on such terms and conditions as may be laid down by this Corporation. They had done the same in the case of kerosene oil. If they were allowed to purchase or import Burma rice in Calcutta they might make retail sale or engage respectable gentlemen of the city to act as Agents for the retail sale of Burma rice at a rate and on conditions to be fixed by the Chairman. In Rangoon the price of rice was Rs. 385 for 100 baskets which was Rs. 4-5-0 per maund. The charge including freight was Rs. 1-6-0 per maund so that the cost altogether was Rs. 5-11-0 per maund and if they sold that rice in Calcutta at even a profit of four annas per maund it would be less than Rs. 6 per maund but as a matter of fact it was sold at Rs. 7 per maund which was the minimum price here.

Mr. Wyness :—Is that the price at the present high rate of freight? If that rate of freight was reduced the price would be less?

BABU AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—Yes. Assuming the rate of freight to be Rs. 20 per ton, The cost price would be Rs. 5-12-0 per maund at the most. If we sell it at Rs. 6 per maund we make a profit of four annas per maund. At the

same time we can reduce the price of rice in Calcutta by one rupee in a single day.

Continuing Babu Amulya Dhone Addy said that two days ago the Darjeeling Planters Association consisting of the leading Europeans of that place resolved :—" That in view of the scarcity in the garden districts the Committee earnestly request the Government to take steps to prohibit the export of rice altogether."

Dr. S. C. Mallik :—What would be the price at the pre war tonnage of rice in Calcutta from Burma ?

Babu AMULYA DHONE ADDY :—Rs. 3 8 0 per maund and in famine years Rs 4 per maund were the rates before the war, Rs 5-3-0 would be the price at the pre-war rate of freight.

Mr. Hooper :—Have you gone into the question of the export from Calcutta ?

Babu Amulya Dhone Addy :—Yes.

Mr. Hooper :—74,000 tons were exported last year.

Amulya Dhone Addy :—From the Indian Trade Journal I find from the 1st January last up to the 24th May, 49,000 tons of rice were exported from Calcutta to foreign countries. That corresponds to 12 lakhs of maunds.

Mr. Hooper :—My information is that it was 74,000 tons.

Babu Amulya Dhone Addy :—That is still worse.

Mr. Hooper said that the figures he had obtained from the Calcutta Customs showed that before the war the average export of rice to foreign countries was 144,000 tons. In the first three years of the war it was 56,000 tons and last year it went up to 74,000 tons.

The Hon'ble Rai Radha Charan Pal Bahadur in seconding the amendments remarked that they would have been moved even if the recommendations of the Markets Committee had not come up before the Corporation. The

matter had received the most earnest attention of Babu Amulyadhane Addy who had carefully collected facts and figures and he congratulated Babu Amulydhane Addy on his able and well informed speech.

The Hon'ble Sir Deva Prosad Sarvadhicary congratulated the Chairman on being able to secure more than a bare quorum for the consideration of this—what to some might appear to be a very negligible question. He hoped that some of them did not think that if rice in abundance could not be had the people might be given pilao. It reminded one of the story of the French Queen who when told that the people had no bread, remarked that they might have cakes. He expected that much greater interest would be taken by the Commissioners in a body on this important occasion. He also congratulated the Chairman on having been able to get 50 tons of Burma rice for the Corporation coolie labourers and the possibility of obtaining a larger quantity for general consumption the distribution of which the Chairman had, with the assent of the General Committee, decided should be in the hands of the Markets Committee. Reference had been made to the resolution passed by the Darjeeling Planters' Association but other public bodies had also been moving in the matter. The attention of members had not been called to the action taken by the Indian Association and the very sympathetic attitude of the Government as indicated in their reply to the Indian Association. The Government were moving in the matter and had assured the Indian Association that they were communicating with the Government of India, and last night he found a Government notification calling for a census of rice. They were all indebted to Mr. Wyness for bringing up the question with such vigour and promptitude and to Babu Amulyadhane Addy for placing an abundance of information at the disposal of the Commissioners to assist them to come to some decision.

Rai Dr. Haridhan Dutt Bahadur seconded the Hon'ble Sir Deva Prosad Sarvadhicary's amendment which practically meant the linking together of the two resolutions now before the Corporation namely, the original resolution of the Markets Committee and Babu Amulyadhane Addy's amendment. In doing so he must express his satisfaction that Babu Amulyadhane Addy had done very good service to this Corporation by placing before them all the facts and figures which he had collected with so great an amount of trouble in connection with this rice question. The Corporation could not but express their thanks to Babu Amulyadhane Addy for what he had done in this connection. He was not prepared to find Babu Amulyadhane Addy, who was one of the richest and biggest rice merchants in Calcutta, come forward here and be ready to help them in going up to and asking Government to intervene. It reflected great credit on Babu Amulyadhane Addy and showed that although he was bent on making money he had not lost sight of the fact that he was required to do what he could for the ratepayers of Calcutta.

Mr. Wyness on behalf of the Markets Committee accepted the advice given by Sir Deva Prosad Sarvadhicari as he thought that it would be a useful way to formulate the resolutions. He did not think that Sir Deva Prosad Sarvadhicary's amendment departed materially from the resolution he had proposed but as he had said when introducing his resolution there was no question as worrying over the wording. They wanted a resolution so worded that it would result in effective action. They wished to represent the general situation and all the suggestions put forward could fitly be appreciated as suggestions for dealing with a difficult situation. In case Babu Amulyadhane Addy had nothing very much more to say he would like to congratulate Babu Amulyadhane Addy on what the latter had said to them. He had heard Babu Amulyadhane Addy speak on many occa-

sions in this Chamber but never had he heard a speech from him so chock—full of useful stuff for the city of Calcutta. He thought that Babu Amulyadhane Addy fully deserved the compliments addressed to him.

Mr. Cotton thought that there was a great deal to be said for what Sir Deva Prosad Sarvadhicary had stated. He was only sorry that they had not got a fuller House to hear Babu Amulyadhane Addy. In regard to the recommendations that Babu Amulyadhane Addy had made there was one that he (the speaker) was rather averse from being included in their resolution when drafted and that was amendment No. 4. It would be a great mistake to include anything which might be read or construed as a vote of censure on the Director of Civil Supplies. He did not think that amendment No. 4 was really material. He wished to state a few facts about the exports of rice. As regards the foreign exports the principal place to which rice was exported was Ceylon and he had received orders that up to October next not more than 10 000 tons of rice were to be shipped. Some rice was also exported to the West Indies but not much. There was only one other point and that was that he wished to add to what Babu Amulyadhane Addy had said about the export of rice from Burma.

The freight at present (Rs. 18 per ton) worked out at nearly annas 11 per maund but if they got it reduced to about Rs. 10 it would be possible to land Rangoon rice in Calcutta at Rs. 5 per maund. He believed that there was tremendous profiteering going on in regard to Burma rice. Even at the present rate of freight people were going about trying to buy import licenses. It was mainly owing to profiteering that rice was sold here at a wholesale rate of Rs. 7 per maund.

The Chairman said that as regards Babu Amulyadhane Addy's amendments he agreed with Mr. Cotton that it

would not be proper to include in the resolution relating to the Director of Civil Supplies such as has been proposed. It would cause some presumption that the Director of Civil Supplies contributed to the high price of rice which was not the case. As regards the fifth amendment he thought it was unnecessary because if the Government agreed to permit the import of Burma rice for consumption in Bengal it would then simply be a matter for local arrangement, and there was no necessity to worry the Government of India on this point. It was possible that they would get Burma rice and the suggestion might be for "allotments of Burma rice being made for Bengal as for other Provinces." If they got the allotments then in consultation with the Local Government they might be able to arrange for its sale in Calcutta. The Government might fix the price. It was unnecessary to worry Government about the price for retail sale. It would be better on the whole, to carry Sir Deva Prosad Sarvadhicary's amendment and bring in all the points, reduction of expenses, arrangement for different places, allotments of Burma rice for consumption in Bengal and reduction in the rate of freight. He agreed with Babu Amulyadhane Addy that the commandeering of stock would be rather impracticable in Bengal. If the members agreed the resolution they adopted could be sent at once by telegram to the Government at Darjeeling while a copy of the proceedings of this meeting would follow when ready.

The Hon'ble Sir Deva Prosad Sarvadhicary thought that it would meet the Hon'ble Rai Radha Charan Pal Bahadur's view if they added after the words "as regards the price of rice" the words "and other foodstuffs" and he amended his amendment accordingly.

Babu Amulya Dhane Addy thanked the Chairman for having accepted his first three suggestions. Objection had been taken to his fourth amendment. He had the greatest confidence in the Director of Civil Supplies but he made the

suggestion in the fourth amendment on principle. The decision of an officer, however eminent he might be, should be made appealable to his superior officer. Whenever a question was asked of the Director of Civil Supplies as to his reason for a decision he referred to a clause pointing out that it was at his discretion.

The Chairman :—If you can explain to us how that affects the price of rice it will be more to the point.

Babu Amulyadhane Addy said that the distribution of rice in India has been entrusted by the Government to the Directors of Civil Supplies. The fifth suggestion concerned the disposal of Burma rice in Calcutta. The Madras Corporation had already laid down that rule without reference to the Government. It had been importing Burma rice and selling in Madras at rates fixed by the Chairman of the Madras Corporation. He is very sorry that some uncalled for remarks had been made by Sir Deva Prosad Sarvadhicary who had referred to this Corporation as an amateur economic Society. Was this Corporation to be treated as an amateur body? It had been said that the wholesale dealers were making huge profits.

As a matter of fact paddy was very scarce in the mofussil, it is Rs. 4 to Rs. 5 per maund. Government had already prohibited the export of wheat from India to foreign countries. However, he accepted Sir Deva Prosad Sarvadhicary's amendment and withdrew his amendments.

Mr. Rhodes said that he wanted to point out something in connection with amendment No. 4. He quite saw Babu Amulyadhane Addy's point.

The Hon'ble Sir Deva Prosad Sarvadhicary :—Babu Amulyadhane Addy has withdrawn that.

Mr. Rhodes said that what he wanted to point out was that where control of any sort had been exercised in Eng-

land, experts from the trades concerned were called in and there was no question that it had been very successful, last year they called in experts in the piece goods trade to advise them when an enquiry was made into the high prices of cotton goods and he thought that the Advisory Committee did a great deal of good. The present Director of Civil Supplies would be very glad to be supported by such patriotic members of the trade as Babu Amulya Dhone Addy. It was his impression that Mr. Wyness' original motion started to draw attention to another matter. The position was likely to get worse instead of better. It would give great temptation to people not interested in the rice trade to come in and profiteer, The great danger of that was this. The present rice dealers were limited in number and could only hold a certain amount of rice but if the Corporation brought in the general public gambling in rice they could get hold of from the market an unlimited quantity. When he was in Bombay on the piece Goods Committee last year he found a Parsee widow holding up the clothing of 20,000 people as a small speculation. Therefore with a view of keeping those people out, and in view of Government getting the service of those best able to advise them he suggested that the Government of Bengal be asked to form an Advisory Committee consisting of persons connected with the rice trade and on which this Corporation should also be represented and to see that recognised dealers only were licensed with a view to the elimination of profiteers. If the House thought that there was anything in that suggestion he should like to put it up.

Mr. Wyness congratulated the Corporation on their present attitude and regretted the paucity of the attendance. There was a remarkable absence of those who were usually very voluble in the expression of attachment to the interest of the ratepayers. He also wished on behalf of the Corporation to congratulate Mr. Rhodes on his maiden speech in

this Council. It was perfectly evident that Mr. Rhodes' advice on this and all other subjects would be of great value. The suggestion that Mr. Rhodes had made was an excellent one but Mr. Rhodes was probably not aware that for some time there had been a Food Advisory Committee appointed by the Government of Bengal so that, as for as words went, the Government could at once say that there was a Committee. Whether they were experts in rice, on it he would not say. We took it that Mr. Rhodes' proposal and remarks would be included in their proceedings and sent to Government and that expression of opinion would carry very considerable weight.

The Chairman:—It is rather a matter of provincial importance than Imperial necessity.

Mr. Rhodes:—All I ask is that this should be included as one of the suggestions made at this meeting.