

PROCEEDINGS



OF THE

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF INDIA,

FROM

January to December 1856.

VOL. II.

Published by the Authority of the Council.

175.

CALCUTTA:

PRINTED BY P. M. CRANENBURGH, MILITARY ORPHAN PRESS.

1857.

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NOTICES OF MOTIONS.

MR. ELIOTT gave notice that he would, on Saturday next the 13th instant, move the third reading of the Bill "to comprise in one Act the provisions necessary for the assessment and collection of Municipal rates and taxes in the Towns of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay, and the several stations of the Settlement of Prince of Wales' Island, Singapore, and Malacca."

And of the Bill "for appointing Municipal Commissioners, and for levying rates and taxes, in the Town of Madras."

MR. ALLEN gave notice that he would, on the same day, move the third reading of the Bill "for appointing Municipal Commissioners, and for levying rates and taxes, in the several stations of the Settlement of Prince of Wales' Island, Singapore, and Malacca."

LAND CUSTOMS (BOMBAY.)

MR. LEGEYT moved that a communication received by him from the Government of Bombay be laid upon the table and referred to the Select Committee on the Bill "to make better provision for the collection of Land Customs in certain Foreign Frontiers of the Presidency of Bombay."

Agreed to.

NOTICE OF MOTION.

MR. PEACOCK gave notice that he would, on Saturday the 20th instant, move the first reading of a Bill to give effect to the Penal Code of India.

The Council adjourned.

Saturday, December 13th, 1856.

PRESENT :

The Honorable J. A. Dorin, *Vice-President*, in the Chair.

Hon'ble Sir J. W. Colville.	C. Allen, Esq.
Hon. Major Genl. J. Low.	P. W. LeGeyt, Esq.
Hon. J. P. Grant.	E. Currie, Esq. and
Hon. B. Peacock.	Hon. Sir A. W. Buller.
D. Elliott, Esq.	

HINDOO POLYGAMY.

THE CLERK presented the following Petitions praying for the abolition of Hindoo Polygamy :—

A Petition of Hindoo Inhabitants of Reshira and its neighborhood.

Two Petitions of Hindoo Inhabitants of Calcutta.

A Petition of Hindoo Inhabitants of Bancoorah.

SIR JAMES COLVILE moved that these Petitions be printed.

Agreed to.

PORT-DUES.

THE CLERK reported that he had received from the Governor of the Straits Settlement a communication forwarding a letter from the Chamber of Commerce of Singapore on the proposed levy of harbour dues at that port.

MR. ALLEN moved that these papers be printed.

Agreed to.

POLICE (PRESIDENCY TOWNS, &c.)

THE CLERK also reported that he had received from the Governor of the Straits Settlement two communications relative to Act XIII of 1856 (the new Police Act.)

Agreed to.

ABKAREE REVENUE (BENGAL.)

The following Message from the Governor General was brought by Mr. Peacock and read :—

MESSAGE No. 87.

The Governor General informs the Legislative Council that he has given his assent to the Bill which was passed by them on the 15th November 1856, entitled, "A Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to the Abkaree Revenue in the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal."

By order of the Right Honorable the Governor General.

CECIL BEADON,

Secretary to the Govt. of India.

FORT WILLIAM,
The 9th December, 1856.

SONTHAL DISTRICTS.

MR. CURRIE moved the first reading of a Bill "to amend Act XXXVII of 1855 (to remove from the operation of the general laws and Regulations certain districts

inhabited by Sonthals and others, and to place the same under the superintendence of an Officer to be specially appointed for that purpose.)”

He said, Act XXXVII of 1855, the title of which had been just read, was an exceptional law rendered necessary by certain peculiar circumstances, and ought, therefore, to be strictly confined to the limits within which those circumstances prevailed. The tracts removed from the operation of the general Law should be those Pergunnahs and parts of Pergunnahs which were inhabited by the wild tribe whose lawless proceedings had rendered this exceptional legislation necessary; and if other tracts were included, it should be only on the ground of their intermixture with, or close proximity to, the removed Pergunnahs, and of their inclusion being in consequence necessary to the establishment of a defined boundary for the new jurisdiction. Honorable Members would remember that the Standing Orders had been suspended in order that the Act might be brought into operation as speedily as possible. The Schedule annexed to the Act had been prepared originally in the Bengal Office, and, in accordance with certain suggestions from that Office, some alterations were made in it by the Committee of the whole Council. But the Bill had not been published before it became Law; and, therefore, there had been no opportunity of examining the Schedule minutely, and for hearing any objections that might be raised against it. Such objections had since been taken by persons having property within the boundaries embraced by the Act, and a Petition on the subject had been printed by order of the Council in May last. The suitability of these boundaries had been carefully examined into by the local Officers, and also by the Lieutenant Governor in his late tour; and it had been found that there were some few Pergunnahs and parts of Pergunnahs mentioned in the Schedule in which there were few or no Sonthals, and the inclusion of which was not necessary to the maintenance of a defined boundary for the special jurisdiction. It was, therefore, desirable to restore those Pergunnahs and parts of Pergunnahs to their proper zillahs; and the present Bill proposed to effect that object by rescinding the Schedule to Act XXXVII of 1855, and enacting, in lieu of it, a new Schedule which had been prepared under the orders of the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal.

The Bill was read a first time.

UNCOVENANTED AGENCY

(FORT ST. GEORGE.)

MR. ELIOTT moved the second reading of the Bill “for the more extensive employment of Uncovenanted Agency in the Revenue and Judicial Departments in the Presidency of Fort St. George.”

The motion was carried, and the Bill read a second time.

MUNICIPAL ASSESSMENT (GENERAL.)

MR. ELIOTT moved the third reading of the Bill “to comprise in one Act the provisions necessary for the assessment and collection of Municipal rates and taxes in the Towns of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay, and the several stations of the Settlement of Prince of Wales’ Island, Singapore, and Malacca.”

The motion was carried, and the Bill read a third time.

MUNICIPAL ASSESSMENT (MADRAS.)

On the Order of the Day being read for the third reading of the Bill “for appointing Municipal Commissioners, and for levying rates and taxes, in the town of Madras”—

MR. ELIOTT moved that the Bill be re-committed for the purpose of considering certain proposed amendments.

Agreed to.

On the motion of Mr. Elliott, a verbal amendment was made in Section V of the Bill as amended in Committee.

Section VI provided a maximum allowance of Rupees 10,000 a year for a Commissioner holding no other appointment or occupation, and Rupees 4,000 a year for a Commissioner holding some other appointment or occupation.

MR. ELIOTT moved that this Section be placed after Section VIII.

The question being proposed—

MR. CURRIE said, he should suggest a slight alteration in the Section. Some conversation had taken place when the Bill was last before a Committee of the whole Council on the subject of the rate of allowances to be given to the Commissioners, and Rupees 10,000 had been fixed as the maximum. It seemed to him, however, that it would be better if the maximum were fixed at Rupees 12,000. Generally, perhaps, an Officer might be found, for whom Rupees 800 a month would be a sufficient remuneration; but it might happen that a peculiarly well-qualified officer might be available

for whom Rupees 1,000 a month would not be too much, especially in the present day when there was so great a demand for engineering talent. He should, therefore, move that the Section be amended by omitting the figures "10,000" before the word "Rupees," and by substituting the figures "12,000" for them.

MR. ELIOTT said, he was quite satisfied that Rupees 10,000 a year would be amply sufficient in Madras; and, in fact, that was all that the Municipal Funds of the town could afford to pay.

SIR JAMES COLVILLE remarked that he was not disposed to give to a Government more than it wanted.

MR. CURRIE said, he moved his amendment in this Bill only because he contemplated moving a similar amendment in the Calcutta Bill.

MR. CURRIE'S motion was put and negatived, and the Section passed as it stood.

The Council having resumed, the Bill was reported.

MR. ELIOTT moved that the Bill be read a third time and passed.

The motion was carried, and the Bill read a third time.

MUNICIPAL ASSESSMENT (STRAITS SETTLEMENT).

MR. ALLEN moved that the Bill "for appointing Municipal Commissioners, and for levying rates and taxes, in the several stations of the Settlement of Prince of Wales' Island, Singapore, and Malacca" be read a third time and passed.

The motion was carried, and the Bill read a third time.

BENGAL MARINER'S FUND SOCIETY.

MR. PEACOCK moved that the Bill "to provide for the dissolution of the Bengal Mariners' and General Widows' Fund Society, and the distribution of the funds belonging thereto" be read a third time and passed.

The motion was carried, and the Bill read a third time.

MUNICIPAL ASSESSMENT (CALCUTTA.)

The Council then resumed its sitting in Committee upon the Bill "for appointing Municipal Commissioners, and for levying rates and taxes, in the Town of Calcutta," for the purpose of considering the Sections which had been reserved.

Mr. Currie

Section XXIV, one of the Sections reserved, provided a Gas-rate.

MR. CURRIE said, when this Section was before the Committee last Saturday, it seemed to be the opinion of the Honorable Members who spoke on that occasion that, instead of a partial tax on gas-lighted streets, it would be preferable that the expense of lighting the town, whether with gas or with oil, should be defrayed out of the funds contributed by the whole town. He had acquiesced in that view; and, such being the state of the case, he did not wish to re-open the question of the principle of the Section as it stood. But, in abandoning that principle, he wished it to be understood that he did not, by any means, admit that the principle was either unsound or unjust. The proposals put forward for a general improvement in the lighting of the town, first in the Gas Bill, and then by the Select Committee on that Bill, appeared to him to have met with so little acceptance, that he had thought it advisable to confine himself, in this Bill, to the object immediately in view—namely, the providing means for the immediate introduction of gas-lighting into certain parts of the town, but making, at the same time, such provision as would enable the Commissioners eventually to extend it to other parts. Accordingly, the Bill as drawn contained no provision expressly applicable to those parts which would still be lighted with oil. Of course, it would be the duty of the Commissioners, under the general provisions of the Conservancy Act, to do what they could for them, and he supposed that, on the introduction of gas into certain streets, the Commissioners, according to their declared intention, would transfer the public oil lights of those streets, where they would no longer be required, to the oil-lit streets. But more than this, he did not expect that they would feel themselves warranted in doing. Inasmuch, then, as the benefit of improved lighting would be only partial under this scheme, he had thought it right that the expense should be met by a partial tax. That was the principle of the Section to which so much objection had been taken last Saturday. It provided for a partial tax because it provided for a partial benefit; but, at the same time, it indicated how both the tax and the benefit might be extended throughout the whole town.

But it seemed now to be the opinion of the Council, that the expenditure of a larger sum might fairly be authorized for improved lighting, whether with gas or with oil, throughout the whole town; and he had no objection to

meet their views. At the same time, he could not but think that, as the introduction of gas must of necessity be gradual, and the gas-lit streets would have an advantage over the oil-lit streets, the modified scheme would be less acceptable to the towns-people than the scheme originally proposed. He was, however, the more willing to adopt the plan for defraying the entire expense of lighting the town, whether with gas or with oil, by a separate tax, for this reason—that, from information which he had received of the conclusions at which the Drainage Committee had arrived, he had good reason to believe that the Committee's estimate for a complete drainage scheme combined with a scheme for a diffused water-supply was considerably in excess of the estimate of the Commissioners for a complete drainage scheme alone; and if the Committee's scheme were adopted, the Commissioners would hardly be in a position to apply any portion of the general Fund to lighting, as was contemplated in the original Section. He believed that they would be able to appropriate out of that Fund a sufficient sum for drainage and water-supply; but those objects would require all their available assets, and they would, in all probability, be embarrassed in regard to other schemes of improvement, such as the opening out of new streets, the excavation of tanks, &c., and there would be certainly nothing left for improved lighting. He had had a Memorandum shewing in general terms the conclusions at which the Drainage Committee had arrived, printed and circulated since the last Meeting; and that, together with the printed Reports of the Commissioners, would enable the Council to judge of the correctness of what he had just stated.

It appeared to him to be clear that, if there was to be improved lighting, there must be additional taxation; and he thought that additional taxation might best be provided in the form of a rate upon occupiers, rather than of an increase of the general house-rate. He did not wish to enter upon the vexed question of the real incidence of a house-rate. In theory, no doubt all such rates, though imposed upon owners, would fall upon occupiers; but he questioned whether they really did so in practice. They certainly did not do so immediately. It would require some years before rents could be adjusted to the increased charge; and that which was felt and complained of was the *immediate* pressure of a new tax. In this case, there was this strong reason for laying the rate immediately on occupiers—that it would

take the place of the compulsory gate lamps, which was indisputably a tax on occupiers.

Then, if there was to be a general rate upon occupiers throughout the town, he thought it would be advisable to exempt from its operation all holdings of a monthly rent under Rupees 10. This was the proposition originally made by the Municipal Commissioners. The collection of a rate from occupiers of small holdings would certainly be a matter of very great difficulty. The Bill as drawn proposed to avoid the difficulty by making the rate upon holdings of a monthly rent below Rupees 10 payable by the owners; but this course, although it had the sanction of English Acts of Parliament, was not, perhaps, without objection. The liability to maintain compulsory gate lamps went no lower than houses yielding Rupees 70 a month. That would be a great deal too high a limit for a general rate; but he thought that, in the case of such a tax as a tax for lighting, it was fair that there should be some minimum, and that the poorest class of householders should be exempt from payment.

If the limit of a monthly rent of Rupees 10 were taken, and the rate were fixed at 2 per cent., the effect would be that occupiers of holdings under Rupees 10 a month would be exempt as now; occupiers of holdings above Rupees 10 and lower than Rupees 70 a month would lose the exemption which they now enjoyed, and would be taxed in proportion to the value of their holdings; occupiers of houses of from Rupees 70 to Rupees 170 a month would have their taxation greatly reduced; and the burden of the increased tax would fall upon occupiers of houses of a higher rent than Rupees 170 a month,—that was to say, upon those who were best able to bear it.

The rate, he thought, could not possibly be less than 2 per cent. That was the least which could supply funds at all adequate for the purpose of efficiently lighting the town either with gas or with oil. As he had shewn in the Memorandum which he had circulated, 2 per cent, on the valuation of 1855, would give barely a lac of rupees, and even that amount would be subject to reduction for remissions. But on the other hand, there had recently been some increase in the valuation of some premises; and as the revision of the valuations proceeded, there could be little doubt that the actual produce of the rate would soon rise above a lac.

The rate would be collected together with the house-rate: the expense of collection would not be very great, and might, he thought, be defrayed with that of the house-rate from the general Fund. The general Fund would also have to bear the expense incurred for the purchase, setting up, and maintaining of lamps, lamp-posts, pipes, and other necessary apparatus,—which, upon the first introduction of gas, would amount to a considerable sum. The Commissioners had funds available for this purpose.

With these remarks, he begged to move that Section XXIV be left out, in order that the following new Section might be substituted for it:—

“ To provide for the better lighting of the public streets of the said Town, an annual Lighting-rate of 2 per cent of the annual value shall be imposed upon all houses, buildings, and lands in the said Town, the estimated monthly rent of which is not less than ten Rupees; and such rate shall be payable in quarterly instalments by the occupiers of such houses, buildings, and lands. The sum applicable annually to the purchase of gas or of oil for the purpose of lighting the said streets shall be the gross proceeds of the said Lighting-rate, and no more; but the Commissioners may expend out of the funds at their disposal such further sums as may from time to time be requisite for the purchase, setting up, and maintaining of lamps, lamp-posts, pipes, and other necessary apparatus.”

Mr. PEACOCK said, he did not object to the omission of Section XXIV of the Bill; but he thought it right to state, before it was struck out, that he might probably object to the Section which it was proposed to substitute for it. The question involved was a very important one; and he hoped that Honorable Members would not come to a conclusion upon it hastily. The question was important, not because he thought that any very substantial benefit would be secured to the inhabitants of this Town by increased lighting, but because the effect of carrying the new Section might possibly be to appropriate to purposes of lighting, funds which ought to be devoted to more important objects. In the Memorandum which the Honorable Mover of the Bill had circulated since the last Meeting of the Council, he had furnished extracts from which it appeared that the cost of an efficient scheme of drainage, instead of being 30 lacs, was estimated by the Drainage Committee at 44 lacs. The annual sum of 1,50,000 Rs. which had been set apart by Section XXIX of the Bill, had been set apart under the idea that 30 lacs would be sufficient to carry out a complete

Mr. Currie

system of sewerage and drainage. The Honorable Member had stated, in his Memorandum, that, out of the present rates, there would be a saving of Rs. 25,000 a year. If the lighting-rate proposed in the new Section were imposed, a further sum of Rs. 17,000 a year, which was now expended for lighting, would also be available for other purposes: and therefore, taking the Honorable Member's own estimate of the annual surplus, there would be a saving of Rs. 42,000 a year beyond the ordinary annual expenditure.

The Honorable Member, in the Memorandum which had been circulated, stated that, if the scheme contemplated by the Drainage Committee were adopted,

“ all the present surplus, in addition to the produce of the new taxes, would be required to carry it into execution.”

He (Mr. Peacock) would ask his Honorable friend whether he intended to include the two sums of Rupees 25,000 and Rupees 17,000 in the amount that was to be set apart for the purpose of drainage? If he did not intend to include them in it, that portion of the Statement which urged the necessity of so applying them, could not be used as a very strong argument in support of the proposed rate. But instead of this 42,000 Rupees being added to the amount for drainage, he (Mr. Peacock) would rather that the lac and a half a year provided by the Bill were reserved for that purpose, and the 42,000 Rupees a year, or at least a portion of it, should be set apart for the purpose of providing the inhabitants with pure and wholesome water for drinking and domestic purposes. If the lac and a half should afterwards be found insufficient to complete an efficient system of drainage at the end of the period appointed, he was sure that the Council might safely rely upon the good feeling of the inhabitants—that they would not allow so good a work to fail for want of funds, but would come forward freely in order to complete the work, even though it might involve the necessity of adding an additional one or a half per cent. to the rates for a few years. But this could not be necessary for many years to come, as it was not proposed to spend more than about 5 lacs a year. There were many wants still unprovided for, which made it imperative upon the Council seriously to consider whether they ought to grant an additional rate for lighting unless they saw clearly some means of at the same time providing for necessities more urgent.

He for one certainly did not feel disposed to do so. He proposed, therefore, to apply the 25,000 and the 17,000 Rupees, or at least a portion of those sums, to one of the most urgent of those wants. He proposed that Rupees 30,000, out of the aggregate of these two sums, should be devoted annually to the purpose of providing for the inhabitants of the city pure and wholesome water for drinking and domestic purposes in convenient parts of the town. The insufficient supply of water for these purposes was a crying evil; and it was incumbent upon the Council to remedy that evil before they applied themselves to the subject of lighting. It was not on his own knowledge alone that he spoke of the existence of this evil. When the Bill to provide for the better lighting of the town was before the Council some time ago, a Petition was presented from the inhabitants, stating that the people in certain parts of the town were unable to obtain pure water for drinking and domestic purposes. They were driven to small and stagnant tanks, and it was to this circumstance that he thought much sickness in the town might be attributed.

Neither was it upon the authority of that Petition alone that he spoke. He spoke also upon the best authority upon such a subject—namely, the Report of the Municipal Commissioners for the year 1855, which was published in the beginning of the present year. The Commissioners said in that Report, speaking of public tanks:—

“Our expenditure under this head has been Rupees 1,775-3-4, which is a less sum by Rupees 3,998-14-7 than in 1854. This large difference is chiefly due to the thorough repair given to College Square and Short’s Bazar Tanks.”

So that the total amount expended for supplying pure and wholesome water to the inhabitants of this city during the whole of the year 1855 was only Rupees 1,776!

The Commissioners proceeded:—

“During the past year, we have obtained a lease of the Colingah Tank adjoining Wellesley Street, which has been put into thorough repair, well fenced in, and deepened, and, being now kept well supplied with water from the aqueduct, has proved a great convenience as well as an ornament to the neighbourhood.

“The iron railing round Wellington Square Tank has also been newly erected and greatly improved in appearance, the expense of which forms an item in the ensuing year’s expenditure, and will therefore appear in our next Report.

“Several localities in the Town stand greatly in need of good tanks, for the convenience of

supplying the neighbourhood with water; but, not having adequate funds at our disposal, we have been unable to effect such desirable objects.

“The Public Tank in Colootollah Street has been filled up during the past year, the ground being required for the new street in course of formation in that vicinity.”

Of course, he did not object to the improvement intended to be effected by the opening of the new street alluded to, if funds were available for the purpose; but the Report showed that, for the purpose of constructing that new street, one public tank had been filled up; and nothing appeared to have been done to provide another in its place for the use of the neighbourhood. He thought that, in order to procure an adequate supply of pure and wholesome water, a much larger sum was necessary than, according to the present mode of expending the rates, could be afforded. His Honorable friend had not proved to his mind that a separate rate of 2 per cent. for lighting was necessary, unless the 42,000 Rupees were to be applied to the purpose which he (Mr. Peacock) proposed. The rate for lighting as originally proposed was divided into two parts—two-thirds to be paid by the occupiers of houses in those streets which should be lighted with gas, and one-third by the Municipal Fund. He (Mr. Peacock) did not know whether his Honorable friend would make a point of the term “*may*” which he had used in reference to the portion to be paid out of the Municipal Fund. The words of the Section were:—

“The Commissioners *may*, in aid of the lighting rate, expend, out of the funds at their disposal, such further sum, not exceeding one-half of the amount of the net proceeds of the said rate, as may be necessary for the efficient lighting of such streets”

that is, streets lighted with gas. He (Mr. Peacock) had understood the intention to be, not that it should be optional with the Commissioners to contribute one-third of the expense of lighting with gas out of the general Municipal Fund, but that it should be incumbent upon them to do so; and that they should not call upon occupiers to pay a lighting rate unless they were prepared to contribute an amount equal to one-half of the net proceeds of such rate from the funds at their disposal. This lighting-rate applied only to the streets to be lighted with gas: the whole expenditure for the streets which were to be lighted with oil, was intended to be provided out of the Municipal Fund as before. Now, if the one-third part of the expense of lighting which the Municipal Commissioners were to

provide would amount, as was stated by the Honorable Member, to only Rupees 25,000 a year, it followed that the remaining two-thirds, which occupiers would have to pay, would amount to only Rupees 50,000. Therefore, under the Section as it stood in the Bill, the cost of lighting with gas could not exceed Rupees 75,000, of which only 50,000 Rs. would be paid by the occupiers. But instead of asking for Rupees 50,000 from occupiers, his Honorable friend now asked for Rupees 1,16,000. It was true that he asked for this sum for the lighting of the whole town; but, under the Bill as it stood, the Municipal Fund would have had to pay the whole expense of lighting with the exception of the streets lighted with gas, towards which the Commissioners were to contribute one-third, which, as had been shewn, could not exceed Rupees 25,000. He had a right, therefore, to say, that the Commissioners could not have raised more by the lighting-rate as originally proposed than Rupees 50,000 from the occupiers.

MR. CURRIE said, he did not wish to interrupt the Honorable and learned Member, but he really must say that the Honorable and learned Member had himself proposed to raise Rupees 1,15,000 at the last Meeting of the Council.

MR. PEACOCK said, he had not proposed to raise it in the way intended by the Section now proposed. He had contended that the Commissioners should be limited to Rupees 1,15,000 a year for lighting, if they could afford so much out of the rates without the aid of the lighting-rate then proposed; but not that a rate should be imposed for raising that amount. What he had said was, that those who wanted a tax for lighting to be assessed upon the people, should show that there was a necessity for such a tax, and that the Council ought to fix Rupees 1,15,000 as the maximum amount to be spent upon lighting. What he now said was, that the Honorable Member was asking for a new rate which would raise annually upwards of one lac for lighting, whereas, according to his own showing, by the Bill as originally proposed, not more than Rupees 50,000 could have been raised by means of the lighting-rate.

But in addition to the sums of Rupees 25,000 and Rupees 17,000, to which he had alluded, the Honorable Member had not taken into consideration another item, for which, in his Memorandum, he had given no credit whatever. In the general Municipal Assessment Bill, it was provided by

Mr. Peacock

Section IV as altered by the Select Committee that the rates should be assessed upon an estimate of the *net* annual rental of property. The Council, at its last Meeting, had introduced an amendment into that Section by which the rates would be assessed upon the *gross* annual rental of property. This vote would increase the amount of the house-rate by about one-tenth more than was originally intended. The Honorable Member for Bombay had said, on that occasion, that, in order to get at the net rent, it would be necessary to deduct one-tenth or one-twelfth part of the gross rent for repairs. [MR. LEGEY observed, that his remark had reference to Bombay only.] He (Mr. Peacock) would take the proportion to be one-tenth. At $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, the house-rate to be levied would amount to Rupees 4,43,000: one-tenth of that sum would be rupees 43,000. Consequently, by the vote of last week, the house-rate to be levied would raise Rupees 43,000 a year more than the rate as originally proposed by the Bill.

He wished also to call attention to the mode in which the rates had been expended. They appeared to him to have been expended during the last three years upon an erroneous principle. When an occupier for a particular year paid municipal rates, he paid them principally for the current municipal purposes of that year, and it was intended that they should be applied principally to those purposes. But where substantial improvements were introduced, the benefits of which were to be extended over a series of coming years, he apprehended that the whole cost ought not to fall on the occupiers of the present day. The rate to provide for a substantial improvement in a town ought to be so adjusted that part of the burden should fall on existing occupiers, and part on their successors, who would equally benefit by the improvement. It would be very unjust, for example, if a tax were imposed upon the occupiers of 1856 for an improvement which would not be completed before 1859, when they might be dead or gone. The correct principle seemed to be to make such an allotment that the rates would fall equally upon all who were to be benefited by the improvements; and, where the improvements were substantial, that they should fall, not entirely on the year in which the aggregate outlay was to be made, but also on the occupiers of succeeding years during which the benefits would be felt. That was the principle which was followed

in England in providing for the health of Towns. But if it was not right that we should charge the expenses of substantial improvements upon occupiers of a particular year, still less was it right that the proceeds of the rates of a particular year should be set aside for some unknown object for the benefit of future generations. Under such a system, an occupier who paid the tax might be dead or gone from the country, before the improvements for which the rates were set aside were carried into effect or even decided upon; and the persons who paid for the improvements might never derive any benefit therefrom. He did not mean to say that the Municipal Commissioners ought to expend in each year every fraction of the rates which they collected for that year. They must necessarily retain a balance in hand. But they ought not to lay by large sums year after year, and invest them with a view to future substantial improvements. The Statute 33 Geo. III. c. 52, the English Act, was the first Act under which Municipal rates were raised in Calcutta; and upon the principle of that Act, the Council was, to some extent, proceeding now. That Act provided that the Justices of the Peace for the three Presidency Towns respectively should make an equal assessment upon owners or occupiers of houses, grounds, or buildings, not exceeding in one year the proportion of one-twentieth part of the gross value—that was to say 5 per cent—unless any higher rate should be considered to be essentially necessary by the Governor General in Council or by the local Governments respectively; in which case, the Governor General in Council might authorize a further assessment not exceeding one-half the amount of the ordinary annual assessment. That additional assessment, added to one twentieth part of the gross rental, would give a maximum rate of $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, the sum now proposed to be raised by the house tax. But how was the money to be raised by such assessment, to be expended? It was to be expended, not for the purpose of forming funds for the benefit of future generations, but “for and towards the repairing, watching, and cleansing of the streets, and for no other purpose.”

Then came Act XXIV of 1840, for Calcutta, by which it was provided that the assessments authorised to be made by the Statute Geo. III, c. 52, should be applicable to the following purposes only; namely,—

“lighting and watering the roads and streets, and cleansing and repairing the same and the drains of the town.”

The next Act was No. XVI of 1847, for Calcutta, which, after reciting the Statute of Geo. III and Act XXIV of 1840, proceeded as follows:—

“And whereas it is apparent that the Sewerage and Drainage of the Town of Calcutta, and the supply of water for the domestic use of the Inhabitants thereof, and the due cleansing of drains therein, and the means of providing for the ventilation of the Town, and the repairing, cleansing, and lighting the roads and streets, and the making convenient lines of communication by spacious streets, and the preventing and removing of nuisances, and the due provision of adequate means for the relief of the sick poor in the said Town are very defective, all which cause excessive disease and great mortality; and whereas the Laws and Regulations now in force, and the pecuniary means applicable to the said objects, are wholly insufficient for the remedy of so great a mischief; and whereas it is expedient that remedy should be had herein:—

and it then repealed Act XXIV of 1840, imposed a horse-and-carriage tax, in addition to the rates authorized by 33 Geo. III, and enacted that the whole of the net proceeds of such rates and taxes should be applied to the following purposes:—

First.—Formation of Tanks and Aqueducts for the conveyance of water to all parts of the Town;

Secondly.—Opening of streets and Squares in crowded parts of the Town.

Thirdly.—Filling up stagnant pools of water and removing obstructions to the free circulation of air.

Fourthly.—Lighting and watering the roads and streets.

Fifthly.—Cleansing and repairing the same and the drains of the said town.

Sixthly.—And in improving and embellishing the said town generally.”

Thus, it appeared to be a primary object in the view of the Legislators of that day that the inhabitants should be provided with a supply of pure and wholesome water for drinking and domestic purposes, and that the small and stagnant pools of water about the town should be filled up, and large tanks and aqueducts substituted for them. But even that Act gave no power to the Commissioners to lay by rates for the purpose of investing them for future improvements, of which the occupiers who paid the rates might never reap the slightest benefit. Now, how had the Commissioners dealt with the funds at their disposal? In the year 1853, they invested Rs. 61,000 in Company's Paper: in 1854, they invested Rs. 64,000: and in 1855, they invested Rs. 25,000. They also, in that year, invested a sum of Rs. 5,000, interest on the Government Promissory notes; and on the 13th of June 1855, they had, in the hands of the Govern-

ment Agent, a further sum of Rs. 1,090 for interest. He put out of the question the investment of one sum of Rs. 20,000, because he found, from the Report of the Commissioners, that that sum was not properly attributable to the rates of this City. The Commissioners said :—

“ It will be seen by this general statement of capital, receipts, and disbursements, that the balance brought forward from last year, with the receipts during 1855, amounts to Rupees 5,53,303-1-3. From this amount, however, rupees 20,000 would be deducted as not being available for general conservancy purposes, being, in fact, an instalment of a promised donation of Rupees 40,000 which has been advanced by a private party towards a special improvement in a quarter of the Town where his munificence will be greatly appreciated; and we hope that, in our next Annual Report, we may have to speak more fully on this matter.”

The Town, no doubt, was greatly indebted to this gentleman for so munificent a donation; and, of course, the Commissioners were bound to invest it in Company's Paper for the purpose for which it was given. He, therefore, put that investment out of the question. But still, the Commissioners had invested considerable sums out of the rates of the past three years in Company's Paper. Was this to go on every year? They had invested Rupees 1,50,000 derived from the rates of 1853, 1854, and 1855, besides the interest on the Government securities; and they had, at the end of 1855, a much larger balance than at the end of the preceding year. In 1855, they expended Rupees 20,855 on the improvement of streets. Improvements of streets were a substantial benefit which would be enjoyed, not merely by the occupiers of 1855, but would run over a number of years, and be of advantage to future generations. He did not complain of this outlay, because it was not more than $6\frac{1}{4}$ or $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on the whole expenditure, which appeared, from the Report of the Commissioners, to be Rupees 3,29,000; and $6\frac{1}{4}$ or $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent was probably not more than a proper proportion of the annual rate to be applied to substantial improvements. But when the Commissioners had expended $6\frac{1}{4}$ or $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of the whole expenditure upon substantial improvements out of the rates of 1855, they, in his (Mr. Peacock's) judgment, ought not to have invested a further sum of Rupees 25,000 out of the proceeds of the rate of that year. The Honorable Mover of the Bill, referring in his Memorandum to the

Mr. Peacock.

investments made by the Commissioners, had said :—

“ The accumulation of this fund indicates that the present income of the Commissioners is in excess of their current expenditure. The saving in 1855 is set down at Rupees 26,944; in 1854, so far as I can make out from the Report for that year, it seems to have been about Rupees 51,000.”

He (Mr. Peacock) made out the saving of 1854 to be much more; but he would take the Honorable Member's figures. What had the Commissioners done in 1854? They had invested for future purposes Rupees 64,000 which had been raised by assessing occupiers who had since left the country or died, and many others who would derive no benefit whatever from the improvements to which such investments might hereafter be applied. Were the Commissioners to lay by Rupees 30,000 every year, in addition to expending upon substantial improvements the proper proportion of the amount which the occupiers of the year ought to bear? He thought that they ought to expend all they received each year upon the current wants of the town for that year, except a sum of about $6\frac{1}{4}$ or $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of the expenditure necessary for substantial improvements.

He contended, then, that he had a right to add to the Rupees 25,000 which the Honorable Member estimated would be the annual available surplus, the Rupees 30,000 which they had invested. That would give Rupees 55,000; and then, there would be the further sum of Rupees 17,000, which was now laid out for lighting, but which would no longer be necessary, since there would be a lighting-rate. This would give a surplus of Rupees 72,000. The Commissioners had now a sum of Rupees 1,76,000 invested in Government Paper. They had a balance at their Banker's of Rupees 28,615, besides a sum of Rupees 1,090 in the hands of the Government Agent. They had expended Rupees 20,855 of the rates of 1855 in substantial improvements and had invested Rupees 30,000 of those rates in Government Paper. The increase of the house-tax and the tax upon horses and carriages would more than provide for the lac and a half to be set aside for drainage; and he thought it clear that, if the lighting rate proposed were granted, the Commissioners would, according to their estimate of former years, have a surplus of upwards of Rupees 72,000, after providing the sum to be set apart for drainage and all current expenses, exclusive of substantial improvements. The Rupees 72,000 was composed of the

following items:—Surplus in 1855, according to the Honorable Member's own estimate, Rupees 25,000; saving of present cost of lighting Rs. 17,000; expended in 1855 on street improvement account, which was a substantial improvement, Rupees 20,855. He did not insist or intend to ask that the proposed rate for lighting should be reduced from 2 per cent. to 1 per cent. if the Bill provided sufficient security that this Rupees 72,000 would be spent for the benefit of the town in the manner most urgently required. The Honorable Mover of the Bill had said, in his Memorandum, that, if the scheme of the Drainage Committee were adopted—

“all the present surplus, in addition to the produce of the new taxes, would be required to carry it into execution.”

If all the present surplus in addition to the produce of the new taxes, would be necessary to carry that scheme of drainage into execution, he would ask his Honorable friend if he intended that that sum should be so expended. If his Honorable friend intended that it should, then let him make his meaning appear in the Bill, and he (Mr. Peacock) would give him everything he asked. But, as he had said before, rather than that the whole available surplus should be appropriated to drainage, he would devote a portion of it to providing the inhabitants with a supply of pure and wholesome water for drinking and domestic purposes, which was a most important want of this city and ought to be immediately provided. He would take his Honorable friend's own estimate as to the annual surplus that would be available—namely, Rupees 25,000, which added to the Rupees 17,000 now expended for lighting, and which would be saved by the lighting rate, amounted to Rupees 42,000. He would ask for only Rupees 30,000 a year out of this saving of Rupees 42,000 for that object. If his Honorable friend would concede this, he (Mr. Peacock) would be contented. If not, he would ask the Council not to vote too precipitately for the new Section proposed, but to introduce into the Bill such a Clause as would secure to the town, in addition to effectual drainage, a sufficient supply of pure and wholesome water. When he found that, out of the sum at the disposal of the Commissioners, only Rupees 1,775 had been appropriated to the improvement of tanks, he thought that he was entitled to ask the Council to provide that a certain amount should be annually expended upon that most desirable object until it was completed. The sum might afterwards,

so long as it was necessary, be carried to the drainage account to which the Honorable Member for Bengal had stated it must be applied.

Another point to which he desired to advert, was this. The Commissioners stated that they had not sufficient funds for watering the town. They said:—

“Several urgent applications have been made to us for the watering of public thoroughfares. We are fully aware of the discomfort produced by the dense clouds of dust which are to be met with constantly in the dry season, in the streets to which this benefit is not extended. We are at all times anxious to assist occupiers who are willing to contribute for this purpose, and could wish that this was more general; but until our finances are extended, we must content ourselves with the present expenditure, although there are several important thoroughfares which demand watering urgently. The watering of the Public Streets generally, however, is a desideratum of itself sufficient to make such an arrangement infinitely valuable in such a climate; for we are assured that the clouds of dust so continually flying in the unwatered Public Streets, no less than the effluvia from the open drains, is highly prejudicial to the Public Health.”

The Commissioners did not say the same of the darkness of the streets. They said that dust was injurious to the public health; but they did not say that there was any such insufficiency of light as to cause injury either to the public health or to the public safety. He held that it was not necessary for either the public health or the public safety that the streets of this City should be better lighted than they were; and he would rather secure to the inhabitants what he conceived would be an invaluable benefit to them.

The Commissioners also said that the Strand bank had not yet been opened. He thought it very important that that bank should be opened as speedily as possible. They said:—

“The process of clearing the Strand Bank, which we alluded to in the 49th Section of our last annual Report, has been materially advanced, and great benefit and convenience will, we hope, eventually result from this measure when completed. The appearance of the Town from the River has already been greatly improved by what has been done; but much more yet remains to be carried out.”

This work would be a very great public benefit, and he hoped soon to see it carried out. It would be of great advantage, not only to the health of the town, but to its commercial interests. But what he mainly insisted upon, was, that this Bill should provide for a sufficient supply of pure and whole-

some water to the Inhabitants for drinking and domestic purposes.

There was one other point to which he would advert. The Section said that the gross proceeds of the lighting rate "shall be applicable annually to the purchase of gas or of oil for the purpose of lighting the streets."

He called attention to this, because it was evidently intended that the lighting rate might be wholly expended in paying for the gas or oil, and that the general rates should provide for the other expenses of lighting as well as the expenses of collecting the lighting-rate. If there was to be a lighting-rate, let it provide for all the expenses of lighting—the object for which it was raised. If it were not sufficient for all the requirements of that object, which he did not admit, more should be asked for. But who ever heard of a rate for the purchase of gas or oil! The Section which provided a lighting-rate exempted therefrom persons occupying houses or lands of which the monthly rent was less than Rupees 10. If it was right that they should be exempted from the lighting-rate—and he had no wish to the contrary—he thought that they ought, upon the same principle, to be exempted from contributing any portion of the expenses of lighting; but as the Section stood, this class of persons would be free from contributing to the purchase of the gas or oil to be consumed, but they would have to bear their proportion of the expense of collecting the lighting-rate, of maintaining the lamps and lamp-posts, of cleaning the lamps, and of the establishment necessary for lighting them. The money for all these purposes was to come out of the general rates; so that, although they would be free from the expense of purchasing gas or oil, they would have to contribute to the expense of the glass to prevent the lights from being blown out!

SIR JAMES COLVILLE observed that the 2 per cent would not even include the price of the wicks!

MR. PEACOCK said, he thought that this wording of the Section was unfair and unjust, and that it ought to be amended. If his Honorable friend wished to have a lighting-rate, that rate alone ought to be applied to all the purposes of lighting, including the expense of collecting the rate and the other charges to which he had referred. He did not object to the Commissioners expending, out of the funds which they had invested, such a sum as was necessary for providing and setting up lamps and lamp-posts in the first in-

Mr. Peacock.

stance, because they would be in the nature of substantial improvements, which would last for many years, and ought not to be paid for solely by the occupiers of the present day. But when the lamp-posts had been once set up, then the whole current expenses of lighting ought to fall on the lighting-rate exclusively, and not to be provided partly out of the general municipal rate. He should, therefore, propose to leave out from the new Section the words "purchase of oil or of gas for the purpose." He did not believe that they had been inserted incautiously or from want of thought. He believed that the intention was that the whole proceeds of the lighting rate should be expended merely in the purchase of gas or oil, and that the other expenses attendant upon lighting, as also the expense of collecting the rate, should be borne by the general Municipal Fund. He said again that he thought this unfair and unjust; and that the Section ought to be amended on this point.

These were his positions. If his Honorable friend would concede them, he would agree to the new Section proposed, after the amendment he had suggested; and he would then move for the introduction of a new Section providing for a supply of water to the inhabitants into another part of the Bill. That Section he had worded as follows:—

"The Commissioners, under the direction of the said Lieutenant Governor, shall, with as little delay as possible, cause to be made and constructed such tanks, reservoirs, or other works as shall be necessary to provide in convenient parts of the said Town, for the use of the inhabitants thereof, a proper supply of good and wholesome water for drinking and domestic purposes; and until such tanks, reservoirs, or other works shall have been made and constructed, and all the expenses thereof defrayed and all moneys borrowed for the payment of such expenses on the security of the rates, and interest thereon, shall have been repaid, shall set apart for the purpose above mentioned an annual sum not less than Rupees 30,000, out of the proceeds of the rate provided by Section XII of this Act."

He did not ask for these particular words, but for something to that effect. If his Honorable friend would not concede, he (Mr. Peacock) should move, by way of amendment, that the Section proposed by him in lieu of Section XXIV be negatived, and that his own be substituted for it.

MR. CURRIE said, the Honorable and learned Member had asked some questions, which he (Mr. Currie) felt it incumbent upon him to answer at once.

The Honorable and learned Member had asked whether he meant to add the Rupees

42,000 which would be available annually as a surplus to the Rupees 1,50,000 which was to be set apart for drainage. He answered that he did not. The Bill provided certain additional items of taxation, the net proceeds of which, he calculated, would amount to something near Rupees 1,50,000. The additional taxation was provided with the object of securing a new and efficient system of drainage; and it was therefore proper that the Bill should indicate expressly the purpose to which the increase of Rupees 1,50,000 was to be applied. But it appeared to him that the Council would be trenching improperly on the discretion allowed to the Commissioners if it said that any specific portion of the funds now at their disposal should be applied to a certain specified purpose. This Bill, as amended, constituted a Commission which was to act under the orders of the Lieutenant Governor; and he thought that the Council ought to trust the Executive Government and the Commission with all the details of the administration of the Municipal Fund. He could not but suppose that, if they should find Rupees 1,50,000 a year insufficient for drainage with a diffused water-supply, as recommended by the Drainage Committee, they would appropriate to that purpose the funds in their hands which might be available, in addition to the Rupees 1,50,000; or if, with reference to the plan of the Drainage Committee, they should consider it advisable to provide for the excavation of tanks in particular situations, he did not doubt that they would appropriate their surplus funds to that object. But the Council would be legislating very much in the dark if it were to declare now that a sum of Rupees 30,000 a year should be appropriated absolutely and indefeasibly to the digging of tanks and reservoirs. He had not yet seen the Report of the Drainage Committee, and did not know what their system of diffused water-supply was to be, nor to what extent it would be available for domestic purposes. Mr. Sims' plan for providing water for the town was by drawing the supply from the river, and passing the water through filterers. Many tanks in the town were now furnished with water from the river. For his own part, he thought that the best way of improving the supply of water was by digging large tanks. But until the Council knew what the system of water-supply contemplated by the Drainage Committee was to be, they should not fetter the discretion of the Municipal Commissioners by saying that they

must apply so much a year to the digging of tanks. He considered water-supply to be one of the greatest wants of the town; but he could not consent to tie the Commissioners down to a particular plan, without knowing whether that plan was really necessary or not.

The Honorable and learned Member had said that there was an item for which no credit had been taken—the addition, namely, of some 10 or 12 per cent over and above the assets provided by the Bill, which would be furnished by the vote of last week on Section V of the General Assessment Bill. The practice had heretofore been to make the valuation on the gross rental of property; and one reason why he had opposed the alteration of this practice which had been proposed and adopted when the Bill was in Select Committee, was, the reduction which it would cause in the Municipal Funds. He had stated last Saturday that, had the alteration been retained, he should have felt it his duty to propose an increase of the house-rate for supplying the consequent deficiency. Therefore, he could not admit that there was any thing for which credit had not been taken.

The Honorable and learned Member appeared to think that the Municipal Funds would be largely increased by the revision of the valuation of premises. No doubt, they would be increased; but the increase would be very, very gradual. No one could yet say what its amount would be; and he did not think that this prospective and uncertain gain could be safely taken into account now.

In justice to the Commissioners, he thought it necessary to say a few words as to the investment of funds which had been so strongly animadverted on by the Honorable and learned Member. The idea now suggested of borrowing a large sum for improvements on a mortgage of the rates was a new one, and no legal provision had been made for it before. The only mode that was open to the Commissioners of carrying out improvements which involved a large present outlay, was to lay by for the purpose the money which remained in their hands after providing for the absolute wants of the year. In a letter to the Bengal Government, dated 8th November 1824, which was amongst the printed papers, the Commissioners had stated that—

“ by extraordinary economy, a sum of about one lakh of Rupees had been saved and invest-

ed in Company's Paper as a reserve improvement fund. This was effected in a period of about 4 years, but during a period of stagnation as to all improvement."

He had just received a Memorandum from the Secretary to the Commissioners on the subject of these savings, which, with the permission of the Council, he would read. It was as follows:—

"1. With reference to Mr. Currie's enquiry why more money has not been expended in lighting, instead of buying Company's Paper to the amount of Rupees 1,76,000, and what was the special object of the Commissioners in the saving, the following answers may be given:—

"2. Rupees 20,000 were deposited by a private party for a special improvement, and that sum cannot therefore be used for any other purpose.

"Rupees 11,000 is a balance of the Chitpore Road Watering Fund, which was transferred to the Commissioners by Government in February 1854, to be expended in defraying part of the cost of erecting an engine and reservoir for the supply of water to the Northern Division of the Town. Therefore, the amount available for general improvements, deducting the above sums, is Rupees 1,45,000.

"3. The Commissioners preferred to expend such sums as they could save in improvements of a permanent character, rather than in lighting, which, however desirable, cannot be considered of that character, as it entails an expense constantly recurring. They, therefore, proposed to make a Watering Fund by adding Rupees 14,000 to the Chitpore Road Fund received from Government, and are prepared to erect an engine in the Northern Division of the Town for the better supply of water thereto.

"4. In the absence of any specific suggestion for the drainage of the whole Town, which has only recently been supplied, there being in fact before them only the general outlines of a scheme by the late Colonel Forbes, the Commissioners considered it desirable to commence this important improvement by opening out a portion of the new street which was indispensable to the plan suggested by Colonel Forbes, and would—considered as a street only, and apart from the question of drainage—greatly improve the locality through which it passed. For this and such other improvements as might become necessary, the Commissioners set apart Rupees 1,31,000."

The object of the Chitpore Watering Fund was to provide the means of remedying the nuisance to which the Honorable and learned Member had referred—namely, the extreme dustiness of the Northern portion of the Town. He considered it due to the Commissioners to say this much. Whether they had acted judiciously or otherwise, might be a matter of opinion; but there could be no doubt that they had acted in the manner they considered best for the interests of the Town.

Mr. Currie.

The Honorable and learned Member had taken objection to the appropriation of the rate being limited to the purchase of materials for lighting. His (Mr. Currie's) reason for providing for this was, that he did not wish to make the rate higher than was absolutely necessary. He had already explained that the gross proceeds of a 2 per cent rate would be barely sufficient; and he thought that, as this rate would be collected with the house-rate by the same agency, there would be nothing very contrary to principle in allowing the whole expense of collection to fall on the General Fund. The Section as it stood would, in effect, provide for all the current expenses of lighting; for the lighting, whether with gas or with oil, would be done by contract; and he believed that the contractors would undertake the expense of cleaning the lamps, lighting them, &c. To avoid any objection, however, he would substitute the words "current expenses of lighting" for the words "purchase of gas or of oil."

Mr. ELIOTT said, he was opposed to the omission of Section XXIV.

His reason was, that he did not like the Section which it was proposed to substitute for it. It was laid down positively as a duty incumbent on the Commissioners that they must light the town. This had been expressly provided in all the later Municipal Acts, and it was expressly provided in the Act under which the affairs of the town were now administered. It appeared that, under the operation of Section XXIV, about one-half the proceeds of the rate proposed to be imposed upon streets lighted with gas—which would be Rupees 25,000—would be set apart from the general Municipal Fund for gas-lighting. The sum of Rupees 17,000 now expended for lighting, would in future be laid out in lighting the streets not subject to the gas-rate, and give them more than double the number of lamps they had hitherto had. The whole amount to be drawn from the Municipal Fund for lighting would thus be Rupees 42,000. He did not think that Rupees 42,000 was a larger sum than ought to be set apart for that purpose from the Municipal funds of this City. He thought that the principle of the Section in the Bill was more correct than the principle of the Section proposed to be substituted for it. The principle of the Section in the Bill was, that those who would benefit by a partial introduction of gas, should pay two-thirds of the expense; but that, inasmuch as they

were now entitled to share in the lighting of the City, and the community generally would derive a benefit from the improved lighting of the thoroughfares, the remaining one-third should be charged to the General Municipal Fund. This seemed to him but fair. The intention was that, as streets were lighted with gas, those parts into which gas could not be introduced should be more efficiently lighted with oil than at present. This would give to occupiers in such parts a very great benefit: it would give them more than double the amount of lighting they now had, and they were not to be taxed at all for that increased benefit. The principle of the Section which it was proposed to substitute for this Section was, that occupiers in all streets, whether these were great thoroughfares or narrow gullies in the purlieus of the town, should pay an uniform lighting-rate of 2 per cent. Now, it was perfectly well known that gas could not be introduced into all the streets of the town. In some of them, it would be perfectly impossible to lay down mains. Were they to be lighted with oil to the same degree that gas would light them? Could this be done? The Honorable and learned Member opposite (Mr. Peacock) had said last Saturday that he was willing that the town should be efficiently lighted, but not that it should be extravagantly lighted. Could that be done by means of oil? It could not; but it could be done with gas; for efficient gas-lighting was cheaper than efficient oil-lighting. One-gas lamp cost the price of two oil-lamps, and gave the light of three; and, therefore, the expense of providing with oil the quantity of light that could be obtained from gas would be one-third more. Consequently, to light streets in which oil would be used to the same degree as streets in which gas would be used, would not be feasible; and, therefore, it certainly would not be equitable to impose a rate of 2 per cent upon all occupiers in the town. He really could not see why it should be thought inequitable to tax with a special rate those who, residing in streets lighted with gas, were continually benefited by that improvement, whether they liked it or not. It was only in this way that special improvements could be provided for. Suppose that a feasible plan for providing water for all purposes of cleanliness were proposed in any part of the town, and that some of the residents should ignore the benefits of cleanliness; would it be at all right to deny the whole community of that part of the town the advantage of such an improvement, because those persons said they did not want it?

With regard to the proposition for providing a supply of drinking water, it was very right and proper that such a measure should be carried out, if possible. But why should the Council defer a measure for the lighting of the Town because a measure for a supply of water was not before it? The Town had been pronounced to be disgracefully lighted; and the Honorable and learned Member opposite (Mr. Peacock) had said that he was quite willing that it should be properly lighted. Then, why should the Council defer the question of lighting? It appeared to him that they ought now to do all that they could for the better conservancy of the town; and this seemed to him a most important part of the Conservancy.

MR. LUGEY said, he must express his regret that the clause in substitution for Section XXIV had been brought forward by the Honorable Member in charge of the Bill. He agreed with the Honorable Member for Madras that Section XXIV more nearly provided for what we really did want in this City. By that Section, persons who would live in streets lighted with gas, and would be benefited by gas, would have to pay a fair and equitable sum for that luxury; he was willing to admit that gas was a luxury. ("No!" from Mr. Grant.) The Honorable Member to his left said "no"; but he could not agree with him. The Honorable Member had said last Saturday, in the debate upon this Section, that those persons who lived in streets which would be lighted with gas would not benefit more than those who would pass through such streets. But surely, the inhabitants of a gas-lighted street would make more constant use of it than casual passengers.

Then, most of the people who would be called upon to pay the lighting-rate of 2 per cent under Section XXIV already paid nearly that sum for their gate-lamps; and others would have to pay only that rate who now paid 3, or 4, or 5 per cent for their gate lamps; while the rest, upon whom it was not compulsory to keep up private gate-lamps, would obtain more oil-lamps for the streets which they occupied than could at present be provided for them out of the general Municipal Fund. Thus, he submitted, it was shewn that the rate could not at all be called an inequitable or an oppressive rate.

Then, under the proposed Section, what were the people living in oil-lighted streets called upon to pay for gas? By this Section, it was proposed to call upon them to pay 2

per cent, the same rate which the people living in the gas-lighted streets would pay. By Section XXIV, they would be called upon to pay only their proportion of the money that would be paid out of the general Municipal Fund—a payment which they would not feel.

Therefore, he could not help thinking that the City would derive the greatest amount of benefit with the least amount of taxation from the retention of Section XXIV.

He would not now re-open the question of drainage. The Council had disposed of that by the Section which set aside a sum of Rupees 1,50,000 to be appropriated annually for the completion of an efficient system of sewerage. But he would remark that he had been informed, and believed, that the estimate by the Drainage Committee of 11½ lacs for the plan of a diffused supply of water related only to a supply of water for flushing drains and watering the roads, and to other purposes distinct from water for drinking and domestic purposes. He had been informed that the supplying of water to this town by filtration would cost an enormous sum. No doubt, for every large City, water-works bringing that necessary of existence to every man's domicile would be of great benefit and importance; and he should be glad to see the time arrive when the inhabitants of Calcutta would be in a position and willing to pay for such a convenience, as was done in the large cities of Europe; but in the meanwhile, he could not think that Calcutta could be said to be badly off for water for drinking and domestic purposes. There was always a supply of fresh water at hand in the Hooghly, and there were thousands upon thousands of persons in town who did drink and always had drunk the river water. He did not, therefore, think that the public funds should be subjected to any large expenditure for an improved and more convenient system of supplying water for merely domestic purposes.

The Honorable Member in charge of the Bill had not shewn that the Section which he proposed to substitute for Section XXIV would benefit the Town so much as Section XXIV, which had been settled by the Select Committee after full consideration of all that had been said in the Council on the subject on former occasions, and the Scheme proposed in which was, in his opinion, every way reasonable, economical, and equitable, and placed the increased taxation it involved on those who received the greatest degree of benefit from the

Mr. Le Geyt.

proposed improvement, and who inhabited the largest and most expensive tenements, and might, therefore, be reasonably supposed to be best able to bear it.

MR. GRANT said, he had thought that this question of principle had been settled by general consent at the last Meeting. If it had been meant otherwise, it would have saved time if it had been discussed and put to the vote last Saturday. He had thought it had been settled to strike out Section XXIV and the other Sections about gas, and to substitute a Section of the nature now proposed by the Honorable Member in charge of the Bill, establishing a general lighting-rate. But as the question of principle had been again raised, and the principle for which he had contended last Saturday had been impugned, he should say a few words—and he hoped only a very few words—in support of his position.

The Honorable Member for Madras had argued that gas-lighting was cheaper than oil-lighting, inasmuch as one gas-lamp cost the price of two oil-lamps and gave the light of three. But he (Mr. Grant) apprehended that this was the case only where brilliant lighting was required. He believed that it would not be the case if we gave to the streets of this Town only as much light as the greater number of them required; because, to do that with gas, the gas-lights would be put so far from each other that the part of the street which was close to the lamp would be brilliantly lighted, and the rest would be in total darkness;—whereas if we put up oil-lamps through the whole length of the street, no part would be in total darkness. Nobody had proposed to light the whole town with gas. The lighting-rate which the Section in the Bill provided for was this—that, whenever any street should be lighted with gas, the occupiers of houses and lands in that street should pay an annual rate of 2 per cent. :—so that, hereafter, those unfortunate people (of whom he feared he should be one) who lived in great thoroughfares, which of course the Commissioners would illuminate brilliantly with gas, would have to pay for lighting all those who pass through such thoroughfares. The best way to look at such questions as this, was, to take a common case, and to see how the principle would apply to it. Take the Chitpore Road, which was the greatest thoroughfare in the whole town. No doubt, the street should be lighted brilliantly, and would be lighted with gas. Now, that street was not inhabited generally by persons

of wealth; but there were little gullies running off it which were inhabited by some of the wealthiest gentlemen in Bengal. A wealthy Baboo who lived twenty yards from that street, in a small lane turning off near the farther end of it, and who drove in his handsome carriage every evening on the Course, would have the benefit every night of passing through the whole road illuminated brilliantly; but because his house was twenty yards off the road, in a lane which was not lighted with gas, and which it would be extravagant to light with gas, he would have nothing to pay for the light, but the whole charge would fall upon the poor shopkeepers and other inhabitants of the road, to whom it was no object whatever that the Baboo should be splendidly lighted in his drive through it;—and not only would this rich Baboo not have to pay for the light the benefit of which he derived, but he would even be relieved from the only expense towards lighting the Town which he now had to bear, of keeping up a lamp at his gate. He (Mr. Grant) put it to Honorable Members, as men of common sense, whether this could be a just or a sound principle. He contended that it was unjust and unsound; and, therefore, he should vote against the Section in the Bill, and for the Section which the Honorable Member for Bengal had proposed in substitution for it.

He also saw no objection to the new Section which the Honorable and learned Member opposite (Mr. Peacock) intended to move. He differed from the Honorable Member for Bombay, who thought that there was no urgent need for a supply of good drinking water being provided for the Inhabitants of Calcutta. No doubt, the Hooghly, which ran by one side of the Town, afforded water which, when it had deposited its sediment, became excellent drinking water; but the difficulty was to get the river water in remote parts of the Town; and in many parts, there certainly was a great scarcity of any good water for drinking and domestic purposes. He believed that all those best acquainted with the Town agreed upon this; and he thought Rupees 30,000 a year for providing the people with good water for such purposes, a very reasonable amount.

But whether the Section to be moved by the Honorable and learned Member opposite for making this provision were carried or not, he should vote for the omission of Section XXIV, and for the introduction of the new Section proposed in substitution for it.

SIR JAMES COLVILLE regretted that the two questions of light and water had been mixed up. He thought that the only point to be determined now was, whether Section XXIV should be omitted, and the new Section, which proposed a rate for lighting on a different principle, should be substituted. He was entirely of opinion with the Honorable Member to his right (Mr. Grant) that the principle of a general rate was preferable to that of the rate proposed by Section XXIV; and he, certainly, had been under the impression that the Council had agreed to the abandonment of the principle of Section XXIV at its last Meeting. He thought that the Section, if the Commissioners chose so to work it, might possibly lead to the diversion of the general funds from better objects, because, in effect, it put no limit to the power of the Commissioners to light with gas, except their means. They might light any number of streets with gas, and call upon the occupiers in those streets to pay two-thirds of the expense. The only limit to their power would be, perhaps, the necessity of their finding the remaining one-third. Their power to do that would be limited by their means; but still, they might appropriate to gas-lighting every Rupee of the available surplus of the general fund, except the Rupees 1,50,000, which the Council had provided should be set apart for drainage. On the other hand, if they proposed to spend their money on other objects, they could hardly tax the occupiers of streets under this Section without providing one-third of the expense of gas lighting; and thus less might be done in the department of lighting than ought to be done.

Again it seemed to him that it was no answer to those who complained of the inequality of this tax—who complained that it would be a tax thrown only upon occupiers of streets lighted with gas—to say that they would be relieved from the tax which they now paid in keeping up gate lamps; because that remission was general, and would be soon forgotten. That which vexed men's minds most in these matters was, not the fact of taxation, but the inequality of taxation—the feeling that they should pay a tax from which others of the community were free. Nor could he give any answer whatever to the argument of the Honorable Member to his right (Mr. Grant) as to the propriety of lighting in the best mode all those thoroughfares which were most frequented, and the injustice of imposing the

rate for such lighting exclusively on the poor shop-keepers and others who lived in the thoroughfares, and of exempting from payment people who equally derived the benefit of the lighting as passers-by, because they lived, perhaps in a large house, twenty or thirty yards from the thoroughfare.

He also thought that the words in italics at the end of the Section, and which had been introduced by the Select Committee, were extremely vague, and might lead to considerable dispute as to the application of the tax.

He did not propose to enter into the question which had been raised as to the appropriation of a particular sum annually for the supply of drinking water. He confessed that the whole subject had taken him very much by surprise—the more so that he found no reference to it in the Report of the Select Committee. All that that Report referred to, was the mode of lighting, and the sum to be devoted to that purpose. If it had been intended to call upon the Council to pronounce on the question whether a particular sum should be set apart for providing a supply of drinking water, it was to be regretted that the question had not been brought forward in the Report of the Select Committee. But in whichever way the question might be decided hereafter, without offering at present any opinion upon the Section which the Honorable and learned Member opposite had said he proposed to move, he would say he certainly was of opinion that the light ought not to be extinguished by the water; and he should vote for the omission of Section XXIV and in support of the Section proposed in substitution for it, probably with an amendment of the words “purchase of gas or of oil” to which allusion had been made.

Mr. ELLIOTT said, the Honorable Member to his left (Mr. Grant) had considered the case of the Chitpore road and of a wealthy inhabitant of a house twenty yards from the road in a gully adjoining it, who would enjoy the benefit of the brilliant light of that thoroughfare with gas to be paid for by the poorer occupants of tenements situate therein, while he would himself be exempt from any charge. What would he say to the case of poor people living in similar gullies, but far from any of the thoroughfares to be lighted with gas, through which they might hardly ever pass, who nevertheless, according to the scheme now proposed, would have to pay 2 per cent. on their rents to provide for the lighting thereof? Would this

be equitable? He (Mr. Elliott) thought not.

Mr. GRANT said, at present, those gullies would be wholly in the dark. It was proposed by this Bill that no part of the Town should be left wholly in the dark, but that every part should be lighted in a manner suited to its circumstances. It was upon that principle that he had agreed to a lighting-rate at all. If he had thought that the whole Town was not to be lighted, but that the rate was to be raised only for gas, he would have objected to the assessment of a rate altogether.

Mr. LEGEYT said, he doubted if, under the Section proposed, we should ever get an extension of gas-lighting beyond that which it introduced. By the terms of the Section, the Commissioners would be restricted to Rs. 1,00,000 for lighting the town, of which they would probably appropriate Rupees 72,000 to gas-lighting, for that was the sum stated by them to be necessary for those portions of the town which they proposed to light with gas. If they should attempt to extend gas-lighting, they would have to extinguish oil lamps in many more streets than they would be able to place gas in; for we knew that gas-lighted streets, in the way they would be lighted under this Section, would cost more than oil-lighted streets;—whereas under Section XXIV, whenever the Commissioners should see fit to extend gas-lighting, they would be able to do so by imposing a rate of 2 per cent. on the occupiers in the streets into which the improvement was introduced.

Mr. CURRIE said, the Honorable Member who had spoken last had said that the sum available for lighting being limited to one lac, the Commissioners, according to their estimate, would appropriate Rupees 72,000 of that lac to the streets which they proposed to light at once with gas. Now, he (Mr. Currie) must say, that, if the Commissioners did so, they would not do their duty. The estimate of the Commissioners for lighting the whole Town with gas and with oil was Rupees 1,33,000. If this Section passed, the whole sum available for lighting would be only about Rs. 1,00,000; and it would be the duty of the Commissioners to make a somewhat proportionate reduction in the sum which they proposed to expend on gas.

With regard to the extension of gas-lighting, he himself did not despair of the Commissioners being able to extend gas-lighting hereafter to such thoroughfares as they might consider ought to have the bene-

fit of the improvement. They had come under engagements to the Oriental Gas Company. It had been necessary to hold out favorable terms to that Company, to induce them to embark upon such a speculation; and, therefore, the price to be paid for gas had been fixed rather high. But in extending gas-lighting to other parts of the Town, the Commissioners might stipulate for reduced prices; and with such reduction, and a progressive improvement in the produce of the rate from the increased valuation of premises, he hoped that the Commissioners would eventually have the means of giving the benefit of gas to the thoroughfares of the Town generally.

MR. PEACOCK said, with reference to what had fallen from the Honorable and learned Chief Justice as to the question of water-supply having been mixed up on this occasion with the question of better lighting, it would be recollected that the proposal at the last Meeting was to provide the expense of lighting out of an annual house rate of $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The proposal now was to provide for it by a distinct rate of 2 per cent. over and above the house-rate of $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The proceeds of the house-rate alone would not be sufficient to provide for a water-supply in addition to efficient drainage and improved lighting; but when 2 per cent. more was proposed for lighting, then he thought that the Council might properly be called upon to consider the question whether it ought not to provide, from the general Municipal funds, for an adequate supply of pure and wholesome water to the people for drinking and domestic purposes.

The question was then put that Section XXIV be omitted.

The Council divided:—

Ayes 7.
Mr. Currie.
Mr. Allen.
Mr. Peacock.
Mr. Grant.
General Low.
Sir James Colville.
The Chairman.

Noes 2.
Mr. LeGeyt.
Mr. Elliott.

The Section was accordingly omitted.

Before the question, that the words proposed to be substituted be substituted, was put by the Chairman—

The motion was by leave withdrawn.

MR. CURRIE then moved that the following Section be substituted for the late Section XXIV, namely,—

“To provide for the better lighting of the public streets of the said Town, an annual lighting rate of 2 per cent. of the annual value shall be

imposed upon all houses, buildings, and lands in the said Town, the estimated monthly rent of which is not less than ten Rupees, and such rate shall be payable in quarterly instalments by the occupiers of such houses, buildings, and lands. The sum applicable annually to the current expenses of lighting the said streets shall be the gross proceeds of the said lighting rate, and no more; but the Commissioners may expend out of the funds at their disposal such further sums as may from time to time be requisite for the purchase, setting up, and maintaining of lamps, lamp-posts, pipes, and other necessary apparatus.”

MR. ELIOTT moved that “1 per cent.” be substituted for “2 per cent.” If that motion were carried, it was his intention to follow it up with a new Section which would impose a higher rate upon occupiers in the streets lighted with gas.

The amendment was negatived.

MR. PEACOCK moved that the word “gross” before the word “proceeds” in the 6th line of the Section be left out, in order that the word “net” might be substituted for it.

The amendment was negatived.

The new Section was then agreed to.

The postponed Sections XXV to XXVII were passed after amendments.

The postponed Section XXVIII was negatived.

MR. PEACOCK moved that the following new Section be introduced before Section XXIX:—

“The Commissioners, under the direction of the said Lieutenant Governor, shall, with as little delay as possible, cause to be made and constructed such tanks, reservoirs, or other works as shall be necessary to provide, in convenient parts of the said Town, for the use of the Inhabitants thereof, a proper supply of good and wholesome water for drinking and domestic purposes; and until such tanks, reservoirs, or other works shall have been made and constructed, and all the expenses thereof defrayed, and all monies borrowed for the payment of such expenses on the security of the rates, and interest thereon, shall have been repaid,—shall set apart for the purpose above mentioned an annual sum not less than Rupees 30,000 out of the proceeds of the rate provided by Section XII of this Act. If such supply of water shall have been provided, and all the expenses thereof, and all monies borrowed for the payment of such expenses and interest thereon, shall have been repaid before the complete system of sewerage and drainage mentioned in Section XXIX of this Act shall have been completed, the said annual sum of Rupees 30,000 shall be added to the annual sum of Rupees 1,50,000 directed to be set apart by the said Section XXIX of this Act.”

MR. CURRIE said, he could only repeat what he had already said on this question—

namely that, while he had no objection whatever to the practical effect of the proposition which the Honorable and learned Member had made, he had a strong objection to the principle of tying up the hands of the Commissioners, and telling them that they must expend a certain sum on a certain object, into which object the Council had made no enquiry whatever, and of the merits of which, therefore, it was not in a position to judge. It was quite possible that the object of securing a supply of wholesome water for the town might be effected by the operations to be carried on in pursuance of the scheme of the Drainage Committee. He did not himself know whether the 11½ lacs estimated by the Drainage Committee was intended only for watering the streets and flushing the drains, or whether their scheme contemplated a supply of water suitable for drinking and domestic purposes. However that might be, he believed that water from the river might be rendered fit for these purposes, by filtration, at no great cost. As he had said before, he thought that to pass the provision for which the Honorable and learned Member contended, would be to legislate in the dark, and, also, that it would be a scarcely legitimate interference on the part of the Legislature with details which ought to be left to the Executive.

These were the only grounds on which he opposed the Section moved. The practical effect of it, unless that effect could be better obtained by other means, he thought would be very beneficial.

Another objection which he felt to the Section was, that, by specifying that the sum to be set apart annually for the construction of water-works should be not less than Rupees 30,000, it seemed to indicate the highest amount of outlay to which the Commissioners must restrict themselves for that purpose; and it might very well happen that the purchase of ground for a large tank, and the excavation of the tank, might cost very much more than 30,000 Rupees.

He would just observe that the cause of the accumulation upon which the Honorable and learned Member to his right (Mr. Peacock) had dwelt, had been very much a feeling which the Commissioners had that something ought first to be done for drainage; and until that was done, they were unwilling to expend anything on other improvements. Now that provision had been made for drainage, they would have no object in laying sums by, but would expend

Mr. Currie.

their income upon such works as they should consider necessary.

Mr. PEACOCK said, he had purposely added at the end of his Section that, after the water-supply should have been provided, and the money borrowed for providing it repaid with interest, the annual sum of Rupees 30,000 should go to the Fund to which the Honorable Member said it would be necessary to apply it. All that he wanted was, that there should be a sufficient supply of water for the poor Inhabitants of this Town for drinking and domestic purposes at an early period. Having determined that Rupees 1,50,000 should be reserved annually for drainage, it was very important that the Council should now provide for a water-supply. As soon as the supply of water for drinking and domestic purposes was secured, the money until then devoted to that object would be carried to the Fund to which the Honorable Member said it would be necessary to carry the annual surplus of Rupees 25,000 and the annual sum of Rupees 17,000 now appropriated to lighting; and, moreover, the tanks and cisterns excavated for the supply of water to the Inhabitants, might also be used for flushing the drains when they were built.

Mr. PEACOCK'S motion being put, the Council divided:—

<i>Ayes 6.</i>	<i>Noes 3.</i>
Mr. LeGeyt.	Mr. Currie.
Mr. Allen.	Mr. Elliott.
Mr. Peacock.	The Chairman.
Mr. Grant.	
General Low.	
Sir James Colville.	

So the motion was carried.

The postponed Section XXXIV and the Preamble and Title were severally read by the Chairman and the question put as to each that it stand part of the Bill.

The Section, Preamble, and Title were severally agreed to.

The Council resumed its sitting.

OATHS OF OFFICE.

Mr. ALLEN moved that the Council resolve itself into a Committee on the Bill "concerning the taking of Oaths of Office by Registers of Deeds," and that the Committee be instructed to consider the Bill in the amended form in which the Select Committee had recommended it to be passed.

Agreed to.

The Bill passed through Committee with two verbal amendments.

The Council having resumed its sitting, the Bills settled in Committee were reported.

MESSENGER.

MR. GRANT was requested to take the following Bills to the Right Hon'ble the Governor General for His Lordship's assent :—

The Bill "to comprise in one Act the provisions necessary for the assessment and collection of municipal rates and taxes in the Towns of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay, and the several stations of the Settlement of Prince of Wales' Island, Singapore, and Malacca."

The Bill "for appointing Municipal Commissioners, and for levying rates and taxes, in the Town of Madras.

The Bill "for appointing Municipal Commissioners, and for levying rates and taxes, in the several stations of the Settlement of Prince of Wales' Island, Singapore, and Malacca."

And the Bill "to provide for the dissolution of the Bengal Mariners and General Widows' Fund Society, and the distribution of the funds belonging thereto."

NOTICE OF MOTION.

MR. CURRIE gave notice that, on Saturday next, he would move that the Bill "for appointing Municipal Commissioners, and for levying rates and taxes, in the Town of Calcutta" be read a third time and passed; and further that the said Bill be re-committed, principally for the purpose of introducing into it a new Section which had been strongly pressed by the Municipal Commissioners in their last Paper relative to this Bill. They said :—

"The Commissioners would strongly recommend to the notice of the Legislative Council the insertion of a new Section for the gradual liquidation of charges incurred in the execution by them of the drainage and improvements to private premises as alluded to in their remark, page 7. After the public works of drainage, &c. are completed, the benefits thereof will only be felt when the private works of improvement are executed; to compel the summary payment of these expenses under the powers of the Act XIV of 1856, Sections XXIV, LI, LIII, will be in many cases a hardship, and operate as a serious impediment to the improvement of the sanitary condition of the Town. The effect of the provision now suggested has been very beneficial in English Towns, where, under the Public Health Act, precisely similar powers are given."

MESSENGER.

THE VICE PRESIDENT moved that Mr. Grant be requested to take to the Governor-General in Council the Message of the Legislative Council, requesting that application be made to the Honorable the Court of

Directors for a Portrait of the Marquis of Dalhousie to be placed in the new Chamber of the Council.

Agreed to.

UNCOVENANTED AGENCY (FORT ST. GEORGE.)

MR. ELIOTT moved that the Bill "for the more extensive employment of Uncovenanted Agency in the Revenue and Judicial Departments in the Presidency of Fort St. George" be referred to a Select Committee, consisting of Mr. Allen, Mr. Currie, and the Mover.

Agreed to.

NATIVE PASSENGER SHIPS.

MR. LEGEYT moved that two further communications received by him from the Government of Bombay be laid upon the table and referred to the Select Committee on the Bill "for the regulation of Native Passenger Ships."

Agreed to.

The Council adjourned.

Saturday, December 20th 1856.

PRESENT :

The Right Honorable the Governor General, *President*, in the Chair.

Hon. J. A. Doris,	}	C. Allen, Esq.
Hon. Major Genl. J. Low.		P. W. LeGeyt, Esq.
Hon. J. P. Grant.		E. Currie, Esq. and
Hon. B. Peacock.		Hon. Sir A. W. Buller.
D. Elliott, Esq.		

MESSAGES FROM THE GOVERNOR GENERAL.

The following Messages from the Governor General were brought by Mr. Grant and read :—

MESSAGE No. 88.

The Governor General informs the Legislative Council that he has given his assent to the Bill which was passed by them on the 13th December 1856, entitled "A Bill to comprise in one Act the provisions necessary for the assessment and collection of Municipal rates and taxes in the Towns of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay, and the several stations of the Settlement of Prince of Wales' Island, Singapore, and Malacca."

By order of the Right Honorable the Governor General.

CECIL BEADON,
Secy. to the Govt. of India.

FORT WILLIAM, }
The 20th Dec., 1856. }