

PROCEEDINGS



OF THE

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF INDIA,

FROM

January to December 1856.

VOL. II.

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had been referred to a Select Committee, had been revised by that Committee, and had been brought forward at the next Meeting of the Council after such revision.

MR. ELIOTT said, he thought it very desirable that the Bill should be fully considered, and therefore he had no objection whatever to follow the suggestion made by the Honorable Member. Instead, therefore, of the course which he had proposed to take, he should now move that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee consisting of Mr. Allen, Mr. Currie, and the Mover.

MR. PEACOCK said, the Standing Orders ought to be suspended now, otherwise the Select Committee would not be able to report upon the Bill.

SIR JAMES COLVILLE said, he saw no objection to the appointment of a Select Committee; but it appeared to him that the Bill was as explicit as it well could be. It was a Bill brought in to alter the construction of part of a particular Section of a Regulation, and, in one Section, it declared and enacted that the Section for the recovery of arrears of revenue should be applicable to the realization of rent due from ryots. However, if the Honorable Member for Madras desired to proceed with his Bill on Saturday next, a Select Committee might be appointed to-day to consider its provisions in the meantime.

MR. ELIOTT'S motion was then put and carried.

MR. ELIOTT moved that the Standing Orders be suspended, in order that the Select Committee might be enabled to present their Report on the Bill, and that the Bill might be passed through the subsequent stages, at the next Meeting of the Council.

In doing so, he said he should, perhaps, have mentioned, in his Statement of objects and reasons, more strongly than he had done, that the construction of Regulation XXVIII of 1802 which the Bill would maintain, was the construction which had obtained and been acted upon without any question in almost all the districts of the Madras Presidency, until the year 1835, when the Board of Revenue issued a Circular Order directing the attention of Collectors to the construction which the Sudder Dewanny Adawlut had put upon it, and enjoining its observance.

MR. GRANT seconded the motion, which was then carried.

#### OPIUM (BENGAL PRESIDENCY.)

MR. CURRIE moved that a communication received by him from the Government of Bengal be laid upon the table and referred to the Select Committee on the Bill "to consolidate and amend the Law relating to the cultivation of the Poppy and the manufacture of Opium in the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal."

Agreed to.

The Council then adjourned.

*Saturday, November 29, 1856.*

#### PRESENT :

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

Hon. Sir J. W. Colville, C. Allen, Esq.,  
 Hon. Maj. Genl. J. Low, P. W. LeGeyt, Esq.,  
 Hon. J. P. Grant, E. Currie, Esq.,  
 Hon. B. Peacock, and  
 D. Elliott, Esq., Hon. Sir Arthur Buller.

#### HINDOO POLYGAMY.

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

A Petition of Hindoo Inhabitants of Andool in the District of Hooghly.

A Petition of Hindoo Inhabitants of Midnapore.

A Petition of Pundits and other Hindoo Inhabitants of Benares.

MR. GRANT moved that the above Petitions be printed.

Agreed to.

THE CLERK also presented the following Petitions :—

#### FRAUDULENT CONCEALMENT OF PROPERTY.

A Petition of certain Native merchants of Delhi, praying that measures may be taken to prevent the secreting of property to evade the payment of just debts.

MR. PEACOCK moved that the above Petition be printed.

Agreed to.

#### MUNICIPAL ASSESSMENT (BOMBAY).

A Petition of Justices of the Peace for the Town and Island of Bombay against the provisions contained in the draft of a Bill (lately referred to the Bench by Mr. LeGeyt) to amend and consolidate the laws relating to Municipal Taxes in the Islands of Bombay and Colaba.

MR. LEGEYT moved that the above Petition be printed.

Agreed to.

#### MUNICIPAL ASSESSMENT (CALCUTTA.)

MR. CURRIE presented the Report of the Select Committee on the Bill "for appointing Municipal Commissioners, and for levying rates and taxes, in the Town of Calcutta."

MR. CURRIE gave notice that he would, on Saturday the 6th December, move for a Committee of the whole Council on the above Bill.

#### OATHS OF OFFICE.

MR. ALLEN presented the Report of the Select Committee on the Bill "concerning the taking of Oaths of Office by Registers of Deeds."

#### REVENUE ARREARS UNDER RYOTWAR SETTLEMENTS (FORT ST. GEORGE.)

MR. ELIOTT presented the Report of the Select Committee on the Bill "for declaring the Law for the recovery of arrears of revenue under Ryotwar Settlements in the Madras Presidency."

#### UNCOVENANTED SERVANTS (FORT ST. GEORGE.)

MR. ELIOTT moved the first reading of a Bill "for the more extensive employment of Uncovenanted Agency in the Revenue and Judicial Departments in the Presidency of Fort St. George." He said, the Bill was intended to give effect to a measure sanctioned by the Government of India, namely, the employment of Uncovenanted Officers as Deputy Collectors and Deputy Magistrates in the Madras Presidency, as authorized for Bengal in 1833 and 1843. The provisions of the Bill corresponded substantially with those of Regulation IX of 1833 and Act XV of 1843, by which respectively the offices of Deputy Collector and Deputy Magistrate were created in Bengal. These offices having been created at two different periods, it was, of course, necessary that they should be provided for by separate Laws; but it seemed to him that, on the present occasion, the provisions for both offices might most conveniently be combined in one Law.

He considered it unnecessary to offer any more particular explanation of the provisions

of the Bill; but he thought it proper to take this opportunity to notice some collateral circumstances which seemed to him likely to affect its operation. It could not be doubted that the measure for which the Bill provided would have a very beneficial effect if the Collectors and Magistrates were to have the advantage of the new agency without any drawback. But it was coupled with a condition by which, he feared, its value would be neutralised at least.

The Government of Madras, it appeared, had applied for sanction to the employment of sixty Uncovenanted Officers, who should assist the Magistrates and Collectors, represented to be extremely overburdened in the discharge both of their Revenue and Judicial duties, and not only relieve them of much work, which, from the enormous extent of the Districts, and the paucity of Covenanted Officers, was now hurriedly and imperfectly done, but also undertake much of what was now of necessity left undone. Subsequently, the Government of Madras pressed for the immediate appointment of eighteen Uncovenanted Assistants, in order to meet an existing deficiency in the Members of the Civil Service, the number of the latter being so reduced as not to admit of the usual complement of assistants for each District.

This was the measure which had been authorized, and which the present Bill was intended to provide for; but the injunction attached to it to dispense with the Collector's Serishtadars eventually, and immediately to employ such of them as were qualified in the new office of Deputy Collector, would, as it seemed to him, prevent the Collector from deriving real aid from it—they would not gain from it additional strength. There were at present 19 Collectorates in the Provinces, and of course 19 Serishtadars, who received salaries ranging from 280 Rs. on first appointment, to 700 Rs. after 20 years' service as Serishtadar. There were to be 18 Deputy Collectors, 9 on a salary of 350 Rs., and 9 on a salary of 250 Rs. Supposing all the Serishtadars to be qualified for the duties of Deputy Collectors, and to be appointed accordingly, there would be a mere transfer of men from offices in which, from their experience and knowledge of Revenue affairs and statistics, they were exceedingly helpful to the Collectors, to offices in which, from want of experience, they could not at first be very serviceable. No doubt, they would soon be able to render useful service of a certain kind, but not of such a kind as would in any degree make up to the Collectors for

the loss of the assistance which they derived from them as Serishtadars. The loss to the Collectors would thus be greater than the gain—unless, indeed, they made the measure of non-effect, to which they would be strongly tempted, by still keeping the ex-Serishtadars with them, (instead of sending them into the Talooks) and employing them as they had been previously employed, but under the name of Deputy Collector instead of Serishtadar.

It had been said by the Board of Revenue that most of the Collectors gladly hailed the increased aid to be given in the appointment of Uncovenanted Assistants. As an *increased* aid, they might well gladly hail it. But he strongly doubted whether any Collector would hail it as a *substituted* aid—that any would welcome it knowing that it was to be accompanied with the loss of his Serishtadar. A Deputy Collector, employed in the same manner as a Covenanted Assistant, might relieve a Collector from a certain portion of his duties:—from the charge, say, of two Talooks, which was the largest charge which could be committed to a Covenanted Assistant; but what was that compared with the assistance which the Collector at present derived from his Serishtadar? The Serishtadar was the Collector's special Assistant, not only in the direct management of that portion of the district, generally at least one-half, which he retained under his own charge, but in overlooking the management of those Talooks which were under the charge of the Sub-Collector and Assistants—not only in making the annual Settlement of his own Talooks, but in supervising and reviewing the Settlements made by the Sub-Collector and the Assistants in their respective Divisions, and scrutinizing the results—and, in short, disposing of all questions arising out of the Settlement—questions requiring the greatest experience and the ablest advice to be decided with propriety, and in a manner suited to the feelings of the people concerned in them.

The Board of Revenue said rightly that, not only was the Serishtadar the chief source of information as to the history and condition of the District, but he was the confidential adviser, and, in many respects, the real administrator—or, as he (Mr. Elliott) would say, the efficient Agent of the Collector. The real position of the Serishtadar was thus indeed, as they said, very different from his ostensible one—that was to say, from the position indicated by the title or designation of Serishtadar. But so was the

real nature of the duties of a Collector very different from what might be inferred from the original meaning of the term by which his office was designated. The Serishtadar was no more a mere accountant than a Collector in the Madras Presidency was a mere Tax-gatherer.

"It is not merely in the preparation of accounts," said Sir Thomas Munro in 1822, "that the Collector derives advantage from his Cutchery. He has the benefit of its opinion in all matters connected with taxation and the improvement of the revenue. There is no Collector, however long his experience may have been, who does not find it necessary to make constant reference to his Cutchery on all occasions for their advice in Revenue affairs. Every person conversant in Indian revenue must be sensible how much additional weight is given to the opinions contained in the reports of Collectors when they are supported by the approbation of intelligent Natives."

He (Mr. Elliott) was lately in a district of the Madras Presidency, in which a most important operation had been effected—namely, the reduction of the Assessment; and he had had much conversation with the Collector on the subject, and had gone over the details with him. He had been much impressed with the difficulties of such a work as this, and the manifest necessity of the assistance which an experienced Serishtadar was fitted to afford in the solution of the many nice and perplexing questions constantly arising—the assistance, that was, of a man thoroughly acquainted with the statistics of the district, and with the interests and feelings of the people concerned in the reform of the Assessment. The Collector spoke strongly of the assistance derived in this work from his Serishtadar—a man of great ability and experience, and who was eminently qualified for the duties of a Deputy Collector, to which, of course, he would be transferred under the new arrangement. It seemed to him (Mr. Elliott) that, without such assistance as Collectors derived from their Serishtadars in working out the details of such an operation as this, it would be impossible to execute it satisfactorily.

The Serishtadar had, on several occasions, been made to understand that they were responsible, not only to the Collector, but to the Government; and that they would not be acquitted of their responsibility merely by pleading the orders of the Collector, when those orders were contrary to positive directions from superior authority, unless they could show that they had remonstrated against them, on the ground of such

directions ; for which reason it was required that the Serishtadar should be made acquainted with the orders received by the Collector from the Board of Revenue.

The actual position of the Serishtadars had always been perfectly understood and approved by the Government ; and it was specially upon the ground of the trust and confidence which must of necessity be reposed in them, and of the good policy of liberally rewarding men whose services were so valuable—he might say indispensable—that the allowances were fixed on the high scale which still obtained and had obtained since 1820, the period when the Ryotwar Settlement was restored in Madras. He, therefore, deprecated the abolition of the office of Serishtadar. In his opinion, it was highly inexpedient to deprive Collectors of the valuable aid of these servants ; and he thought also that it was contrary to good policy to take away the incentive to integrity and zeal, which the hope of attaining the high prize of an appointment to this office with its liberal emoluments held out to the Native Revenue Officers generally.

He might observe that the opinions he had quoted as expressed by Sir Thomas Munro, were shared by one of the wisest and ablest men whom India had ever seen—Mr. Elphinston, who acted upon the same principles, and followed substantially the same plan in forming the Revenue Establishment in the Deccan.

He had thought it his duty to express these sentiments ; but they did not affect the principle of the Bill, which he fully approved.

He had now to move the first reading of the Bill.

The Bill was read a first time.

#### TOLLS ON THE KURRATIYA RIVER.

MR. CURRIE moved the third reading of the Bill “for establishing a toll on boats and timber passing through the Kurratiya river in the District of Bogra.”

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

#### REVENUE ARREARS UNDER RYOTWAR SETTLEMENTS (FORT ST. GEORGE.)

MR. ELIOTT said, that, as the Council had, at the last Meeting, agreed to suspend the Standing Orders with regard to the Bill “for declaring the Law for the recovery of arrears of revenue under Ryotwar Settle-

ments in the Madras Presidency,” he should now move that the Council resolve itself into a Committee upon the Bill ; and that the Committee be instructed to consider it in the amended form in which the Select Committee had recommended that it should be passed.

Agreed to.

Section I provided as follows :—

“It is hereby declared and enacted that the collection of the Government revenue due on account of lands under settlements direct with the ryots, is a khas collection on the part of Government within the meaning of Section XXXVIII Regulation XXVIII of 1802.”

MR. PEACOCK said, he thought that, as the Courts in Madras had decided that the collection of the Government revenue due under the Settlements referred to, was not a khas collection within the meaning of the Regulation, it was hardly necessary for this Council to declare that it was. For his own part, he thought that it really was not. He would, therefore, propose, instead of making this a declaratory Act, to omit the words “declared and” from the 1st line of the Section, and to substitute the words “shall be deemed” for the word “is” before “a khas collection” in the 5th line of the Section.

SIR JAMES COLVILLE said that the slight consideration which he had been able to give to the Regulations referred to by the Honorable Mover of the Bill in his Statement of objects and reasons, inclined him also to the opinion that the construction of the Sudder Court at Madras was correct, and that the second of those Regulations was not applicable to the collection of this kind of revenue.

MR. PEACOCK'S amendments were severally put and carried, and the Section was then passed.

The Preamble was agreed to.

The wording of the Title was as follows :—

“A Bill for declaring the law for the recovery of arrears of revenue under Ryotwar Settlements in the Madras Presidency.”

MR. PEACOCK moved that the word “declaring” be left out, in order that the word “amending” might be substituted for it. If the decision at which the Sudder Court had arrived was right, the declaration of this Council, pronouncing it to be wrong, might affect a question pending at this moment before the Court. All that the Council had to do was to provide for the future.

MR. ELIOTT observed that he had stated at the last Meeting that, in almost

every district of the Madras Presidency, the construction reversed by the Sudder Court was the construction which had hitherto been acted upon, and that questions might arise as to past proceedings if the law were made prospective only.

MR. PEACOCK asked, if the Honorable Member meant that this Bill should give an indemnity for past acts?

MR. ELIOTT replied that that was the intention.

MR. PEACOCK said, in that case it would be better to insert a distinct Section giving such indemnity. He objected to make a Law declare a Regulation to be that which he thought it was not.

MR. GRANT said, the Council could not pass a declaratory Law until it had given its judicial attention to the question involved in that Law.

MR. CURRIE said, if the Honorable Mover of the Bill had opposed the amendment in the enacting Clause moved by the Honorable and learned Member to his right (Mr. Peacock), he would have supported him in the opposition. There was no other Law in the Madras Presidency under which arrears under the Ryotwar Settlements were or could be collected, but this Section XXXVIII of Regulation XXVIII of 1802. Whether the construction of the Sudder Court was right or wrong, the Council had it on the authority of the Honorable Member for Madras, that the Ryotwar revenue in that Presidency had in fact been collected under this Regulation for the past fifty years; and he (Mr. Currie) therefore thought that a declaratory Act was, under the circumstances, the most suitable way of providing for the exigency.

SIR JAMES, COLVILLE said, he apprehended that the Act, as proposed to be amended, would have this effect—that everything done under it hereafter in the collection of arrears of Government revenue under Ryotwar Settlements, whether those which had already accrued, or those which might hereafter accrue, would be good. But he conceived that the Honorable Mover of the Bill desired further that protection should be given for acts *heretofore* done under the construction of the Regulation which many had thought to be right, until it had been recently declared to be wrong. To the giving of such protection, he saw no objection; although he agreed with the Honorable and learned Member opposite (Mr. Peacock) in thinking that the Council would not be right in giving it by means of a declaration that the construction which had been put on the

Regulation was wrong. It should be the subject of an express Clause of indemnity.

He did not agree with the Honorable Member for Bengal in thinking that there was no law but the Regulation XXVIII of 1802 for the recovery of such arrears. He conceived that persons holding lands under these Ryotwar Settlements, fell within the description of proprietors of land which was contained in the preceding Regulation XXVII of 1802. But he admitted that the machinery provided by that Regulation was defective and impracticable when applied to the recovery of revenue from that class of proprietors, and that the Council was bound to remedy the defect.

MR. ELIOTT said, the meaning of the term "Proprietor," according to the intention of the Regulations of 1802, was to be gathered from Regulation XXV of that year, which set out by affirming that Government was the virtual proprietor with whom a permanent Settlement of Revenue should be formed; in virtue of which settlement, it was declared that the "proprietary right of the soil should be vested in them." Looking to the terms of this Regulation and to the provisions of Regulation XXVII, which were obviously intended for cases in which such a permanent settlement had been formed, he could not admit the correctness of the construction of the Sudder Adawlut, which, it was to be observed, had been almost a dead letter since it was delivered in 1829, until lately. With respect to the meaning of the term "Khas Settlement" it was imported from Bengal, and was to be understood as it was understood in Bengal. Now, Mr. Young, in his Revenue Manual for Bengal, thus explained it:—

"A Khas Mehal is an estate which is managed, like all estates in the Madras Presidency, by a Collector in direct communication with the Ryots. It is, in fact, a Ryotwarree Settlement Mehal. Such estates generally come into the hands of Government either by purchase or by resumption. If an estate is sold for arrears of Revenue, and attracts no bidders, the Collector buys it on the part of the Government, and it becomes Khas. In the same way, if a Mehal is resumed, and the proprietor declines to enter into engagements for it, it falls into the hands of Government, and becomes Khas."

In point of fact, this was the case of the lands now under Ryotwarree Settlement in many of the Madras Districts. They had been included in the permanent Settlement, and had fallen back to Government by failure of the persons with whom the Settlement had been formed, and had become Khas. It was a fallacy, beside, to regard the

Ryots generally as proprietors. They were not so, in fact, in many parts of the country.

MR. PEACOCK said, to obviate all difficulty, he would move that the following new Section be added to the Bill :—

"All past arrears of such Reveaus shall be collected according to the provisions of this Act. And every Collector and other Revenue Officer is hereby indemnified for any thing heretofore done for the recovery of arrears of such revenue in accordance with the provisions of the said Section XXXVIII Regulation XXVIII of 1802."

THE CHAIRMAN said, as the Preamble had been already passed, it would not be in regular order to put this Motion; but, probably, the Council would assume that the Preamble had not yet been arrived at.

MR. ALLEN said, the Standing Orders having been suspended in regard, to this Bill, there could be no objection to the Motion being put.

The Motion was then put, and carried.

MR. PEACOCK said, as the Standing Orders had been suspended, he should now move that the words.—"It is hereby declared and enacted that," in the 1st line of the 1st Section, be left out, and that the words "It is enacted as follows" be added to the Preamble.

The amendments were severally put and carried, and the Section and Preamble then passed.

The Title being read—

MR. PEACOCK moved amendments which made it run thus :—

"A Bill for the better recovery of arrears of Revenue under Ryotwar Settlements in the Madras Presidency."

The amendments were severally agreed to, and the Title was then passed.

The Council having resumed its sitting, the Bill was reported.

MR. ELIOTT moved that the Bill be read as it now stood.

Agreed to.

THE CLERK read the Bill in its amended form.

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

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

MR. ELIOTT moved that Mr. Grant be requested to carry the Bill to the Governor General for his assent.

Agreed to.

#### TOLLS ON THE KURRATIYA RIVER.

MR. CURRIE moved that Mr. Grant be requested to take the Bill "for establishing a

*Mr. Elliott*

Toll on Boats and Timber passing through the Kurratiya River in the District of Bogn" to the Governor General for his assent.

Agreed to.

#### NOTICES OF MOTIONS.

MR. PEACOCK gave notice that he would, on Saturday the 6th December, move the second reading of the Bill "for the incorporation and regulation of Joint-Stock Companies and other Associations, either with or without limited liability of the Members thereof."

THE VICE PRESIDENT gave notice that he would, on the same day, move that a Message be sent to the Governor General in Council, communicating the wish of the Legislative Council that application be made to the Honorable the Court of Directors for a portrait of the Marquess of Dalhousie to be placed in the new Council room.

MR. ELIOTT gave notice that he would, on the same day, move for a Committee of the whole Council on 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."

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

#### POLICE AND CONSERVANCY.

MR. ELIOTT moved that the Select Committee appointed to take into consideration the Projects of Law for regulating the Police Court, and for the good order and civil government of Madras, and for improving and regulating the Streets, Roads, and Drains in the Town of Madras; the Projects of Law relating to the Police and Conservancy of the Settlement of Prince of Wales' Island, Singapore, and Malacca; and the papers before the Legislative Council containing proposals for revising Acts X, XII, and XIII of 1852, relating to the Conservancy and Police of Calcutta, and to prepare such Bills as may be necessary with reference thereto,—be discharged.

Agreed to.

#### NOTICES OF MOTIONS.

MR. ALLEN gave notice that he would, on Saturday the 6th December, move for a Committee of the whole Council on 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."

MR. PEACOCK gave notice that he would on the same day move for a Committee of the whole Council on the Bill "to provide for the dissolution of the Bengal Mariners and General Widows' Fund Society, and the distribution of the funds belonging thereto."

The Council adjourned.

Saturday, December 6th, 1856.

PRESENT:

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

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

MESSAGES FROM THE GOVERNOR GENERAL

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

MESSAGE No. 85.

The Governor General informs the Legislative Council that he has given his assent to the Bill which was passed by them on the 29th November 1856, entitled "A Bill for establishing a Toll on Boats and Timber passing through the Kurratiya River in the District of Bogra."

By order of the Right Honorable the Governor General,

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

FORT WILLIAM, }  
The 5th December 1856. }

MESSAGE No. 86.

The Governor General informs the Legislative Council that he has given his assent to the Bill which was passed by them on the 29th November 1856, entitled, "A Bill for the better recovery of arrears of Revenue under Ryotwar Settlements in the Madras Presidency."

By order of the Right Honorable the Governor General,

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

FORT WILLIAM, }  
The 5th December 1856. }

HINDOO POLYGAMY.

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

A Petition of Hindoo inhabitants of Bengal.

A Petition of Hindoo inhabitants of Nuddea.

A Petition of Hindoo inhabitants of Sulkea and its neighbourhood, in the district of Howrah.

A Petition of Hindoo inhabitants of Shibpore and its neighbourhood, in the district of Howrah.

A Petition of Hindoo inhabitants of Buri-sa and its neighbourhood, in the district of the 24-Pergunnahs.

A Petition of Hindoo inhabitants of Keer-poy and its neighbourhood, in the district of Booghly.

A Petition of Hindoo inhabitants of Man-cor and its neighbourhood, in the district of Burdwan.

A Petition of Hindoo inhabitants of An-dool.

A Petition of Hindoo inhabitants of Pub-na.

MR. GRANT moved that the above Petitions be printed.

Agreed to.

BOMBAY MUNICIPAL TAXES.

THE CLERK also presented a Petition of Justices of the Peace for the Town and Island of Bombay in favor of the Draft Bill (of which a copy was lately referred to the Bench by Mr. LeGeyt) to amend and consolidate the laws relating to the Municipal taxes in the Islands of Bombay and Colaba.

MR. LEGEYT moved that the above Petition be printed.

Agreed to.

THE CLERK also presented the following Petitions:—

REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS.

A Petition of Christian Ministers and Inhabitants of Agra, Members of the Baptist persuasion, praying for the passing of an Act for the registration of births.

MR. ALLEN moved that the above Petition be printed.

Agreed to.